LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION: 
TOWARDS ALTERNATIVE CONSTRUCTS OF 
ADMINISTRATION, ORGANIZATION, AND KNOWLEDGE

by

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for the degree of Doctor of Education 
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ABSTRACT

Leadership evokes ambivalence. As a term, as a human activity, and as a social practice, leadership is familiar yet imposing; it is sought after but regarded apprehensively; it inspires admiration while eliciting misgivings; it is, in short, equally winsome and worrisome. Given the aspirations of democracy and egalitarianism integral to the Occidental worldview, our consternation about leadership and leaders seems essentially irresolvable.

Within the context of education, the ambivalence surrounding leadership is heightened. In the school, the college, and the university, where a professional collegiality has shaped practices peculiar to such organizations, "educational leadership" and the administrative mastery it implies can seem oxymoronic, if not simply illusory. Yet calls for renewed leadership as a crucial element of educational improvement continue unabated.

This dissertation is an attempt to make leadership and the paradoxes it evinces comprehensible. The form of leadership examined is that which is implicit in the administration of educational institutions. The institutions, in this case, are contemporary Canadian universities, and the administrative practice is the university presidency. The underlying premise is that leadership and the organizations in which it is actualized are social constructs, as is the knowledge we may have of each. The argument made is that our established vocabularies may needlessly and unhelpfully limit the kind of conversation we might have about administration, organization, and knowledge, and, therefore, that these vocabularies need revision, and, perhaps, replacement.
The pragmatic recognition that knowledge is made narratively from vocabularies imbued with cultural and historical contingencies, contextualizes the conversations with five practicing university presidents that are the primary data for this study. The information collected through interviews and questionnaires and the hermeneutic context of its appreciation make possible broader speculation about the nature of leadership as an inescapably moral praxis, and of administration as an ambivalent cipher for the control of individual and organization. This speculation inevitably speaks to the prospects of our cultural moment and to the modernist preoccupation with mastery, that, as I argue, drives this moment forward.
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Finally, I have been fortunate to enjoy the support and the challenge of an extraordinary Department of Educational Administration. Many of those whom I had the good fortune to meet are now remembered only by us stragglers who recognize fondly the faces pictured in photographs that hang on the wall dedicated to retired faculty members. Some old days really were good! Although the portraits of Thomas B. Greenfield and Mark Holmes have special intellectual resonance for me, all of the photographs, including those to be added in the near future, testify that educational administration can, in Ken Kesey's words, sometimes be a great notion.
Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

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A Note On Words And Their Usage

In the course of this thesis the following words are used in ways that may not be immediately obvious or familiar: "educational administration," "administration," "management," and "leadership;" "organization;" and "moral." While several other words are given specific definition in the body of the text that follows, the terms immediately below are defined here in order to avoid initial confusion as to meaning and intention.

**Educational administration** is used to refer to the administering of educational institutions at all levels; it is not used narrowly to refer only to the administration of schools. Unless stated otherwise, educational administration is used in a more generic or encompassing sense to include the practice of leadership within schools as well as within colleges and universities. When I use the term "field," I refer to the collection of scholarly discussions of and research into leadership within educational organizations of all types.

**Administration** is distinguished, per Christopher Hodgkinson (1978, 1983, 1991), from **management**, the former being synonymous with **leadership**—making sure that the "right" things are done—and the latter synonymous with a more technical oversight of day-to-day institutional affairs—making sure that things are done "right." In distinguishing the two terms, Hodgkinson notes (1978: 5) "administration is ends-oriented, management is means-oriented." Each, obviously, is important, but the two terms are different from one another and call for distinct aptitudes, attitudes, and abilities. Each also calls up a distinctive set of associations and descriptors. Nevertheless, as enacted aspects of administration, one frequently blurs into the other and both are often, for better or for worse, combined in one person, office, or action.

**Organization** is used as the most generic term to designate the collective enterprises formed by individuals to achieve purposes that would prove more difficult or impossible to realize singly. This usage is not intended to deny that educational institutions are in many ways unique organizations or that different levels of educational institutions have distinguishing characteristics. It is intended, however, to admit that many of our insights into the socially constructed collectives we call organizations also may apply to educational institutions and vice-versa.

The use of the term **moral** is intended to connote a different set of meanings than is the term **moralistic**, to which it can be antagonistic. The former indicates commitment to a discourse that makes active and prominent the values, beliefs, and worldviews of individuals who may be in conflict or agreement. The latter indicates subscription to a shared set of prescriptive "oughts" that would obviate the necessity of discussion and debate about the means and ends of human affairs. The term moral is underdetermined and, therefore, tolerant of axiological difference. The term moralism is axiologically overdetermined and, therefore, tends towards internal deference and external judgementalism.
For my teachers.
To exist as a North American is an amazing and enthralling fate. As in every historical condition, some not only have to live their fate, but also to let it come to be thought. What we have built and become in so short a time calls forth amazement in the face of its novelty, an amazement which leads to that thinking. Yet the very dynamism of the novelty entralls us to inhibit that thinking.

It is not necessary to take sides in the argument between the ancients and moderns as to what is novelty, to recognize that we live in novelty of some kind. Western technical achievement has shaped a different civilization from any previous, and we North Americans are the most advanced in that achievement. This achievement is not something simply external to us, as so many people envision it. It is not merely an external environment which we make and choose to use as we want—a playground in which we are able to do more and more, an orchard where we can always pick variegated fruit. It moulds us in what we are, not only at the heart of our animality in the propagation and continuance of our species, but in our actions and thoughts and imaginings. Its pursuit has become our dominant activity and that dominance fashions both the public and private realms.

—George Grant, "In Defence of North America" (1969: 15)

To search for where you already are is the most benighted of quests, and the most fated.


So we need to ask: through what kind of understanding of leadership have we enabled that future that is now our present.

Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

Introduction: Reorienting Administration, Renewing Leadership

Educational administration is at the applied end of an applied field; like industrial engineering perhaps, it is concerned with the application of applied knowledge.

—Mark Holmes, "Comment [On Thomas B. Greenfield]," Interchange (17,2, 1986b: 86),

Professions can survive the paradigms which gave them birth.

—Richard Rorty, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (1980: 393)

This dissertation begins with a conjecture to be explored rather than with a research problem to be solved. The conjecture is that both scholars and practitioners of educational administration have by and large—and, as I shall argue, needlessly and to their disadvantage—worked too much within a singular set of assumptions. In his entry "Administration of Education: Critical Approaches" in The International Encyclopedia of Education, William Foster (1994: 66) enumerates many of these formative suppositions:

"Administration" is the establishment of order in a somewhat disorderly, but largely harmonious world. It accepts the regnant ideas and narratives as true, and these foundational assumptions are not to be examined, let alone challenged. "Administration" assumes a certain soundness to the world order; problems that are identified can be rectified through more research, or through the more efficient application of what is already known. "Administration" puts a certain faith in technical rules of procedure, assuming that human error and variance can be adjusted to the norm by the application of standard ways of operating.

Foster's definition of administration places it, as a professional practice and as a related scholarly discipline, within the context of a particular human project. To use a term central to this dissertation, that project may be referred to as the attempt to establish "mastery" in human affairs.
In being critical of this aspiration, my point is not to dismiss the importance of establishing an order sufficient to allow the pursuit of educational objectives in what are complex and often turbulent organizations. My point is, however, that this aspiration, by itself, is an insufficient striving for those of us who identify intellectually and more practically with the work of educational administration. To speak metaphorically, while the managerial task of keeping the trains clean and running on time is not trivial, it is also not an aspiration sufficient to define leadership. What matters far more are the ends that such instrumental accomplishments serve. To return to the railway metaphor, trains that run on time can be instruments of good or evil, or can be simply innocuous, depending upon their destinations and whether passengers can choose to be on-board.

As Neil Postman (1996: 7) remarks in his recent book *The End of Education*, the articulation of purposes is essentially a moral and a narrative enterprise through which we give meaning to what we think and to what we do:

> Our genius lies in our capacity to make meaning through the creation of narratives that give point to our labors . . . . The purpose of a narrative is to give meaning to the world . . . . The measure of a narrative's "truth" or "falsity" is in its consequences . . .

Existential confusion and disorientation become pronounced when this narrative process of moral articulation is preempted by the installation of means as ends, or what Christopher Hodgkinson (1983: 43) calls "metavalues":

> A metavalue is a concept of the desirable so vested and entrenched that it seems to be beyond dispute or contention—one that usually enters the ordinary value calculus of individual and collective life in the form of an unexpressed or unexamined assumption. In administration and organizational life the dominant metavalues are efficiency and effectiveness.

When mastery, or its kindred concepts efficiency, effectiveness, and expertise, become unexamined and therefore unquestionable "goods," administration, particularly educational administration, is placed in moral jeopardy and risks intellectual aridity.

The term "mastery" is itself shorthand for the enterprise to mitigate chance by developing a knowledge capable of regulating human affairs. Because it is a concept central to this thesis, it is important to be clear about its usage herein before going further. Joseph Dunne (1993: 366), referencing the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, provides a thoroughgoing definition of mastery that accurately conveys my usage of it:
As human beings we give ourselves to—or find ourselves in—projects through which we shape our environments and our relationships with each other. In the history of this projecting, particularly since the rise of modern science in the seventeenth century, we have moved more and more into a position where, as ‘subject’, we confront a world which is ours to objectify and control. And, increasingly, the substance of our human lives has become part of this objectified world over which we exercise mastery. Our lives are resolved into a series of projects, and all of these projects—all "our wanting and doing," our "making, producing and constructing"—occur within this overall project or ‘frame’ of mastery itself. It is this frame which defines the scope of our ambitions and the meaning of success; our attitudes, our modes of thought, the very questions which are our problems arise already within this framework or else are smoothly, and inexorably, assimilated into it.

Mastery is, then, more than an idea that informs our habits and orients our aspirations. As Dunne begins to suggest, mastery is the fate modern individuals feel destined to fulfil. In a very real sense, it is us.

The subscription to "mastery through prediction over human and non-human nature" leads, as George Grant (1974: 8-10) reminds us, to a peculiar epistemic reduction of human life where "to know about human beings is to know about their behaviour and to be able to predict therefrom." That the peculiarity of this reduction is so seldom remarked upon is evidence of mastery's persuasiveness as an end appropriate for human endeavors, whether they be practical or intellectual. Grant (1986: 16) sees the dramatic development of the applied arts and sciences as a consequence of this promise to regulate the self and its relationships to others:

The new adage of rulers and educators is that to the mastery of non-human nature must now be added mastery of ourselves. The desire for 'mastery of ourselves' (which generally means the mastery of other people) results in the proliferation of new arts and sciences directed towards human control, so that we can be shaped to live consonantly with the demands of mass society.

1969; Hodgkinson, 1982, 1991, 1993, 1996; Holmes, 1986a&b; Kelsey & Long, 1983; Ryan, 1988, 1993; Sergiovanni, 1984; Smith & Blase, 1989; Willower, 1980, 1985, 1988, 1994, 1996; Van Mannen, 1995), results primarily from a continuing attempt to write descriptions of organizational experience exclusively with a vocabulary of control and within the conventions of the grammar associated with it. In the following pages I argue that current images of leadership and organization have, unfortunately and unnecessarily, become too much reflections of the lexicon of "mastery" within which they have, for the most part, been formed and discussed.

Vocabularies, as the previous paragraph suggests, are more than collections of words, and grammars are more than rules for their disposition. As lexical conventions, vocabularies and grammars embody and underwrite worldviews. Given scrutiny, they reveal the fundamental assumptions and aspirations implicit in our talk and formative of our actions. In their preselection of what becomes available for attention and discourse, grammatically organized vocabularies function as epistemic filters. As such, they tacitly prefigure and authenticate a certain picture of self, other, and world and the relationships that obtain among them. By literally making it possible to talk about certain things and difficult or impossible to speak about others, language is an ontological, an epistemic, and an axiological gatekeeper. As Wittgenstein (1974: 329) put it with his usual economy, "grammar is the shadow of possibility cast by language on phenomena."

A shift in vocabulary and grammar is, then, not a minor undertaking. It involves nothing less than a raising to consciousness and a questioning of fundamental assumptions about how we think the world is. Accordingly, the argument that dominant ways of thinking and talking about administration, organization, and knowledge need to be supplemented with—and in some cases replaced by—alternative conceptual constructs pushes against both the way we think things are and the way we think they can and should be. In pursuit of this argument, fundamental issues of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and human purpose are engaged equally. Questions of who we are, what can be known, what we should value, and the ends towards which our knowledge should be applied simultaneously come open for discussion and debate.
Participation in this discussion and debate also requires a consideration of how our assumptions about "the way things are" have come to be. The critical examination of now dominant concepts in educational administration, then, entails an exploration of how and why the quest to reduce complex social phenomena to a set of law-like, value-free statements facilitating predictability and control came to determine the agenda for research and practice in the field. That the ambition to buttress mastery in human affairs is shared alike by most quantitative and by many qualitative researchers in organizational studies suggests we must look further than superficial distinctions of methodology.

To understand the holding power of the quest for mastery in educational administration, we must reconsider the field's aspirations, their origins, and the kinds of knowledge these aspirations have fostered, as well as the kinds of knowledge they have disallowed. Both the kinds of "problems" the field deems worthy of discussion and the kinds of issues pushed to the margins, help us to understand why educational administration has labored within an instrumentalist vocabulary wedded to a grammar of social regulation. In appreciating the tenacity of a vocabulary and grammar that reduce life to obstacles to be mastered, we may also see possibilities for moving beyond epistemic limitations which have, thus far, conditioned and constrained our understanding of organizational life and administrative work.

By following the human experience that is organization (Greenfield, 1993: 75) as it outruns the metaphor of mastery, an alternative set of descriptions for administration, organization, and knowledge may be sketched in outline form. In this sketching, the reflexive and normally tacit relationships between language and perception, between expectation and experience, and between belief and knowledge are necessarily made explicit. As we open prescriptive definitions of knowledge to reconsideration, we begin to see how the grammatically structured vocabularies with which we think and speak condition what we see, what we validate as important, and, ultimately, what we verify as real.

Although the recognition that knowledge is dependent upon our vocabularies may initially appear epistemically vertiginous, the reciprocal relationship between linguistic convention and "truth" makes for a perhaps paradoxical continuity and
conservation. Indeed, Richard Rorty's (1991: 20) post-objectivist, pragmatic claim that the world does not provide us with any criterion of choice between alternative metaphors, that we can only compare languages or metaphors with one another, not with something beyond language called "fact," reminds us that the value of new descriptions can only be assessed pragmatically through comparisons with older ones and an assessment of what each enables us to think and do.

The implications of this interdependent relationship between new insights and established knowledge creates both a tension and an obligation. On one hand, the divergence of emergent and standing renderings of experience provides an impetus to explore what may lie beyond the limits of current vocabularies. On the other, care in these explorations is inspired by the realization that new interpretations must stand upon the shoulders of their antecedents and that neither, per Rorty, is sheltered by an external reality independent of language. James March (1996: 287) suggests how the tension between inquiry and prudence might be balanced in the internally diverse discipline of organizational studies:

The first essence of intellectual history is that things change, that important parts of what is believed today will not be believed tomorrow. The second essence of intellectual history is that there is continuity, that threads of the past are woven into fabrics of the future. History is ephemeral, but the tellers of history and their subjects are not free to elaborate arbitrary fables. They are obliged to tie new interpretations to ones that have gone before. The links may well be contested, but they are a reminder that we seek not only to construct a clever story but also one connecting us to a chain of coherence that began long before us and will continue long after us.

March's words elucidate the double sense of "discipline" as a defined field of inquiry made alive through innovation and challenge, and as a set of constraints that make innovation comprehensible through connection and continuity.

With these considerations in mind, the propositions argued and the research presented in the pages that follow are intended to instigate as well as to connect, to interrupt the pervasive agenda of mastery, and yet to seek continuity with the longstanding attempt to understand the life we lead within organizations. The instigation to rethink administration, organization, and knowledge as well as their interrelationship engages the quest for mastery in a protracted debate by examining its
roots, challenging the sufficiency of its assumptions, and exploring how subscription to it has changed us. What partisanship there may be in this challenge emerges from a simple conviction: that the social world we share should evoke an attitude combining thoughtfulness, wonder, and appreciation rather than attempts to desiccate and control it.

In attempting to move beyond the preoccupation with a mastery that would secure itself through the objectification of organizational life, my intention is to point to sources from which an alternative perspective for the understanding of leadership within educational organizations might emerge. In doing so, I draw upon the thought and work of many others often from disparate fields and different times. Given the multiplicity of voices included, the analogue of "conversation" is apposite to how this dissertation is presented. Conversation plays a primary role not only in how the study is composed, but in how the research that is its empirical core has been conducted, and in its translation of reductive methodology into an open and continuing discourse bounded more by language and its conventions than by objectivity and fact.

One of the prominent voices in this conversation is that of Karl Weick, who, with James March and Herbert Simon, represents what is often most insightful, least typical, and most controversial in the formal discipline of organizational studies. In the introduction to his recently published study of organizational sensemaking, Weick (1995: xii) expresses why he adopted conversation as a metaphor for the research and writing of that book:

I think the metaphor of joining an ongoing conversation, even if that conversation is a little more wordy than usual, is the best voice I can find to preserve some richness and nuance in what I make explicit.

Having neither Weick's expertise nor his experience, I must partially invert the rationale contained in his statement. My often unwitting—although I hope they would not be unwilling—conversational partners are the ones who often make explicit what I find difficult to express. It is their words that crystallize concepts that might otherwise have found neither "sensible" nor sensible form (Huber & Daft, 1987: 154). Their voices not only provide richness, nuance, and tension, they also make possible clarity, meaning, and understanding.
As well as providing permission for the inclusion of many voices, the metaphor of conversation supplies the medium in which I explore the university and its leadership. It is through conversation adapted to the protocol of the long interview (McCracken, 1988) that the experience of presidents participating in the study is made accessible. In these conversations the alternative vocabulary and grammar referred to above are tested in their ability to frame and to articulate worthwhile questions, to evoke the meaning implicit in organizational action, and to facilitate understanding of a unique administrative practice enacted in a distinctive educational setting.

The five presidents, who participated in the conversations that are the primary empirical data for this study, bring a variety of experiences and backgrounds to the presidencies of their particular universities. The sample includes both novice and seasoned academic administrators, individuals well socialized in the norms of academia and one "outsider". The universities in which the presidents serve represent an array of institutional types that range from small, undergraduate, teaching institutions to multi-campus research universities with graduate programs and professional schools of international standing. All of the institutions are Canadian and, therefore, we may expect the information gathered from their presidents both to parallel the experience of senior administrators in modern, Western, English-speaking universities and to manifest a distinctive voice accented by the cultural setting that is Canada.

As well as explicating the conduct of the empirical research for this study, conversation applies more generally as a metaphor for a kind of inquiry that is both invitational and indifferent to attempts to reduce the plenitude of experience to matters of fact. To value conversation in this way is to share the novelist Richard Ford's (1995: 101-2) sympathy towards mystery:

Mystery is the attractive condition a thing (an object, an action, a person) possesses which you know a little about but don't know about completely. It is the twiney promise of unknown things (effects, interworkings, suspicions) which you must be wise enough to explore not too deeply, for fear you will dead-end in nothing but facts.

Although the conversational virtues of difference, openness, accent, and engagement frustrate the comforts of certainty promised by more reductive methodological schemes,
they are not inimical to inquiry. Indeed, as Ford (1995: 199) admits in qualification of his remarks immediately above, the best and the truly memorable conversations have a way of affirming that mystery and inquiry can sit, albeit delicately, together:

A certain kind of mystery requires investigation so that a better, more complicated mystery can open up like an exotic flower. Many mysteries are not that easy to wreck and will stand some basic inquiry.

Ford's sense that at least certain mysteries solicit and can withstand inquiry suggests that wisdom may lie in allowing the difference that enlivens good conversation to freely contest the forced deference characteristic of positivist and neo-positivist epistemologies, and moralistic prescriptions.

As the philosopher Michael Oakeshott has argued (1962: 197-199), the "conversation of mankind" is, in and through its essential openness, constitutive of a knowledge distinct from the supposed certainties rendered in the reductive monotone that too often is "the voice of 'science'" or in the unyielding injunctions of an obdurate moralism:

In conversation, 'facts' appear only to be resolved once more into the possibilities from which they were made; 'certainties' are shown to be combustible, not by being brought in contact with other 'certainties' or with doubts, but by being kindled by the presence of ideas of another order; approximations are revealed between notions normally remote from one another . . . . Conversation is not an enterprise designed to yield an extrinsic profit, a contest where a winner gets a prize, nor is it an activity of exegesis; it is an unrehearsed intellectual adventure . . . . Properly speaking, it is impossible in the absence of a diversity of voices: in it different universes of discourse meet, acknowledge each other and enjoy an oblique relationship which neither requires nor forecasts their being assimilated to one another.

Rorty (1980: 389), himself a reader of Oakeshott, underscores the merit of substituting conversation for more reductive methodologies with his encouragement to see "conversation as the ultimate context within which knowledge is to be understood."

Contrary to the innumerable philosophical enterprises that would either regulate or silence conversation, Rorty (1980: 394; emphasis added) insists that the "philosophers' moral concern should be with continuing the conversation of the West."

To propose new and improved constraints upon this conversation would be, as W. Edwards Deming (1994: 1), the noted American organizational pragmatist, was
fond of saying, to "only dig deeper the pit that we are in." By staying such scientific and philosophical diggings, we may avoid "the road to dogmatism" which Paul Feyerabend equates with the specious attempt "to come up with a set of standards that are fixed and permanent and that presumably have some transhistorical or transcendental status" (Bernstein, 1988: 66). Abandoning the project to prop up methodological constraints upon inquiry, we may enter, however tentatively, a discursive space in which educational administration may be fundamentally redefined as a human discipline actualized through a continuing, underdetermined, and open conversation about the work of educational leadership and its organizational settings.

In summary, to loosen the hold of mastery upon our ways of knowing, we must learn to talk about administration and organization in a manner that validates rather than circumvents or suppresses the existential ambiguities, the diversity of experiences, and the irreducible richness presented by each. In doing so, we must redefine knowledge so that it is not identified solely with certainty and the systematic reduction of experience to fact. To speak metaphorically, we must begin to see that there are more important tasks than trying to "tie up water in parcels" or attempting "to shut the wind in a box" (Watts, 1951: 55).

To say with Wittgenstein (1980: 7e) that,

I am not interested in constructing a building, so much as in having a perspicuous view of the foundations of possible buildings.

So I am not aiming at the same target as the scientists and my way of thinking is different from theirs.

is to ask the reader to partake in a conversation that may not always be conducted within the usual grammar of either science or, as Wittgenstein's work itself illustrates, philosophy. It is to ask the reader's patience, attention, and engagement as we consider anew what we mean and what we can mean when we speak of administration, organization, and knowledge.

Endnotes for Introduction

1. Lest this language sound too otherworldly, it is worth noting the long-time organizational theorist Henry Mintzberg's (1994) inscription to his somewhat iconoclastic book *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*:
Not to our fantasies
—may they mostly fall
as fast as they rise—
but to the wonders of reality

Mintzberg’s inscription has the "Zenish" advantage of tempering excesses of the imagination in favor of the reality in which we are all immersed, but which we seldom see or appreciate. I think Mintzberg would share the attitude of many religious teachers and too few of his fellow students of organization in urging that the first thing we must do—before we "fix" anything—is to wake up to the wonder of where we are.

2. Perhaps no contemporary writer more than William S. Burroughs has been so concerned with and so adept at rendering the modernist obsession with control and the fate to which it must lead. In a recent Harper’s article in which he reminds us of the danger Burroughs once posed to "the establishment" that has now coopted his image (e.g., Nike commercials, Christmas specials), Vince Passaro (1998: 74; emphasis in original) quotes from Mary McCarthy’s early and controversial valuation of Burroughs work in which she perceptively ranked him and his book Naked Lunch with the Nabakov of Pale Fire and Lolita "as the most interesting authors and books she had encountered in some time": "Control, as Burroughs says, underlining it, can never be a means to anything but more control—"

3. Many of the quotations included in this dissertation are also intended to fulfil a function that Walter Benjamin captures in his letters, from which Hannah Arendt quotes in her introduction to his perspicacious if sometimes cryptic book of essays, Illuminations (Benjamin, 1985: 38): "Quotations in my works are like robbers by the roadside who make an armed attack and relieve an idler of his convictions."

4. In the thirteenth chapter of her book Policy Paradox and Political Reason, Deborah A. Stone (1988: 263) reproduces a cartoon from the New Yorker to remind us of the protean character of "facts." The cartoon outlines a file cabinet in which the drawers are labelled: "OUR FACTS," "THEIR FACTS," "NEUTRAL FACTS," "DISPUTABLE FACTS," "ABSOLUTE FACTS," "BARE FACTS," "UNSUBSTANTIATED FACTS," "INDISPUTABLE FACTS," "DEMONSTRABLE FACTS," "UNDEMONSTRABLE FACTS." The file cabinet is partially cut away to suggest that the variety of "facts" it holds is limitless. Stone (1988: 256), in this same chapter which is titled "Facts," goes on to underscore a point that is too often disregarded in the quest for objectivity: All information is created from a point of view by real people with personal and institutional loyalties, cultural and social backgrounds, and enduring as well as more temporary interests. Every piece of information transmitted in society (a somewhat misleading metaphor) represents numerous influences on the transmitter as well as conscious and unconscious attempts to influence the receiver. That all information, without exception, is purposively created by people whose interests are shaped by cultural contexts is an assumption that distinguishes the hermeneutic perspective from the assumption implicit in objectivist forms of inquiry that such interests can be methodologically suspended.
5. Watts, the popular expositor of Oriental philosophies, is here commending a cultural way of looking at things that may at first seem paradoxical to more achievement-minded Occidentals. Watts, invoking an Eastern perspective, alerts us to the possibility that our every-day priorities and projects may be neither universally venerated nor accomplishable. Seeking to persuade us of the inanity of much of what we attempt to do as policy makers, administrators, educators, "scientists," and human beings, Watts effects an inversion similar to that rendered poetically by Lao-Tzu when the latter reminds us, in the eleventh chapter of the Tao Tê Ching and in typical Taoist fashion, of the nothingness or emptiness that lies at the center of our earnest purposefulness and the pride we take in our accomplishments:

We put thirty spokes together and call it a wheel;  
But it is on the space where there is nothing that the usefulness of the wheel depends.  
We turn clay to make a vessel;  
But it is on the space where there is nothing that the usefulness of the vessel depends.  
Therefore just as we take advantage of what is, we should recognize the usefulness of what is not. (Waley, 1982: 155)

Taoist thought supplies cogent, if ancient, counterpoint to the interventionist and instrumentalist ethos characteristic of the West. Taoism, in its resolute suspicion of attempts to perfect either the social or the natural world, distinguishes itself from the ethos characteristic the administrative profession and the predispositions typical of the administrative temperament.

But skepticism about acting self-consciously on behalf of the good is not confined to the East, as we can see from Thoreau's (1962/1854: 54) reflections in Walden:

As for Doing-good, that is one of the professions which are full.  
Moreover, I have tried it fairly, and, strange as it may seem, am satisfied that it does not agree with my constitution. Probably I should not consciously and deliberately forsake my particular calling to do the good which society demands of me, to save the universe from annihilation; and I believe that a like but infinitely greater steadfastness elsewhere is all that now preserves it.  
Thoreau (1962/1854: 55) goes on to make the point that in the case of the good, it is no better to receive than to give:

If I knew for a certainty that a man was coming to my house with the conscious design of doing me good, I should run for my life, as from that dry and parching wind of the African deserts called the simoon, which fills the mouth and nose and ears and eyes with dust till you are suffocated, for fear that I should get some of his good done to me,—some of its virus mingled with my blood.

6. Richard Rorty offers a helpful gloss on Wittgenstein's preceding statement from Culture and Value that prevents it being read literally as a recommendation to rebuild and thereby bolster the "foundations" of what we may call the "Cartesian knowledge project." Rorty's comment provides the reading that I think Wittgenstein, certainly the
Wittgenstein who emerged from the writing of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Wittgenstein, 1961), desired it to have. Contrary to advocating a search for better epistemic nets with which we might entrap experience in habitual patterns, Wittgenstein was simply suggesting that we need to look differently at things. As Rorty (1989: 6), addressing his own work, puts it:

> My essays should be read as examples of what a group of contemporary Italian philosophers [Gianni Vattimo and Pier Aldo Rovatri, eds., *Il pensiero debole* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1983)] have called "weak thought"—philosophical reflection which does not attempt a radical criticism of contemporary culture, does not attempt to refound or remotivate it, but simply assembles reminders and suggests some interesting possibilities.

In his self-designation as an author of "weak thought," Rorty, through understatement, at least in the eyes of some, locates himself outside philosophy understood as the quest for a binding system to which experience may be methodologically reduced. Rorty's "interesting possibilities"—possibilities that surface from his ingenious melding of Nietzsche's hermeneutic perspectivism with the fallibilist, post-objectivist pragmatism emblematic of Willard Van Orman Quine (1960, 1969, 1976, 1981, 1987, 1990), Wilfrid Sellars (1949, 1963, 1969, 1980, 1997), and Donald Davidson (1975, 1980, 1986)—are analogues for the "foundations of possible buildings" that Wittgenstein would glimpse through the windows his philosophy is intended to open.
Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

Chapter 1
Conceptual Focus and Empirical Approach: A Neo-Pragmatic Moral Perspective

But as the sciences have developed farther the notion has gained ground that most, perhaps all, of our laws are only approximations. The laws themselves, moreover, have grown so numerous that there is no counting them; and so many rival formulations are proposed in all the branches of science that investigators have become accustomed to the notion that no theory is absolutely a transcript of reality, but that any one of them may from some point of view be useful. Their great use is to summarize old facts and to lead to new ones. They are only a man-made language, a conceptual shorthand, as some one calls them, in which we write our reports of nature; and languages, as is well known, tolerate much choice of expression and many dialects.

—William James, Pragmatism (1974/1907: 48-9)

My concern in organization theory is that we are restricting one another’s thinking by insisting on searching for universal truths that fit within a framework that is narrower than the reality it is trying to represent.

We have been caught in a trap that requires us, in the name of theory to hold a single image up to reality and test whether it is true—or at least whether it is a ‘better’ and more accurate representation of reality than any other image . . . . Instead, we must recognize social and organizational theories as expressions of ideology and as moral judgements about the world . . . . In judging theories, as we would no doubt continue to do, we would therefore recognize that we were involved in a truth-making and essentially moral task within a disciplined process of enquiry into social reality.


Theory, Language, and Knowledge

William James and Thomas B. Greenfield, writing seventy years apart, present complimentary positions central to this thesis. The points they raise have also become central to a continuing and, for some, an irksome debate about fundamental epistemic
issues in educational administration. Both writers challenge monistic and reductive definitions of truth and both prod their readers to reconsider the nature of human knowledge as it is articulated in the making of theory. Each presses us to examine the practical implications of how we understand knowledge and how we define truth. James, the professional philosopher and avowed pragmatist, outlines a straightforward argument for theory pluralism. Greenfield, the scholar of educational administration, develops the axiological implications of James's endorsement of epistemic difference. The emphasis Greenfield places upon the moral is an outgrowth of his assertion that theory is the medium in which particular truths are purposefully made rather than the means through which a universal truth is objectively disclosed.

By arguing that the making and the adjudicating of theory are essentially moral acts, Greenfield preempts the reduction of pragmatism's emphasis upon consequence to the simple dictates of usefulness. In gainsaying a utilitarian reading of James, Greenfield points beyond an epistemic eclecticism based exclusively upon calculations of effectiveness. His claim that the making of knowledge has as much to do with axiology as with epistemology is based on his observation that theories are social artifacts constructed by individuals whose worldviews are unavoidably infused with values.

In stating that all organizational theory is shaped by ideology and moral judgement, Greenfield reminds us that theory must reflect the diverse presuppositions, sentiments, and beliefs of its makers. That theory inevitably will be as diverse as the perspectives of those who make it problematizes a cardinal assumption that has structured the relationship between researcher and practitioner in educational administration. Greenfield's (1993: 89) contention that "we must understand organizations as containing multiple meanings" and its corollary that "we must abandon the search for a single best image of them" undermines the view that administrators are engaged in the technical craft of applying a unitary, uncontested knowledge that has been objectively secured by researchers and scholars. Through problematizing the relationship between knowledge and organization, Greenfield recasts the customary relationship between theorist and practitioner. His view that we must "abandon the attempt to construct a value-free theory of social reality" (Greenfield, 1993: 89) implies
that scholars and administrators must become partners in a moral enterprise that
cannot be superseded by matters-of-fact or through uncritical deference to research.

Taken together, the views of James and Greenfield form a provocative challenge
to the assumptions which underlie generally shared understandings of knowledge and
truth. Within the disciplinary boundaries of educational administration, the contention
that truth is inherently multifarious, value-laden, and ideological has inspired vigorous if
inconvenient debates about the nature of research, practice, and "training." By looking
more closely at the quotation about the contingency of theories from Pragmatism,
which opens this chapter, and at some of its more contemporary parallels, we can see
why the theory pluralism, which James commends and which Greenfield elaborates,
challenges so much that is presumed in both the formulation of organizational theory
and in the work of administration in educational settings.

James's advocacy of epistemic pluralism calls for a rethinking of what is meant
by the word "knowledge" itself. His seemingly modest proposal removes the idea of
knowledge from a fact-based certainty established through the commensuration of
theory with an objective reality made accessible through methods of inquiry untainted
by individual predilection. By reminding his readers that theories are numerous and
that each "from some point of view may be useful," James invites a reconsideration of
how the knowledge that finds form in theory may be evaluated. A theory's value, he
suggests, depends upon its pragmatic usefulness, which, in turn, depends upon the
task at hand. But there is something more fundamental in James's epistemic pluralism
than the notion that diverse tasks warrant the coexistence of diverse theories. It is not
simply the coexistence of multiple and differing purposes that results in his pluralistic
approach to knowledge. On the contrary, James's theory pluralism is more
fundamentally grounded in the conundrum that even our best possible theories are
unable to tell us finally what is the case.

In stating "that most, perhaps all, of our laws are only approximations" and that
"no theory is absolutely a transcript of reality," James presages Richard Rorty's (1980)
contemporary pragmatic caution that we err when we understand laws and theories as
epistemically privileged constructs capable of accurately mirroring an objective world.
In stating that theories "are only a man-made language, a conceptual shorthand . . . in
which we write our reports of nature," James seeds much that is elaborated in Rorty’s more current thinking. We may see this legacy when Rorty (1989: 6) remarks with characteristically pointed wit:

the fact that Newton’s vocabulary lets us predict the world more easily than Aristotle’s does not mean that the world speaks Newtonian. The world does not speak. Only we do.

This argument that theory is a human construct spoken in a thoroughly human voice underwrites Rorty’s contention that theories are best viewed as tentative linguistic fabrications necessarily formulated within the conceptual horizons of their makers. Theories, then, for James and for Rorty, partake in all of the advantages and escape none of the limitations characteristic of every human use of language.

James extends the implications of the parallelism between theory and language in the quotation's final sentence in which he remarks that both "tolerate much choice of expression and many dialects." In suggesting that variation in theory as in language may be regarded as a virtue, James again anticipates a theme that Rorty would radicalize: that we should value and encourage conceptual diversity rather than regard it as a sign of epistemic weakness. In advocating a culture that can be "poeticized" rather than "rationalized" or "scientized," Rorty (1989: 53-4) underscores James’s argument for diversity in the form of a sweeping and unconventional recommendation:

A poeticized culture would be one which would not insist that we find the real wall behind the painted ones, the real touchstones of truth as opposed to touchstones which are merely cultural artifacts. It would be a culture which, precisely by appreciating that all touchstones are such artifacts, would take as its goal the creation of ever more various and multicolored artifacts. (Rorty, 1989: 53-4; emphasis in original)

Jettisoning the assumption that theory is a neutral medium through which a singular external reality may be objectively and finally disclosed, Rorty, like James, would have us regard theory as a form of discourse enriched and vivified through difference. Reversing the understanding of knowledge-making as a progressive movement towards a unitary definition of what is true and therefore real, Rorty takes us one step beyond James in his counsel that the ideal end point of theory is variation not unanimity.
Rorty, accordingly, would agree with Paul Feyerabend's (1975) observation that theory, like all language, is fluid and tends to proliferate and to diversify rather than to reduce and to converge. The protean nature of theory, which at times may be masked by the binding power of prevalent orthodoxies, becomes especially evident with historical shifts in cultural presuppositions. Such shifts, which signal the emergence of unfamiliar conceptual perspectives, are often accompanied by dramatic changes in sign systems and their meanings. With these epochal transitions, assumptions are recast, "givens" are opened to question, vocabularies are changed, and experience is made subject to reinterpretation. As the history of ideas witnesses, new forms of science, literature, religion, music, and visual arts are the signifiers of deeper changes in our assumptions about world and self. As fundamental assumptions about reality and human purpose grounded in encompassing and formative metaphors (Pepper, 1984/1942) change, so too does the content of our experience and our methods of reporting it.

But James does not confine theory diversity to the historic transitions or Kuhnian (1970) revolutions that make it most visible. On the contrary, he pushes us to see epistemic diversity and conceptual difference within the cultural and historical moments we share. In his remarks about the proliferation of scientific laws and formulations, James notes that coexistent but divergent assumptions generate contemporaneous and often unappeasable differences. This difference negates the pretension that experience is uniform or universal within a common temporal and cultural period however narrowly it may be defined. We need only look closely to see that what from a distance appears continuous and characteristic is belied by differentiation and multiplicity. Stated in terms of everyday experience, there is no guarantee that the passengers who brushed shoulders in the bus shelter this morning inhabit substantially similar existential "worlds." Or, as Greenfield (1980: 28) puts it, referencing an anecdote that draws upon an epistemically telling pun,

Observing two women standing at windows atop their ancient houses and seeing them shout at each other across the narrow street that separated them, Sydney Smith, the eighteenth-century English essayist, is said to have commented: "These women will never agree; they are arguing from different premises."
Coexistent but differing premises, then, indelibly and at times quarrelsomely mark the engagements of individuals who build perception and perspective from different conceptual foundations. This is only to admit that, like other forms of discourse, theories are conditioned by the premises of their authors. As intentionally composed narratives, theories are, at least in part, self-reflexive. In addition to addressing their nominal subject, theories convey much about the intellectual predilections, value orientations, and conceptual premises of those who make them. As James, Rorty, and Greenfield avow, whenever we render the world through theory we necessarily speak transparently. In the process of theory-making we confess, often unselfconsciously and in narrative form, the ideas, values, and beliefs that condition how we understand, internalize, and articulate experience.

The story that a given theory tells about the world that surrounds us and of which we are a part, however, embodies more than a collection of idiosyncratic perspectives. The ideas, values, and beliefs indirectly made visible through the formulation of theory represent a melding of individual predilections with inherited cultural forms. The expressions which theory makes possible as well as the rules which govern its adjudication are indicative of both the persons of individuals and their cultural contexts, which include preexistent epistemic traditions articulated within collectively established conceptual limits (Shils, 1981). In the making of theory, the nomothetic dimension of culturally established permissions, proscriptions, and methods imposes upon the idiographic dimension of personal insight. The imposition of cultural form upon individual idea is perhaps nowhere more unnoticed, but nowhere more significantly actualized, than in the language system through which idea is given narrative expression. The intimate relationship between idea and its expressive medium give sense to Wittgenstein's claim that the limits of our language are the limits of our knowledge and, ultimately, the limits of ourselves.

To better see the epistemically and existentially formative role played by language-embedded cultural predispositions, we can look briefly at the interrelationship between one aspect of language and a signal element of the epistemological perspective associated with Occidental thought. By focusing on the "subject-verb-object" relationship, we may see how a primary lexical convention of the Latinate
languages helps form the particular and, perhaps, peculiar epistemic position which has become characteristic of Western culture. Theory-making, understood as the systematic investigations of a self ontologically removed from, but able to act upon, the phenomena it seeks to comprehend, is a simulacrum of the grammatically normalized "subject-verb-object" structure. This structure, which prefigures the depiction of agency as the property of conscious and isolated subjects separated from but acting serially upon other individuals, objects, and environments, is directly reflected in the Cartesian philosophical constructs that are continuous with the emergence of modern Western thought. The very privilege that theory enjoys in our culture may itself be regarded as a vestige of Descartes' location of certainty in the solitary "I" which thinks and thereby gains surety of its existence and purchase upon that which surrounds it. Once the isolated subject, at an existential remove from its language-mediated environment, is established, all else that the Occidental tradition presupposes as given, self-evident, and synonymous with reality follows.

Nietzsche (1967/1887: 455; emphasis in original) understood well that many of the ontological dichotomies, putative certainties, and epistemic assumptions that ramify throughout the West's enactment of modernism result from allowing "our grammatical habits" to dictate what is regarded as real:

"There is thinking; consequently there is that which thinks"—that is what Descartes' argument comes to. Yet this means positing our faith in the concept of substance as "a priori true." When there is thinking, something must be there which thinks—that is merely a formulation of our grammatical habit, which posits a doer for what is done . . .

As Descartes was seduced into restating grammar in the guise of metaphysics, his inauguration of the modern epistemic project condemned it to reiterate arbitrary and perhaps misleading grammatical conventions. The consequent quest of the self for certain knowledge of a substantial world external to it are but extended footnotes to this philosophical reification of grammar. Like all metaphysical projects, Descartes' claims to a higher and regulating set of concepts can only be read in retrospect as a tautological recapitulation of grammatical conventions. The conclusions to which his ideas lead are thus foretold in the medium of their telling.
This illustration suggests that the grammatically structured subject-verb-object relationship and the image of an inquiring and somewhat anxious self, separated from the world it would predict and control through systematic manipulation, are formatively intertwined. At a more abstract level, this illustration points to how the means of articulating knowledge may predetermine the knowledge that is expressed. Per Noam Chomsky’s (1988, 1993) linguistic speculations, it suggests that the deep structures evident in language may shape experience as much as they shape its articulation. The experiences of person, agency, action, relationship, time, and space are implicit in the structures of the language in which they are framed. To borrow from Rorty’s metaphorical extension of knowledge-making as conversation, our languages supply the words and constructions with and within which these conversations are made. They are the cultural storehouses that condition and impose upon the sorts of conversations we may have.

Marshall McLuhan extends this argument a step further in his apothegm “the medium is the message” (McLuhan, 1964; emphasis added) and its later iteration, “the medium is the massage” (McLuhan, 1967; emphasis added). McLuhan’s gnomic statements suggests that the medium may not only massage and shape content, but that it may become the content by superseding the message it would convey. That is, in a reversal of ordinary habit, the message may be read as a transparency which gives expression to the conventions or deep structures of the medium that is normally regarded as its neutral carrier. In addition to making possible and constraining the messages that would be expressed, these conventions announce and confirm themselves subtly and recursively in our exchanges of information and in our formulation and verification of theory.

The formative and occasionally conflicted relationship between preexistent medium and the novelty of message suggested by Nietzsche, Chomsky, and McLuhan is recapitulated in the epistemological tension between established and emergent forms of knowledge. In the making of "new" knowledge through the articulation of insight in established forms, we necessarily ignore, at least to some extent, the biblical admonitions against sewing unshrunk cloth to old garments or putting new wines into old wineskins (Mk 2:21-22; Mt 9:16-17; Lk 5:36-39). The predetermining conventions
of language, which legitimate certain forms of discourse while devaluing, if notexcluding, others, therefore exist in tension with those insights that, sitting uneasily within established expressive vocabularies, tear at their grammatical fabric. And although James's remark that languages "tolerate much choice of expression and many dialects" is resonant, Thomas Kuhn (1970) has demonstrated amply that when the criteria for establishing and legitimating knowledge are at stake, this toleration, even within the scientific community, is often won only at great price. Similarly, the paradigmatic cases of Bruno⁴ and Galileo⁵ reveal that those who bring facts made culturally inconvenient by their failure to fit within existing vocabularies, grammars, and systems are often made most unwelcome.

The vehemence that attends current methodological rifts in the social sciences emphasizes the epistemic tension engendered by James's pluralist position and Greenfield's axiological extension of it. Within a tradition of monistic theory development that views itself as systematically and objectively excluding errant formulations in a progressively self-correcting and convergent approach to truth (Popper, 1959), it is understandable that a recognition of epistemic pluralism and the inexorable influence of values can appear distressing and problematic. If knowledge does not reduce to a set of ideas that conform to a knowable, objective world, accepted notions of certainty, progress, and veracity are put in jeopardy. Similarly, forms of inquiry modeled on value-free investigation are disturbed by the reintroduction of the axiological and ideological considerations whose marginalization or elimination had been thought accomplished with the ascendancy of the scientific method.

The tension between established and emergent forms of knowledge, increasingly being made manifest in educational administration, marks the beginning point for the present study. The debate that T. B. Greenfield (1975) initiated in his still controversial 1974 International Intervisitation Program address opened the epistemological presuppositions of a "scientized" administrative theory and practice to critical scrutiny. As the issues raised by Greenfield now almost three decades ago refuse to go away, those engaged in educational administration are forced to reconsider the sufficiency of dominant forms of inquiry and practice. Particularly, a continuing critique of the assumptions that had privileged science as the ideal type of
critical investigation has demanded a reconsideration of the kinds of knowledge that are appropriate to the field and possible within it.

And while, as the dates of both James's and Greenfield's remarks attest, the critique of a reductive epistemic monism is not new, its deepening momentum and increasing reach has an especially marked impact upon the social disciplines that would assuage the existential anxieties of the Cartesian modernist self through establishing order, prediction, and control in human affairs. Within educational administration, the full implications of Greenfield's untiring assertion that knowledge about the regulation of social organizations has pronounced moral consequences and bears a marked ideological imprint are only beginning to be felt. It has taken close to thirty years for those engaged in educational administration to see that the prolonged attempt to circumvent these considerations has needlessly constricted the knowledge base and impoverished the kinds of conversation essential to the development of a field rooted in the intricacies of human interaction and the diversity of human aspiration.

In questioning the sufficiency of inquiry modeled on the scientific method, students of educational administration are led to consider the plausibility and the potential usefulness of alternative epistemic approaches to research, practice, and training. Although established traditions problematize these approaches in ways both subtle and overt, new ways of understanding organizations and administration push for articulation. As Glenn Immegart (1988: 269) remarks in his extensive review of research into educational leadership:

All in all, normal scientific inquiry may have contributed to oversimplification of the notion of leadership and, in so doing, may have limited advances in what is known about it. If this is the case, there is a need to consider other approaches to collecting and analyzing data about leadership and leader behavior as well as other sources of data and even broader perspectives on what should be investigated.

The conceptual orientation and the research design of the present study attempt to articulate rudiments of one such alternative perspective. The ideas engaged are intended to contribute to the epistemic reevaluation now taking place within the irreducibly human discipline of educational administration. They, to paraphrase James,
would provide elements of an alternative conceptual shorthand with which we may write our reports of administration in educational settings.

**Focus and Conceptual Orientation of the Study**

*Focus: Higher Education Leadership, Administration, Organization, and Knowledge*

This study addresses the topic of leadership in higher education by focusing upon the professional experience of five Canadian university presidents. The information that forms the empirical core of the study was collected through the medium of the long interview, a questionnaire addressing the issues of organization and leadership, and textual materials in the form of speeches or writings by the five presidents in the sample. Counterpoint to this more immediate level of inquiry is supplied by opening the concepts of administration, organization, and knowledge to reconsideration. While the empirical focus is upon the information supplied by the presidents participating in the study, the conceptual focus emerges from a reassessment of terms whose significance, I argue, has been unhelpfully attenuated by commonplace usage.

To use painterly terms, the empirical foreground of the study consists of an exploration of how the presidents included in the sample have come to understand their work and the institutions within which that work is undertaken. The conceptual background concerns the more abstract issues of the nature of administrative practice, its organizational context, and how we may generate knowledge about each. As in a painting, the foreground and background exist in a complementary tension. Each is integral to the configuration of the other, but each also possesses an autonomous and distinctive content. In developing the two aspects of inquiry, the intention is to facilitate each in reciprocally enhancing a more complete understanding of its complement. To conclude the analogy to the visual arts, the particular work that is this dissertation begins with a painting-in of the conceptual background against which the figures of the five presidents can assume distinctiveness, meaning, and significance.
Conceptual Orientation: From Reductionism to Hermeneutics—The Case of Science

As its title notes, this thesis would advance "alternative" treatments of what have become traditional subjects of inquiry in educational administration. The use of alternative is not intended to beg the question, "Alternative to what?" The "what" in this case is the repertoire of reductive approaches for generating knowledge about leadership and organization in educational settings. The reductive approaches characteristic of systematic philosophy in general and metaphysics in particular are reviewed in detail in the third chapter of this dissertation. There we shall undertake an extended examination of the exemplary arguments, presented by Alisdair MacIntyre in his book After Virtue, for a normative moral standard sufficient to determine human choice. The remainder of this section and much of the second chapter focus upon the reductive methods characteristic of scientific thinking. The intent of what follows is not to nullify the scientific perspective, but to recognize that its persuasiveness needs tempering and that its limitations warrant compensation.

Within the scientific framework, reductivist approaches to educational administration presume that organizations and the people within them function predictably in accordance with objective and isolable variables. Typically such scientific investigations conclude by formulaically arranging discovered variables into cause and effect patterns that "explain" observed phenomena. The generalization from these patterns to law-like constructs presumes that similar causal networks exist in settings considered comparable to the situation researched. There is an implicit promise that alteration of these corresponding networks in the prescribed manner will permit us to induce predetermined behavioral and organizational change. We are coaxed to accept the conceit that we may alter the behaviors of individuals and the settings in which these behaviors are actualized in order to bring about desired actions, conditions, and outcomes. Further, it is presumed that scientific investigations provide the causative knowledge that will allow experts, planners, and policy-makers to predictably export change from one educational setting to another.

That this causally reductive "scientific" methodology has become and remains the dominant framework for conducting research and governing practice within educational administration is regarded herein as a given. Its historical predominance
and continuing preeminence can be verified by even a cursory review of the field's primary research journals and publications. Jack Culbertson (1988; 24; emphasis in original), underscoring the field's dependence upon scientific modes of inquiry, makes the following observation of educational administration's now one hundred year long "quest for a knowledge base":

After a century's pursuit of knowledge, scholars of educational administration still look to science, with its multifaceted and changing definitions, for a legitimating cloak, facilitator of inquiry, and a tool to be used in the continuing quest for knowledge about the ends, means, and settings of a very complex social process.

Perhaps paradoxically, the adoption of the scientific perspective and its methodology has resulted in both the development of educational administration as a distinctive field and to what many take to be its current crisis.

Nevertheless, the quest for disciplinary legitimacy in educational administration, which has largely been tied to the promised delivery of predictable educational change, has led to a perhaps inevitable fascination with the seeming efficacy of science. The belief that science offers the best means for rendering organizational intercourse knowable—and, therefore, subject to administrative intention—was first made conspicuous with the advent of the avowedly positivistic Theory Movement in the 1950s (see Culbertson, 1988; Evers & Lakomski, 1991; Chapt. 3; Greenfield, 1986; Willower, 1994). The Theory Movement's idealization of value-free inquiry emphasized commensurability between theory and an objectively knowable social reality, and the utility of the hypothetico-deductive model for disciplining and testing speculation. The naive empiricism that drove the quest for commensuration received perhaps its starkest modern statement in the positivism of the Vienna Circle, while the hypothetico-deductive method was elaborated in the work of Herbert Feigl (1974). The positivist attempt to locate certainty in the facts of sense-data and Feigl's emphasis upon the logic of theory building were viewed as complementary entrance points for the development of objective law-like generalizations that would make the prediction and control of educational organizations an attainable goal (Griffiths, 1964; Halpin, 1958).

The modelling of inquiry in accordance with the logic elaborated by the Vienna Circle and the epistemic strictures advocated by Feigl offered the hope that educational
administration could attain the rigor, the prestige, and the legitimacy of the human
disciplines that had previously redefined themselves as social sciences. Daniel
Griffiths's (1959: 45) statement in Administrative Theory makes clear there was little
doubt about how educational administration was to be rescued from the limitations of
practitioner anecdotalism that had thus far denied it academic approbation:

administration must assume the characteristics of a science. Inquiry in
administration must come to be characterized by objectivity, reliability,
operational definitions, coherence or systematic structure, and
comprehensiveness.

Although the Theory Movement may in the end have been more informed by the
spirit than by the letter of either orthodox or heterodox positivism (Griffiths, 1983), its
desire to secure administrative practice through deference to empirical fact has had a
lasting impact upon the field. Writing about the adoption of the scientific mantle by the
human disciplines in general, Charles Taylor (1979: 29) captures the epistemic ethos
that educational administration, through the Theory Movement, came to share:

The attempt is to reconstruct knowledge in such a way that there is no
need to make final appeal to readings or judgements which cannot be
checked further. That is why the basic building block of knowledge on
this view is the impression, or sense-datum, a unit of information which is
not the deliverance of a judgment, which has by definition no element in it
of reading or interpretation, which is brute datum. The highest ambition
would be to build our knowledge from such building blocks by judgments
which could be anchored in a certainty beyond subjective intuition.

By setting out to transcend subjective intuition, the study and practice of administration
in educational settings hoped to exchange a discounted anecdotalism for a generally
prized scientific "objectivity." And although formal philosophical positivism has since
been largely abandoned, the empiricist motivation to supersede interpretation and the
subjectivist workings of the self has, in educational administration, survived its erstwhile
philosophical host.7

In spite of vigorous debate among students of educational administration about
its sufficiency (Bates, 1983; Greenfield, 1986, 1993; Gronn, 1983a; Holmes, 1986b;
Hodgkinson, 1991), the scientific approach has continued to guide the field's research
and practice. The most recent restatement of this methodological devotion may be
found in the post-positivist "coherence theory" advocated by the Australian scholars
Colin Evers and Gabriele Lakomski (1991). While it comes forty years after the advent of the Theory Movement, Evers's and Lakomski's (1991: 5) promise of "a new science of administration" free of positivist failings deviates little from the field's commitment to scientific reductionism. In a field that has always harbored the desire that administration "could become less of an art and more of a science" (Hoy & Miskel, 1987: iii), it is hardly surprising to encounter the following coherentist epistemic confession of faith:

Our position is a species of scientific realism that is thoroughly naturalistic, favouring reduction (in principle) to the physical as a methodological constraint on good explanation . . . . Our scientific realism . . . is uncompromisingly naturalistic or physicalistic, even for properties. More specifically, from the writings of W.V. Quine we have been persuaded of the merits of coherentism over foundationalism, physicalism over mentalism, desert landscapes over lush domains of being and, in methodology, of eschewing meaning as an explanatory category. (Evers and Lakomski, 1991: ix; emphasis added)

But human life, for the most part, is not lived in an epistemic desert. Rather, it is lived in the "lush domains" of complex interaction which become human through the impress of meaning. To pretend otherwise is to invite the lament phrased simply by T. S. Eliot (1963: 208) in "The Dry Salvages,": "We had the experience but missed the meaning." When the world is reduced to our causative abstractions of it, we are left with a sense of estrangement and ontological displacement. The hard-nosed, scientific pursuit of reductive, physicalist knowledge that would escape the taint of meaning inevitably leads to the knowledge-bound alienation aptly described by the American novelist and insightful philosophical dabbler Walker Percy (1984: 17):

Every advance in an objective understanding of the Cosmos and in its technological control further distances the self from the Cosmos precisely in the degree of the advance—so that in the end the self becomes a space-bound ghost which roams the very Cosmos it understands perfectly.

To mend the estrangement of self from world we must first reframe and broaden our understanding of what may constitute knowledge. Incorporation, rather than the extirpation, of the nonreductive, "mentalistic" elements that give purpose to human interaction provides a remedy for the scientific dulling of existential significance. In any case, as Donald Polkinghorne (1988: 9) notes, the quest for meaning precedes the
human desire to know and is particularly apposite to experiential approaches to social phenomena like leadership:

research into meaning is the most basic of all inquiry. Husserl has pointed out that the whole scientific enterprise is grounded ultimately in the perceptual and meaning-making operations of human consciousness. The understanding of our existence and action requires a knowledge of the structures that produce the experienced or lived realm from which we direct our actions and expressions. The study of the realm of meaning precedes an understanding of the manner in which human beings create knowledge, and thus informs the operations of science itself. The study of the making of meaning is particularly central to the disciplines concerned with explaining human experience.

The redemptive logic of Eliot’s (1963: 208) “The Dry Salvages" tells the seemingly obvious truth that the thirst for a knowledge independent of human making can obscure: "And approach to the meaning restores the experience . . ." By juxtaposing the words of Polkinghorne and Eliot with Evers's and Lakomski’s mission statement of reductive "scientific realism . . . eschewing meaning as an explanatory category," we can begin to see that the chosen method of approach plays a determinative role in structuring the nature of what is "found," or in Greenfield's more telling terms, what is made.

In an attempt to map more than "desert landscapes" denuded of meaning, this study is oriented by a variant of the narrative (D. Carr, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1988), interpretivist (Greenfield, 1986; Nietzsche, 1967/1887), or what has been described as the hermeneutic perspective (Gadamer, 1986; Rorty, 1980). In approaching social phenomena, this perspective gives emphasis to understanding the particular, the situatedness of circumstance, and the openness of possibility rather than to reductive and generic explanations that would serve an overarching agenda of prediction and control. Where reductivist systems labor to exclude them, the hermeneutic approach welcomes the multifariousness of experience, accepts a pluralist epistemic context, and includes meaning as a critical consideration. The resulting interpretivist view of social organizations as an evolving nexus of multiple and often divergent intentions subject, in turn, to a multiplicity of readings calls for a recontextualization of scientific thinking and the claims that it would make.
The issue is not to dismiss scientific modes of inquiry, but to understand that such approaches to knowledge-making are part of—not separate from—the interpretivist or hermeneutic spectrum. In attempting to give pause from the metanarrative of mastery, there is, then, no wish or need to deny that scientific approaches may be applied advantageously in particular circumstances and towards specific ends. As Greenfield acknowledged when he advised "if there are things to count, count them!" (classroom comment, 1989), even numerical representation of experience—as we shall find in Chapters 5 and 6—may, depending upon the issue(s) at hand, be appropriate and helpful.

But because there are things to count and numerical representation may be apt, we must be careful not to misrepresent what such operations accomplish. As W. Edwards Deming (1994: 104-5; emphasis added), who was formally educated as a statistician and a physicist, underscores, systems of enumeration, no less than the grammars of language, impose human convention upon observation, which itself is inescapably an activity of "fact making" not "fact finding":

There is no true value of any characteristic, state, or condition that is defined in terms of measurement or observation. Change of procedure for measurement (change in operational definition) or observation produces a new number . . . . There is no such thing as a fact concerning an empirical observation. Any two people may have different ideas about what is important to know about any event. Get the facts! Is there any meaning to this exhortation?

Deming's rhetorical question is a reminder that "there is no fact of the matter" (Quine, 1969: 38) to be grasped by either numbers or language. That is, neither enumeration nor language are neutral ciphers for the value-free representation of an external world which can be discovered untainted by human intention, purpose, and meaning.

Numbers, like words and other cultural signifiers, are human conventions that, by structuring experience, condition what we see, think, and do. As Stone (1988: 146) notes:

Numbers are always descriptions of the world, and as descriptions, they are no more real than the visions of poems or paintings. Their vision of experience may correspond more or less with popular visions, just as realist, impressionist, and abstract expressionist paintings correspond
more or less with common visions. Numbers are real as artifacts, just as poems and paintings are artifacts that people collect, recite, display, and respond to.

This comment amplifies Stone's (1988: 144) antecedent remark, also made with her unfailing if somewhat caustic acuity, that the development and application of such constructions reflects choice not necessity:

Accounting is not a matter of merely adding up numbers (tallying), but a creative endeavor of painting with numbers.

Measures tend to imply certain solutions to a problem, so people who have particular solutions to peddle will promote the measures that point to their solutions . . . Measures, in short, obey the Law of the Hammer: Give a small boy a hammer and he'll find plenty of things that need pounding.10

Like the hammer to which Stone refers, numbers and language are each knowledge-making tools that may be used in excess and unwisely. That science has relied too heavily upon assumptions of facticity captured through an overly eager reduction of experience to number may be expressed by paraphrasing Wittgenstein's adage cited in the introduction: through excessive and often misplaced enumeration, science casts the shadow of but one possibility too darkly upon phenomena.

When placed within the hermeneutic perspective, science loses the hardness of its numerically expressed epistemic edge. Rather than being regarded as a self-correcting methodology that through successive iterations of theory approaches truth with greater exactitude, science is seen as a particular knowledge form that emerges under specific historical and cultural conditions from a given set of epistemic presuppositions. These presuppositions condition the kind of story science can tell about who we are and how we get along in the world. Hermeneutics, then, would undo science's unitary claim to express "the way things really are and must be" by admitting a plurality of stories that, rigorously constructed and critically read, can also provide insight into, and convey the complexities of the human situation. To recognize that science is but one, although perhaps one of the most instrumentally valuable, of these stories, is to open possibilities for the existence of others.

Certain things follow from positions of the hermeneutic type. One of the most important is the recognition that interpretation is unavoidable in the generation of knowledge. Within the hermeneutic perspective the idea that knowledge is discovered
by disinterested and impartial observers possessing special, self-authenticating technologies of disclosure is regarded as mythic. In contradistinction to this view, knowledge is viewed as a set of constructs formed by individuals actively engaged with the subject of inquiry. The medium for this construction is language, which itself both forms and is formed by often unconscious cultural predispositions.

Especially important in the context of this study, the use of the word "construct" is intended to indicate that all concepts—including the concept of "knowledge"—are linguistic fabrications that reflect fundamental values, beliefs, and dispositions, not determinative and inescapable facts. Like all other knowledge claims, this dissertation itself is a construct made from and formed by language and imbued with a particular set of values and interests. At its center is a desire to explore how language can be reflexively opened up to first problematize and then to deepen and enrich our understanding of organization, leadership, and the knowledge we may have of each.

As noted above, a complementary aspect of hermeneutic or narrative knowledge is its interest in meaning—in the case of this study, the meaning of what we do within organizations and the meaning of why we do it. Rather than encoding observations as discrete variables, determining causal linkages, and then creating formulae for the reproduction of organizational change, the hermeneutic perspective is oriented by second order questions. Such questions give emphasis to "why" as well as to "what" and "how." Their asking expresses an interest in the human purposes that construct the moral order made visible in our forms of knowledge and our social practices. As Michael Polanyi's and Harry Prosch's (1975: 25) comment makes clear, the scientific desire to get to the bottom of things is necessarily deaf to such questions.

The ideal of science remains what it was in the time of Laplace: to replace all human knowledge by a complete knowledge of atoms in motion. In spite of much that is said to the contrary, quantum mechanics makes no difference in this respect. A quantum-mechanical theory of the universe is just as empty of meaning as a Laplacean mechanical theory.

The scientific circumvention of meaning is made especially problematic when reductive methodologies are applied to human phenomena. The reduction of leadership and organization to their supposed constituent variables cannot address the second order questions of collective purpose, individual intention, and perceived
significance which are central to and formative of organizational life. While the avoidance of such questions would certainly make administration more a science and less of an art, we must ask if such a transmogrification can really be in anyone’s genuine interests, or, more pointedly, whose interests it may serve and towards what ends.

As leadership and organization are reopened to reconsideration, the implications of the normative presuppositions that condition the generation of knowledge will become more visible. By examining and challenging the epistemic constructs which undergird the scientific enterprise, the axiological dimensions normally concealed by the preemptive reduction of experience to fact can be given consideration. And by understanding our ways of knowing as an implicit moral architecture, it will become possible to see that our epistemological positions and the practices they justify tell us as much about ourselves and our aspirations as they reveal about the natural and social world we would investigate.

**Empirical Material and Research Design**

The focus, the conceptual orientation, and the formative assumptions of this study reflect the belief that ideas matter, specifically that the ideas of leaders in higher education matter, especially to their respective universities. As E. D. Hirsch (1988: 110) has remarked, not without irony, "The practical importance of ideas in human affairs, while not a recent revelation, is one that is too easily forgotten." The empirical focus and the methods of inquiry in the present study reflect the view that Hirsch's emphasis upon the generative importance of ideas is pragmatically applicable to the study of educational administration in general, and to the leadership of institutions of higher education in particular.

The design for the research reported herein emerges from an empirical interest in the ideas those who lead institutions of higher education have concerning their roles and the institutional settings for their administrative work. But the exploration of presidential thought presented and explored in subsequent chapters is not regarded as an end in itself. Rather, the ideas of the five participating presidents about leadership and organization conveyed through conversation have practical importance because of
their impact upon the human affairs that constitute the university. Presidents are, to make a bodily analogy, the administrative "heads" of universities. The intent of the research completed for this dissertation is to see what these heads think given that this thinking may be expected to have a distinctive impact upon institutional form and practice.

The following investigation of presidential thought patterns, or what Weick and Bougan (1986) call cognitive or conceptual maps, is intended, then, as a contribution to understanding how presidents may make a difference (Kerr, 1984) within the contemporary university. Although this difference-making may be made manifest in organizational and physical structures, the empirical focus of this dissertation is upon the ideas of presidents and how those participating in the study feel that their perspectives may inject the practices of their institutions with meaning, significance, and purpose.

But the thinking of those administratively charged with the organizational stewardship of the intellect has a still broader significance. Their views about leadership and organization can become a vantage point from which we may critically reexamine our presuppositions about educational purpose and what is necessary for its realization. A critical review of their ideas can provide an opportunity to reassess what may be desirable and possible for educational organizations and for the individuals who lead them. And such ideas necessarily bear more broadly upon how we understand the purposes and the meanings of the lives we lead both as individuals and as participants in the social collectives we call institutions.

Lest the relationship between leader thinking and organization seem abstruse, it will be useful to outline the primary concepts that inform the empirical portion of the present study. These insights arise from the work of scholars and researchers who have endeavored to rethink our typical understandings of both organization and leadership. To begin, T. B. Greenfield (1993: 4) argues that organizations are best viewed "not as structures subject to universal laws but as cultural artifacts dependent upon the specific meaning and intention of people within them." The work of Christopher Hodgkinson (1978, 1983, & 1991) similarly suggests that the reality we call organization is but the material form of the enacted meanings, intentions, and beliefs
he calls "values." And as David Cameron (1992: 167) makes clear in his discussion of university management and governance, organizational form necessarily reflects the predominant values which condition structure and convention:

Organization is instrumental of values. That is to say, the way in which institutions are organized serves to promote some values and restrain others. Organization is not merely a technical arrangement of work, authority, resources, and relationships. Alternative ways of organizing an institution represent choices among competing values. This applies to all organizations . . . It certainly applies to universities.

But how are some values made predominant within the organization that is the university while others recede in both importance and presence? In remarking that leaders may be understood as entrepreneurs for values within organizations, Greenfield (1986: 73) suggests that administrators actively seek to impress their ideas upon organizational form and practice. Lee Bolman and Terrence Deal (1993: 21), applying Erving Goffman's (1974) notion of cognitive "framing," have pointed to how this "conceptual entrepreneurship" may be operationalized:

Leaders' thinking defines and frames reality for themselves and often for their constituents. How they frame problems or dilemmas has a decisive impact on what their organization notices, what it does, and what it eventually becomes.

The work of Greenfield, Hodgkinson, Cameron, Goffman, and Bolman and Deal amplifies the importance of leader thinking for understanding the coincidence of administration and organization. Together these scholars and researchers outline a conceptual perspective through which we may better understand how, in the social construction (Berger & Luckmann, 1989) that is the contemporary university, leader "thinking makes it so" (Shakespeare: Hamlet, 2:2). Each suggests how presidential ideas about leadership and organization may shape both the unfolding of individual presidencies and the practices characteristic of particular institutions. In doing so, they each contribute to a strong argument for the worth of studying presidential ideas as we seek to understand the university as an organization premised in values and actualized through choices that are inescapably moral.

Guided by this set of ideas and approaches, the research undertaken was designed to advance understanding of three distinct but interrelated aspects of the thinking of the participating university presidents:
1. their personal and professional self-understanding of the presidency and its responsibilities;

2. the implicit leadership theories (Birnbaum, 1989a: 126) and the images of organization (Morgan, 1986) they each hold; and

3. their perceptions about how they exercise influence and make a difference within their particular institutions.

In order to gain insight into these different aspects of presidential thinking, the final research design included three types of information collection:

1. a 1 to 1.5 hour interview;

2. a post-interview questionnaire in which participants were asked to rate images of organization and leadership analogues in accordance with their appropriateness to their professional experience; and,

3. the collection of written and archival materials including a speeches considered significant by the participants, curricula vitae, and information about the particular university (catalogues and other public materials).

The intent throughout was to generate information that would permit insight into how the participating university presidents define their work, and how their concepts of organization and leadership interact to shape reported administrative and institutional practice.

Stated in the negative, there are many things that the research was not meant to accomplish. It was not motivated by a desire to collect definitive data concerning what senior administrators "really" do with their time (on this, see Mintzberg, 1973). It was also not meant to discover, through the application of reductive social science methodologies, a generic repertoire of technically efficient presidential behaviors (on this, see Fisher, Tack & Wheeler, 1988). It began neither from a wish to define nor from a belief in the value of defining the habits of "effective" individuals (on this, see Covey, 1990). In short, the research was not intended to provide more grist for what might be called, paraphrasing Lyotard (1984), the "performative" mill, which produces seemingly endless and often contradictory prescriptions for the enhancement of administrative effectiveness. Rather, it was intended to initiate five conversations
about the nature of leadership in higher education and the impact of this leadership upon five very different individuals and five very different institutions.

The questions included in the interview schedule (Appendix A) were designed to elicit presidential thinking about a set of relatively straightforward concerns. Each question focused on a specific aspect of the interviewees' understanding of leadership and/or organization. The questions asked invited presidential responses to the following issues:

1. the purposes of the university;
2. the role of the president in defining and achieving those purposes;
3. why presidents want to be presidents;
4. how presidents feel that their employers (i.e., governing boards) and "constituency groups" (e.g., faculty, staff, students, alumni) understand the role of the president;
5. where personal expectations and the expectations of significant others have and have not coincided with the experience of presidential leadership;
6. what presidents regard as their most significant duties, their most important successes, and their primary disappointments or failures;
7. how presidents assess their effectiveness;
8. whether presidents do or do not make a significant, difference within their institutions;
9. whether personal values do or do not contribute to presidential work; and,
10. the impact of the office upon the personal and intellectual life of those who enact the presidential role.

The questions were intended to initiate conversations in which the interviewees could express their ideas which both formed and were formed by their experience as university leaders. I began from the position that the participants in the study, as university presidents, were uniquely privileged researchers into the nature of higher education leadership. The rationale for this beginning point was not, however, that presidents were privy to or that they would convey unvarnished truths about
educational leadership. In deciding to use the interview as the primary means for gathering data, I made one principal assumption: that presidents would express in conversation the sorts of varnishes they habitually apply when interpreting their leadership experience. And, in the case of this study, the varnishes were of as much interest as the surfaces which they would make more coherent, comprehensible, and attractive.

As did Erving Goffman (1959: xii) in his less administratively oriented observations "of a Shetland Island crofting (subsistence farming) community," I regarded the presidential presentation of self and setting as my primary data. Per Goffman, the aspects of performance and impression management that unavoidably enter the interview situation were not discounted. On the contrary, they were regarded as data useful for interpolating presidential perceptions of self and organization. The design of the information gathering portion of the study, then, entailed the assumption that the conventions of the interview would do more to advance than to hinder my research interests. Nevertheless, the interview alone would not be a sufficient instrument for getting the information I desired about the participants' individual perspectives on their office and its organizational setting. To reduce the possibility of misunderstanding and to avoid the problems of relying upon a single mechanism for information gathering, I supplemented the initial long interview with two other sources of information.

These sources were an interview follow-up questionnaire and a request for specified textual or archival materials. The questionnaire provided five "organizational models" (Appendix B) and twelve "leadership analogues" (Appendix C) that presidents were asked to rate through the assignment of points in accordance with which models and analogues were most concordant with their experience. As an independent source of information about two primary areas of inquiry, the questionnaire was intended to provide a point of internal reference for the interview and as an opportunity for presidents to express directly the images of organization and leadership that most influenced them. A third point of triangulation was supplied by participants in the form of texts of speeches which the presidents felt conveyed their views about educational leadership and/or the university. As noted above, I gathered additional background
data by collecting a curriculum vitae from each participant and publications about each of their institutions.

The modest size of the sample was dictated by the nature of the study. Rather than seeking veracity by gathering data widely and then reducing its variation to a set of common elements, the study was designed to approach verisimilitude by remaining attentive to the particular (Bruner, 1986). Said another way, the study does not aspire to reach a generalizable image of the presidency by applying statistical measures that would secure the uniform from the variations of the particular. In the present context, difference or variation is regarded as an opportunity for insight into individual presidencies rather than as an annoyance to be overcome through the aggregation and statistical reduction of data. This approach is reflective of that outlined by March, Sproull, and Tamuz (1991: 11) as they describe "how meaning is [routinely] extracted from sample sizes of one or fewer," both within organizations and in our observations of them.

This dissertation would avoid duplicating the many existing studies that would construct generalized images of the presidency in higher education (Cohen & March, 1986; Kerr, 1984; Fisher, Tack, & Wheeler, 1988). While such studies can and often do provide useful actuarial information (e.g., presidential backgrounds, typical length and pattern of career), they can obscure the individual. The data collected for this study are intended to serve a more idiographic or "Kierkegaardian" purpose by concentrating upon the particulars and uniquenesses that distinguish one presidency and one president from another. Accepting Kierkegaard's (1963/1859) unmediated valuation of the individual, I have tried to guard against allowing generalizations to misrepresent the particular existential realities they would reflect. Accordingly, the study's primary focus is upon philosophies of one. This focus is indicative of my concern to depict fairly each participant's expressed knowledge of self, role, and setting.

This idiographic emphasis, however, is not intended as an argument for the sufficiency of individual experience. Rather, it constitutes an entry point for a study of presidential thinking, which, in turn, is intended to contribute to a developing discussion of how leadership is made coherent in experience and manifest in educational settings,
particularly in the contemporary university. In valuing the particular, the study is intended to counterbalance rather than to replace studies which concentrate on that which is common to educational leadership. By balancing aggregate studies of presidential work with the experience of individual presidents, we may understand how differences as well as samenesses shape the experience of leaders and the institutions within which they toil.

One sameness in this dissertation, however, should be acknowledged explicitly at the outset. That sameness is the person of the investigator whose attitudes towards those in leadership positions—attitudes which include an unresolved mix of skepticism, deference, and curiosity—informed both the research design and its execution. The empirical material presented in this study as well as its analysis and the extrapolations made from it bear the mark of these attitudes, and they reflect my interests and my conceptual predispositions.

**Purpose, Audience, and Structure of the Study**

*Purpose*

Each text is shaped by purpose and is addressed to an audience. As has been said above, the empirical intention of this study is to explore how a select sample of practicing Canadian university presidents understand their work and its institutional settings. The complementary conceptual intention is to re-think educational administration as a practice, as a field of scholarly inquiry, and as a discipline within which leaders are educated as well as trained. A more encompassing and abstract purpose is to consider how our understanding of leadership and organization have been shaped by modernism. This consideration takes seriously the possibility that the conditions under which we live out our individual and collective lives are now being reshaped. The possible and perhaps imminent recession of the quest for certainty central to the modernist agenda invites an encounter with "postmodernity" as a socio-cultural phenomenon and emergent existential condition, and with "postmodernism" as an incipient mode of discourse.14
Audience

Given that the fate of most dissertations is to sit unthumbed gathering dust on library shelves, the consideration of audience may seem superfluous or, worse, vain. Nevertheless an audience, if only an ideal one, is being addressed and consideration of its composition helps to situate this text and to clarify the intentions that inform it. I have written this dissertation with three audiences in mind. First is the academic community concerned with issues relevant to educational administration. Predominant in this group, of course, is the examining committee which has the task of evaluating the thesis put forward, and the quality of the arguments and the research offered in support of it. Second is the community of administrative practitioners, especially those engaged in university administration and related aspects of higher education. The third and most disparate audience consists of a more general readership whose concern with the welfare of the educational enterprise is informed by a cultural awareness of the forces now buffeting the social, philosophical, and economic constructs associated with modernism and the attendant quest for mastery in social affairs.

Structure

This study is presented in an introduction and six chapters. The introduction and the first three chapters develop the theoretical background against which the empirical material will be viewed. If successful, the introduction has informed the reader of the purposes of the present inquiry and provided conceptual orientation for what is to follow. In addition to outlining the study, the chapter you have now almost finished reading gives further definition to the kinds of perspectives and arguments stressed in the pages that follow. The second chapter, titled "Postmodernism, Knowledge, and Educational Administration," argues that the quest for mastery, which is emphasized in the introduction and explored further in its guise as science in this chapter, finds fruition in the modernist preoccupation with technique, especially in those techniques concerned with the management of self, other, and organization.

The third chapter, "Leadership As Interpretative Moral Praxis," is concerned with defining the work of educational administration as an indelibly moral praxis situated within distinctive individual life narratives and evolving professional and institutional
traditions. Displacing prevailing perceptions of leadership as a regulative practice itself made regulable by its subordination to either scientific or metaphysical "truths," the chapter's purpose is to present leadership as an iterative, contingent, and situated praxis to which moral knowledge-making is central.

Chapter four, "Ambiguity and Experience in the University: Prelude to Five Presidential Interviews," begins by reviewing some of the problematics central to the university presidency and to its research. The chapter grounds the moral praxis of educational leadership in the sensemaking activity in which moral convictions must override institutional ambiguities and cognitive equivocalities that are equally resistant to facts. After drawing out the relevance of selected literature on the university presidency to the ideas considered in this study, the interview is examined and assessed as an information gathering instrument.

The fifth chapter, "The Long Interview: Five Conversations and Their Audit," presents the empirical material gathered for this study through interview, post-interview questionnaire, and presidential speeches and texts, and offers a preliminary analysis of each. Setting aside traditional approaches to research that seek in data samenesses suitable for generalization, the analytical focus is upon the particulars that distinguish presidents and their respective presidencies. The chapter tests the speculation that attending to institutional ambiguity and administrative difference may provide a distinctive knowledge about the higher education presidency that can fill-out attempts to render it as a generic, rule-bound practice actualized in settings characterized by clarity, reason, and fact.

The sixth chapter, "A Concluding Unscientific Postscript: Neither Objectivism nor Relativism," brings the study to a close. Beginning with a presentation of "provisional sketches" of each of the five presidents participating in the study and fourteen "antithetic inferences" from the data concerning the presidency, the chapter explores a framework within which differences among university presidents might be tentatively reconciled with the more generic identity of the presidency itself. The chapter ends with my speculations about the development of both administration and knowledge after modernism by revisiting the distinction cast by MacIntyre between Nietzsche and Aristotle.
The empirical and conceptual areas of inquiry each press for a rethinking of the higher education presidency as an administrative practice and the university as an educational organization. By making the complementarity of the empirical and conceptual material presented herein explicit, my intention is to advance a discussion of the prospects and future directions of educational administration as a distinctive discipline. The explorations of organizational life and our modes of knowing will, in turn, provide a platform for observing the nature and ambitions of inquiry at the close of the Twentieth Century, the temporal arena in which the experiments of modernism have been, in the view of some, now almost conclusively conducted.

Endnotes for Chapter 1

1. "Pragmatism" is a designation that is currently suffering something of a renaissance. Like all other designations that would be broadly inclusive, "pragmatism" is vulnerable to the sort of criticism made by Quine (1981: 23) when he notes:
   
   It is not clear to me what it takes to be a pragmatist. It is not clear in what ways the philosophers who have been called pragmatists are nearer in outlook to one another than to philosophers who are not so called. I suspect that the term 'pragmatism' is one we could do without. It draws a pragmatic blank.

Quine (1981: 23) goes on, however, to concede that "we have the term, and we can make some sense of it by enumeration." The enumerations of pragmatism most pertinent to what I have called "a neo-pragmatic moral perspective" have been made by Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, William James, Richard Rorty, and Nelson Goodman. Although Charles Sanders Peirce, John Dewey, and Hilary Putnam also make significant contributions to this perspective, the impact of each is qualified by a scientistic, objectivist, and reductive empiricism that seems to war continuously with their less constrained speculations about the nature of human experience. Peirce and Putnam share a characteristic most pronounced in the work of Dewey and remarked upon by H. O. Mounce (1997: 231), "His [Dewey's] psychology is repeatedly in conflict with the scientism which is at the centre of his philosophy."

By using the designation "neo-pragmatic," I am making an effort to align my way of going about philosophy with the modest sentiments expressed by William James (1974/1907: 17-8) at the outset of his still influential Pragmatism:

For the philosophy which is so important in each of us is not a technical matter; it is our more or less dumb sense of what life honestly and deeply means... it is our individual way of just seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos.

Presaging James's remarks cited as an epigraph to this chapter and the views of Richard Rorty that we shall soon encounter more fully, Emerson (1995/1841: 26), in
his essay "Circles," demonstrates how the pragmatist's qualification of factual objectivity leads to an inherently open definition of the human person:

Every ultimate fact is only the first of a new series. Every general law only a particular fact of some more general law presently to disclose itself.

There is no outside, no enclosing wall, no circumference to us. Like St. Augustine's description of God "as a circle whose centre was everywhere and its circumference nowhere," Emerson (1841: 25) views humankind as irreducible to determinate facts and capable of creating realities yet unimagined and perhaps, within our current vocabularies, unimaginable. The relationship between pragmatism's insistence upon human existential indeterminacy and its implicit emphasis upon the moral imagination is phrased nicely by Russell B. Goodman (1995: 8) in the introduction to his recent regathering of the pragmatic tradition in Pragmatism: A Contemporary Reader: "To paraphrase Kant, the new pragmatists deny absolute truth in order to make room, along with humanized science, for humanized morality." This, in outline, is the philosophical path that leads to and defines my phrase "neo pragmatic moral perspective."

2. Henry David Thoreau expresses a similar sentiment in Walden, or Life in the Woods (1854: 12) when he says:

Nature and human life are as various as our several constitutions. Who shall say what prospect life offers to another? Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant?

It is precisely this "miracle" that the articulation of theory can provide as it inevitably reveals the prospects life has offered its maker(s).

3. The privilege attached to theory becomes obvious when we compare theory to, for example, poetry. Within Occidental culture, theory—especially theory in the "hard" sciences—is considered as an integral part of the agenda to create an objective knowledge base. Poetry, on the other hand, is consigned to the edifying forms of "subjectivity." Theory, not poetry, is a source of knowledge. It is not surprising that in Plato, the root epistemologist of our culture, we find poets excluded from the ideal state that he constructs in The Republic. Similarly, in our universities those who teach poetry are located in the humanities that compare unfavorably to the sciences in terms of power, funding, and prestige. George Grant (1969: 115-116), in his essay The University Curriculum, links this hierarchy to the quest for mastery to which, in the context of the university curriculum, wonder progressively demurs:

The chief job of the universities within the technological societies is the cultivation of those sciences which issue in the mastery of human and non-human nature. . . . In North American science the motive of wonder becomes ever more subsidiary to the motive of power . . . . It is this growing victory of power over wonder which is the basis of the proposition that the modern sciences can best be understood as a unity around the idea of mastery.

4. For those unfamiliar with the case of Giordano Bruno, usually presented as a paradigm case of scientific martyrdom, Judy Jones and William Wilson (1987: 529) in their book An Incomplete Education provide background and a helpful correction:

In favor of dying for science, partisans of martyrdom used to invoke Giordano Bruno. The Inquisition gave him a chance to recant, but he wound up burning at the stake anyway. Since Socrates, no man had
fought less to save his own life. Or at least that's the way Victorian press agentry told the story. Bruno had been an adherent of Copernicanism (the earth moved; the universe was infinite) but he was also of a mystical stripe (other worlds were inhabited; [an] infinite universe was indistinguishable from [an] infinite God). As a case for martyrdom for science, therefore, this can be thrown out on technical grounds: By modern criteria, Bruno wasn't a scientist at all. Rather, he used scientific ideas to dress up a system of hermetic magic. And, in any case, the Inquisition didn't indict him for Copernicanism; they indicted him for his lukewarm acceptance of the doctrine of the Trinity.

That Bruno quite literally put his life at stake for both scientific and metaphysical reasons, brings out the point that the penchant for fact-making as well as for the protection of putative "certainties" may be sourced in either scientific or metaphysical doctrine. As we shall see in Chapter 3, both the scientific and the metaphysical communities have a low tolerance for novelty.

5. Continuing their observations under the heading "Is Science Worth Dying For?," Jones and Wilson (1987: 529) speak about the case of Galileo:

   In 1633, thirty-three years after Bruno took the torch, Galileo was invited to have a look at the Inquisition's instruments of torture, and abjured. According to legend, he also said an aside, Eppur si muove: It—that is, the earth—moves, even if you and I say it doesn't. But this doesn't make Galileo a martyr, only a brinkman. When it came to actually dying for ideas, Galileo wasn't having any.

   It is not hard to imagine the practitioners of educational administration making an aside similar to that offered by Galileo after the scholars and researchers have authoritatively propounded their theories and "findings." That this aside is seldom voiced is evidence of the real and imagined power that research establishments, graduate schools, and established scholar-researchers exercise over those condemned to take their ideas seriously.

6. It is noteworthy that even Greenfield (1986: 61), in his signal essay "The Decline and Fall of Science in Educational Administration," finds it difficult to shed the nomenclature of science in spite of producing sufficient reason and rationale to do so:

   When I first took up the study of educational administration, nothing I learned cast a scintilla of doubt upon the certainty and power of administrative science; its objectivity and probity were simply assumed as were the benefits that were supposed to flow from its application. Certainly I did not doubt these apparent truths. What then is to be said now? Would the world be the worse without an administrative science? Probably not. But the issue is not simply science versus something else—versus the humanities, philosophy, or doing nothing at all. the issue is rather "What kind of science? . . . We must seek a new definition of science in administration—one that can accommodate the view that values pervade the entire realm of administration and, indeed, constitute the proper focus of study.
Greenfield's anticipation of the anti-representationalism, pluralism, and individual intentionality that would become central to Rorty's post-objectivist pragmatism (see the epigraph for this chapter by Greenfield) adds irony to his attachment to the term "science." Although Greenfield's neo-Weberian call for a new "value-centric" administrative science seems to parallel Gadamer's outline of the hermeneutic perspective and Rorty's pragmatic expansion of it, his manifesto is, nevertheless, evidence of the holding power of science as an exclusive synonym for rigorous, empirical investigation.

7. The distinction between "positivism" or "positivistic science" and "empiricism" as defined by Taylor is a significant one that can have important consequences. Greenfield's use of "positivistic science" as the polar opposite to "moral art" or "human science" makes him vulnerable to the accusation that he is arguing against a straw man given that positivism's demise is almost uncontested. If "empiricist reduction" is substituted for "positivistic science," it is clear that Greenfield's nemesis is still alive and well and that the point of his arguments are indeed pertinent to the current situation in educational administration in particular and to the social sciences in general. This is not to suggest that Greenfield is invulnerable to more substantive critiques as Evers and Lakomski (1991) and Holmes (1986b) each illustrate.

8. Even simple counting, as Deborah Stone (1988: 134-7, emphasis in original) underlines, is, however, far from being either an innocuous or an objective operation:

   Counting says a phenomenon is common, regular, and expected, even when the explicit story of a count is to show how rare the phenomenon is . . . Counting moves an event from the singular to the plural, and thus to some degree "normalizes" the extraordinary.
   
   To count something is, second, to assert that it is an identifiable entity with clear boundaries. No one could believe in a count of something that cannot be identified, so to offer a count is to ask your audience to believe the thing is countable . . .
   
   To count something is, third, to create a community. Any number is implicitly an assertion that the things counted in it share a common feature and should be treated as a group . . .
   
   A fourth hidden story is that numbers offer the promise of conflict resolution through arithmetic . . . Once a phenomenon has been converted into a quantitative measure, it can be added, multiplied, divided, or subtracted, even though these operations have no meaning in reality. Numbers provide the comforting illusion that incommensurables can be weighed against each other, because arithmetic always "works." Given some numbers to start with, arithmetic yields answers. Numbers force a common denominator where there is none . . .
   
   Finally, in our profoundly numerical contemporary culture, numbers are symbols of precision, accuracy, and objectivity. They suggest mechanical selection, dictated by the nature of the objects, even though all counting involves judgment and discretion . . . And certain kinds of numbers—big ones, ones with decimal points, ones that are not multiples
of ten—not only conceal the underlying choices but seemingly advertise the prowess of the measurer, as if to say he or she could discriminate down to the gnat's knees. To offer one of these numbers is by itself a gesture of authority.

9. Deming knew well the hazards of naive empiricism and the uncritical acceptance of data. His extensive work as an organizational consultant provided ample exposure to the misuse of numbers to justify the ill-informed "tampering" (see Deming, 1994: 172-5, 190-204)—a tampering carried out in the name of improvement—that he viewed as a cardinal organizational sin. His recurrent admonition that numbers are merely a function of convention and that to have meaning they must be contextualized provides an important addendum to Greenfield's enumerative injunction. The following is typical of the examples Deming (1994: 104-5) would cite lest the no-nonsense, hard-headed organizational "realists" who attended his organizational improvement seminars become entranced by the numbers that they were prone to generate as indicators of "reality":

There is no true value of the number of people in a room. Whom do you count? Do we count someone that was here in this room, but is now outside on the telephone or drinking coffee? Do we count the people that work for the hotel? Do we count the people on the stage? the people managing the audio-visual equipment? If you change the rule for counting people, you come up with a new number.

The procedure will depend on the purpose. If our job is to prepare lunch for the people that will stay through lunch, then we need to count the people that will be here for lunch.

If the problem is the total weight of the people in this room (are we in violation of the fire regulations?), then we should count everybody in the room . . .

How would you count the people on boats in San Diego?

Deming thus makes explicit what is implicit in Greenfield's conditional advice to count: quantification is exempted from none of the fallibilism and misapplication that attends the use of language.

10. To underline that she is not merely talking about abstractions, Stone (1988: 127 & 130, respectively) emphasizes that the choice often hidden by the numerical representation of information can have a pronounced and a potentially misleading impact upon the generation of public policy:

There are many possible measures of any phenomenon and the choice among them depends on the purpose for measuring. The fundamental issues of any policy conflict are always contained in the question of how to count the problem.

and, The astute policy analyst would do well to remember that every number is an assertion about similarities and differences. No number is innocent, for it is impossible to count without making judgments about
categorization . . . And similarities and differences are the ultimate basis for decisions in public policy. Karl Weick, in his article "Drop Your Tools: An Allegory for Organizational Studies," extends Stone's use of the law of the instrument to provide a still larger lesson. In tracing the parallels between research in organizational studies and two incidents in which several members of wildland firefighting crews lost their lives because they refused to drop their tools, Weick (1996: 302) warns: scholars themselves are equally at risk. Kaplan's (1964: 28) "law of the instrument" portrays part of the risk: "Give a small boy a hammer, and he will find that everything he encounters needs pounding. It comes as no particular surprise to discover that a scientist formulates problems in a way which requires for their solution just those techniques in which he himself is especially skilled." What else is "the law of the instrument" but a pointed comment that social scientists refuse to drop their paradigms, parables, and propositions when their own personal survival is threatened.

It is no small irony that Weick's caution applies equally to those who would retain structures of methodological hegemony but who would merely install narrative forms of inquiry in place of the currently prevalent scientific modes of investigation—a hammer is, after all, a hammer. In addition to hinting at the unhelpful nature of purely methodological controversies that ignore what specific methods, paradigms, and orientations allow us to say and do, Weick's remarks suggest that such controversies may stop us from saying or doing very much at all, including what we may need to do to make organizations better places.

11. Emerson (1995/1841: 25), in his essay "Circles," provides additional insight into the power of ideas to structure what we usually regard as objective and real:

Our culture is the predominance of an idea which draws after it this train of cities and institutions. Let us rise into another idea: they will disappear.

12. As W. V. O. Quine (1964: 2) announced in his landmark book Word and Object with his usual gift for making unusually compact, significant, and captivating statements, it is useless, in any case, to seek "a fancifully fancyless medium of unvarnished news." Although Quine's statement was intended to dead-end the philosophical quest for a pure language of sense-data purged of reference to physical objects, it can also be read as a caution that the attempt find an objective medium uninflected by personal experience must end in failure. That is, as all theory is inescapably value-laden, so too, inevitably, are all reports of experience. After over 270 pages of intriguing philosophical argument, Quine concludes Word and Object by remarking on a complementary philosophical point. In voiding the epistemological quest to attain objectivity by seeing the world from the remove of a God's-eye-view, he (Quine, 1964: 275, emphasis added) says:

The philosopher's task differs from the others', then, in detail; but in no such drastic way as those suppose who imagine for the philosopher a
vantage point outside the conceptual scheme that he takes in charge.  

There is no such cosmic exile.

Not only, then, is there no unvarnished news; there is no philosophical solvent available to us which can remove the varnish without also taking away what news we may have to report.

13. In Kierkegaard's (1973/1846: 203) *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, in which he attacks the equation of abstraction with knowledge, in this case the grand philosophical abstractions of Hegel, the reader is reminded of the existential hazards that attend generalization.

It is from this side, in the first instance, that objection must be made to modern philosophy; not that it has a mistaken presupposition, but that it has a comical presupposition, occasioned by its having forgotten, in a sort of world-historical absent-mindedness, what it means to be a human being. Not indeed, what it means to be a human being in general; for this is the sort of thing that one might even induce a speculative philosopher to agree to; but what it means that you and I and he are human beings, each one for himself.

14. Andy Hargreaves (1995: 38) proposes the following distinction between "postmodernism" and "postmodernity."

*Postmodernism* is an aesthetic, cultural and intellectual phenomenon. It encompasses a particular set of styles, practices and cultural forms in art, literature, music, architecture, philosophy and broader intellectual discourse—pastiche, collage, deconstruction, absence of linearity, mixture of periods and styles and the like. *Postmodernity*, by contrast, is a social condition. It comprises particular patterns of social, economic, political and cultural relations."

Translated, this distinction removes the sociologist's interest in postmodernity from the necessity to speak in the voice of postmodernism. As Hargreaves (1995: 39) is quick to affirm,

One does not, of course, have to accept or adopt a postmodern intellectual position in order to acknowledge or understand the nature of the postmodern social condition.

The seemingly innocuous distinction Hargreaves makes in definition conceals a more fundamental epistemic move that would allay the anxieties that might otherwise attend the postmodernist deconstruction of previously regulative norms. His distinction between "postmodernity" and "postmodernism" can be read—as can many elements of this dissertation—as a final attempt to salvage the stabilizing pretense of objectivity central to modernist discourse. That is, the distinction Hargreaves makes and, to some extent, I abide herein would allow inquiry into the fractionation, difference, discontinuity, improvisation, paradox, decontextualization, situatedness, particularity, contingency, and irony characteristic of postmodernism while salvaging the objectivity and the remove of the inquirer. Hargreaves's terminological distinction is, then, ultimately an attempt to make postmodernism safe for a distinctively modernist consumption, thereby lessening the epistemic crisis of modernism that, in the next chapter, will be explored
as a unique and compelling opportunity for doing other things and for doing the things we do now differently.
Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

Chapter 2
Postmodernism, Knowledge, and Educational Administration

But where it is a question of rival systems of the world, we have no fixed frame to cleave to.

We should bear in mind that the issue of the legitimacy of knowledge is the underlying problem of modernity inasmuch as the latter cut itself off from divine guarantees of knowledge, so that the problem that haunts all modern thinkers from Descartes, Locke, and Kant onward, is that of ensuring the reliability of knowledge (i.e., its legitimacy) and of all forms of individual and collective action that rest on it.
—Wlad Godzich, "Afterword" to The Postmodern Explained: Correspondence 1982-1985, Jean-François Lyotard (1993: 114)

The tripartite relationship between postmodernism, knowledge, and educational administration is central to the issues this study addresses and to the manner in which it addresses them. The reflexive and formative linkage between postmodernism as a cultural condition and the development of knowledge is underscored by the titling of the English translation of Jean-François Lyotard's seminal book The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge. As Lyotard (1984: xxiii) emphasizes in his introduction, postmodern describes "the condition of knowledge in the most highly developed societies" which reflects "the state of our culture following the transformations which, since the end of the nineteenth century, have altered the game rules for science, literature, and the arts."

For Lyotard, postmodernism makes explicit and unavoidable a question that was implicit in modernism. This question, as the positioning of Godzich's and Quine's comments as epigraphs for this chapter is meant to underscore, concerns the definition and the legitimacy of knowledge given the collapse of both the foundational and the
transcendental epistemic certainties that would regulate inquiry. Where modernism
was able to conceal a growing intellectual and moral uncertainty beneath a seemingly
self-validating history of technical and technological progress, postmodernism removes
itself from this masking. Rather than seeking to cover over the epistemological and
axiological ruptures that attend modernism, the postmodernist perspective aggressively
explores them.

In doing so, postmodernism admits the equivocal nature of the technical
accomplishment that has identified progress with the expanding orbit of human will. It
accepts that a simple mastery over circumstance is no longer a self-evident good
capable of ameliorating the epistemic and moral ambiguities inherent in the modernist
project. It confirms that an inexorable uncertainty has come to inflect questions of what
we admit as knowledge, how knowledge comes to exist, and the ends to which
knowledge is and should be put. This pervasive uncertainty informs "postmodernism"
as a form of thought and discourse, and as an existential condition.

Lyotard (1884: xxiv) expresses this condition economically when he says,
"Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward metanarratives." This
incredulity towards the "metanarratives" or epistemological and moral structures
that had undergirded modernist certainties has begun to have a pronounced impact
upon the development of knowledge within educational administration. Quine's
aphoristic reminder that we have lost the "fixed frames" that once ordered knowledge is
is a secular, philosophical statement of the point made by Richard Tarnas (1993: 399)
when he says "With no divine foundation to certify the Word, language possesses no
privileged connection to truth."

Following Quine and Tarnas, it is no surprise that the vocabulary and grammar
of administration, like other language forms stripped of empirical or metaphysical
assurances, is increasingly interrupted by epistemological questions about truth and
certainty. Accepting Godzich's contention that "all forms of individual and collective
action" rest on the question of epistemic legitimacy, it is understandable that a
generalized incredulity towards legitimating metanarratives will also have a significant
impact upon the "game rules" that govern organizations and their leadership. Within a
postmodernist context, administrative practice as well as the organizations within which
it seeks efficacy, become transparencies through which the practical implications of the unresolved epistemic and moral issues inherent in modernism are made, sometimes disturbingly, visible.

But before the implications of the postmodern condition for our understanding of organizations and their leadership can be explored, it is first necessary to understand how postmodernism alters the conceptual context in which issues pertinent to educational administration may be considered. In order to comprehend more clearly the epistemic transformation that has its beginnings in modernism's limitations and contradictions, this chapter begins with a definition of postmodernism that spells out how that term will be used in the present study. Following this definition, I argue that the quest for "mastery," is the legitimating metanarrative that underwrites the modernist equation of control with knowledge—an equation that is most fully articulated in our understanding of science and our appropriation of technology. By suggesting that the formal study of organizations is a shibboleth of scientific modernism, I will draw out, through reference to the thought of Hans Vaihinger and Alfred Adler, how educational administration has been both substantiated and seduced by its subscription to the "cultural fiction" of mastery.

The chapter is concluded by revisiting an idea first presented in this study's introduction: the viability of hermeneutic conversation as a post-epistemological model for knowledge-making. The centrality of interpretation both to what organizations and leadership do and to our understanding of that doing prepares the way for the issues addressed more fully in the third chapter. As we move through the cluster of postmodernist themes that impose most directly upon educational administration, the cogency of the following remark by Lyotard (1984: xxv) and its import for leadership research, practice, and training will become more apparent:

Postmodern knowledge is not simply a tool of the authorities; it refines our sensitivity to differences and reinforces our ability to tolerate the incommensurable. Its principle is not the expert's homology, but the inventor's paralogy.
Postmodernism Defined

"Postmodernism" is a contentious word. Too often used for rhetorical purposes in order to distinguish a knowing "us" from an unknowing "them," it is hardly surprising that this neologism raises eyebrows as well as hackles. The word itself has been used glibly as a self-designation by initiates who seem to share little among themselves but a general orientation that can seem pridefully recondite if not illusory to others. Richard Rorty's (1991: 1) regret about having ever used the term "postmodernism" provides several persuade caution:

I have sometimes used "postmodernism" myself, in the rather narrow sense defined by Lyotard as "distrust of metanarratives." But I now wish that I had not. The term has been so over-used that it is causing more trouble than it is worth. I have given up on the attempt to find something common to Michael Graves's buildings, Pynchon's and Rushdie's novels, Ashberry's poems, various sorts of popular music, and the writings of Heidegger and Derrida. I have become more hesitant about attempts to periodize culture—to describe every part of a culture as suddenly swerving off in the same new direction at approximately the same time. Dramatic narratives may well be, as MacIntyre has suggested, essential to the writing of intellectual history. But it seems safer and more useful to periodize and dramatize each discipline or genre separately, rather than trying to think of them all as swept up together in massive sea changes.

Acknowledging and staying alert to Rorty's implicit concern that "postmodernism" may inadvertently take on aspects of the metanarratives of which it would be incredulous, the term is, nevertheless, retained in this dissertation. It is retained primarily as a marker of the philosophical fault line that runs unevenly through Occidental culture and which is made most contemporaneously visible in the thinking of Nietzsche and in the "re-presentation" of that thought in Lyotard's injunction to incredulity. Simultaneously recapitulating and emphasizing this fault line, postmodernism gives epistemic urgency to the broader hermeneutic perspective within which alternative approaches to knowledge, like those reviewed in the previous chapter, may be articulated, explored, and applied.

In order to minimize the arbitrariness of Humpty Dumpty's conceit, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less" (Carroll, 1966/1896: 214), it will be useful to make three matters clear at the outset:
1. what postmodernism means when used in this text;

2. how postmodernism is understood to differ from modernism; and,

3. why the distinction between modernism and postmodernism is significant in a dissertation concerned with administration, organization, and knowledge.

In addressing each of these issues, the deeper questions postmodernism poses for the concept of knowledge will make themselves heard. The purpose in exploring these questions is to trace how changing concepts of knowledge bear upon educational administration as an academic discipline, a defined area of research, and as a practice that would regulate educational organizations.

My definition of postmodernism references the work of the two thinkers we have encountered immediately above and who have succeeded in stating its content and its epistemic implications with some clarity: Richard Rorty and Jean-François Lyotard. Lyotard (1984; 1993), as previously observed, has given emphasis to the insufficiency of the "metanarratives" or master frameworks within which knowledge has traditionally been defined. In acknowledging the need to push beyond established metanarratives, Rorty (1980; 1989; 1998) underlines the unhelpfulness of engaging in habitual forms of discourse and the importance of generating new vocabularies through which experience may be interpreted. In my reading of their work, Lyotard supplies the prod for re-thinking knowledge and Rorty introduces a pragmatic alternative to the moribund quest for binding epistemological structures. While I have differences with both philosophers, who also have significant differences with each other (see Rorty, 1991: 164-176, 1991: 211-222), their thinking supplies context for the definition and use of postmodernism in this study.

Three concepts drawn from Lyotard and Rorty are central to my working definition of postmodernism:

1. skepticism towards the prescriptive metanarratives which have defined knowledge, and the consequent opening up of the singular understanding of truth to multiple representations of the possible;

2. a recognition that all knowledge is constructed through interpretations contextualized within a set of variable and
often tacit epistemic presuppositions which reflect both individual and cultural values; and

3. the suspicion that mastery over the phenomenal world is neither an index of truth nor a necessarily desirable outcome of inquiry—especially inquiry in the more applied human disciplines within the social sciences.

Taken together, these elements form a philosophical imperative to reconsider the epistemological and axiological presuppositions that currently govern scholarship, research, and practice in educational administration.

Postmodernism, Knowledge, and Science

With the weakening of the metanarratives which had authoritatively adjudicated and sustained knowledge claims, it becomes clear that all knowledge consists of interpretations whose epistemic presuppositions cannot be secured from doubt. Even the hardest of the hard sciences are not immune from the interpretive structure of knowledge. As Nietzsche (1968/1886: 87), perhaps modernism's most astute expositor and critic, noted almost a century ago:

physics too, is only an interpretation of the world and an arrangement of it (to suit ourselves, if I may say so!)—and not an explanation of it.

In his assertion, Nietzsche builds upon the Eighteenth Century's philosophical skepticism most pronounced in the work of Berkeley and Hume. The robustness of this skepticism is reflected in the failed Kantian attempt to counter an increasing epistemic incredulity by regrounding a more tentative certainty within the "mentalistic" but supposedly uniform categories formative of human experience.

Nietzsche's sweeping critique of philosophy and science called into question a history of metaphysical and empirical projects that had been oriented by the Cartesian hope for an objective foundation capable of supporting a unified framework within which knowledge could be validated as true and certain. Lyotard's postmodern incredulity is, in turn, a restatement and an application of the skeptical tradition radicalized by Nietzsche. But where Nietzsche sought to speed the vertiginous removal of certainty from life, the postmodernist perspective begins to speak about what life may be like after the Cartesian quest for certainty has been set aside.
Postmodernist thinking begins to explore the texture and the content of a world in which no access exists to a singular set of principles which can definitively arbitrate truth claims.

Contrary to much current opinion, the diminution of certainty, especially the certainty promised by science, need not be regarded as calamitous. In fact, the destabilizing of science's unitary rendering of truth and knowledge confers a somewhat paradoxical advantage. The discounting of the value of epistemological closure and reductive explanation permits a reconsideration of alternative forms of knowledge that may fall outside the scientific agenda of explanation, prediction, and control. As Patti Lather (1992: 89) has remarked, the recession of a singular objective truth has resulted in the restructuring of a once-privileged knowledge form:

In this movement, truth is viewed as at least as rhetorical as it is procedural (Nelson et al., 1987) and science is, according to my present favorite definition, 'a much contested cultural space, a site of the surfacing of what it has historically repressed'. (Hutcheon, 1988: 74)

This reassessment of science as "a much contested cultural space" may be viewed as one of the more visible markers that distinguishes modernism from postmodernism. Where modernism understood science as the self-correcting methodology for the generation of knowledge, postmodernism, like hermeneutics, understands science as one distinctive form of knowledge emerging from a particular set of cultural circumstances and values. The knowledge associated with science is neither exhaustive nor exclusive. It, like all knowledge, reflects choice rather than necessity or nature. As Rorty (1980: 345), elaborating Nietzsche's hermeneutic relocation of physics cited above, has stated,

Our tough-minded "naturalistic" sense that spirit is, if not reducible to nature, at least parasitic upon it, is no more than the insight that physics gives us a good background against which to tell our stories of historical change. It is not as if we had some deep insight into the nature of reality which told us that everything save atoms and the void was "by convention" (or "spiritual" or "made up"). Democritus's insight was that a story about the smallest bits of things forms a good background for stories about changes among things made of these bits. The acceptance of this genre of world-story (fleshed out successively by Lucretius, Newton, and Bohr) may be definatory of the West, but it is not a choice which could obtain, or which requires, epistemological or metaphysical guarantees.
As a constructed form of knowledge, science amplifies a limited and epistemically limiting set of values and beliefs. The modernist valorization of science as a self-authenticating knowledge form has resulted in an underlying equation of that which is true and good with the ability to predict and control events. In doing so, the value of technical efficacy has come to predominate our sense of what is both possible and desirable. The epistemic ascension of science has bolstered the predominant cultural value of "mastery" which, in turn, has come to define the means and the ends of the post-Enlightenment technological project (Ellul, 1964; Grant, 1969; Kroker, 1984).

Modernism and The Metanarrative of Mastery

Mastery, as is noted in the introduction to this study, is associated with the enterprise to improve the human condition by attenuating chance and controlling change in both the natural world and in social settings. As George Grant's (1969: 47-8) pointed remarks suggest, the agenda of the modernist project may be understood as continuous with the agenda of mastery: the progressive, technical supersession of the accidental by the intentional.

The dynamism of technology has gradually become the dominant purpose in Western civilization because the most influential men in that civilization have believed for the last centuries that the mastery of chance was the chief means of improving the race. It is difficult to estimate how much this quest for mastery is still believed to serve the hope of men's perfecting, or how much it is now an autonomous quest. Be that as it may, one finds agreement between corporation executive and union member, farmer and suburbanite, cautious and radical politician, university administrator and civil servant, in that they all hold mastery to be society's religion.

Grant's words help us to see that mastery is the metanarrative within which the historical period we identify as modernism has been defined. The modernist faith in mastery has undergirded the twin enterprises most central to modern life: science and technology. Where science defines truth, technology tacitly verifies it in practical and desired applications. Through the introduction of the physical and human technologies enabled by the continuing refinements of the predictive sciences, the modernist project has validated itself by lessening human dependence upon providence, fortune, and luck.
As Grant has indicated, most believe that the modernist agenda of mastery has been steadily and happily accomplished, and that the task of the future is merely to increase its hold over both physical and human phenomena. Those who share this view can enumerate the manifold successes of science, achievements which none of us may dismiss and which few of us would choose to be wholly without. But the equation of truth with utility and of progress with the successive subjection of the world to will, has had a less visible and a more troubling impact upon our thinking and our doing. Our faith in the proficiency of our interventions to produce utilitarian "goods" lulls us into a sense of accomplishment that would conceal the shortcomings of both our practices and the ideas that drive them. Living within the limits of technical mastery, we have come to share much of the presumptive self-pride which Nietzsche (1967/1892: 129-30), in the voice of Zarathustra, attributed to the "most contemptible" last men: "'We have invented happiness,' say the last men, and they blink."

The questioning of the metanarrative of mastery within which science is valorized has, however, shaken the double equation of truth with utility and of progress with the expanding orbit of will. We have learned in the physical sciences that we are capable of unleashing forces that exceed our control and which routinely escape our plans. We have also learned at a more spiritual level that the reductive knowledge which advances mastery can result in existential vacuity. As the Nobel Prize winning physicist Stephen Weinberg (1993: 154) bluntly states, "The more the universe seems comprehensible, the more it also seems pointless."

In the social and political sphere, we have had chilling examples of technologies of human control overwhelming our understanding of human freedom and dignity. Those who would police thoughts, monitor language, and constrict the definition of correct behavior have been given new, powerful, and increasingly subtle tools against which the individual has only modest recourse. It is not accidental that dystopian statements in literature, cinema, theatre, and the visual arts have accompanied the modernist celebrations of scientific and technical progress—especially the progress evidenced in the regulation of human conduct and social organization.

These dystopian visions, which are the dark moral clouds attached to modernism's silver technical linings, contain a double and, perhaps, a paradoxical
warning. First, they warn that technologies undisciplined by moral constraints can jeopardize what we find most precious and sustaining in human life. But, second and more disturbingly, they caution that such moral constraints can no longer be founded upon axiological, metaphysical, or epistemic truths which transcend a given cultural and historical moment. As Isaiah Berlin (1990: 211-2) has remarked in his critique of the utopian quest, which may be viewed as the project to establish a final, if benign, regulative mastery over circumstance, visions of social perfectionism must rest on a uniform and unchanging definition of ends:

All the Utopias known to us are based upon the discoverability and harmony of objectively true ends, true for all men, at all times and places. This holds of every ideal city, from Plato's Republic and his Laws, and Zeno's anarchist world community, and the City of the Sun of Iambulus, to the Utopias of Thomas More and Campanella, Bacon and Harrington and Fénelon. The communist societies of Mably and Morely, the state capitalism of Saint-Simon, the Phalanstères of Fourier, the various combinations of anarchism and collectivism of Owen and Godwin, Cabet, William Morris and Chernyshevsky, Bellamy, Hertzka and others (there is no lack of them in the nineteenth century) rest on the three pillars of social optimism in the west of which I have spoken: that the central problems—the massimi problemi—of men are, in the end, the same throughout history; that they are in principle soluble; and that the solutions form a harmonious whole.

In disclaiming the project to achieve uniform and immutable human ends, postmodernism necessarily abandons traditional utopian schemes and the premises upon which they have been based. In place of Francis Fukuyama's (1992) prideful declaration of "the end of history" in modernism's fulfilment of enlightenment aspirations, postmodernism calmly marks the end of the timeless, unitary virtues prerequisite for utopia. Whether postmodernism can supply an alternative and viable context for the continuing attempt to reconcile the increasingly pluralistic tensions between moral impulse and action remains an open question that will be addressed more fully in the final chapter below. The prospect of a unitary and permanent resolution of desire, value and deed, which remained a genuine prospect in classical thought, however, can only be pretended within a modernism beset by the progressive overwhelming of singular certainties by difference.
While the advent of postmodernism is signalled by its critique of a modernism suffering from exhaustion, it is not an inherently negative phenomenon whose presence is defined solely by the negation of modernist suppositions. The opening to scrutiny of the foundational epistemic presumptions that had supported the modernist metanarrative of mastery is but the beginning of the nascent epistemic and axiological renewal portended by postmodernist speculations. This renewal may begin with the interruption of the epistemic pretensions of scientific reductionism and metaphysically founded "truths," but it proceeds to map alternative ways of knowing that supersede the premature certainties once regarded as foundational and necessary. As Tarnas (1993: 402) states:

In the politics of the contemporary Weltanschauung, no perspective—religious, scientific, or philosophical—has the upper hand, yet that situation has encouraged an almost unprecedented intellectual flexibility and cross-fertilization, reflected in the widespread call for, and practice of, open "conversation" between different understandings, different vocabularies, different cultural paradigms.

The open epistemic conversation that has begun to occur in the physical and the social sciences is not, however, always welcomed by adherents to established methodologies that would presume to objectively ground knowledge in truth. The field of educational administration has, for example, demonstrated a marked ambivalence to engage—or even to understand—epistemic issues that impose upon its traditional knowledge-base. And while the resistance of scholars, researchers, and practitioners, who seek generalizable and predictive knowledge, to new modes of inquiry and to new forms of practice can unnecessarily restrict the vibrancy and interest associated with the field, it is all too understandable. To continue tinkering towards a singular utopia envisioned as the enlightened exercise of mastery over social circumstance has so far outstripped the desire to recast epistemic assumptions in the plural and to redefine the aspirations of organization and leadership as manifestations of choice rather than as artifacts of necessity.

Educational Administration and the Crisis of Modernism

Educational administration, which Hodgkinson (1982: 64) has described as a "timorous and subaltern discipline," is perceived by many to be in a state of crisis.
Despite ambitious efforts, it has been unable to provide a comprehensive knowledge base capable of directing a profession towards the demonstrable improvement of educational institutions (Culbertson, 1988; Dolmage, 1992; Greenfield, 1986; Willower, 1994). To the worry of many, it has remained, as the epigraph from Holmes on page 1 above notes, a highly contingent amalgam of theory and practice existing uneasily "at the applied end of an applied field" (Holmes, 1986b: 86).

The ironic coincidence of educational administration's appearance as a distinctive field of inquiry with the apparent bewilderment and decline of the North American public school (e.g.: Emberley & Newell, 1994; Gatto, 1992; Hirsch, 1988; Postman, 1996; Sykes, 1995), and the disorientation of the contemporary college and university (Bercuson, Bothwell & Granatstein, 1984, 1997; Bloom, 1987; D'Souza, 1991; Solway, 1989; Sykes, 1988), is not lost upon its scholars, its practitioners, or its clienteles. As "solutions" to the educational malaise proliferate, the more ineradicable seems the predictable failure of educational reform (Sarason, 1990). Like Robert Burns's (174/1785: 25) well-meaning if somewhat inept ploughman who must answer to the indignant mouse he has inadvertently dislodged through his labors, those who till the field of educational administration must respond with increasing frequency to the complaints of equally discomfited and unappreciative audiences:

But Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,
An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
   For promised joy.

Unlike the ploughman in Burns's poem, however, we in educational administration seldom acknowledge the difficulties that our machinations cause our largely choiceless or "conscript clientele" (Friedenberg, 1975). Despite the growing sense that all is not well, those who lead the educational enterprise at primary, secondary, and tertiary levels dutifully assure their clients, public funders, accrediting agencies, and political masters that things have seldom been better (Birnbaum, 1992a; 1994). Foresight need not be admitted as vain if data are selectively gathered, inventively read, and euphemistically presented to confirm success despite ample
evidence to the contrary. Pressed to serve needs for equity of gratification, researchers and practitioners of educational administration pledge that, if it is not already so, soon everyone—like the cheerfully misguided citizens of Garrison Keillor’s (1985) Lake Wobegone—will be above average.

Unfortunately, international comparisons, experiential reflection, and longitudinal studies (A. Bloom, 1987; Hirsch, 1988), not to mention the conventions of arithmetic, tell a less fabulous story. And in reaction to these inconvenient facts, researchers continue to generate formulas for change that, like previous remedies, will be displaced by still newer innovations before their implementation and evaluation can be completed. Meanwhile the pervasiveness of a placating "glitterspeak" (Morgan, 1992), the sense of incredulity, and a general peevishness continue to grow.

I would argue that the frustration of the best-laid schemes within educational administration results in no small measure from the field's commitment to organizational mastery, which is most commonly manifested as a commitment to science as the determinant conceptual framework for generating knowledge and practice. Adhering to the modernist faith in mastery, educational administrators have been led to make extravagant promises that ignore the limits of human and institutional malleability. Somehow the factors of human obduracy, the irreducible differences among people and settings, and the fortuitousness of events are systematically deleted from their highly selective research and overly optimistic formulas that would, in Grant's (1969: 47-8) words, "improve the race."

The consequent disruption of—to borrow a favored neologism—"planned change" by the immovable and the accidental has produced a crisis mentality and a reigning sense of interdisciplinary skepticism. But, in spite of an increasingly critical audience, it can be argued that the "crisis'' in educational administration is largely self-inflicted. After all, the "obstacles" that have frustrated the best efforts of the field are an acknowledged and often a welcome part of most functional adult lives (see Marquard, 1989, 1991).11 As a mature humility is formed by achieving a more affable stance toward the obdurate and the accidental, so practitioners and scholars of educational administration may learn that the preemption of mastery in human affairs may well be of greater ultimate value than would be its realization.
However this may be, the field by and large has chosen to maintain its identification with the metanarrative of mastery and its faith in methodologies believed capable of establishing certainty in human affairs. Perhaps ironically, the shaking of this faith appears to heighten rather than to diminish expectations that more and better science can solve the intrinsically human dilemmas which would, on the way to solution, be systematically reduced to technical problems of social regulation.\textsuperscript{12}

Under the sway of the modernist promise to guarantee the intentional over the fortuitous, any suggestion that mastery may not be the end of practice and scholarship in educational administration can only be equated with an admission of defeat. As a result, the field has interpreted its inability to discover an efficacious technology for the control of educational organizations as a failure that threatens its credibility and its disciplinary identity. To date, Hodgkinson's (1982: 64) "timorous and subaltern discipline" largely remains resistant to questioning whether it should have ever adopted such a hubristic ambition. It appears to prefer a "crisis" with whose contours it is familiar, to an unknown for which it has no ready context.\textsuperscript{13}

Moving to a broader social and cultural arena, the reason why the weakening of the metanarrative of scientific mastery has had such noticeable ramifications in those applied disciplines which are concerned with researching and improving organizations and their administration becomes more comprehensible.

In reflecting upon the ideas foundational to organizational theory, Stewart Clegg (1990: 4) remarks:

Representational modernism consisted in the sketching of a singular set of empirical tendencies which were imagined to be irresistible and inevitable. These were the famous rationalization of the world, the success of which would be attributed to bureaucracy as the primary mechanism of its achievement . . . . Organization theory is in many respects a modernist discipline par excellence, springing as it does from Weber's modernist vision of the modernist world.

Educational administration's commitment to the regulation of human conduct through the development and application of scientific principles has wedded its ambitions to modernism's metanarrative of mastery. Through its identification with the scientific enterprise and the rhetoric of technological progress, educational administration, like organizational theory, has become "a modernist discipline par excellence." It is,
therefore, bound to experience the tremors that have begun to shake modernist foundations as major ground swells.

By subscribing to the modernist social science agenda which promised mastery in human affairs, educational administration, perhaps inadvertently, invited what would become its current crisis of legitimacy. Ironically, this subscription was at least partially motivated by a desire to share in the recognition and the rewards garnered by the humanities that had previously adopted positivistic epistemologies and concordant scientific methodologies. The apparently happy fate of "scientized" human disciplines like sociology and psychology promised a legitimacy that the more anecdotal subdiscipline of educational administration found irresistible (Barnard, 1965).

This identification with the seeming success of the social sciences, however, entailed acceptance of an agenda that conditioned both how knowledge as well as what kind of knowledge would be developed. It was this agenda, outlined below by Nicholas Maxwell (1984: 61; emphasis added), that was perhaps inadvertently adopted in the 1950s by the Theory Movement in its eagerness to lead the field from anecdotalism to the putatively powerful research methodologies of science:

First, the social sciences . . . develop improved theoretical knowledge of laws governing human behaviour and social systems. This knowledge then enables us to predict that if such and such human social circumstances are realized, such and such will reliably be the outcome. As a result we are in a position to develop useful social technology.

In continuing his thought Maxwell (1984: 61) notes that "useful social technology" is a euphemism for a more morally problematic enterprise.

But this amounts quite simply to developing techniques of human social manipulation. Built into the very enterprise of the social sciences, conceived of in this way, is the ideal of developing more effective techniques for manipulating people.

But the new approach to administrative reality astutely announced by Herbert Simon in his 1945 publication Administrative Behavior offered the means to bypass such morally problematic objectives. For it was exactly these kinds of moral considerations which were deemed extraneous to the efficient decision making Simon regarded as the primary function of organizations. As Greenfield (1986: 59) has noted, Simon's decision to advocate a value-free technology of decision making, has
had a lasting moral and epistemological impact upon educational administration.

Simon's great failure was his own decision to focus exclusively on the factual basis of decision and to regard as irrelevant all the other forces that shape them but which his science could not predict or control. And so the science of administration defined by Simon retreated in the face of the intractable powers and imponderable choices that make up the realities of life.

Simon's approach, which may have been valid within the context of managerial decision making (i.e., decision making which presumes or accepts rather than sets objectives), was generalized to endorse an exclusively positivistic, value-free form of inquiry and practice. *Administrative Behavior* became something of a manifesto for many students and practitioners of educational administration who saw its epistemological framework as a means to solidify and bring rigor to their nascent sub-discipline. Unfortunately, their eagerness may have led them to do more than Simon said and certainly more than he would later caution against (Simon, 1983, 1986).

The eagerness with which Simon's work was greeted, over generalized, and then emulated resulted largely from the field's hope that its adoption of a scientific positivism would provide access to legitimacy, effectiveness, and reward. In a field that, as Raymond Callahan (1962) retrospectively observed, long flirted cultishly with the value of efficiency, Simon had, perhaps unknowingly, made an offer that could not be refused. And initially the field did achieve focus and a means of linking theory and practice through its emulation of positivistic epistemologies. In the long run, however, this emulation would contribute much to the disciplinary dilemmas now facing it.

While contrary voices have made themselves heard, those who have dominated research and practice in educational administration have steadfastly retained a commitment to perfecting methods premised in an epistemic realism sufficient to assure mastery in human affairs. Most, but not all,14 who adhere to this commitment have attached themselves to methodologies that mimic those common among the natural sciences. They have shown little interest in critically examining how educational administration has come to be a "modernist discipline par excellence," in exploring alternative epistemological perspectives, or in developing new orientations for practice. Although scholars and practitioners of educational administration have been forced to undergo repeated ordeals by confidence, they appear to hold fast to the very scientific
apparatus and the commitment to mastery that increasingly shows signs of failing them.\textsuperscript{15}

This faith is reaffirmed in spite of the growing evidence of science's insufficiency to singularly meet the higher pedagogical and moral ambitions of educators and their clients. It appears unthreatened by the accumulating empirical evidence that human nature and its social forms can be predictably manipulated only within the widest limits of probability. And it seems immune to the growing doubts about the moral character of an enterprise dependent upon both overt and more unobtrusive measures of control (Perrow, 1986). Nevertheless, the mainline literature of the field continues to speak the promise of an administrative science premised in a technology of managerial effectiveness.

But the subterranean sense that there is something fundamentally specious about the equation of leadership with managerialism and organizational control persists. Alasdair Maclntyre and James March, speaking within very different perspectives, each question the soundness and the value of this equation. At a philosophical level, Maclntyre (1984: 107) offers a penetrating critique of administrative expertise and the moral shadow play we enter when we subscribe to its presumptive efficacy.

The concept of managerial effectiveness is after all one more contemporary moral fiction and perhaps the most important of them all. The dominance of the manipulative mode in our culture is not and cannot be accompanied by very much actual success in manipulation. I do not of course mean that the activities of purported experts do not have effects and that we do not suffer from those effects and suffer gravely. But the notion of social control embodied in the notion of expertise is indeed a masquerade. Our social order is in a very literal sense out of our, and indeed anyone's, control. No one is or could be in charge.\textsuperscript{16}

Maclntyre's challenge to our preoccupation with the manipulation and control of others, and the managerial expertise that would make this preoccupation institutionally practicable strikes, as Clegg (1990) has suggested, at the heart of the modernist metanarrative of mastery.

Like Maxwell (1984: 61) who concludes his criticism of social technology by stating, "The saving grace of this procedure is perhaps its ineffectiveness," Maclntyre is resolutely skeptical about the prospects of the modernist enterprise to effect control
over human circumstance. In his skepticism, MacIntyre dismisses neither the very real and problematic consequences of managerial expertise nor the moral repercussions of making the manipulation of behavior and its settings a goal paramount in human affairs. Curiously MacIntyre’s thoroughgoing critique of modernist variants of the manipulative mode is replaced, as we shall see in our third chapter, by his subscription to a metaphysically secured means to regulate social intercourse. This attempt to philosophically reground social regulation is indicative of how deep-seated is the need to affirm that the human project can be described, ordered, and authoritatively regulated—if not by science, then by metaphysics.

March further explores the seemingly archetypal need to feel "in control" by observing how the wish to deny chance is manifested in the mythic construction of executive life and managerial efficacy. By suggesting that our valorization of administrative behavior meets a basic human need to endow circumstance with order and event with intention, March (1984: 31) supplies counterpoint to the thinking of his erstwhile colleague Herbert Simon:

The stories, myths, and rituals of management are not merely ways some people fool other people or a waste of time. They are fundamental to our lives. We embrace the mythologies and symbols of life and could not otherwise easily endure. Executive behavior and management procedures contribute to myths about management that become the reality of managerial life and reinforce a belief in a human destiny subject to intentional human control. They may not be essential to such a belief—it is reinforced in many subtle ways throughout society—but executive rituals and executive life are parts of that large mosaic of mutually supporting myths by which an instrumental society brings hope and frustration to individual lives.

Where Simon (1976/1957) elaborated how executives might increase their ability to "satisfice," March offers a more circumspect interpretation of executive work from a second order perspective. Rather than simply examining what administrators do and what will make this "doing" more expedient, he opens our everyday understanding of administration by moving outside what is usually taken for granted. As does MacIntyre, he begins from a position like that stated by Michel Foucault (in Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1982: 187), "People know what they do; they frequently know why they do what they do; but what they don’t know is what they do does." In providing one atypical answer to
'what the doing of executive work does,' March suggests that a primary function of management as an enterprise and as a worldview is to support a belief in the efficacy of order, prediction, and control in human affairs—a belief that without such supports would falter. That is, the inflation of administrative behavior is as much a symbolic and irrational expression of belief in a rationally orderable universe, as it is a means to instrumentally achieve prescribed ends. Regarded as at least a partially fanciful enterprise, management becomes a transparency through which we may glimpse the power of mastery over our thinking and doing.

We can amplify the significance of MacIntyre's and March's insights, by placing them in the context of Alfred Adler's psychodynamic notion of "fictions" (see Adler, 1927; Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler came to his understanding of the role that fictions play in human life through his reading of Hans Vaihinger's (1925) book, The Psychology of "As If." There Vaihinger speculated that individuals give orientation and purpose to their lives by adopting often well-intentioned and existentially functional ideas that are not objectively verifiable and which may even run counter to commonsense knowledge. Such ideas become self-verifying by conditioning perception and systematically, if unconsciously, pre-editing experience. Vaihinger termed such objectively unverifiable and often counterexperiential guides or beliefs, like "honesty is the best policy" or "all men are created equal," fictions.

Adler converted Vaihinger's philosophical speculation into a psychic construct within the individual personality. At various points in his writing Adler referred to such constructs as "fictional goals," "fictional finalisms," and "guiding fictions" (see Ford & Urban, 1967: 304-365). He came to believe that one guiding fiction would ultimately become dominant and that the personality would be organized around it. This dominant "fiction" could be understood as the guiding predisposition or value that shaped the individual and her/his interactions with the social world, making the former distinctive and assigning a "signature" to the latter.

Once in place, the guiding fiction becomes a screen through which perception is first filtered and then interpreted as experience. The surety and coherence that underwrites individual experience—one is reminded of Walter Cronkite's unironically assertive closing to his evening newscast, "And that's the way it is!"—is often, then, a
product of the circular prefiguration of what one sees by what one believes. And although the tautological, redactional, and self-verifying loop between guiding fiction and experience brings coherence and economy to the personality, it also limits novelty and possibility. Screening out more than they admit, psychic fictions produce consistency, constancy, and predictability by substituting an often unconscious habituation in outlook and action in place of a more open attitude towards circumstance and event. This limiting becomes more fervent as the exercise of the psychic fiction becomes more practiced and less conscious. That is, as the fiction's workings become less arduous and less visible, personal perception and individual experience tend to be more readily equated with the way things really are.

Adler's elaboration of Vaihinger's fictions becomes pertinent to our discussion of educational administration if we return it from the domain of the individual psyche to the larger cultural arena. Making this analogical translation, we may understand the belief in mastery or the rendering of "human destiny subject to intentional human control" (March, 1986: 286-7), as the guiding fiction of modernism. This fiction both buttresses the modernist preoccupation with surmounting the accidental and serves as a control on the development of knowledge. It functions tacitly as the "reality principle" (Freud, 1965/1933 & 1969/1935) or bottom line against which both scholarly and commonsense truth claims may be evaluated. Methods which do not enhance the agenda of mastery are discounted as, at best, interesting, and knowledge which does not increase the range of human will is regarded as unproductive. As the metanarrative of modernism, the cultural fiction of mastery is implicit in the ambitions and methods of science, and explicit in the manifestations of technology.

As psychic fictions progressively exclude variant interpretations of experience, the reciprocally formative relationship between metanarrative and language makes it difficult to suggest alternatives to the prevailing constructs of knowledge without seeming self-contradictory or, still worse, absurd. To disjoin knowledge from the quest for mastery seems literally "non-sensical." This is why Lyotard (1984: 60; emphasis in original), after confessing his skepticism towards epistemically regulative metanarratives, must offer such a diremptive and paradoxical phrasing of what may constitute science and knowledge in a postmodern context:
Postmodern science—by concerning itself with such things as undecidables, the limits of precise control, conflicts characterized by incomplete information, "fracta," catastrophes, and pragmatic paradoxes—is theorizing its own evolution as discontinuous, catastrophic, nonrectifiable, and paradoxical. It is changing the meaning of the word knowledge, while expressing how such a change can take place. It is producing not the known, but the unknown. And it suggests a model of legitimation that has nothing to do with maximized performance, but has as its basis difference understood as paralogy.

Against the certainties of modernist science which would continue to offer reductive "truths" in support of an agenda of control, Lyotard points to the significance of the discontinuous, of difference, and of the unexpected. But, more importantly, his alternative casting of science begins to make the conceptual boundary that circumscribes modernism more visible. That is, he begins to expose the structure of the previously tacit cultural fiction of mastery by speaking about what it may mean to stand outside it. Where reductive science offers an optimism based in technical performance, Lyotard, speaking for postmodernism, offers the paradoxical hope of discontinuity and rupture.17

While the "delegitimation" (Lyotard, 1984: 37-41) of the metanarrative and cultural fiction of mastery may understandably trigger attempts to resuscitate exhausted forms of knowledge capable of supporting its increasingly suspect dominance, it also invites a more interesting and creative, albeit less certain, use of intellectual energies. Relieved of the tired and unworkable agenda of interpersonal manipulation and control, researchers and practitioners in educational administration may begin to redefine a discipline which has perhaps grudgingly become open to new possibilities. As James Ryan has remarked with particular reference to administration in school settings, it is not necessary to interpret postmodernism's lack of interest in repairing modernism's unitary epistemic foundations as cause for despondency or resignation. On the contrary, postmodernism, if it does nothing else, begins to make us aware of the modernist fictions which have determined and foreshortened research and practice:

We need not, then, view the receding prospects for generating a unified theory of school administration and organization with disappointment or despair. On the contrary, social scientists and practitioners should welcome the opportunities that accompany this view. At the very least, it
frees us from the shackles imposed by the imperative to generate fictitious universals. (Ryan, 1993: 27)

Those within the discipline of educational administration who regard the exhaustion of modernist knowledge constructs as a crisis, illustrate, if nothing else, the holding power of metanarratives. As Adler learned from his patients, it is difficult to weaken a fixation upon a guiding fiction without evoking fears of self-destruction and the emergence of chaos. Such fears typically result in a generalized sense of denial, resentment, and closure. This experience of crisis reflects the extreme unease that is the first reaction to the dislodging of the familiar. But such a crisis, providing that it can be survived, augurs in the reopening of the habitual to renewal. It can lead to the reorientation and relocation needed both to reformulate purposes and to seek alternative paths to them.

To look beyond a modernism horizoned by the cultural fiction of mastery is the first step in seeing how the postmodernist perspective can contribute new insights to our studies of leadership and organization. In doing so, we shall see that it is unnecessary for those concerned with administration in educational settings to share the apprehensiveness of Burns's (1974/1785: 25) ploughman, whose outlook was made unduly dreary by the unpredictability and unmanageableness of the future:

Still thou art blest compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och! I backward cast my e'e
    On prospects drear!
An' forward though I canna see,
    I guess an' fear!

Although postmodernism need not inspire consternation, it does not, as we have seen, lend itself to ready cooptation or to quiescent accommodation at the modernist periphery. Its incredulity towards metanarratives and its aggressive questioning of epistemic legitimacy inaugurates a restructuring of the philosophical and moral horizons within which modernist concepts and practices have been safeguarded. The opening of once authoritative knowledge constructs creates a space appropriate for questions and ongoing discussion rather than for peremptory answers. The advent of postmodernism invites challenge and provokes uncertainty where researchers and
practitioners of educational administration have previously sought a more pacific and determinative knowledge.

The hermeneutic perspective, with its emphasis upon the iterative role of interpretation in the continuous generation of a knowledge capable of advancing tolerance of ambiguity and empathy towards difference, provides a bridge through which postmodern thought can find form in a pragmatic research practice. Within the postmodernist context, the interpretative process can become a consistent reference point for reframing a coherent but open approach to organization and administration in the face of increasing uncertainty.

Indeed, the process of interpretation can clarify a central function of organizations, which, themselves, can be apprehended as "interpretation systems" (Daft & Weick, 1984: 293) that are constantly engaged in hermeneutic practices:

The interpretation system view is concerned with specialized information reception, equivocality reduction, and sensemaking. This perspective represents a move away from mechanical and biological metaphors of organizations. Organizations are more than transformation processes or control systems. To survive, organizations must have mechanisms to interpret ambiguous events and to provide meaning and direction for participants. Organizations are meaning systems, and this distinguishes them from lower level systems . . . . interpretation may be one of the most important functions organizations perform . . . . Almost every other organizational activity or outcome is in some way contingent on interpretation.

Similarly, the exercise of leadership, as Robert Birnbaum (1992b: 154) suggests, can be translated as an essentially hermeneutic and moral enterprise:

If instrumental leadership does the best it can with the institution as it is, interpretive leadership involves altering perceptions of institutional functioning and the relationship of the institution to its environment. This kind of leadership emphasizes the "management of meaning" through actions or words of the leader that "guide the attention of those involved in a situation in ways that are consciously or unconsciously designed to shape the meaning of the situation" (Smircich and Morgan, 1982, p. 261). Interpretation is a moral act of leadership . . . . Interpretation builds commitment to communal values . . .

The work of the next chapter will be to describe leadership as an interpretive moral praxis capable of withstanding the postmodern condition, a condition that in educational
institutions becomes organizationally manifest as an intractable pluralism and an irremediable ambiguity.

Endnotes for Chapter 2

1. My retention of postmodernism is not meant to overlook the contingency of the term itself and the quality of arbitrariness, which as Rorty's remarks imply, postmodernism shares with all historical designations (e.g., when, if ever, did the Enlightenment begin and when, if ever, did it end?). Nor is it meant to affect a self-serious sanctimoniousness that would exempt itself from criticism. Woody Allen (1980: 81) provides some humorous insurance against the latter in his amusingly accurate definition of "modern man" in his essay "My Speech to the Graduates," that first appeared in The New York Times:

Modern man is here defined as any person born after Nietzsche's edict that "God is dead," but before the hit recording "I Wanna Hold Your Hand."

As a quick reading of its first paragraph makes abundantly clear, Allen's (1980: 81) fictitious but telling speech provides a vaccination against the rhetorical heavy handedness and philosophical exaggeration that too easily can skew the postmodern conversation:

More than any other time in history, mankind faces a crossroads. One path leads to despair and utter hopelessness. The other, to total extinction. Let us pray we have the wisdom to choose correctly. I speak, by the way, not with any sense of futility, but with a panicky conviction of the absolute meaninglessness of existence which could easily be misinterpreted as pessimism. It is not. It is merely a healthy concern for the predicament of modern man. [Allen's definition of modern man quoted immediately above appears here] This "predicament" can be stated one of two ways, though certain linguistic philosophers prefer to reduce it to a mathematical equation where it can be easily solved and even carried around in the wallet.

To survive Allen's lampoon is to admit that "postmodern," like all other words, shares the shortcomings and the benefits of human language. In appreciating Jeremy Bentham's (see Ogden, 1932) understanding of "fictions"—a concept we shall encounter more fully later in this chapter—Quine (1981: 24-5) helps us to see how the use and usefulness of the term "postmodernism" can be tempered with humility:

If he [Bentham] found some term convenient but ontologically embarrassing, contextual definition enabled him in some cases to continue to enjoy the services of the term while disclaiming its denotation.

Crediting and critiquing Sabina Lovibond's feminist claims in his essay "Feminism and Pragmatism," Rorty (1995: 129) suggests that while the moniker of postmodernism can be intellectually suspect, it retains the utility Bentham knowingly attributes to fictions:

I share Lovibond's doubts about the apocalyptic tone, and the rhetoric of
unmasking prevalent among people who believe that we are living in a "postmodern" period. But on all the crucial philosophical issues, I am on the side of Lovibond's postmodernist opponents.

2. The term "valorization" is commonplace in postmodern writing and thought. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary defines it within its traditional usage as a primarily economic term:

   to enhance or try to enhance the price, value, or status of by organized and usu. governmental action <using subsidies to ~coffee>.

Within a postmodernist context, valorization implies an artificial pumping up of concepts that bolster constructed metanarratives that, in turn, privilege particular interests. Where valorization is, the postmodernist is alerted to the interest-based vesting of concepts that merit both incredulity and deconstruction. Within Marxist speculation, valorization is a cardinal element of the "false consciousness" that leverages the interests of those who either own or control the means of production. For both postmodernism and for Marxism, valorization is, then, an artifice that can become, through analysis, telling. For the Marxist, valorization contributes to the actualization of economic exploitation, for the postmodernist, this exploitation is likely to be conceptual and ideological, and, therefore, still more virulent.

3. In his book Technology and the Canadian Mind: Innis/McLuhan/Grant, Arthur Kroker (1984: 7, emphasis in original) perceptively draws out the reasons for and the implications of the formatively ambivalent relationship that Canadian thinkers have had with technology:

   What makes the discourse on technology such a central aspect of the Canadian imagination is that this discourse is situated midway between the future of the New World and the past of European culture, between the rapid unfolding of the "technological imperative" in American empire and the classical origins of the technological dynamo in European history. The Canadian discourse is neither the American way nor the European way, but an oppositional culture trapped midway between economy and history. This is to say that the Canadian mind is that of the in-between: a restless oscillation between the pragmatic will to live at all costs of the Americans and a searing lament for that which has been suppressed by the modern, technical order.

Kroker (1984: 28, emphasis in original) demonstrates how Grant's thinking resonates deeply with Gadamer's (1986: xvi) definition of philosophy as "what has happened to us over and above our wanting and doing" when he says, beginning with a quotation from Technology and Empire (Grant, 1969: 127):

   Grant states: "We can hold in our minds the enormous benefits of technological society, but we cannot so easily hold the ways it may have deprived us, because technique is ourselves." Grant's thought moves and plays in that region of the most terrible truths: the full penetration of technique, the will to mastery, into the deepest interstices of human personality.

Kroker's insightfulness may, however, be an artifact of a generation now past. In my
teaching of recent university graduates—even those who have "studied" philosophy—I have found disturbingly little awareness of the issues or the personages that are the subjects of Kroker's book. Perhaps, as Grant predicted, the allure of new technologies has simply seduced younger Canadians into a preoccupation with the ephemeral and the entertaining, leaving them strangers in their own culture. That this strangeness is not ameliorated by "our" schools, colleges, and universities, however, raises a question of responsibility that is more difficult to shirk.

4. For reasons uncertain to me, the last sentence of this quotation was changed without annotation to read as follows in the posthumous edition of Technology and Empire (113, emphasis added) reprinted by Grant's Toronto publisher Anansi:

   Be that as it may, one finds agreement between corporation executive and union member, farmer and suburbanite, cautious and radical politician, university administrator and civil servant, in that they all effectively subscribe to society's faith in mastery.

The original wording, which appears in the dissertation text, is much more like Grant's uncompromising and idiosyncratic phrasing than the latter, which takes on the seemingly benign phrasings of the social sciences of which Grant was ever suspicious and critical.

5. B. F. Skinner, in Beyond Freedom and Dignity (1971) and Walden Two (1962), has forecast and developed the means through which both freedom and dignity might be made atavistic concepts through the exercise of technical mastery over human development.

6. The depiction of the malevolently capable ineptness of the inevitable future techno-bureaucracy is depicted with a very black humor indeed in Terry Gilliam's 1985 film Brazil. Gilliam updates and expands the insights of Orwell and Kafka by underscoring the perverse fulfilment of modernist impulses to regulate and control social organization through the machinations of a professional administrative practice. In the establishing scene of the lobby for this near future society's Ministry of Information, posters state "Help The Ministry of Information To Help You" and "Information Is The Key To Prosperity." At the base of a statue of a winged creature, that is equally demonic and angelic and around which uniformed school boys gather, is carved the inscription "The Truth Shall Make You Free" (emphasis added). Gilliam makes the bureaucratic relationship between knowledge/truth, administration, and oppression hauntingly unavoidable as the disaffected protagonist, to whom we are gradually introduced, unexpectedly meets and is greeted by his old friend and eventual torturer at the clumsily mechanized and robotically patrolled gates securing the elevators which carry him to his daily work. Gilliam's use of humor and his reverence for human aspiration makes his depiction of a world where knowledge is the vehicle for control all the more effective. Rorty's (1989: 169-188) discussion of 1984 in Irony, Contingency, and Solidarity is filmically expanded with peculiar genius in Gilliam's extraordinarily ambitious and perceptive work.

7. In their disavowal of the quest for a singular, harmonious societal form, the postmodernists may simply be faithful to the Greek origins of "utopia" as the compound
of ou, meaning "not" or "no," and "topos," meaning place. That is, in resigning the prospect of utopia, postmodernists are literalists who share, albeit for reasons that have little to do with lament, the sense captured by Samuel Butler (1927) when he named his utopian society Erewhon, or "nowhere" spelled backwards.

8. The novelist John Barth's (1984: 64) essay The Literature of Exhaustion, plays out the theme of the tiresomeness as much as the tiredness of modernist conventions in relationship to the writing and reading of fiction, a theme which has a decidedly up side: By "exhaustion" I don't mean anything so tired as the subject of physical, moral, or intellectual decadence, only the used-upness of certain forms or the felt exhaustion of certain possibilities—by no means necessarily a cause for despair.

9. Donald Willower's (1994: 57) remarks in his article "Administration of Education as a Field of Study" in The International Encyclopedia of Education makes the following telling comment in comparing educational administration to its "stronger" cousins in the social science disciplines:

Educational administration has a weaker intellectual culture and a stronger attachment to practice. In the past, both of these characteristics have meant that a segment of the professoriate in educational administration has been quite detached from the kind of [epistemological/philosophical] debates chronicled here, and has been mainly devoted to teaching about the more practical aspects of administration. Such professors often work with school personnel, most of whom, it seems reasonable to conjecture, would find many of the criticisms made by subjectivists and critical theorists arcane or objectionable.

Although Willower's comment might be read as an endorsement by those advocating less intellectually obvious perspectives like postmodernism, he is quick to put such advocates, who may enjoy professorships in educational administration, in their place by continuing his thought:

The weak intellectual culture of the field has also meant that it has been vulnerable to trendy ideas, whether old, new, or old presented as new.

10. Morgan (1992: 1) coined the composite word "glitterspeak" to convey the nature of the discourse that has come to characterize contemporary educational talk. Morgan creates this word in order to capture an increasingly prevalent phenomenon that is much less innocuous and far more malignant than simple deception:

There are numerous situations where people spout the rhetoric, but don't live the message. It's an interesting situation, because many of the people engaged in the 'glitterspeak' are committed individuals who believe what they are saying. Often they believe that they 'walk the talk'... But in the reality of their roles and institutions, and in the context of the constraints with which they have to deal, words and actions often deliver conflicting messages.

We may gain insight into this double deception of other and self by comparing it to Sartre's (1975/1953: 88-116) understanding of mauvaise foi or "bad faith," to which
glitterspeak bears a family resemblance. As Sartre points out, the intentional deceiver maintains at least one residual virtue: s/he knows what is really going on. On the other hand, "bad faith is a type of being in the world, like waking or dreaming, which by itself tends to perpetuate itself" (Sartre, 1975/1953: 113). As bad faith proliferates, it becomes invisible to the individuals living under its dominion, and it is this invisibility that makes it—like educational glitterspeak—so perniciously effective.

11. In an observation made striking by its obviousness, an obviousness we seldom comprehend given our effusive talk of "managing life," Odo Marquard (1991: 24) calls attention to how the obdurate and the unpredictable are natural to us, however alien and offensive they may be to our epistemologies and to educationists:

To have problems with which one does not get finished is irritating for the theory of science, but normal for humanity . . . There are human problems in regard to which it would be antihuman, and thus an error in the art of living, not to have them, and superhuman, and thus an error in the art of living, to solve them.

In a related line of thought, Marquard (1991: 105) emphasizes that uniformity of agreement too is an often overrated attribute that can stultify the human conversation rather than bring interest to it:

- consensus is by no means always necessary; what is much more valuable is productive misunderstanding . . . philosophers bring with them from the tradition of their discipline—a two and a half thousand year old tradition of not arriving at agreement on fundamental positions—something that is useful in interdisciplinary discussion, namely, the ability to live with open aporias and surpluses of nonconsensus. The philosophers' ancient vice, as a profession—their chronic deficit of consensus—turns out to be an ultramodern interdisciplinary virtue: above all, a proficiency in surviving conversational confusion without discouragement.

Although Marquard would, in all probability, be chagrined by the designation "postmodernism" as much as or more than is Rorty, his depiction of difference and discord as virtues strikes a sympathetic chord with postmodernist themes spelled out by Lyotard. Perhaps his usage of the term "ultramodern" is a less ideologically prone surrogate for "postmodern."

12. The relationship between the scientific reduction of human affairs to general, law-like principles and the quest to establish technical control over the individual is hardly coincidental. The intentional character of this relationship is amply illustrated by citing the arguments used to rationalize the recent restatement of the scientific approach to educational administration advocated by Evers and Lakomski (1991: 219, emphasis added):

- the task of philosophy, which is not sharply distinguished from but continuous with empirical science, is to find general principles common to all sciences. This means extending the use of such principles even to the regulation of human conduct and the organization of society. The move to a postpositivist philosophy of science is quite compatible with such a view of the nature of science and its role in human affairs.
There seems something pathetic in our apparent inability to step or to want to step outside the deeply embedded cultural and philosophical presumption that human life presents but a series of opportunities to exercise mastery. Until we are able to persuasively articulate other ends, the tautological valorization of science as the engine of technical control will remain unchallenged and alternatives will, in all likelihood, remain unseen.

13. Wolf Heydebrand (1988: 296-7) has offered the intriguing suggestion that crisis itself can present an opportunity for "sociotechnical systems" to demonstrate their efficacy in achieving mastery rather than to reveal the obsolescence of the technocratic agenda:

The internalization of crisis and change also facilitates the possibility of ideologically concealing the crisis character of the system in question. From this perspective, complexity and change appear to be a function of the strategies and controls that have been applied, not a function of uncontrollable forces.

We may read Heydebrand's comments as a useful gloss on the disciplinary crisis that now faces educational administration. It helps us understand how a purported crisis may vivify attempts to mask rather than to explore the implications of fundamental questions concerning the modernist quest for mastery. This masking will surely be manifested in the undoubtedly forthcoming succession of attempts to shore up rather than to explore alternatives to the scientific program to establish control in human affairs.

14. We shall see below that some scholars and researchers have coupled a positivistic facticity with metaphysics to create philosophical warrants for the regulation of educational organizations and the individuals within them. Alasdair Maclntyre's Aristotelianism, which fuels an often telling critique of modernism with equally prescriptive ambitions, is mirrored in the educational administration research and writing of Mark Holmes. Such work would supplant the vapid empirically sourced behavioral control of individuals it critiques with a normative philosophical/metaphysical regulation of social organizations. Where science disdains hermeneutical approaches as "philosophical," this metaphysically "re-sourced" positivism reproves them as "nihilistic" (see for example Holmes's extended debate with C. A. Bowers and others about nihilism, liberalism, and values in the American Journal of Education August 1985 and August 1986 issues)." Both anxiously equate the dropping of mastery with a vertiginous invitation to chaos.

15. The equation of knowledge with reduction to cause has not withered with the supersession of positivism and the Theory Movement. The field continues to effect rear-guard actions that would perpetuate its continuing indenture to a somewhat staid appropriation of science. As is alluded to above and as is commented upon further in the third chapter, the "post-positivist" coherentism advanced by Evers and Lakomski may be viewed as the most recent attempt to bolster the reductive knowledge forms once associated with positivism. As the coherentist program shows, the reduction of phenomena to generalizable causes—in this case the physical movement of atoms and molecules in the neural "wetware" of decision-makers (see Evers & Lakomski,
1995)—continues to be the epistemic gold standard within educational administration. And, as is noted in endnote 12 in this chapter, Evers and Lakomski leave little doubt that their reduction to the physical is in the service of mastery, regulation, and control. Maxwell's outline of the scientific approach to social phenomena cited above allows us to see that coherentism is but the putting of the old epistemic reductionist wine into new, post-positivist wineskins. Caveat emptor!

16. As we shall see in detail in the third chapter of this dissertation, Maclntyre's perceptive deconstruction of "managerial effectiveness" is in the service of an agenda no less problematic than the one he critiques. Maclntyre's (1984) solution to the bad state in which he takes moderns to be, is to impose a teleologically funded social regulation sourced in his particular and selective reading of Aristotle. Nevertheless, his critique of managerialism and bureaucracy are pertinent to our discussion as are his concepts of practice, narrative, and tradition, which, when "de-teleologized," can help us to an enlightened understanding of what Mintzberg (1973) called The Nature of Managerial Work.

17. In his book The True and Only Heaven: Progress and Its Critics, Christopher Lasch (1991: 530) distinguishes hope from optimism. Lasch's skeptical view of progress allows him to understand how modernist optimism differs from a hopefulness that is independent of a real or imagined mastery:

We can fully appreciate this kind of hope only now that the other kind, better described as optimism, has fully revealed itself as a higher form of wishful thinking. Progressive optimism rests, at bottom, on a denial of the natural limits on human power and freedom, and it cannot survive for very long in a world in which an awareness of those limits has become inescapable. The disposition properly described as hope, trust, or wonder, on the other hand—three names for the same state of heart and mind—asserts the goodness of life in the face of such limits. It cannot be defeated by adversity.

While the crisis of modernism results from mastery's disappointment, the same disappointment gives rise to a postmodernist sense of hope. Modernism's closure, manifested as the destabilization of reductive certainties, is postmodernism's opening to what remains largely unexplored but noticeably different territory.
Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

Chapter 3
Leadership As Interpretive Moral Praxis

The term leadership is an incantation for the bewitchment of the led.

—Christopher Hodgkinson, Proposition 6.4, Towards a Philosophy of Administration (1978: 219)

Against that positivism which stops before phenomena, saying "there are only facts," I should say: no, it is precisely facts that do not exist, only interpretations . . .

—Friedrich Nietzsche, Notes¹ (1967/1888: 458; emphasis in original)

Towards A Non-Reductive Redescription of Leadership

Leadership is an elusive concept. Like Humpty Dumpty's portmanteau words (Carroll, 1966/1896: 215) "leadership" packs up multiple meanings many of which can seem confusing or even contradictory. Clarity in definition as well as in analytical approach appears to be at a premium. As Benjamin DeMott (1993: 66) sniped in his Harper's Magazine article "Choice Academic Pork: Inside the leadership-studies racket," the currently abundant talk about leadership calls up oddly mixed references and a perplexing assortment of neologisms:

the leadership cult's quasi-official language is a blend not only of Tom Peters and John Naisbitt but of Thomas Kuhn, Zen, Pentagonese, and traditional psychobabble as well. Keywords and phrases include "megaskill," "capstone experience," "futures-creative," "program design matrices," and "diversity training." Key proverbs and sayings are pretentiously gnomic.

But while the current spate of popular and more esoteric leadership writing may merit DeMott's ill regard, even straightforward attempts to define leadership result in a plethora of meanings. Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary (1986) tells us that
the verb "lead" is derived from the Old English word *laedan*, which in turn is derived from both the Old High German word *leiten* meaning "to run ahead," and the Old English word *lithan* meaning "to go." Webster's offers no less than ten meanings of the verb and each has distinctive associations which emphasize differing aspects of what the act of leading can entail.

\[
\sim vt 1 \text{ a: to guide on a way esp. by going in advance} \quad b: \text{ to direct on a course or in a direction} \quad c: \text{ to serve as a channel for [a pipe \(\sim s\) water to the house]} \\
2: \text{ to go through: LIVE \([\sim a\ quiet\ life]\)} \\
3 a (1): \text{ to direct the operations, activity, or performance of [\(\sim an\ orchestra\)]} \quad (2): \text{ to have charge of [\(\sim a\ campaign\)]} \\
b (1): \text{ to go at the head of [\(\sim a\ parade\)]} \quad (2): \text{ to be first in or among [\(\sim the\ league\)]} \quad (3): \text{ to have a margin over [\(\sim his\ opponent\)]} \\
4: \text{ to bring to some conclusion or condition [I am led to conclude that it failed]} \\
5: \text{ to begin play with [\(\sim trumps\)]} \\
6 a: \text{ to aim in front of (a moving object)[\(\sim a\ duck\)]} \\
b: \text{ to pass a ball or puck just in front of (a moving teammate)} \\
\sim vi 1 \text{ a: to guide someone or something along a way} \\
b: \text{ to lie, run, or open in a specified place or direction [path \(\sim s\) uphill]} \\
2 a: \text{ to be first} \\
b (1): \text{ BEGIN, OPEN} \quad (2): \text{ to play the first card of a trick, round, or game} \\
3: \text{ to tend toward or have a result [studying \(\sim ing\) to a degree][failure of negotiations led to a strike]} \\
4: \text{ to direct the first of a series of blows at an opponent in boxing syn see GUIDE \(\text{ (bold, italic, and symbols in original)}\)

While each of these definitions contribute, as might the sources DeMott would dismiss, to an understanding of various aspects of leading, none provides a holistic sense of what constitutes the purposeful and value-laden human activity that is leadership.

The act of leading can assume meaning and moral significance in this latter sense only when both its context and its objectives are given clarity. Definitions that would eschew the particulars of situation and the specific purposes to be advanced by reducing leadership to either boilerplate procedures or to desirable personal traits do little to unwind discussion of a knotty topic. Such technocratic and charismatic reductions leave us with an understanding of leadership that can be little more than the bewitchment against which Hodgkinson and DeMott, each in their own fashion, warn.

To move beyond definitions that describe leadership as an instrument for ensuring organizational expedience and effectiveness, we must situate leadership within a context that permits us to give it the moral orientation and axiological coherence that can distinguish human activity from that of other equally purposeful animals.
In an attempt to avoid the temptation of technical, charismatic, or other partial simplifications, I will in this chapter approach leadership indirectly rather than through definition. Beginning from an understanding of leadership as a purposeful human endeavor informed by intention and actualized within the social constructs (Berger & Luckmann, 1989) that we call organizations, this approach builds upon the concept "practice" (MacIntyre, 1984) and its similar praxis (Hodgkinson, 1978, 1983, 1991). These distinct but related concepts each contribute to an understanding of leadership in educational organizations that is coincident with the neo-pragmatic moral perspective outlined in the first chapter and with the postmodern redescription of knowledge presented in the second.

This coincidence is grounded in the role played by interpretation, language, and discourse in the actualization of organization as a collective activity conditioned through the interplay of human intentions, historical antecedents, and the unpredictabilities of chance. By viewing organization as the outward and visible manifestation of an extended conversation about perception (what is to be seen as significant), purpose (what is to be desired), and practice (what is to be done), the purely instrumentalist vocabulary associated with the quest for social mastery may be at least partially mitigated. Looking beyond and beneath organizations as rationally constructed machines for the instrumental realization of prescribed ends, they may be explored as organic and evolving structures through which sense would be made of experience and meaning would be assigned to event through continuing acts of individual and shared interpretation (March, 1982, 1984, 1986; March & Olsen, 1976; Weick, 1985, 1995; Weick & Bougon, 1986; Daft & Weick, 1984).

Applying the concepts and contexts developed in the first two chapters, university leadership may be redescribed as a knowledge-making activity that would bring coherence and meaning to individual and collective experience (Bensimon, 1987b; Bensimon, Neumann, & Birnbaum, 1989; Birnbaum, 1986, 1989a, 1990, 1992a&b; Cohen and March, 1986; Neumann & Bensimon, 1990; Thayer, 1988) in settings characterized by difference, divergence, and at times, conflict (Baldridge, 1971). By building and using a vocabulary that can convey this activity, we may come to appreciate elements of leadership and organization which have been either
devalued or ignored by the control-oriented language of a management science that would isolate the criterion of effectiveness from its broader moral context.

Christopher Hodgkinson's proposition, which appears at the head of this chapter, instigates the movement to an alternate perspective within which leadership may be rethought as a moral enterprise capable of superseding organizational enchantment. By making tacit reference to Ludwig Wittgenstein's (1953: no. 109) dictum that "Philosophy is a battle against the bewitchment of the intelligence by means of language," Hodgkinson's proposition wryly suggests that the language of leadership too often seeks to enthrall rather than to critically engage the intellect and, if it may be said in an academic dissertation, the spirit. Although this particular citation invokes irony, Hodgkinson's adoption of the propositional form used in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (Wittgenstein, 1961) is a less ironic reminder that he would build nothing less than a logic and language of leadership as "philosophy-in-action" (Hodgkinson, 1978: 202, prop. 1). His proposition tells us indirectly that if we are to replace tactical bewitchment with a more philosophically convincing and existentially adequate concept of administrative praxis, we must first critically reassess our assumptions about what leadership is. And to do this, we must build a vocabulary that is capable of examining these assumptions rather than subscribe to a language that too readily lends itself to their confirmation.

A second point prompted by Hodgkinson's remark, and which again makes tacit reference to Wittgenstein, is that leadership is part of a complex "language game" (Pondy, 1978; Wittgenstein, 1953 & 1974) that can conceal the uneven distribution of power, the significance of will, and the centrality of conflict in organizations. In interrupting the assumptions that have made leadership a desirable attribute and a winsome concept, Hodgkinson reveals the lived world of organizational administration as a problematic moral landscape in which contesting wills seek realization of their respective projects. As Hodgkinson's (1978: 217, prop. 6) axiom, "Power is the first term in the administrative lexicon" illustrates, this is a world where power and influence can matter greatly. And it is from this unsettled and frequently unsettling world that the nominally "value-free" and effectiveness-oriented language of management science would divert the observer's attention.
In contrast to much of the current literature of presumptive affirmation, Hodgkinson signals an alert that discussions of leadership are unduly unproblematized. He suggests that when we speak of leadership we unconsciously import a host of a priori assumptions that sanitize its enactment and overstate its value. These assumptions, like the guiding fictions posited by Vaihinger and Adler, confine our thinking to habitual patterns and expectations. By pushing us to reopen the bewitching language of leadership to scrutiny, Hodgkinson suggests that we may understand better what leaders do and the situations in which their work is completed. His signal encouragement is to seek clarity through the axiological constructs of value rather than through the reduction of complex patterns of social interaction to a technical language of instrumentality and brute fact.

Nietzsche, in the second quotation that opens this chapter, takes an unusual tack in addressing the question of how the distinction between facts and values imposes upon our definition of knowledge. Rather than belaboring how the two should ideally be interrelated, he denies the existence of fact, whether phenomenal, moral, or metaphysical, altogether. In his "epistemic interpretivism" or "perspectivism," which we have glimpsed in the previous chapter, Nietzsche would put an end to the long, often tedious, and usually unproductive debates between fact and value, quantitative and qualitative, and objective and subjective.

For Nietzsche, as for Rorty, such debates between paired opposites occur only through the subterfuge that we can have access to an objective knowledge that transcends and determines our theories. Once admitted, this deception gives way to the recognition that knowledge can only be derived and represented through the act of interpretation—that knowledge is interpretation. The knowing subject, as Greenfield has emphasized, cannot conceal its agency as creator. In asserting that knowledge, whether of the phenomenal world, of axiological foundations, or of metaphysical "truths," is made rather than discovered, Nietzsche, to cite Richard Bernstein's (1988) book title, presses us to move beyond objectivism and relativism. In Nietzsche's view such dichotomies can only invite partisan diversions from more fundamental, if more troubling, realizations.
Notwithstanding his reputation as an uncompromising champion of an instinctual will, Nietzsche's interruption of the simple equation of fact and knowledge has distinct moral implications. By collapsing the dichotomy between interpretation and truth, he obviates both the empiricist search for objective knowledge certified in the commensuration of claim with reality and the metaphysical quest for a transcendent moral standard. Although the epigraph to this chapter specifically disparages the positivistic urge to methodologically ensure the objectivity underwritten by "value-freeness," Nietzsche's remarks also imply that the classical transcendental project to secure an atemporal, abiding, and final moral certainty is equally fallacious.

Within the Nietzschean perspective, the construction of knowledge is an active, open, and continuous quest necessarily imbued with values. And it is, therefore, in and through our making of knowledge that we ultimately disclose ourselves as moral beings. For Nietzsche, our epistemic constructs become a telling self-portrait and a collective axiological confession.

In moving from a unitary language of discovery to a multiplex vocabulary of making, we no longer, as Nietzsche puts it, "stop before phenomena." In acknowledging that phenomena represent a complex interweaving of presupposition, perception, and intent, we give up the security and moral neutrality of fact-finding in exchange for the active responsibility of knowledge-making. The methodological quest to underwrite the discovery of purportedly objective explanations and extrinsic truths that would excuse moral engagement, therefore, is replaced by a recognition of making, a rhetoric of meaning, and an anticipation of difference.

Nietzsche's interpretivist restructuring of knowledge has marked moral implications for how we may perceive and describe leadership. Within organizations, leaders are in a unique position to determine what sorts of knowledge will be supported, developed, and perceived as meaningful and significant. As is noted above in the first chapter, "Leaders' thinking defines and frames reality for themselves and often for their constituents" (Bolman & Deal, 1993: 21; emphasis added). The combination of bewitchment and influence can make leader thinking so ontologically persuasive that, within organizations and, at times, beyond them, leaders can literally determine "what is real and what is not" (Dylan, 1965). But as Nietzsche points out, the
making of knowledge through the interpretive prerogative exercised by leaders and the consequent shaping of reality are enjoined by an indelible moral element. Given David Cameron's (1992: 167) assertion that "Organization is instrumental of values," we may expect to find that organizational characteristics and features normally enumerated as facts are also indicative of formative principles and beliefs. The translation of leadership as knowledge-making underscores, then, the significance of the epistemic and ultimately, per Nietzsche, moral responsibility that is attached to the values implicit in organizational structures, practices, and acts.

To view leadership as a site for the generation of a value-laden knowledge within organizations, is to give operational form to Hodgkinson's expression of leadership as philosophy-in-action. The exploration of leadership understood in this way, however, requires a different epistemic approach than those which end in either reductive empirical explanations or in authoritative transcendental truths obtained through either revelation or metaphysical speculation. In comprehending leadership as an underdetermined, iterative, and continuous moral endeavor, we must look further than methodologies that would produce either the scientific or moral certainty necessary for the definitive resolution of value difference. For, where empirical reduction would facilitate mastery through enabling prediction, it, as Greenfield (1986: 68) notes, also must preclude valuation:

if values are real, and if they are beyond the scope of positivist science, then a science of social order that claims to be value-free must remain silent in the face of the central issues of organizational and administrative life.

And where transcendently funded truths would dictate values, they, as Rorty suggests (1980: 383), undermine and mask the moral choices that are continuous with and essential to the administrative act:

This attempt to answer questions of justification by discovering new objective truths, to answer the moral agent's request for justifications with descriptions of a privileged domain, is the philosopher's special form of bad faith—his special way of substituting pseudo-cognition for moral choice. (Rorty, 1980: 383)

The sources for the meanings that give definition both to leadership and organization, then, will necessarily be different than the sources used to derive cause-
and-effect explanations or to sanction prescriptive compliance with transcendent norms. In this "re-sourcing" of knowledge, the narrative intonations of the individual voice can take precedence over both statistical aggregate and metaphysical warrant. The particularistic knowledge about leadership developed in this study will, accordingly, assist us in making a series of sketches that picture five university presidents made distinct by the images of organization and leadership held by each, and the administrative praxis each enacts. The information developed from the presidential conversations and the supporting information presented in the fifth chapter will allow us, in the sixth and final chapter, to formulate what I call "fourteen antithetic inferences" about the university presidency and the kinds of leadership presidents see themselves supplying to uniquely complex organizations. To paraphrase Greenfield's (1993: 55) remark that "Our conceptions of organizations must be as complex as the reality we try to understand," these interpretative renderings of person, office, and setting must be as diverse and as variegated as the individual perspectives they would represent.

The sketches, which are preliminary to full presidential portraits, and the inferences, which are antecedent to more developed speculations about the presidency, neither boil down to empirical "realities" nor add up to prescriptive codes, rules, and standards capped by metaphysical "truths". Unlike the Evers and Lakomski empiricist reduction of administrative coherence to the molecular chemistry of synaptic firings, they are also unlike the metaphysical project advanced in the writings of Maclntyre, which would reduce administrative probity to compliance with eternal metaphysical signposts. In contrast to such reductive ventures in which the particular would be disciplined through the assertion of putative generals, these antecedents to portraiture and speculation require an attentiveness to the details that separate one subject from another.

The transition from both the artificial constraints of "scientific realism" (Evers & Lakomski, 1991) and the ethical prescriptions of metaphysics to a verisimilitude with human circumstance and individual experience entails a movement from simplicity to complexity, from comprehensiveness to situatedness, from homogeneity to difference, and from closure to openness. Rather than seeking to grasp leadership through a
reduction of individual experience to empirical fact or transcendental norm, the task undertaken herein is to map a decidedly human, and therefore varied, landscape in which ambiguity, chance, openness, and poiesis⁶ (Shakotko & Walker, 1996) contest the centrality of certainty, prediction, conformity, and control. The purpose is to exchange the unfilled promises of an errant methodological reductionism for something less defined, more modest, and of greater existential substance.

**Practice, Narrative, Tradition and Praxis**

Informed by Hodgkinson and Nietzsche with an incredulity towards the metanarrative of mastery, two arguments are made in this chapter. The first, that leadership can be read as a moral praxis unencumbered by determinative metanarratives, entails an extended review of Alasdair MacIntyre's (1984) definition of "practice," "narrative," and "tradition" presented in his book *After Virtue*. When read critically—here I acknowledge my indebtedness to Richard Bernstein's (1986) discerning reading of MacIntyre—without metaphysical trappings, and, therefore, in a manner seemingly contrary to their author's intentions, this family of concepts can elucidate leadership both as observed phenomenon and as lived experience. The nonmetaphysical recontextualization of MacIntyre's primary concepts leads, in turn, to a consideration of Hodgkinson's understanding of praxis as central to a nonprescriptive moral approach to educational leadership (Barlosky, 1992).

The second argument, that interpretation is integral both to the exercise of organizational leadership and to our understanding of it, begins in Charles Taylor's consideration of the kinds of knowledge that are appropriate to human affairs. In his critique of positivistic empiricism, Taylor distinguishes the knowledge we may have of things human from the knowledge we may have of the natural world. In doing so, he argues that the reductive methodologies characteristic of the natural sciences can only produce a distorted picture of human undertakings. Taylor's (1985a) rendering of the human being as "the self-interpreting animal" underwrites his claim that hermeneutic knowledge, in contradistinction to either empirical or transcendental reductions, must be primary to whatever understanding we may have of human projects.
To say that leadership may be understood as a fundamentally moral endeavor realized interpretively within a context of uncertainty, contingency, and difference requires some additional clarification about how the term "moral" can be distinguished from the term "moralistic". As stated above in "A Note on Words and Their Usage," where the term moralistic is characterized as being both prescriptive and proscriptive, the term moral is neither. On the contrary, to be moral is to engage axiological issues non-catechistically through open discussion rather than to instill fixed moralistic answers through indoctrination. The point of closely following MacIntyre's rendering of practice, narrative, and tradition is both to appreciate concepts signal to understanding leadership as a moral practice articulated in individual narratives and acts, and to uncouple these concepts from a transcendental metanarrative that would make the exercise of leadership prescriptively "moralistic."

The task at hand may be rephrased as the separation of moral discourse from the derivation of and the adherence to fixed moralistic moorings. The objective is to develop a set of concepts through which leadership may be elucidated as a moral praxis in a manner consistent with the conditions that Rorty and Lyotard apply to knowledge. Within this perspective, which forsakes the

search for an algorithm of theory choice, or for clear and explicit criteria for demarcating science from nonscience, or for reconstructing the permanent standards that it is believed ought to govern the validation of scientific hypotheses and theories . . . (Bernstein, 1988: 23), knowledge is understood as a process of continuous description and redescription moving through repeating cycles of experience, interpretation, conversation, and learning. Once the quest for commensurability between idea and objective reality no longer drives a singular epistemic agenda, knowledge-making becomes an interpretative, an iterative, and a historically and culturally grounded process (see Figure 1. "Knowledge-Making: A Non-Algorithmic Epistemology—Knowledge-Making as Cyclic Learning," p. 91). Consonant with this view of knowledge, the moral praxis of leadership is viewed as a situated and recursive activity through which individuals revisit and clarify learned assumptions in the light of experience and evolving personal beliefs and values as they confirm, discard, and reconfigure their images of administration and organization. An instancing of this iterative process is represented
Figure 1
Knowledge-Making
A Non-Algorithmic Epistemology -- Knowledge-Making as Cyclic Learning
In this study, through the narratives that presidents construct in interviews concerning their personal and professional selves and the situations of their work.

MacIntyre's *After Virtue*: Redescribing Leadership in a Narrative Mode

"Strong Readings" and Reading MacIntyre: A Model for Post-Objectivist Inquiry

As an outfall of the epistemic position presented in *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* that "truth is made rather than found," Rorty (1989: 53) is led to commend the practice of "strong reading." This notion, derived from the literary criticism of Harold Bloom, particularly as presented in his book *The Anxiety of Influence* (H. Bloom, 1973), repositions inquiry after metanarratives. In addition to re-framing what we can mean by knowledge, a leitmotif in this dissertation, the concept of strong reading provides a useful set of reference points for the extended critique of MacIntyre presented immediately below.

Dislodging inquiry from the still prevalent metaphor of discovery and the attendant methodologies that would effect the commensuration between idea and world that we define as "fact," the practice of strong reading provides a model for knowledge-making once the quest for this commensuration has been curbed. No longer engaging in the pretense that knowledge claims can be verified through correlation with an external, objective reality, they must now be given substance through a process of continuing comparison with other contesting knowledge claims, both past and present. Rorty (1989: 80), employing the pictorial metaphor that recurs so frequently in his work, gives immediate expression to this process by philosophically broadening Bloom's (1973: 94) more literary contention that "The meaning of a poem can only be another poem":

Since there is nothing beyond vocabularies which serves as a criterion of choice between them, criticism is a matter of looking on this picture and on that, not of comparing both pictures with the original.

As Kuhn (1970) holds in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, only those strong readings or reappropriations of once canonical givens that are most existentially resonant and which appear to speak most adequately to issues of current importance within particular communities of interest are affirmed. The "truths" affirmed through the requisite intercomparisons must be expressed, per Rorty, in the historically and
culturally conditioned medium that is language and will, therefore, continue to find interruption, revision, and completion through subsequent strong readings. As new experience seeks more adequate expression, previous strong readings will continue to give way to more persuasive ones, which draw selectively in form and substance upon their precursors.

Bloom, who confines his discussion to the uneasy evolution of that which is "new" in poetry, describes what he calls "six revisionary ratios" through which the existent is transformatively appropriated by the emergent. Of these, the first two, *clinamen* and *tessera* are most pertinent to the present discussion. Bloom (1973: 14, also see 19-48) extends the meaning of *clinamen*, a term taken from Lucretiuis, "where it means a 'swerve' of the atoms so as to make change possible in the universe," to things poetic:

A poet swerves away from his precursor, by so reading his precursor's poem as to execute a *clinamen* in relation to it. This appears as a corrective movement in his own poem, which implies that the precursor poem went accurately up to a certain point, but then should have swerved, precisely in the direction that the new poem moves.

The term "tessera," which was used in ancient Hellenic mystery cults as a sign of initiation and is still used in mosaic-making, and which Bloom encounters in the psychoanalytic writings and cultural observations of Jacques Lacan (1953), combines the meanings of completion and antithesis. Brought within the orbit of poetry, Bloom (1973: 14, also see 49-76) redefines this concept as follows:

A poet antithetically "completes" his precursor, by so reading the parent-poem as to retain its terms but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough.

In a sense, and as Bloom recognizes, strong readings are principled misreadings or what he calls, connoting a positive sense of the subversive, "misprisions" that evoke new configurations of meaning implicit but undeveloped in existent poetry. The justification for these misreadings, through which the gradual unfolding of a culture is given articulation, is not an incremental approach to an objective, extrinsic truth, but the gradual evolution of verisimilar readings of what might matter most to us and therefore compel our attention. As Rorty (1989: 82) suggests, such readings gain an essentially "moral relevance" in that they "might conceivably
alter one's sense of what is possible and important." In underscoring this moral justification for strong misreadings, a justification completed in individual and social transformation, Rorty makes clear that Bloom's analysis contributes more than an interesting poetic aside.

That misreadings are not only unavoidable but essential to creating new insights, as well as to the expression of cultural continuity, provides both a permission and a context for the following misprision of Alasdair Maclntyre. It is, in this regard, worth noting that in *After Virtue* Maclntyre himself provides a strong misreading or misprision of Aristotle.\(^9\) In swerving from Maclntyre's telically closed Aristotelian universe, much as Maclntyre swerves from Aristotle's metaphysical biology, I shall attempt, paraphrasing Bloom's (1973: 14) notion of *tessera*, to retain Maclntyre's central terms "practice," "narrative," and "tradition," "but to mean them in another sense, as though the precursor had failed to go far enough."

**A Misprision of After Virtue: Clinamen, A Corrective Swerve**

To comprehend *After Virtue* adequately, it is important to recognize from the outset that it is redemptive in both intention and form. It is a highly sophisticated moral and epistemic rescue mission phrased as an extended homily directed especially to those who have become mired in what Maclntyre considers to be the philosophical wreckage of modernism. A recapitulation of the archetypal salvation drama of loss and redress,\(^{10}\) the text moves from a depiction of the fall to a redemption whose availability is dependent upon subscription to the good it would progressively reveal. For Maclntyre, this recovery is actualized in the act of remembrance which leads to the existential grounding of a forsaken philosophical tradition in a narratively contextualized practice.\(^{11}\)

The fall that Maclntyre depicts is a fall from virtue; the redemption he proposes is marked by virtue's recovery and the consequent recovery of definitive guidelines for the moral life. Maclntyre reads the recession of virtue as coextensive with the advent of modern philosophical inquiry. It is continuous with what he calls the "Enlightenment Project" in which the unifying Aristotelian tradition of the virtues, that had once given sense and balance to human affairs, is gradually disparaged and finally forgotten.\(^{12}\)
For MacIntyre, this mnemonic fall has resulted in a confused liberal individualism that is both ignorant and erosive of the virtues within which human existence can know and achieve the ends appropriate to it.\textsuperscript{13} Going forward within the assumptions of this liberalism can only exacerbate the problem; the redemptive path must, therefore, be one of the recall and restoration of a classical tradition Maclntyre believes to have been dislodged at great cost.

MacIntyre begins \textit{After Virtue} by inviting the reader to consider a catastrophe in which humankind has lost its bearings through a fundamental rupture with the determinative traditions needed to endow experience and knowledge with coherence. After this catastrophic rupture, which entails the loss of virtue, humans are helpless and hapless beings whose very language and its associated cultural commonplaces become progressively impervious to them. Erstwhile cultural norms founder upon a lack of meaning which individuals are powerless to overcome because they are separated from the tradition of the virtues needed to govern their modes of interaction as well as their sense of self and world.

As the reader begins to suspect, Maclntyre is not merely casting a clever thought experiment. What has been introduced is a penetrating allegorical depiction of what he regards as the signal debility of the modern condition. This debility presents itself in bold relief whenever moral issues are confronted. Because the modern philosophical habit has deprived itself of the overarching and rational sense of what constitutes a singular image of the good, Maclntyre can only regard contemporary moral issues as crises eliciting a great deal of emotive noise but ultimately incapable of rational resolution. There is simply no appeal to a determinative and unitary moral standard which would settle axiological difference by defining the essence and purposes of human life. For Maclntyre, the house of modernism is a moral tower of Babel.

The first part of MacIntyre's three-fold argument for the restoration of the virtues develops the notion of practice. The second places the idea of practice within the context of "the narrative order of a single human life." And the third nests the two previous arguments within Maclntyre's concept of an encompassing and teleologically defined moral tradition. The three arguments form the concentric arenas within which
MacIntyre would progressively mitigate the damage made manifest in contemporary ethical dilemmas. Beginning with practice, proceeding through narrative, and ending with telos, each stage would effect a restoration of the nomothetic constants that have become lost in the Enlightenment Project’s fruition as a morally discordant modernism. In arguing that MacIntyre fails in his attempt to restore a telically funded metaphysic capable of regulating human affairs, I will, as is previously remarked, attempt to preserve the three core concepts: practice, narrative, and tradition. To see why MacIntyre’s Aristotelian project founders and why concepts central to it become available for recontextualization, we must follow the arguments through which his attempt to reinstate the virtues is structured.

MacIntyre (1984: 187) begins his tripartite argument for the teleological efficacy of the virtues by defining a practice as follows:

By a practice I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realized in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.

By progressively realizing the goods internal to a practice in accordance with the standards of excellence appropriate to it, an individual is both initiated into those goods and gradually becomes an exemplar of them. The practitioner is thus authenticated as an agent whose nomothetically guided actions are increasingly endowed with the purpose, efficacy, and unity that inhere in a practice. In actualizing the goods internal or intrinsic to a practice, the transformation of the individual into the practitioner thus marks the first step in the redemptive return to virtue.

Distinct from the external or contingent goods which may accrue accidentally, internal goods give form and definition to a practice and extend the human capacity for excellence. Through the example of the practice of portrait painting, MacIntyre (1984: 189-90) helps us to distinguish the internal and necessary goods of imagination, painterly skill, and accuracy in rendering from the external and contingent goods of fame, wealth, and social status. It is, therefore, in the goods internal to a practice where we may expect to find the imprint of the virtues.
And MacIntyre's (1984: 191) definition of virtue draws out its essential relationship to these existentially formative goods:

A virtue is an acquired human quality the possession and exercise of which tends to enable us to achieve those goods which are internal to practices and the lack of which effectively prevents us from achieving any such goods.

Virtues, then, are the qualities whose acquisition makes the realization of the goods internal to a given practice possible. They are the axiological catalysts that activate the moral transformation of activity into practice and of individual into practitioner. Practices, by embodying the virtues, instill an ineradicable moral vector in human action. To complete MacIntyre's painterly example, it is through the acquisition of the virtues of vision, commitment, self-discipline, and courage that the goods internal to the practice of portraiture may be actualized. In the absence of virtue, the possibility of actualizing these goods is foreclosed and the achievement of excellence in work and life is precluded. With the subtraction of the virtues, practice becomes mere role, knowledge is displaced by skill, and the moral agency of the practitioner is both moot and mute.

A practice, then, calls for the realization of the distinctive set of goods peculiar to it through acquisition of the requisite enabling virtues. Thus MacIntyre (1984: 188) speaks of the chess player who realizes the internal goods of "analytical skill, strategic imagination and competitive intensity" and who in his successive accomplishments demonstrates possession of the virtues of intelligence, courage, and tenacity. Although this paradigm case is coherent and sensible, there is nothing in MacIntyre's argument so far that would exempt practices, the virtues they require, and the goods internal to them, from the pluralism that manifests itself as nontrivial moral difference. As Bernstein (1986: 123) remarks in his critique of After Virtue:

Now it is important to realize just how wide the range of practices is. For while not everything is a practice, there do not seem to be any apriori limitations on what may become a practice. Given his own "definition" of practice, spying, smuggling, safecracking, the art of the executioner, and (despite MacIntyre's suggestion to the contrary) even torturing may become practices.

Such candidates for practices speak against MacIntyre's (1984: 191) earnest, if now questionable, assertion that:
we have to accept as necessary components of any practice with internal goods and standards of excellence the virtues of justice, courage and honesty.

This common core of virtues, however admirable, would seldom be necessary components of practices like those listed by Bernstein. As Bernstein (1986: 124) points out, Maclntyre's list of essential virtues comes undone once a plurality of practices is admitted: "indeed, what is a 'virtue' for one practice may well be a defect or a vice for another."

That different practices call up very different and often mutually exclusive "virtues," however, is not the only flaw in Maclntyre's argument for a unitary set of existentially determinative virtues. Even if Maclntyre's argument that all practices depend upon a common core of virtues is, for the sake of argument, conceded, he goes on to make an equally suspect claim in his attempt to reestablish the efficacy of the virtues he would advance:

In the realm of practices the authority of both goods and standards operates in such a way as to rule out all subjectivist and emotivist analyses of judgment. De gustibus est disputandum. (Maclntyre, 1984: 190; emphasis in original)

The assertion that practices are somehow able to purge themselves of all but objective analyses of judgement seems to seriously exaggerate the authority of the goods and standards internal to them. And yet, if practices are not able to internally regulate the subjectivity that generates the modernist dissonance Maclntyre deplores, they hardly seem capable of reestablishing the unity of virtues that he advocates.

By altering the Latinism "De gustibus non est disputandum" (there is no disputing about tastes), Maclntyre claims that within the context of a practice goods and standards operate in a uniform manner that permits sustainable and definitive judgements of accomplishment to be made. The normative standards of a practice are, thereby, invested with the authority needed to bring "is" and "ought" together, as Maclntyre goes on to claim, "in such a way" that objective assessment is ensured. For Maclntyre, participation in a practice invokes an ethical facticity that supersedes subjective moral judgement. The virtue of the "authentic" practitioner is, thus, plain for all to see and forecloses moral disagreement.
The self-defining quality of practices should, therefore, enable us to avoid several emblematic instances of what MacIntyre would consider to be the pluralist drone that makes arguments about so many contemporary judgments interminable. The objectively adequate goods and standards to which MacIntyre refers presumably should allow us, for example, to determine finally whether Ted Williams or Pete Rose was in fact the better baseball player, whether Mozart or John Coltrane was in fact the better composer, whether Michelangelo or Andy Warhol was in fact the better artist, or whether Jesus or Aristotle in fact offered the more profound philosophy of life. But clearly such matters do not yield to factual reduction; they remain the subject of argument based on individual discernment, predilection, and taste.

The "in such a way" in which "the authority of both goods and standards" are to "rule out all subjectivist and emotivist analyses of judgment" is, then, both unclear and unconvincing. Nevertheless, the points that MacIntyre raises in his discussion of practice do coincide, although in a more limited way than he might wish, with our experience of disciplines and professions. This experience leads us to agree with his point that a practice is typically realized in a community of practitioners whose activity extends through time and is governed by virtues actualized as internal goods that stand in a normative relationship to their work.

This normative relationship, however, is on at least two counts less morally efficacious and less objective than MacIntyre would have us believe. First, it neither guarantees the goodness of practices nor the value of the "virtues" associated with them. As we have seen, practices may involve traditions, disciplines, and skills that we find less than desirable; they may also engage virtues that are of questionable value. Second, the goods internal to a practice—whatever their relative worth—are seldom sufficient to substantiate definitive evaluative judgments of practitioners. Even when performance is at either extreme of the normal continuum, neither the certainty nor the generalizability of judgments can be guaranteed. Although MacIntyre would like to bring such judgments to final resolution through reasoned discourse within a sphere of agreed upon standards, evaluations of individual performance and practices typically remain subject to individual preference and perception that accentuate rather than diminish the differences he would exorcise.
The normative efficacy of practices is not only limited by the lack of operational definitions for the goods internal to them, disagreement as to the standards that are appropriate for measuring achievement, and an absence of effective methods for assessment. As MacIntyre (1984: 186) suggests himself when he states that his concept of virtue,

always requires for its application the acceptance of some prior account of certain features of social and moral life in terms of which it has to be defined and explained,

the goods and standards of a practice themselves lack determinacy, as they are subject to the contingencies of cultural context and to the accidents of history. For example, within the established rabbinical perspective of first Century Pharisees and Sadducees, Jesus was regarded, perhaps correctly, as offensive and dangerous. Indeed, within the contemporary Jewish community and the goods internal to it, the figure of Jesus is still regarded with skeptical ambivalence at best. A figure regarded as derelict and suspect in accordance with one set of internal goods, however, was regarded within the evolving vocabulary of the early Christian church as the most perfect possible incarnation of an omnipotent and loving God. A shift in descriptive context, then, often determined by historical happenstance and cultural predilection, can upset the surety that would make judgements resistant to the pluralist perspectivism which MacIntyre finds so debilitating.

Perhaps it is with such considerations in mind that MacIntyre (1984: 203; emphasis in original) softens his initial claim by noting that a practice defined by a particular set of internal goods and standards is not sufficient by itself to ward off the subjectivity and arbitrariness capable of scuttling attempts to restore a unified and definitive vision of the virtues:

unless there is a telos which transcends the limited goods of practices by constituting the good of a whole human life, the good of a human life conceived as a unity, it will both be the case that a certain subversive arbitrariness will invade the moral life and that we shall be unable to specify the context of certain virtues adequately.

MacIntyre, in what seems to be something of a strategic retreat, now states that only a transcendental telos appears sufficient to dispel the pluralism that can destabilize the moral life constituted in and through a practice. But how are we to understand this
"good of a whole human life" that on the one hand is the context in which practices are made meaningful and on the other is itself only given coherence through a transcendental telos? How does "the good of a human life conceived as a unity" simultaneously ensure the virtue of practices and embody the telos capable of regulating the virtues themselves?

To explicate how we may comprehend "the good of a human life conceived as a unity," MacIntyre introduces the concept of narrative. Narrative is the formative medium within which thoughts and actions can be captured and given coherence. It is in the making of narratives that we can envisage the doing of others and the significance that may be attached to it. Similarly narratives allow us to appreciate the impact of social context upon thought and conduct. Narrative, then, is the medium that allows us to place and to know the other as situated individual. As MacIntyre (1984: 211) says,

> in successfully identifying and understanding what someone else is doing we always move towards placing a particular episode in the context of a set of narrative histories, histories both of the individuals concerned and of the settings in which they act and suffer.

By supplying a continuing context through which expression and action are informed by the intentions, passions, and beliefs that characterize a unitary human life, narratives make our perceptions of others intelligible.

But narratives are more than means to understand the actions of others. More fundamentally, narratives are the medium in which we come to exist as individual and social beings. It is through the narrative of our life that we embody the stories that preexist us and that we orient ourselves and our actions by stories that have not yet been given form in lived events. Narrative, then, is both the ontological medium and the existential message of the human animal distinguished as the creature that tells stories. It is in these stories that event is signified with meaning and that actions become purposive. As MacIntyre (1984: 219; emphasis added) puts it,

> The unity of a human life is the unity of a narrative quest . . . the only criteria of success or failure in a human life as a whole are the criteria of success or failure in a narrated or to-be-narrated quest.
It is the narrative story that informs a life with purpose and meaning by creating the internal criteria against which action is assessed and achievement is measured.

Although MacIntyre’s introduction of narrative is intriguing, it appears to underscore the vulnerability of his unity thesis to that which is contingent, accidental, and plural. What is there within the structure of narratives to constrain the formulation of quests that would contravene what we normally regard as virtues? What is there intrinsic to narratives that would discount, for example, the narrative quest of the intelligent and to some extent virtuous Nazi, introduced by MacIntyre (1984: 179-80)? And conversely, what is there in the unity of a narrative quest that might convince the Pharisees and Sadducees that they were mistaken in their assessment of Jesus? MacIntyre, then, has not yet established that narratives are resistant to the "certain subversive arbitrariness" that undermines the moral unity of practices. Like the virtues that inform practices, the internal criteria narratives create for the assessment of a human life may be coherent, but they have no apparent "objective" claim to either surety or goodness. Narratives too fail to produce the standards against which moral dilemmas may be definitively resolved and through which the radical uncertainty of choice and the contingency of circumstance may be mitigated.

In attempting to fortify the normative quality of narratives, MacIntyre (1984: 219; emphasis in original) adds that the narrative quest must be informed by a telos, "a conception of the good which will enable us to order other goods." But MacIntyre (1984: 219) compromises his emphasized use of the definite article, by admitting that his notion of the “final telos" can only be "partly determinate." This admission is expanded in his further concession that a narrative quest must retain at least an element of indeterminacy: "A quest is always an education both as to the character of that which is sought and in self-knowledge" (MacIntyre, 1984: 219). Restated, MacIntyre appears to admit that while his concept of practice and narrative give coherence to particular human histories, they neither ensure their virtuousness nor preclude the disruptive moral contingencies he associates with modernism. In the end, the narrative quest that is the unity of a human life is a provisional and iterative composition oriented by a telos that only partially defines a good whose content remains open to debate. Said more simply, MacIntyre’s quest shares rather than
attenuates modernism's indeterminate openness. The "subversive arbitrariness" Maclntyre has previously depicted as an invader capable of thwarting the moral life is, finally, neither ruled out nor reigned in by his placement of the narrative quest within a teleological horizon.

Contrary to producing the unitary definition of the good needed to expel the uncertainties characteristic of the modern temperament, Maclntyre (1984: 219) provides an unexpectedly ambiguous, if profound, tautology in order to define how the good life for human beings is constituted:

We have then arrived at a provisional conclusion about the good life for man: the good life for man is the life spent in seeking for the good life for man, and the virtues necessary for the seeking are those which will enable us to understand what more and what else the good life for man is. Such a conclusion accords well with the Nietzschean perpectivism described above, but it hardly leads to the promised architecture of the virtues that would supersede the agonistic decisionism and irresolvable pluralism that, according to Maclntyre, needlessly haunt the modern individual. On the contrary, his "provisional conclusion" seems to reintroduce both with added vigor.

In affirming what appears to be a constructivist view of the moral life, Maclntyre seems to echo his arch antagonists, especially Nietzsche, Sartre, and their existentialist colleagues who would argue, in contradistinction to the classical tradition of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, that existence precedes essence. This surprising parallelism contradicts Maclntyre’s Aristotelian quest, a quest that depends upon "the concept of man understood as having an essential nature and an essential purpose or function . . ." (Maclntyre, 1984: 58; emphasis in original). The moral objectivity Maclntyre would claim as requisite to the restoration of virtue begins to slip away, and this slippage is a crucial weakness in his proposed restoration of moral unity in place of ethical dissonance. As Maclntyre himself admits, "once the notion of essential human purposes or functions disappears from morality, it begins to appear implausible to treat moral judgements as factual statements" (Maclntyre, 1984: 59). Against his own standards, Maclntyre seems to admit that there is little in his sense of practice, virtue, narrative quest, or telos that would eliminate or even discipline the pluralism,
subjectivity, and moral difference he tells us is uniquely characteristic of an errant modernism.

Lacking objective content sufficient to determine the good life for humankind, the plight of the individual is not relieved of modernism's uncertainties and the ambiguities that attend choice. The moral life remains a work in progress subject only to the contingencies of the "us" that has been placed by circumstance in a position to determine "what more and what else the good life for man is" (Maclntyre, 1984: 219). Minus the historical accidents that led to the Nuremberg trials, for instance, Albert Speer's practice and narrative in all likelihood would have been celebrated rather than declared perverse and punishable. The historical contingency manifested in this example reveals an extreme but an exact instance of the moral relativism that Maclntyre would wish to reverse; but, as yet, he has failed to provide the means to do so. As Bernstein (1986: 119) reminds us,

what Maclntyre has not yet done is to show us how rival and incompatible claims to truth about what we essentially are, what is our true nature, what are our genuine ends, what is the moral character of the universe in which we live, are to be rationally evaluated.

To find release from the hold of what is proving a tenacious pluralism, Maclntyre makes his third argument by turning to the importance of tradition as that which situates both practice and the individual life narrative within a transpersonal history and community. But how will tradition be defined and where within this tradition are we to find the normative strictures that can relieve modernism's arbitrariness and moral difference? Given that practices and narratives have histories enacted within diverse and divergent social and cultural communities, how are we to adduce the unified moral tradition from them that will define the good?

Maclntyre's readers may experience surprise at his definition of tradition on two counts: first, it too evades any specification of what concretely constitutes the good, and second, it is expressed in the plural. Once again risking circularity and indeterminacy, a tradition is defined as much by the sustained argument precisely about what constitutes the good for it, as it is by the good for which it would argue. As Maclntyre (1984: 222), again appearing to adopt a form of moral constructivism and Nietzschean perspectivism, writes:
when a tradition is in good order it is always partially constituted by an argument about the goods the pursuit of which gives to that tradition its particular point and purpose . . . . A living tradition then is an historically extended, socially embodied argument, and an argument precisely in part about the goods which constitute that tradition.

By speaking about traditions rather than the tradition, we are prompted to ask how the individual is to determine within which tradition s/he is to be located. Maclntyre's (1984: 222) answer to which arguments one should be having and towards what ends, hardly eludes the hazard of the contingent and the accidental:

the individual's search for his or her good is generally and characteristically conducted within a context defined by those traditions of which the individual's life is a part.

In other words, the traditions that define the good appear to be as contingent as the place and time in which one finds oneself, and the socialization one receives. Said differently, Maclntyre seems to agree that the traditions which express the virtues are as accidental and as situation specific as are most elements in most life histories. Contrary to the expectations he has initially raised, Maclntyre provides us with no coda, standard, or process that can reconcile the difference characteristic of either diverse socializations or of divergent cultural and historical moments.

The moral difference that Maclntyre finds so problematic, however, is not solely an attribute of either spatially or temporally separated cultural traditions. On the contrary, and as Maclntyre insists in his critique of modernism, divergent and often incompatible traditions vie for the individual's and the community's subscription in the shared place that is "here" and in the shared moment that is "now." And the debate about which tradition most adequately represents the virtues would appear to be as interminable, non-rational, and potentially as shrill as the contemporary moral arguments which Maclntyre denigrates as emotivist.

After his three-fold argument against modernism, then, Maclntyre returns us to the very dilemma with which he began. He appears to have done little to mitigate the dependence of virtue upon accident or to lessen the din of competing versions of the good. Bernstein's (1986: 118; emphasis in original) comments on the indeterminacy that attends Maclntyre's earlier treatment of the virtues can be applied equally to his later discussion of traditions:
One might even claim that what MacIntyre has shown us thus far really supports Nietzsche's case; that MacIntyre decoded is the champion of Nietzsche. Why? Because he not only shows that there are incompatible and incommensurable lists and theories of virtue, but has failed thus far to show how we can "rationally" adjudicate among rival claimants.

MacIntyre, however, is aware of the philosophical drift of his arguments, although he seems to underestimate its consequence for his revisionist Aristotelian project. This point becomes clear in a line of thought that begins with his explicit rejection of J. L. Austin's "exclusivist" argument,

that either we can admit the existence of rival and contingently incompatible goods which make incompatible claims to our practical allegiance or we can believe in some determinate conception of the good life for man . . . (MacIntyre, 1984: 223; emphasis in original)

In rejecting Austin's either/or alternative, MacIntyre presents a compelling image of what may be called "tragic decisionism." Tragic decisionism results when two or more incompatible goods, each having equal moral purchase on the protagonist's orienting sense of "the good life for man," vie for simultaneous commitment. Yet in presenting his concept of the tragic dilemma, MacIntyre appears to avoid the core issue of moral discernment—the issue that focuses his distaste for modernist indecisiveness—by moving to a second-order consideration. He tells us that when a decision is demanded and yet there is "no right choice to make" (MacIntyre, 1984: 224; emphasis in original), the tragic protagonist may still act with heroism, grace, and prudence. The good may to some extent be accomplished in how the protagonist brings off the decision made, even though the decision itself remains indelibly problematic.¹⁵

But this is an argument about how to do something rather than a guide to what should be done. It is as if MacIntyre would substitute an aesthetics of action for the failed teleological ordering of goods that would relieve the contingency of decision-making. Such a displacement of the moral—precisely when it becomes most significant—by the aesthetic is alien to MacIntyre's argument. In his previous denigration of the aesthete as one of three primary character types castigated as emblematic of modernism's poverty (the other two are, unsurprisingly, the bureaucrat/manager and the therapist), he (MacIntyre 1984: 24-44, 73-4) has already scorned aestheticism as yet another modernist escape from moral authenticity. Given
his salvific moral intent and his pronounced disdain for aestheticism, we would expect MacIntyre to provide at least some minimal guidance about what is to be done in moments of ethical conflict rather than to defer to matters of form. Such guidance, however, is not forthcoming, and its absence would appear to collapse MacIntyre's thesis that the self can be rescued from ambiguity, choice, and conflict by a guiding, nonconflicted telos made unambiguously manifest in practices, narratives, and traditions.

The rub is that MacIntyre, in the second chapter of After Virtue, has described three moral dilemmas the seeming irresolvability of which is used to substantiate his unforgiving critique of modern moral emotivism. These three dilemmas which are exactly of the type that would appear to pit goods of comparable value against each other are: the question of a just war, the issue of abortion, and the matter of the just distribution of social goods. MacIntyre would have us believe that these debates are only irresolvable, and hence deteriorate into matters of mere emotive preference, because we lack an overarching tradition informed by the virtues that would permit a rationally circumscribed resolution of the moral dilemmas they pose. His very mission, as we have seen, is to restore a tradition capable of obviating such indecision and indeterminacy precisely in matters where moral debate seems intractable. His inability to do so can only be read as a failure to meet the requirements of his own argument for the moral sufficiency, and hence the value, of a holistic and determinate Aristotelianism.

It is here that MacIntyre makes a final concession that seems to place him firmly within the Nietzschean horizons and the modernist problematic he has sought so earnestly to transcend. In what can only be read as a curious conclusion to his protracted three-fold argument for the moral life, MacIntyre (1984: 225) says simply, "What is better or worse for X depends upon the character of that intelligible narrative which provides X's life with its unity." The promised knowledge that would obviate the moral uncertainty and indecisiveness of modernism reduces in the end to the contents of the individually constructed narrative that provides a life with its sense of coherence. Even without reintroducing the spectre of MacIntyre's partially virtuous Nazi, we are left to wonder what normative or unifying effect such a conclusion could possibly have
upon the pluralism entrenched in modernist ethical debate. We appear left with little
guidance in terms of what sorts of actions would be unconditionally included in a
virtuous life and what sorts of actions would be unconditionally excluded from it. In
short, we have gained no sense of how MacIntyre's three-fold argument would bring the
moral questions cited in the second chapter of After Virtue to satisfactory closure.

After MacIntyre we are left, or so it appears, with no greater certainty about how
to order the moral confusion that has been declared modernism's unique debility.
Rather than proving the superiority of Aristotle's teleology over Nietzsche's
perspectivism, we are left with the impression that "MacIntyre and Nietzsche look like
close companions" (Bernstein, 1986: 126). For contrary to resolving the radical
uncertainty that stands at the center of the modernist experience,

it looks like, despite his intentions, he [MacIntyre] is making the case for
the type of decisionism he finds so objectionable in Nietzsche or Weber.
(Bernstein, 1986: 131)

Given MacIntyre's announced ambition to restore an ordered unity sufficient to
discipline the centrifugal tendencies inherent in pluralism, this outcome can only be
regarded as a disappointment. His attempt to produce a telic vocabulary within which
the moral dilemmas and epistemic disparities that have fractionated modernism can be
resolved has, after all his argumentation, failed. But the collapse of the mission to
resurrect a morally regulative telos can be read as something other and as something
ultimately more than a defeat of MacIntyre's neo-Aristotelian unity thesis.

Disentangled from the failed Aristotelian metaphysical project, MacIntyre's
concepts of practice, narrative, and tradition retain their pertinence and actually gain
philosophical significance and existential leverage. However inadvertently, MacIntyre
has supplied the vocabulary with which Nietzsche's interpretivism can be given
pragmatic and practicable form in an understanding of leadership as a moral practice
exercised within the complex and often conflicted human environments that are
organizations. Released from the normative pretensions of a metaphysical teleology,
leadership may be understood as a highly underdetermined moral practice informed by
contingent traditions and made accessible in individual narratives. Without recourse to
transcendent, metaphysically-secured norms, the practice of leadership can be
identified with the continuing narrative attempt to make sense of organizational
experience by creating meaning and significance from what organizations have done in the past, in what they do in the present, and around what they can and should do in the future. That MacIntyre has so vivified the vocabulary of practice, narrative, and tradition that it withstands the loss of its metaphysical context without diminution is, in the end, testimony to the power of the concepts he has put forward.

*From Practice to Praxis: Tessera, An Antithetical Completion*

It is, then, important to balance a critical reading of MacIntyre's failure to reverse what he has diagnosed perhaps too broadly as the moral travesty initiated by the Enlightenment Project with an appreciation of what he has, in fact, accomplished. In arguing his thesis, MacIntyre has shifted the ground of analysis for practices, narratives, and traditions from a reductive social scientific naturalism to a constructivist moral perspective shaped by intention, meaning, and reflection. When he says,

> What I have tried to spell out . . . is the kind of understanding of social life which the tradition of the virtues requires, a kind of understanding very different from those dominant in the culture of bureaucratic individualism, (MacIntyre, 1984: 225)

we may agree that he has, to a significant extent, accomplished his purpose.

After MacIntyre, the mechanistic understanding of practices as bureaucratically enacted, predefined roles is displaced by their redefinition as the primary arenas in which the often extemporaneous human activity of moral articulation must take place. MacIntyre's axiological infilling of practice and narrative, as well as his unforeseen pluralistic redescription of tradition, allows research into leadership to move from the empirical surface to deeper questions concerning the aspirations, beliefs, and values that unfold in the individual and collective search for knowledge and meaning. Similarly the notion of organization is transformed from a nexus of technocratic roles to the existentially "thick" settings where individual and shared purpose seek form. And the moral quests of individuals, made audible in narratives contextualized by the history and traditions of their particular settings, supersede "objective" and determinative organizational dynamics as the premier entry point for an understanding of social collectives and their reflexive impact upon private aspirations.
After the neo-Aristotelian scaffolding has been taken down, Maclntyre's constructs of practice, narrative, and tradition retain their resonance with experience and their ability to broaden and deepen our ways of understanding organizational leadership. Placed within a more axiologically and epistemologically open context, Maclntyre's three core concepts can be used to refashion an image of leadership as a moral engagement of the non-prescriptive kind, a leadership that can survive the morally turbulent, pluralistic currents of modernism without being dashed by them. If Bernstein is right "that Maclntyre decoded is the champion of Nietzsche," such a "replacement" allows us to employ Maclntyre's concepts to achieve ends to which they are, as the previous section proposes, more suited. The conceptual tools used to create the failed Aristotelian effort thereby become available for use in an alternative project restructured through a Nietzschean transposition of purpose. This movement from Aristotle to Nietzsche, from Maclntyre to Hodgkinson, and from practice to praxis allows us to approach leadership without pretending that it can be exempted from the moral dilemmas and the occasional anguish inherent in all human projects.

Although Maclntyre may exaggerate the hazards of difference that attend pluralism, I am not suggesting, that the outcomes of difference will always be happy or that they should be greeted Pollyannishly. When the tragic dilemmas depicted by Maclntyre do present themselves in their strongest terms, the ability to keep the human conversation intact can be severely tested. An inability to see a third way beyond a dichotomic "either/or" can result in moments of breakdown, fracture, and hostility. It is the appearance of difference as irresolvable and escalating conflict that poses the most severe dilemma for a moral discourse that would supersede both the technically efficacious "truths" of science and the metanarratives that promise a regulative, metaphysical certainty. And it is precisely here that Hodgkinson's development of the concept of praxis provides a vital axiological alternative to the prescriptive moral dictates associated with metanarratives.

Hodgkinson's logic of leadership is independent of the muting of difference promised by either science or metaphysics. Relieved of the need to eliminate or conceal antagonism, Hodgkinson's (1991: 90) separation of facts from values
presupposes that organizations are sites for continuing and, at times, troublesome conversations of difference:

Because of the radical difference between fact and value, it is both possible and likely for two observers to attribute two divergent values or sets of values to the same piece of objectivity or fact. Indeed they must do so, if only for the simple reason that everyone experiences the world from a different angle. No one can occupy the same life-space as another. The world comes up differently each time for each person. Therefore, in some very fundamental sense values are always in conflict.

Hodgkinson (1991: 76) not only accepts the occurrence of difference, but insists upon value conflict as the necessary starting point for any discussion of leadership as a moral enterprise:

Conflict cannot be eliminated from organizations; it is an essential, necessary and healthy part of their life. The leader has not so much to solve value conflict as to resolve it, continuously. Doing this cannot be a science, or a craft, but an art.

To see how much this separates him from the telic, determinative ambitions of classical metaphysics, we need only refer to Maclntyre's (1984: 157) comment:

Aristotle’s belief in the unity of the virtues is . . . one aspect of a hostility to and denial of conflict either within the life of the individual good man or in that of the good city. Both Plato and Aristotle treat conflict as an evil and Aristotle treats it as an eliminable evil . . . For Aristotle, as for Plato, the good life for man is itself single and unitary compounded of a hierarchy of goods.

In accepting the conflicted nature of organizational life, Hodgkinson abandons the effort to produce a moral sameness by either securing a uniform and pacifying hierarchy of goods or by seeking technical means sufficient to eliminate difference. He accepts from the outset that even when organizational participants subscribe to a generic set of virtues and share a common narrative history, their individual values, beliefs, and interests will give rise to distinctive and, perhaps, divergent thoughts and actions. It is a Hodgkinsonian axiom that the translation of the virtues into individual practices lends itself to contention rather than to harmony. He says, once again in propositional form,

6.132 Beware of friendliness in the realms of power. There is no need to beware of friendship. It does not exist. (Hodgkinson, 1978: 218)
Rather than seeking a prescriptive certainty or a technical expertise capable of eradicating organizational dissonance, Hodgkinson would provide the philosophical perspective and the pragmatic tools needed to work with individual and collective difference. Accepting the moral limitations of the individual and recognizing the potential for organizations to act perversely, Hodgkinson affirms the possibility of the good without trivializing or denying the potential for evil. As Greenfield (1991: 4) remarks in his introduction to Hodgkinson's book *Educational Leadership: The Moral Art*,

> Where the thrust of the modern field offers science and certainty—and ultimately release from responsibility through technical correctness—Hodgkinson offers choice, responsibility and the search for honor and rectitude; he offers art and morality in place of science and certainty.

Hodgkinson's readiness to view leadership as a moral art realized in a context of value difference and contests for power results in a significant variation upon MacIntyre's notion of practice. Avoiding the assumption that practice can be regulated by a normative and normalizing set of virtues and a standardized set of dispositions, Hodgkinson starts from the premise that leadership, beginning with those who seek to actualize it, will itself be marked more by difference than by uniformity.

> Of course, different kinds of men will come to the role of administrator, men with different characters and characteristics; men, that is to say, with different patterns of values. And their roles will be embedded in different types of organizational context, again with different patterns of values. (Hodgkinson, 1983: 53)

Given both individual and organizational value difference, Hodgkinson describes a moral practice of leadership that is non-isomorphic: that is, a moral practice that requires no unambiguous and uncontested extrinsic standard with which it may seek compliance.

Hodgkinson does so by drawing on what he refers to as Aristotle's three ways of knowing and acting in the world: *theoria*, *techne*, and *praxis*. *Theoria* or theory, the highest form of knowledge in the Aristotelian schema, is the conceptual insight that can yield abstract knowledge of the phenomenal world. Aristotle's attempt to formulate a metaphysical biology sufficient to determine what constitutes the unconflicted good for the human animal is a manifestation, albeit an errant one, of *theoria*. *Techne*, the root
from which technique and technology are derived, is reflected in the capacity to apply theory in the making of those goods which can enhance life and ease its burdens. In Hanna Arendt's (1958) terms, *techne* describes the human being as *homo faber*, the deliberate maker, and captures the technological disposition to mold both things and events. Where theory and technology are familiar polar concepts (e.g., they are reflected in our dichotomic pairing of "thinking" and "doing"), *praxis*, according to Hodgkinson, is a mode of thinking, being, and doing that largely has been lost to modern Occidentals.

Superseding Marxist ideological appropriations, Hodgkinson (1983: 55) defines *praxis* as "purposeful human conduct which would be an amalgam of theory (rationality, science) and values (morals, emotions, ethics)." Thus *praxis* is the middle ground or third way where the capacity to do seeks union with the capacity to value. As Hodgkinson (1983: 55) says, "*praxis* would then imply the conscious reflective intentional action of man." Bringing together the intellectual work of reflective thinking with the capacity to act, *praxis* activates and grounds philosophy in deed. *Praxis* thereby makes possible the translation of administration, either as a technical practice that would establish mastery or as means for establishing regulation through effecting conformity with metaphysically derived "oughts," into the axiologically imaginative and, at times, trying work of leadership.

Linking *praxis* to the pluralistic context of contemporary administration, Hodgkinson (1983: 56) suggests, "the need for such a valuational approach to administration is intensified in an era of pluralism and value confusion . . ." It is precisely in such times, when the "centre cannot hold" (Yeats, 1974/1920: 1925), that the possibility of the moral life must be most aggressively argued, affirmed, and enacted. The collapse of the prescriptive moral frameworks that increasingly shapes the modern temperament, coupled with the inability of science to endow thought and action with meaning, demand the moral interpretation of events that is the initiation of *praxis*. Given the absence of surety, the mutability of meaning, and a proliferation of divergent value orientations, interpretation becomes a moral imperative rather than an ancillary epistemic option.
Where MacIntyre finds the ambiguity and uncertainty associated with modernism to be debilities hampering the moral life, Hodgkinson sees both as requisite to a moral life that is vivified as it is redefined through the foregrounding of interpretation. Hodgkinson thus translates MacIntyre's depiction of a tragic fall from virtue as a propitious, Miltonian movement that introduces the possibility of authentic moral choice. Not seeking to mollify the existential consequences of pluralism, Hodgkinson sees in difference an opportunity to exercise the moral prerogative that can make beings human. Through the construction of moral narratives, actions and the settings in which they are taken can be made comprehensible, coherent, and, potentially, humane. Where MacIntyre's notion of practice is concordant with a more static Aristotelian definition of the human animal and the limits of its aspirations, Hodgkinson's presentation of praxis accommodates the post-Nietzschean pluralism that is characteristic of contemporary life and the educational organizations with which we are most familiar. Moralistic determinants thus give way to the exercise of the moral imagination.

Notwithstanding the important differences that separate Hodgkinson's understanding of praxis from MacIntyre's rendering of practice, the two remain closely related. As Wittgenstein might say, they have a distinct family resemblance. In addition to sharing Aristotelian origins, each places human activity within an axiological framework made practical through concrete reference to specific individual intentions and the particulars of social context. Perhaps more importantly still, each strives to find meaning in human interactions through dislodging the nominally value-free quest for technical mastery that drives the modernist agenda. In the sense connoted by tessera, Hodgkinson's presentation of praxis is a radicalization or an antithetical completion of MacIntyre's exposition of practice. This tessera is accomplished in the Nietzschean, perspectivist recontextualization of the determinative Aristotelianism that, as we have seen, MacIntyre initially sets out to champion.

Deciphered, MacIntyre's thinking assumes an initially hidden complementarity with that of Hodgkinson. Where MacIntyre supplies the vocabulary of practice, narrative, and tradition, Hodgkinson provides insight into the axiological dynamics of the interpretative process essential to the activation of each. While MacIntyre has
done so implicitly and possibly inadvertently, Hodgkinson leads us explicitly and intentionally to understand practice, narrative, and tradition as being in a state of continuous composition through the thoughts, words, and actions of individuals who find conflict and solidarity as they argue for and seek to enact their respective visions of the good.

The good life is not, then, lived through adherence to prescribed values unambiguously structured by overarching virtues, in turn defined by a transcendent and unitary telos. Nor is it coextensive with the project of configuring human life as a set of empirical problems awaiting technical, value-free solutions. On the contrary, it is lived through an iterative, interpretive process in which the good life must be constructed in the mutuality of conversation rather than discovered outside it. The conversation within which the interpretative act is realized, through difference, conflict, and insight, is no less and no more than the human project itself. And it is the affirmation of this conversation, initiated in Nietzsche's perspectivist displacement of epistemology by hermeneutics, that is encapsulated in the movement from a telically defined practice to an empirically and philosophically underdetermined praxis.

Objectivity, Interpretation and Knowledge in Educational Administration

Charles Taylor's writings on interpretation and the human sciences complement the arguments developed in the previous section of this chapter and provide a synopsis of the ideas presented in the first two chapters of this dissertation. From a close reading of MacIntyre, we were able to see the failings of a paradigmatic metaphysical attempt to regulate the unfolding of human affairs. Taylor asserts that parallel empiricist efforts can fare no better. Where our critical reading of MacIntyre allowed us to distinguish the hermeneutic approach from metaphysical reductionism, Taylor's critique of what he calls the "empiricist orientation" (Taylor, 1979: 31) differentiates the interpretivist perspective from reductions of a scientific kind.

Focusing upon the inadequacy of the empiricist orientation as a model for inquiry in the social sciences, Taylor helps us to appreciate the formative role played by interpretation in the enactment of organizational leadership. Underscoring the pertinence of the hermeneutic stance to the social sciences in general, he creates the
conceptual space within which we may explore educational leadership as a moral praxis through an interpretive encounter with practitioner narratives. In both his critique of an objectivist empiricism and in his advocacy of the interpretivist perspective, Taylor fills in and fills out the alternative constructs of administration, organization, and knowledge implicit in MacIntyre’s concepts of practice, narrative, and tradition and explicit in Hodgkinson’s description of praxis.

In developing the hermeneutic or interpretivist perspective, however, Taylor is more constrained than is his philosophical colleague, Richard Rorty. Although Taylor makes an exacting critique of the empiricist orientation, he limits his advocacy of hermeneutic inquiry to the human or social sciences. If he sympathizes with the Nietzschean claim reiterated by Rorty that all knowledge, whether in the human or the “hard” sciences, is interpretative, he does not make this his explicit concern. Adopting a more modest focus, Taylor argues specifically against the appropriateness of the empiricist “epistemological bias—one might say obsession” (Taylor, 1979: 31) for inquiry in the human disciplines.

Within the scope of the social sciences Taylor, like Rorty, questions the empiricist emphasis upon reductionism and commensurability in the service of the quest to objectify, and thereby to explain, human phenomena. Taylor would agree with R. D. Laing’s (1970/1959: 22-3; emphasis in original) suggestion that such reductivist agendas, despite their scientific appearance and pretensions, are but instances of a reverse animism:

There is a common illusion that one somehow increases one’s understanding of a person if one can translate a personal understanding of him into the impersonal terms of a sequence or system of it-processes . . . . It seems extraordinary that whereas the physical and biological sciences of it-processes have generally won the day against tendencies to personalize the world of things or to read human intentions into the animal world, an authentic science of persons has hardly got started by reason of the inveterate tendency to depersonalize or reify persons.

As Taylor (1985a: 47) emphasizes, such objectifications, which would provide means to discipline experience by fact, depend upon an ultimately specious reduction of human phenomena to physical cause.
This theory of experience has turned out to be an embarrassment for everyone, and in recent times this same basic objectivist orientation rather expresses itself in the perspective of a reductive explanation of human action and experience in physiological and ultimately in physical and chemical terms. In this way we shall be able to treat man, like everything else, as an object among other objects, characterizing him purely in terms of properties which are independent of his experience—in this case, his self-experience; and treat the lived experience of, for example, sensation as epiphenomenon, or perhaps as a misdescription of what is really a brain-state.

Taylor’s remarks apply pointedly to the neoQuinean physicalism espoused by Evers and Lakomski that would establish certainty in human affairs and obviate moral choice by reducing human experience to the objective workings of "neural wetware" (Evers and Lakomski, 1995: 463). Whether the end point of such reductions is sense data, brain chemistry, or atomic particles, intentionality is redescribed as the mechanical outcome of physical causes. Through the reduction of experience to its constituent physical elements, the workings of the self are, or so it is claimed, contained, explicated, and made available for manipulation and change. Mystery is summarily banished and certainty arrives not with a whimper but a bang.

The physicalist hopes of Evers and Lakomski are, however, only the logical and most visible endpoint of the empiricist perspective that, in more modest forms, continues to enjoy epistemic predominance in educational administration. This perspective presupposes that the researcher can stand in a special, objective relationship to that which is investigated dispassionately. Grant’s (1986: 36) exegesis of "objectivity" provides insight into the nature of this stance which he identifies with the modernist variant of rationalism:

Suffice it simply to say that what is given in the modern paradigm is the project of reason to gain objective knowledge. What is meant by objective? Object means literally some thing that we have thrown over against ourselves. *Jacio* I throw, *ob* over against; therefore "the thrown against". The German word for object is *Gegenstand*—that which stands against. Reason as project, (that is reason as thrown forth) is the summoning of something before us and the putting of questions to it, so that it is forced to give its reasons for being the way it is as an object. Our paradigm is that we have knowledge when we represent anything to ourselves as object, and question it, so that it will give us its reasons.
In order to secure the objectivity required to generate knowledge, we first must remove ourselves from that which we seek to know. Grant's exegesis, however, points to the peculiar nature of this promised facticity and to the paradoxical, if not contradictory, stance that must be taken to obtain it, especially within the social sciences. Like a dog trying to catch its own tail, those of us who would research human affairs must pretend that we are removed from that of which we are integrally a part. Research methodologies within educational administration continue to encourage the investigator to attempt this pretense. Accordingly, researchers—both quantitative and qualitative—typically try to distance themselves from the educational and organizational issues they study by adopting the position of the hermetic inquisitor capable of subjecting human experience to the ordeals of science, the dictates of critical theory, or to moralistic prescriptions. In addition to posing very real dilemmas for educational researchers (see Barlosky, in press), the threshold requirement for generating empirically valid knowledge by removing the knower from that which would be known has resulted in the adoption of ill-fitting methodologies that produce "truths" having little or no resonance with administrative practitioners and the organizations they lead.

Michael Oakeshott (1962: 215-6), seconding Taylor's equation of scientific empiricism with the exclusion of the knowing self, shows how this dynamic leads to the obsessive quantification characteristic of the "scientized" human studies.

Scientists do their cumulative best to inform us about the world, but scientia is the activity, not the information, and the principle of this activity is the exclusion of whatever is private, esoteric, or ambiguous. And in response to this requirement of exactness of communication, images become measurements according to agreed scales, relationships are mathematical ratios, and positions are indicated by numerical co-ordinates: the world of science is recognized as the world sub specie quantitatis.

While the quantification that became predominate in educational administration with the Theory Movement may have become somewhat less fashionable of late, the translation of experience into number, as noted above, retains its persuasiveness in both the rationalization of plans and the justification of outcomes. When combined with
methodologies that remove and privilege the researcher, such statistical reductions widen the gap between administrative theoria and leadership praxis.

By placing organizational phenomena and experience within the world sub specie quantitatis so that, in Grant's terms, "it will give us its reasons," the moral aspect of making a knowledge designed to inform action in contested social settings is concealed. It is here, in the attempt to make administration a coolly quantifiable science exempt from moral anguish rather than a moral praxis immersed in the reality of pluralistic difference, that scholarship and research lose touch with the lived world of leader experience—a world where rival goods contest incessantly for recognition and authority. In reducing the human to the objectivity of number, science excuses scholars from their responsibility to address the lived world of administration and organization in a distinctively moral voice.

As Hodgkinson (1993: 179) inveighs, what may be a methodologically sound reduction of experience to number is often nothing less than an ontological and axiological derogation that administrators would do well to avoid:

the distinction claimed by the human species to render itself ontologically other than the rest of the animal kingdom is that, in the language of myth, it has eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Mankind has moral capacity. It can do ethics. Cats and dogs can't. Automata can't. Administrators can. And should.

Indeed, from Nietzsche's interpretivist perspective, administrators must and inevitably do engage ethical issues in an active and individual voice, however little this moral engagement is accounted for in the abstractions of administrative theory or in the involutions of statistical analysis.

And yet, the prevailing variants of an empiricism that would escape moral consequence continue to quietly shape the objectivist agenda for research and practice in educational administration. Although MacIntyre has incisively questioned the manipulations such efforts would make possible in his unyielding critique of bureaucratic managerialism and the hubristic assumptions that undergird it, educational administration remains largely preoccupied with the plight of how to manage change, a management which would seem to require the oxymoronic ability to foresee the unpredictable. The impulse to manage, and, thereby, to demonstrate that
administration can be coextensive with the mastery of human interaction, shares the
dependent and predictive ambitions of science spelled out by Oakeshott (1962: 214):

Its impulse is not to make a world, each of whose component images is
welcome on account of the pleasure it gives or the moral approval it
evokes, but to make a rational world of consequentially arranged
conceptual images.

Given this unrelenting impulse to make rational a world which is little given to
logical conceits, it is understandable that the demise of positivist foundationalism has
resulted in a hunger for a successor and a willingness "to see the failure of science-
based theories of administration as remediable by better and more powerful
methodology" (Greenfield, 1986: 65). The many attempts to provide such a
methodology capable of regulating organizations reinforce Rorty's (1980: 315) remark
that "The demise of foundational epistemology . . . is often felt to leave a vacuum which
needs to be filled." The hunger for rearguard defenses of the empiricist orientation
results in the chastising bewilderment that greets those who would engage in
hermeneutic approaches to administration. Taylor (1979: 31) foretells such
reproaches in his observation that "in general, the empiricist orientation must be hostile
to a conduct of inquiry which is based on interpretation."18

But the empiricist orientation is not alone in its enmity towards interpretation.
Attempts to reengage metaphysical agendas, as we have seen in our reading of After
Virtue, share the desire to bolster mastery by filling the epistemic vacuum of which
Rorty speaks. Although the insufficiency of such metaphysical projects has been a
recurrent theme in modernist philosophy,19 they share the ambitions of science to
reduce difference through the restoration of a prescriptive and determinative
knowledge base. As MacIntyre's Aristotelian ambitions illustrate, metaphysical
dictates, like the scientific laws that are their physicalist counterparts, would mitigate
the ambiguity and disagreement that are regarded as such troubling aspects of
contemporary experience. In the specific context of educational administration,
metaphysical as well as physical reductionism are potential sources of the certainty
needed to rationalize the regulation of organizations and the individuals who compose
them. Where scientific physicalism would supply this objective certainty from below,
the metaphysical project would supply it from above. In this sense, the empirical and
the metaphysical orientation may be viewed as two aspects of the fact-bound positivism that Nietzsche would abandon in favor of interpretation (see Figure 2. "Science, Metaphysics, and Praxis: Three Models of Knowledge-Making," p. 122).

It is not a coincidence that restorative metaphysical projects like that of MacIntyre and the post-positivist, physicalist projects like those of Evers and Lakomski share a desire to overcome the distinction between fact and value by expanding the former to include the latter. In overcoming the "is/ought" dichotomy by injecting moral claims with factual warrants, each would dispel the vagaries and contentiousness that attend moral choice. Consequently, the administrative knowledge base would be objectified and expanded through the systematic incorporation of philosophically or empirically verifiable, and hence authoritative, statements. Through the subsumption of values by facts, albeit facts of different kinds, both metaphysical and empiricist epistemic projects would regulate the discourse in and about educational organizations that has become unruly with the demise of positivism and the Nietzschean recognition of the instability of unitary definitions of truth. Each, through methods peculiar to itself, would obviate the necessity of interpretation by reducing questions of value to the dictates of fact.

But the very search for empirical or moral certainty within educational administration involves a contradiction particular to the field that Hodgkinson (1991: 62) raises bluntly:

in contrast to other fields of administration, the actual raw material of education is intractably mysterious, for it is human nature itself. Thus educational administration is distinctively different and problematic on the three counts of ends, means, and evaluation.

If human nature will not reduce to matters of empirical fact and if the values represented in ends, means, and evaluation are unremittingly contestable, the attempt to regulate educational organizations through reductive techniques of prediction, compliance, and control must founder. Human indeterminacy and irreducible value difference equally problematize the technical means and the philosophical ends that would inscribe the human interaction that is organization within fixed, objective horizons. Accordingly Hodgkinson's statement would rule out the development of
Figure 2
Science, Metaphysics, and
Praxis:
Three Models of
Knowledge-Making
either a technical or a moral calculus through which educational organizations could be predicted or made compliant with theory and thereby controlled.

As Taylor observes, focusing on similar points acknowledged by MacIntyre (see 1984: 88-108) in *After Virtue*, proposals to reduce ambiguity to certainty ignore three factors characteristic of human life: the open rather than the closed nature of human systems; the irreducible contestability of the meanings assigned to circumstance, event, and action; and, most importantly, the polymorphously self-determining nature of the human being. It is the last factor that allows Taylor (1979: 69, emphasis added) to spell out the meaning of Hodgkinson's claim that human nature is "intractably mysterious":

> With changes in his self-definition go changes in what man is, such that he has to be understood in different terms.

Taylor's emphasis upon the human potential to change both self-understanding and the vocabularies within which that self-understanding may be articulated, similarly makes clear Sartre's (1975: 105, emphasis in original) quizzical existential caution that "consciousness is not what it is." In "East Coker," the second part of the extended meditation that is *Four Quartets*, Eliot (1963: 199) provides a poetic summary of the common insight articulated differently by Hodgkinson, Oakeshott, MacIntyre, Taylor, Rorty, Sartre, and Nietzsche:

> . . . knowledge imposes a pattern, and falsifies,  
For the pattern is new in every moment  
And every moment is a new and shocking  
Valuation of all we have been.

The indeterminateness that inheres equally in human ontology, thought, and action thus interrupts the epistemological impulse to know that which is unchanging and therefore "real" in the human condition. It is to this elusive existential quality that Sartre (1975: 112) again refers when he says, "human reality, in its most immediate being . . . must be what it is and not be what it is." It is the paradoxical nature of the human to exceed definitions of "human nature" articulated as objective fact. To be human, then, is to be what Taylor (1985a) calls a "self-interpreting" animal—the being, in Rortyesque terms, that continuously creates its descriptions rather than subscribes to them. It is through eluding the objective self-definitions that either physical or
metaphysical systems would supply, that our species constitutes its humanity. And it is this humanity that must demand more of leadership than the habitual enaction of an administrative repertoire built upon the presumption to predict and control.21

The self-determining and intractably mysterious nature of the person, the indeterminate character of meaning, and the open systems within which knowledge is formed leave little alternative but to explore how we may understand leadership as a moral praxis imbued with the contingencies intrinsic to interpretation. Without a determinative facticity, whether of the philosophical or scientific kind, the project to objectify administration—in Grant's sense of objectivity described above—fails both epistemologically and axiologically. Attempts to reduce leadership to its objective elements and to quantify experience afford little insight into the nature of administrative praxis as a distinctively human and necessarily moral activity knowable through narrative accounts. Nor do they allow us to understand organizations in a manner consistent with our experience of and within them; what Greenfield describes as an appreciation of "organizations as talk, chance, action, and experience" (Greenfield, 1993: 53-74). Both scientific and metaphysical attempts to generate an objective knowledge of administrative work in educational settings have produced meagre results, little conformity with the experience of practitioners, and the appearance of a crisis in research and scholarship.

Given that neither empirically based nor metaphysically premised management techniques have established predictability and control over even the most modest aspects of life within educational organizations, it is time to explore other means and other ends. To speak the richness of organizational life and to address the moral complexity of educational leadership, the human sciences must begin again with the self, experience, and the distinctively human engagements that are organizations. In welcoming little used vocabularies and the questions they make possible, we may find new meaning in organizations and what we can and should do within them. We may begin to invite the multiplicity of voices that in their difference make conversation about organization and leadership life giving and worthwhile.
Endnotes for Chapter 3

1. As Walter Kaufmann (1967: 457) observes, the notes that this quotation is taken from are those that would eventually be posthumously incorporated by Nietzsche's heirs in *The Will to Power*. Karen Carr (1992: 30-1) follows Nietzsche's thought to its fulfilment in the position of "perspectivism":

   We can establish no fact "in itself"; perhaps it is foolishness to want such a thing. . . . So far generally as the word "knowledge" has meaning, the world is knowable, but it is interpretable otherwise. It has no [one] meaning behind it, rather, countless meanings. "Perspectivism."

Carr (1992: 31) goes on to make an important observation about what Nietzsche's words mean, and, more importantly, what they do not mean:

   Yet it would be a mistake if we were to infer from this that we are, like Cratylus, merely to sit in a corner and wag our finger because there is nothing we can say with any certainty of meaning about the world. Nietzsche was far from trying to advocate skeptical detachment or disengagement from the world. In fact, this is precisely the kind of response he wished to avoid, a response he regarded as the negative form of nihilism. He asked not that we stop interpreting—something which would only be possible with our death—but only that we recognize any particular interpretive act for what it is, namely, an interpretation, one of many that are possible.

2. The divide that separates Wittgenstein's earlier and later work gives added irony and significance to Hodgkinson's tacit reference. In rephrasing an insight from Wittgenstein's later writing—writing that abandoned the ordered and systematic propositional form of the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* published in 1922—in propositional form, Hodgkinson, perhaps unintentionally, prefigures his own philosophical contribution to educational administration. The later Wittgenstein, speaking through publications appearing after his death in 1951, moved away from the formal logic of the *Tractatus* (1961) which had displaced—arguably reverentially—issues (e.g., metaphysical, in the sense of religious or transcendental, and moral) less amenable to the limits of normal, systematic philosophical discourse. These later writings often self-critically chided this previous exclusion as an instance of bewitchment designed to secure certainty by artificially constricting the limits of philosophical discussion. Hodgkinson's call for a readmission of axiological considerations to the value-free science of educational administration, then, recapitulates at a disciplinary level Wittgenstein's philosophical reversal. That is, Hodgkinson would remedy the reduction and exclusion of axiological matters characteristic of value-free social science methodologies as Wittgenstein had recognized and rectified the error of his early exclusion of issues that were either existentially idiosyncratic or transcendent.

3. Gabriele Lakomski (1996) in her incomplete paper titled *Against Leadership: Concept Without a Cause* presented at the 1996 Toronto Conference on Values and Leadership remarked that there is a strong case for regarding leadership as a concept without a referent. Although intriguing, her claim that leadership might be better
understood as a "folkpsychological and functionalist concept" than as a genuine organizational phenomenon captivates for the wrong reason. Her dismissal of leadership results from her self-acknowledged physicalist attempt to verify concepts through commensuration or by finding correlates for concepts in the "real" world. As we have seen in the previous chapter, this attempt is regarded by postmodernists as an artifact of a now passé and fundamentally flawed epistemological position that is thoroughly critiqued by Richard Rorty (1980) in his book Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature. Lakomski's attempt to denigrate leadership as a concept that dissolves because of its context dependence and susceptibility to multiple constructions would appear to Rorty odd. For as soon as the "commensurability project" is abandoned, it is precisely these characteristics of leadership that make organizational administration a compelling topic for discussion. Like many other pejoratives that lose their sting when translated to a postmodernist context, the charge of "reification" not only is neutralized, it becomes something of an achievement meriting inquiry.

4. In introducing his paper, Researching Praxis in Leadership: A Case of Three Head Teachers, presented at the 1996 Toronto Conference on Values and Leadership, Peter Ribbins (1996) develops the metaphor of portraiture as an empirical approach to describing the activity of school leaders. In the paper itself and in his article co-authored with Peter Gronn (1996) titled Leaders in Context: Postpositivist Approaches to Understanding Educational Leadership, the term "situated portrayals" is used to capture the idea of a highly nuanced image that can be constructed of an individual leader by observant third parties. The following quotation from the article is to the point:

   From quantitative surveys claiming to represent principals' views generally, researchers typically extract composite accounts of key issues. But such approaches cannot offer rich and comprehensive understandings of the perspectives that principals bring to their work. Portraits in-depth of individual principals would, however, provide much fuller access to their views across a range of issues. (Gronn & Ribbins, 1996: 460)

The presidential sketches and antithetical inferences offered in Chapter 6 below fall short of such portraits intentionally, in that they remain, to continue the metaphor of portraiture for interpretive rendering, more concerned with the "mind-scape" of educational leaders than with external physiognomies. That is, idea and conceptual orientation take precedence over enactment (for reasons noted in Chapter 1 above) in the sketches made herein.

5. In his book On Knowing: Essays for the Left Hand, Jerome Bruner (1967) develops the notion of verisimilitude as a primary indicator that our attempts to create knowledge have been faithful to our lived experience, and, hence, worthwhile.

6. In defining the place of creativity and imagination in the study of leadership, Don Shakotko and Keith Walker summarize their view in the preface to their paper A Poietic for Leaders: Engaging the Moral Imagination in Educational Leadership (emphasis in original) presented at the 1996 Toronto Conference on Values and Educational Leadership:
Our thesis may be stated as follows: to the extent that it involves interaction with others, leadership is a moral activity; leadership has a *poietic* (creative) dimension which complements and completes the traditional *theoria-praxis* grid on which most leadership models have been plotted; the imagination plays a crucial role in the enactment of this poietic process; and hence, engagement of the imagination is an integral aspect of leadership.

The role of creativity and imagination, however, need not be permitted only because of the moral nature of leadership. As Rorty, echoing Nietzsche and James, informs his readers again and again, creativity and imagination—and hence poiesis—are as much a part of the hard sciences as they are of more axiologically and aesthetically sensitive disciplines.

7. Here Bernstein is expanding Thomas Kuhn’s (1970: 199, emphasis added) clarification of what he, Kuhn, means in saying that in scientific debate, as in all discourse,

reasons function as *values* and that they can thus be differently applied, individually and collectively, by men who concur in holding them.” Kuhn is here emphasizing that even agreement upon values does not insure the supersession of difference.

Bernstein's expansion is, in fact, a restatement of Kuhn's further caution that there is no external regulative principle(s) capable of reducing disagreement to resolution. In Kuhn's (1970: 200) own words:

There is no neutral algorithm for theory-choice, no systematic decision procedure which, properly applied, must lead each individual in the group to the same decision.

We shall see later in this chapter, through examination of MacIntyre's metaphysical quest for such a principle, why such hopes for a monistic determinant must give way to the epistemic pluralism Kuhn admits as central even in the "hard" sciences. Bernstein is signalling, as am I in my quotation of him, that the protracted Cartesian project to reduce ambiguity to certainty must fail and that we, therefore, must seek ways of describing what we mean by knowledge that presume neither an external reality sufficient to arbitrate truth claims or a "metaprinciple" (e.g., Evers and Lakomski's "coherence") capable of regulating discourse and rendering it uniform.

8. The following lengthy quotation from Bloom (1973: 67) merits inclusion as it conveys both the relationship between the concept of *tessera* and the sense in which I have been using the word "vocabulary" (i.e., as the protean medium for cultural articulation), and the, perhaps paradoxical, conserving relationship between the emergent and that which it would replace, a relationship first suggested in the quotation from James March in the Introduction above:

In his *Discours de Rome* (1953), Lacan cites a remark of Mallarmé’s, which "compares the common use of Language to the exchange of a coin whose obverse and reverse no longer bear any but worn effigies, and which people pass from hand to hand 'in silence.'" Applying this to the discourse, however reduced, of the analytic subject, Lacan says: "This
metaphor is sufficient to remind us that the Word, even when almost completely worn out, retains its value as a tessera." Lacan’s translator, Anthony Wilden, comments that this "allusion is to the function of the tessera as a token of recognition, or 'password.' The tessera was employed in the early mystery religions where fitting together again the two halves of a broken piece of pottery was used as a means of recognition by the initiates." In this sense of a completing link, the tessera represents any later poet's attempt to persuade himself (and us) that the precursor's Word would be worn out if not redeemed as a newly fulfilled and enlarged Word of the ephebe.

Rorty (1989: 78), in his advocacy of irony, uses the word "redescription" in a way that parallels Bloom's combined use of clinamen and tessera, although Rorty incorporates Bloom's concept in a somewhat subversive program for post-objectivist inquiry in the sciences as well as in the humanities:

The ironist's preferred form of argument is dialectical in the sense that she takes the unit of persuasion to be a vocabulary rather than a proposition. Her method is redescription rather than inference. Ironists specialize in redescribing ranges of objects or events in partially neologistic jargon, in the hope of inciting people to adopt and extend that jargon. An ironist hopes that by the time she has finished using old words in new senses, not to mention introducing brand-new words, people will no longer ask questions phrased in the old words.

9. It is for this reason that I call MacIntyre's position presented in After Virtue "neo-Aristotelian." MacIntyre acknowledges explicitly that he is presenting an interpretation of Aristotle's thought edited to accord with moral and epistemological norms he views as essential. Elements selected for editing out include: Aristotle's exclusion of non-Greeks, barbarians, slaves, and women from participation in the virtues; his assumption of a caste-oriented social hierarchy headed by philosopher-brahmins deemed uniquely capable of metaphysical contemplation; and his assent to a thoroughly oligarchic arrangement of political power. While there is some irony in the conformity between MacIntyre's edits, the aspirations of the Enlightenment Project, and the modernism against which he rails, the more striking and substantial editing out of Aristotle's "metaphysical biology" causes still greater pause, and foretells the collapse of MacIntyre's project from the outset.

MacIntyre (1984: 148) helpfully summarizes what is entailed in Aristotle's notion of metaphysical biology when he says:

Human beings, like the members of all other species, have a specific nature; and that nature is such that they have certain aims and goals, such that they move by nature towards a specific telos. The good is defined in terms of their specific characteristics.

MacIntyre (1984: 162) rightly sees where a rejection of this proposition leads him when he asks: "If we reject that biology, as we must, is there any way in which that teleology can be preserved?" In spite of his attempt to answer in the affirmative, MacIntyre's substitution of "historicity," a concept which he concedes is alien to both Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, for "metaphysical biology" is fatal. Not only is "historicity," and
the contingency and situatedness it represents, alien to Socratic and Aristotelian thought, it is the cardinal element that defines Nietzsche's perspectivism. And it is precisely this perspectivism that Maclntyre will tell us he must repudiate in order for his neo-Aristotelian project to succeed.

As George Grant, a less apologetic and less defensive advocate of positions Maclntyre would share, notes, the hallmark of Nietzsche's philosophy is the supersession of a defining telos by the contingencies of history. Indeed, Grant's 1969 Massy Lectures on Nietzsche are titled Time As History in recognition of this very point. As Grant (1974: 26) puts it in these lectures:

The belief that men are enfolded in their historicity, and the consequent historical relativism with its use of the word 'values', only began to be the popular vocabulary in this century. Nietzsche is the first thinker who shows how this historicity is to be recognized in the full light of its consequences, in every realm of existence.

10. The issue of existence as history and the countervailing notion of salvation as return to a primordial condition of wholeness, help to distinguish the modern and premodern sensibilities. In Cosmos and History the cultural anthropologist Mircea Eliade (1959: 154) depicts the separation between the modern and the traditional perspective in terms of the former's embrace of historicity and the latter's attempt to minimize its significance.

And the crucial difference between the man of the archaic civilizations and modern, historical man lies in the increasing value the latter gives to historical events, that is, to the 'novelties' that, for traditional man, represented either meaningless conjunctures or infractions of norms (hence, 'faults,' 'sins,' and so on) and that, as such, required to be expelled (abolished) periodically.

It is this transgression of the timeless that confronts moderns as the terror of history, and which simultaneously offers the possibility of creativity and uniqueness. As Eliade (1959: 155-6) notes in his discussion of the modern perspective, that he, like Maclntyre, sees in need of redemption:

In the last analysis, modern man, who accepts history or claims to accept it, can reproach archaic man, imprisoned within the mythical horizon of archetypes and repetition, with his creative impotence, or, what amounts to the same thing, his inability to accept the risks entailed by every creative act. For the modern man can be creative only insofar as he is historical; in other words, all creation is forbidden him except that which has its source in his own freedom; and, consequently, everything is denied him except the freedom to make history by making himself.

As we shall see, the existential predominance of history is characteristic of the world which Nietzsche recognizes as having its irreversible beginning in the death of God and the subsequent guilt that manifests itself as a punishing fear of the indeterminate.

George Grant extends Eliade's insight by pointing to the relationship between Time As History (1974: 10-11) and the modernist metanarrative of mastery,

To enucleate the conception of time as history must then be to think our orientation to the future together with the will to mastery. Indeed the
relation between mastery and concentration on the future is apparent in our language. The word 'will' is used as an auxiliary for the future tense, and also as the word which expresses our determination to do.

And while time as history allows for individual uniqueness, the attendant metanarrative of mastery that would deny chance results in the privileging of the collective over the individual:

Indeed the greater ability of collective than of individual purposes to be sustained against accidents is one of the reasons why, in an age given over to making the future, we all more and more truly exist in the collective, and less and less pursue purposes which transcend it. (Grant, 1974: 12)

The identification of modernism, broadly speaking, with historicity thus paradoxically marks the path towards individualism and will on the one hand, and to conformity and organization on the other. This tension between individual and organization, openness and compliance, and imagination and technology push towards the existential and conceptual rupture that is postmodernism.

11. In his book *Memory and Tradition in Israel*, the Biblical scholar Brevard Childs (1962) provides an extensive analysis of the relationship between memory, tradition, and salvation that gives resonance and cultural depth to MacIntyre's arguments. Child's points to the salvific value of annulling time through a "re-presentation" of tradition that establishes a redemptive identity past archetypal and formative events when he says:

> the act of remembrance is not a simple inner reflection, but involves an action, an encounter with historical events. Each successive generation in Israel witnessed in faith to a reality which it encountered when remembering the tradition. The biblical events have the dynamic characteristic of refusing to be relegated to the past . . . . Israel testified to the continuing nature of her redemptive history by the events of the past in the light of her ongoing experience with the covenant God. (Childs, 1962: 88)

If we substitute the philosophical works of Aristotle for the Biblical texts to which Childs refers, we can appreciate both the logic and the intensity of MacIntyre's mnemonic redemptive mission. Child's quotation also helps us to understand why the existential and moral vertigo associated with modernism turn MacIntyre so earnestly to the imagined certainties of the past. It is his submission to reason rather than to belief, and the consequent making of an argument from the contingencies of history and culture, however, that ultimately undermine the redemptive intent of MacIntyre's quest.

12. It is interesting to compare MacIntyre's restorative Aristotelianism with the Aristotelianism of Umberto Eco expressed in his encyclopedic novel *The Name of the Rose*. For Eco, a writer associated with the postmodern aesthetic, it is the suppression by the church of Aristotle's lost books on humor that marks the launching of the self-serious Enlightenment Project. And for Eco, contra MacIntyre's metaphysical quest, redemption is to be found in the restoration of humor and irony. Perhaps this
counterpoint is indicative of a tendency in postmodernism to translate the weight of liturgical metaphysics into the humor and irony that are so welcome in conversation.

13. Charles Taylor in his Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Massey Lectures titled *The Malaise of Modernity* (1991) and in his seminal book that is their origin, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (1989), presents a very different view of the modern condition. Taylor finds MacIntyre's savaging of both modernism and liberalism shortsighted and somewhat intellectually dishonest. His remark from the preface to *Sources of the Self* speaks to this point:

> We have yet to capture, I think, the unique combination of greatness and danger, of *grandeur et misère*, which characterizes the modern age. To see the full complexity and richness of the modern identity is to see, first, how much we are all caught up in it, for all our attempts to repudiate it; and second, how shallow and partial are the one-sided judgements we bandy around about it. . . . I try to set out in the concluding chapter what flows from this story of the emerging modern identity. Briefly it is that this identity is much richer in moral sources than its condemners allow, but that this richness is rendered invisible by the impoverished philosophical language of its most zealous defenders.

Taylor would be as critical of the generalizations I make about modernity as he is of those made by MacIntyre, Foucault, and Habermas. And, to an extent, his criticism would be valid. Within the tenets of hermeneutics, a phenomenon as vast as modernism can be expected to give rise to a diversity of interpretations that can range, for example, from those offered by George Grant to those of his philosophical antagonist, Max Weber. That the best of these interpretations, regardless of their orientation, speak resonantly to us while the worst say little, endorses Taylor's perception of modernism's complexity and the limitations of human thought.


> Constructivism is more than experiential knowledge, more than the invention of constructs and theories. Paraphrasing Nelson Goodman, it is the declaration of a flowing reality formed of interpretations worked and reworked, personally and socially examined; a search for authority, while denying the authority of Truth, casting a skeptical eye on tests against an empirical world. Constructivism insists upon dynamic relationships among evolving interpretations.

It is the tension between moral constructivism and Aristotelian holism that plays through MacIntyre's sometimes tortured argument for the restoration of an ancient metanarrative.

15. It is in this assertion that MacIntyre seems to disclose a previously hinted and telling affinity with Stoicism that imposes on his professed allegiance to Aristotle. The Stoics too had an answer that parallels MacIntyre's proposed response to tragic dilemmas. As an addendum to Sophocles' observation "How dreadful knowledge of the truth can be when there is no help in the truth," the Stoics noted that when an action
was performed virtuously it was transformed into a right action or perfect function. It is the primacy of the Stoic virtue of self control amidst the uncertainty and turbulence of human affairs that leads to our modern appropriation of their name as an adjective describing actions that are unaffected by passion in the face of uncertainty. Like the Stoics, MacIntyre’s fixation on the virtues allows him to ultimately unseat questions of truth and to replace a determinate virtue with the idiosyncracies of virtuous action founded in individual justification.

That MacIntyre may be viewed as more a Stoic than an Aristotelian provides two interrelated insights that help to illuminate and philosophically place his thinking. First, MacIntyre’s opposition to modern emotivism closely tracks the Stoic opposition to Epicurianism, as both emotivism and Epicurianism, in MacIntyre’s view, can be understood as perspectives within which preference supersedes virtue. Second, and more telling, MacIntyre’s stoic tendencies reveal a fundamental parallelism with Nietzsche, who, as Walter Kaufmann (1974a: 36) says, quoting from Beyond Good and Evil (227), “Nietzsche . . . called himself “the last of the Stoics.” Thus MacIntyre’s rejection of Aristotle’s metaphysical biology, through which the virtues are disciplined by cosmos and nature, brings him to the Nietzschean precept that virtue must be constructed since it is nowhere to be found.

16. In his comments upon Milton’s Paradise Lost in Forbidden Knowledge: From Prometheus to Pornography, Roger Shattuck (1997: 73) reminds us how central to and formative of Western culture is the tension between conformity/innocence and difference/experience.

In the Christian story, the Fortunate Fall interprets Adam’s sin as the action that permits redemption by the second Adam, Jesus Christ. In vivid filigree behind the theological meaning of Eden, Milton narrates a secular story about a legendary yet very human couple who move through four stages of knowledge: innocence, fancy or dream, experience, and wisdom.

To arrest human development at the stage of obedience to metaphysical limits—and thereby to avoid difference and conflict—is to foreclose the path to experience and to wisdom. Shattuck (1997: 74) underscores this existential maxim by quoting, “The epigraph Baudelaire found in d’Aubigné for The Flowers of Evil . . . : “For virtue is not the fruit of ignorance.”

17. Hodgkinson (1993: 180-181, emphasis in original) has pointed out ironically that in addition to such reductions obscuring more than they clarify, they are ultimately unscientific:

Essentially the axiological path traced by EL [Evers and Lakomski] is one from Skinnerian behaviorism, which reduces values to affect and ethics to programming, through to Wilson’s bioethics, which reduces everything to evolutionary process and ultimately to Professor Evers’ own favourite reductionism: brain chemistry and neuronal electrodynamics. But this trajectory rapidly becomes unscientific: it omits too much and it assumes too much: for example, that the mind-brain problem in philosophy has been solved; that the value-fact distinction is destroyed, leaving us only
with facts (But what are facts?); that quantum mechanics are reconciled with general relativity; that there are no Chomskyian depth structures in language; that we can explain what is meant by a belief; that all metaphysics will be reduced ultimately to physics (i.e. coherent naturalistic accounts; the hoary ploy that 'science' will give us pie in the sky by and by); that science itself coheres (or that we should take out a promissory note that it will some day cohere); that the Turing-machine problem has been solved; that non-equilibrium thermodynamics can be reconciled with Newtonian physics; that the anthropic principle coheres with scientific epistemology; or that Jungian synchronicity does; or Sheldrake's morphogenic thesis; or the Gaia hypothesis; or that, in short, Truth, Beauty, and Goodness are not teleological ideals but mere epiphenomena of sub-molecular activity.

18. In describing "the various new excitements in studies of organizations" in which he included "interpretive analysis," James March (1996: 287) made the following qualification, employing a biblical metaphor that I have used above, of his view that the field is circumspect in its approach to new modes of inquiry,

The openness, however, has not prevented a certain skepticism. The new messiahs have not been condemned, but neither have they been embraced fully. The new wine has been accommodated in old bottles and has been affected by the containers.

That this remark was made as recently as 1996 in celebration of the 40th anniversary of Administrative Science Quarterly, the flagship publication of organizational theory, suggests that the empiricist orientation will not make epistemic concessions gratuitously.

19. Indeed the corpus of modern Occidental philosophy may be read as a somewhat anxious and increasingly skeptical relationship to both religion and metaphysics as approaches to a transcendent and unchanging truth. Early modernism, which culminates in the philosophy of Kant and the grand metaphysical schemes of Hegel, features the development of various versions and defenses of metaphysical constructs against the presence of an increasingly erosive doubt. Bernstein (1988: 18) term "Cartesian anxiety" vividly depicts what was viewed as at stake in this enterprise:

Reading the Meditations as a journey of the soul helps us to appreciate that Descartes' search for a foundation or Archimedean point is more than a device to solve metaphysical and epistemological problems. It is the quest for a fixed point, some stable rock upon which we can secure our lives against the vicissitudes that constantly threaten us. The spectre that hovers in the background of this journey is not just radical epistemological skepticism but the dread of madness and chaos where nothing is fixed, where we can neither touch bottom nor support ourselves on the surface. With a chilling clarity Descartes leads us with an apparent and ineluctable necessity to a grand and seductive Either/Or. Either there is some support for our being, a fixed foundation for our knowledge, or we cannot escape the forces of darkness that envelop us
with madness, with intellectual and moral chaos.

Where early modern philosophy sought to systemically assuage doubt, the philosophy of late modernism increasingly experiences the impact of doubt's efficacy. First efforts to circumvent doubt sought alternative, nonmetaphysical sources for certainty—especially in logic (positivism) and language (the "linguistic turn")—in which the epistemic quest could be regrounded. As late modernist philosophy has progressed, this quest for a metaphysical regrounding of certainty has gradually lost much of its allure. Increasingly it has been disregarded as arcane, uninteresting, and unhelpful. As Rorty points out, the movement beyond the desire to renew the foundations of empiricism and/or the certainties promised by metaphysics can be traced particularly in the philosophy of Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and Dewey, each of whose later writings abandon the grander hopes to shore up the Western philosophical project that shaped their early work. The postmodern, postrepresentationalist pragmatism of Rorty is perhaps the most matter-of-fact, engaging, and controversial vision of what might come after the quest for commensurability between idea and either empirical fact or transcendental certainty is finally set aside.

20. It may be that Sartre's paradoxical secular definition of the elusive self borrows from the even more paradoxical definition authored by Kierkegaard (1954/1849: 146) in *The Sickness Unto Death*:

Man is spirit. But what is spirit? Spirit is the self. But what is the self? The self is a relation which relates itself to its own self, or it is that in the relation which accounts for it that the relation relates itself to its own self; the self is not the relation but consists in the fact that the relation relates itself to its own self. Man is a synthesis of the infinite and the finite, of the temporal and the eternal, of freedom and necessity, in short it is a synthesis. A synthesis is a relation between two factors. So regarded, man is not yet a self."

While Kierkegaard's definition of the self mocks the language used by his philosophical antagonist Hegel, its refusal to bind the self to that which may be known in the secular world is genuine in that it is concordant with a theme continuously developed in his writing. I have pointed out elsewhere (Barlosky, 1992) that Kierkegaardian tropes also occur in secularized forms in primary aspects of Hodgkinson's work. The description Hodgkinson offers of human nature as an intractable mystery may be yet another and, perhaps the most important example of this borrowing. It guards the human against the intrusions of the secular without having to use theistic language. Sartre, having explicitly renounced the Christian perspective that shaped Kierkegaard's thought, cannot resolve the crisis of the self's definition in the sacred. Rather, he must speak of the "will to nothingness"—without, I think, the dreariness that we habitually attach to it (i.e., for Sartre "nothingness" may simply be that which is utterly beyond human description, much as the early writings of Karl Barth describe God).

21. It is important to emphasize a point that has been alluded to several times above. Much of the current work concerning "values" in educational administration shares the prescriptive ambitions of the empiricist orientation rather than the openness that I have argued should be characteristic of the interpretivist or hermeneutic perspective. In
practice this means that research into putatively value-centered aspects of educational administration is typically limited to one of the three following options: 1., to create or argue for a determinate axiological standard, or 2., to survey and tabulate the values of "representative groups" in order to recommend organizational remedies for dysfunctions emerging from difference, or 3. to use survey data to craft politically acceptable policy formulations that would effect social regulation. Each of these options demonstrates the power of mastery to determine even explicitly axiological endeavors. Each also demonstrates, yet again, how strong the epistemological position is that Greenfield tirelessly argued against in its guise as positivistic science.
Chapter 4
Ambiguity and Experience in the University:
Prelude to Five Presidential Interviews

The college president faces four fundamental ambiguities. The first is the ambiguity of purpose. In what terms can action be justified? What are the goals of the organization? The second is the ambiguity of power. How powerful is the president? What can he accomplish? The third is the ambiguity of experience. What is to be learned from the events of the presidency? The fourth is the ambiguity of success. When is a president successful? How does he assess his pleasures?

These ambiguities are fundamental to college presidents because they strike at the heart of the usual interpretations of leadership. When purpose is ambiguous, ordinary theories of decision making and intelligence become problematic. When power is ambiguous, ordinary theories of social order and control become problematic. When experience is ambiguous, ordinary theories of learning and adaptation become problematic. When success is ambiguous, ordinary theories of motivation and personal pleasure become problematic.


We are all subject in some measure to errors induced by cognitive distortion. That is true not only for college presidents, but also for those who study college presidents . . . Preconceptions affect what is seen, what is not seen, and what is invented. Particularly with equivocal data, preconceptions influence how we select and weigh data, resulting in a greater likelihood of self-confirmation (Ross and Lepper, 1980; Jennings, Amabile, and Ross, 1982). Expectancy bias can mislead us into seeing presidential influence even when it does not exist—or into failing to see it when it does. In general, our theories can overwhelm our data (Nisbitt and Ross, 1980) . . .

—Robert Birnbaum, "Leadership and Learning: The College President as Intuitive Scientist" (1986: 393)

The immediately preceding epigraphs outline the problematics within which the university presidency is conducted and studied. In each case, the considerations
enumerated turn on the question of knowledge. Michael Cohen and James March (1986/1974), in their pivotal and still under-assimilated study of the higher education presidency Leadership and Ambiguity: The American College President, spell out the limits that constrain the knowledge administrative practitioners may have of their actions and their effects. Robert Birnbaum (1986), complementing Cohen and March, reminds researchers, among whom he is one of the most canny, that students of the university presidency share these limits fully and without exception. Breaking the pretense of objectivity and fact, the epigraphs remind us that presidents and those who research their work have no alternative but to construct—or, as Birnbaum adds "invent"—provisional interpretations from what are at best equivocal readings of the ambiguous linkages between administrative thought, action, and outcome.

The ambiguity and consequent equivocality characteristic of both presidential experience and its research does not, contrary to scholarly prejudice, result from a deficiency of information. More data by itself, in most circumstances, will improve neither the work of presidents nor our understanding of their administrative experience. Indeed, simply increasing the volume of information may impede the practical wisdom that can make leadership a moral praxis, and confuse our comprehension of administrative work and its settings. Contravening the presumption that more "facts" will lead naturally to an increase in knowledge and practical effectiveness, Weick (1995: 27), in his treatise on "sensemaking," points out that organizational scholars and administrators alike suffer from a surfeit, not a lack, of information:

The problem faced by the sensemaker is one of equivocality, not one of uncertainty. The problem is confusion, not ignorance. I emphasize this because those investigators who favor the metaphor of information processing (e.g., Huber, Ullman, & Leifer, 1979) often view sensemaking, as they do most other problems, as a setting where people need more information. That is not what people need when they are overwhelmed by equivocality.

Organizations, Weick tells us, are already glutted with facts and with a diversity of competing and complementary rubrics that would make sense of them. In the ubiquitous narrative rendering of happenings as coherent stories, organizational participants, be they administrators or members of a research team, unavoidably introduce a set of tentative meanings that stitch divergent events and observations into
the whole cloth of experience. Thus as action is pondered and event is construed, information and meaning become abundant.

That many distinct narratives may be woven from the same occurrences confirms that there is no self-evident given by which either information or meaning may be finally reduced or definitively measured. Indeed, as the prospects for consensus among a potentially limitless array of stories decreases, clusters of more local coherence proliferate. This profusion of stories heightens equivocality, thereby making the context of organizational action increasingly ambiguous and, therefore, increasingly problematic for both participants and their observers.

If supplying more information to organizations is, then, the researcher's equivalent of bringing coals to Newcastle, the scholarly contribution of theory seems, in accordance with Weick's comment, equally munificent, and, as each of the two epigraphs to this chapter suggests, potentially more encumbering. In drawing out the problematic relationship between idea, action, and understanding, Cohen and March stress that the experience of practitioners, at many crucial points, outruns theory, defined as our typical ways of making sense of circumstance. In a similar vein, Birnbaum cautions that the implicit theory or sensemaking tendencies of scholars may falsify what they see and what they say when administration and organization are subjected to their gaze.

Notwithstanding the intention of the epigraphs to move us beyond familiar ways of thinking that underfund and circumscribe our comprehension of administrative action and its organizational setting, each intimates that theory and experience can be cleanly separated and freely managed. Unless this intimation is mitigated by noting that theory is reciprocally and inextricably intertwined with experience, we risk resuming a misguided search for a methodology capable of constraining theory so that we might see objectively, unfettered by supposition, preconception, and belief. The attempt to finally cleanse data from the contaminates of theory, conceptual predisposition, and existential need is but the false hope of objectivism. It is motivated by the want to reduce experience to brute fact rather than by the endeavor to express experience in different vocabularies that might facilitate the telling of more interesting, apt, and arresting stories.
If theory did not overwhelm data, thereby making occurrence meaningful, experience would remain a series of literally "non-sensical" phenomena unfolding as discrete happenstance events. Birnbaum's "cognitive 'distortion'" is but the social scientist's pejorative admission of the meaning-making that allows occurrence to become comprehensible and, therefore, tolerable. Without it, we are unable to make the attributive connections requisite to the composition of narratives that render events and actions coherent and purposeful. In reversing the empiricist adage "seeing is believing," Weick (1995: 133-4) reminds us that the psychologist's "cognitive distortion" and "expectancy bias" are necessary stepping stones towards the truths confirmed when, through persuasion or force, these configurations of experience gather consensus. Without prior belief, the perceptual focus that is the first step in working towards outcomes—outcomes that may ultimately confirm or amend creedal assumptions—would be lacking:

In matters of sensemaking, believing is seeing. To believe is to notice selectively. And to believe is to initiate actions capable of lending substance to the belief . . . . What people keep missing is that what they see is usually the outcome of their own prior actions. What they see is something of their own making.

Admittedly the belief-driven relationships between experience and theory, action and thinking, and intention and outcome tend to circularity or self-confirmation. Nonetheless, the ability of these quasi-tautological relationships to exclude or screen information, the abundance of which would otherwise compromise attention and preclude action, constitutes something of an organizational virtue. Even self-fulfilling prophecies, as Weick (1995: 153) suggests with his usual irony, contribute to the taming of organizational flux by "proving" a constancy between expectation and occurrence:

If we return to organizational settings, we can assume that the changing mix of people, solutions, and problems, through constantly changing decision opportunities thrust up by an unstable competitive world, means that most people, most of the time, cannot afford the luxury of accuracy. Instead, their goal is to establish some sort of stability and predictability under conditions that work against this goal . . . . Said differently, most people in organizations spend most of their time trying to make sense under conditions where self-fulfilling
prophecies should flourish. And self-fulfilling prophecies flourish, because they are one of the few sensemaking processes that work.

Cognitive variants of the unfalsifiable Biblical assurance "seek and ye shall find" do, after all, fortify the quests, however errant, of organizational participants and researchers alike. That we are Quixotically capable of finding, in most circumstances, what we seek—in the parlance of scholarship, that theory may be expanded to accommodate almost any occurrence—is an epistemic irony suppressed in order to maintain the integrity of the "search" for certainty and the posture of objectivity. To admit that, in making administrative theory and practice, we seek eminently revisable agreements rather than truth, interest rather than reliability, and civility rather than finality is to concede a humility that threatens the foundations of both administrative rectitude and objectivist organizational scholarship. It is also to admit to a good part of what we do rather than what we say we do both inside organizations as well as in our more private thoughts and lives.

But, if instability and equivocality, as Weick tells us, cannot be relieved by the addition of more information, what will overwhelm mere data in order to give organizational experience the sense, continuity, and direction that can subdue instability and make action meaningful? What can act, in lieu of information, as a catalyst for the satisficing necessary to effect sensemaking and purposeful action? Weick (1995: 27-8) provides his version of an answer:

Instead [of more information], they [people in organizations] need values, priorities, and clarity about preferences to help them be clear about which projects matter. Clarity on values clarifies what is important in elapsed experience, which finally gives some sense of what that elapsed experience means.

Values, as Weick uses the term, may be viewed as compressions, perhaps the most condensed and utilizable compressions possible, of an axiologically oriented theory that endows experience with significance. They supply the "oughts" that ideally give orientation, priority, and meaning to what "is." As capsule renderings of the significant and good, values should give axiological trajectory to experience and make it possible to connect action meaningfully to the attainment of that which is desired.

But "values" remains a nebulous term, especially in organizational contexts where the impact of principles upon the formulation of purpose and action is unclear.
In educational settings, not only is the relationship between values and action vague, there are indications that it is the opposite of what we might expect and, indeed, of what we might hope. Summarizing her doctoral research, Elizabeth Campbell (1994: 1) noted in her dissertation abstract that educational administrators in school settings, like their teaching colleagues, have a pronounced and, she suggests, troubling ability to sever the values they profess from the practices they enact:

Twenty teachers and ten principals, both elementary and secondary, from ten public school boards were interviewed in order to examine how some individuals perceive right and wrong and how, as a consequence, they act based on or in spite of their own belief. Although more teachers than principals were aware of moral and ethical conflicts in their professional lives, neither group was shown to be able to translate objective and fundamental moral beliefs into meaningful action.4

The "de-valuation" of action in contemporary organizations, both educational and corporate, however, does not diminish the relationship between what is believed, what is seen, what is thought, and ultimately what is done.

The concept of "belief" developed by the founding pragmatist Charles Sanders Peirce can help us to bypass the unsure relationship of values to both individual action and collective practice as we seek to understand leadership from the perspective of working administrators. Peirce, like the Weick of "believing is seeing," preferred to speak of beliefs rather than of values. Through his participation in the august Cambridge Metaphysical Club in the 1870s, which he co-founded with William James, Peirce first encountered Alexander Bain's definition of belief as "that upon which a man is prepared to act" (Murphy, 1990: 2). Finding Bain's definition an increasingly persuasive linking of idea and deed, Peirce further shortened it to his pithy maxim: "belief is a rule for action" (Peirce, 1995/1878: 41). John Murphy (1990: 22; emphasis in original) provides a concise summary of the central role played by belief in the cyclic dynamic that Pierce viewed as moving from doubt through inquiry to the establishment of what we may call, in contradistinction to values, "procedural beliefs" or, in Peirce's words, "habits of action:"

Doubt is an uneasy, irritating, dissatisfied state. It provides no guide for action, no way of proceeding. So we struggle to free ourselves from it, to acquire a habit of action, to attain a state of belief. Pierce calls this struggle to turn doubt into belief (or disbelief) inquiry.
Writing a century before Weick, Peirce shared the recognition that inquiry need not end in truth to be successful. More important than verifiable truth is the resolution of what Peirce (in Murphy, 1990: 22-3; emphasis in original), again presaging Weick and anticipating Adler's psychic fictions, called "the irritation of doubt":

the sole object of inquiry is the settlement of opinion. We may fancy that this is not enough for us, and that we seek, not merely an opinion, but a true opinion. But put this fancy to the test, and it proves groundless; for as soon as a firm belief is reached we are entirely satisfied, whether the belief be true of false . . . . The most that can be maintained is, that we seek for a belief that we shall think to be true. But we think each one of our beliefs to be true, and, indeed, it is mere tautology to say so.

The penultimate pragmatist, Peirce (1995/1878: 43) sidesteps epistemic ramblings about truth by grounding his definition of "belief" in "habits of action"—habits that are integral to establishing meaning, sensibleness, and practice:

the whole function of thought is to produce habits of action . . . . Now, the identity of a habit depends on how it might lead us to act, not merely under such circumstances as are likely to arise, but under such as might possibly occur, no matter how improbable they may be. What the habit is depends on when and how it causes us to act. As for the when, every stimulus to action is derived from perception; as for the how, every purpose of action is to produce some sensible result. Thus, we come down to what is tangible and practical, as the root of every real distinction of thought, no matter how subtle it may be; and there is no distinction of meaning so fine as to consist in anything but a possible difference of practice.

If we imagine Peirce using, albeit in a distinctively pragmatic voice, the vocabulary introduced by Maclntyre, we might hear him saying something like: "the narratives we are bound to compose as the culmination of our sensemaking activities are imbued with the beliefs (i.e., habits of action) that give rise to our individual practices, which are themselves articulated collectively as normative traditions."

Accordingly, the meaning of leadership for an administrator would be synonymous with the practices s/he enacts and the narratives s/he speaks as public expressions of belief. In pragmatic shorthand, her/his remarks about leadership are, and can be no more than, a situated expression of the habits of action, informed by experience and tradition, particular to her/his practice of administration.
Contrary to a modernist expertise within which values are either encumbrances or ornaments for display that have lost their power to effect conduct, procedural beliefs or habits of action are completed in the practices that they make possible and necessary. Where there may be a functional separation of the values we speak and the actions we take, for Peirce there is no separation possible between what we believe and how we act. Said another way, where talk of values may smack of the axiological "glitterspeak" (Morgan, 1992) to which Campbell has pointed, habits of action cannot escape what our practices say about us. Similarly, our beliefs are disclosed directly and indirectly in our mien, our manner, and our talk.

From Habits of Action to Moral Convictions

Richard Rorty brings an expressly moral tone to the relationship between beliefs and practice fashioned by Peirce. He does so in his response to the charges of nihilism and relativism that have been made against him in particular and, more generally, against pragmatism as a philosophical stance that eschews debates concerning truth. To do so, Rorty provides a pragmatic exegesis of the term "moral" that incorporates the situatedness of actions in specific, normative communities that need have no claim upon an absolute knowledge of either the good or the true. Building upon Joseph Shumpeter's (in Rorty, 1989: 46) statement:

To realise the relative validity of one's convictions and yet stand for them unflinchingly, is what distinguishes a civilized man from a barbarian,

Rorty describes how, under conditions of moral and epistemic ambiguity, Pierce's "habits of action" are synonymous with "moral convictions." Rorty's principled presentation of pragmatism becomes significant for this study on two counts: first, it establishes that a leadership praxis capable of withstanding the contingencies of circumstance and sourced in neither metaphysical revelation nor empirical warrant can be distinctively moral, and, second, it axiologically frames the interpretivist or hermeneutic reading of the presidential interviews and supporting materials reported in the following chapter.

Rorty's argument is made in two parts. He first cites Oakeshott (in Rorty, 1989: 58) in order to establish that morality, like a living language, is better understood as a
work in progress incrementally and continuously actualized in thought, experience, speech, and behavior than as a fixed standard against which what is said and what is done can be measured:

A morality is neither a system of general principles nor a code of rules, but a vernacular language. General principles and even rules may be elicited from it, but (like other languages) it is not the creation of grammarians; it is made by speakers. What has to be learned in a moral education is not a theorem such as that good conduct is acting fairly or being charitable, nor is it a rule such as "always tell the truth," but how to speak the language intelligently . . . . It is not a device for formulating judgments about conduct or for solving so-called moral problems, but a practice in terms of which to think, to choose, to act, and to utter.

Always in the process of making, the moral, under Oakeshott's account, is as much about surprise as it is about judgement, as much about openness as it is about finality, and as much about the imagination as it is about limiting the unconventional. Morality is itself a practice that must be given sense and sensibility by individuals as they compose what MacIntyre (1984: 219) calls "the unity of a narrative quest" through which the wholeness of a human life is, in turn, constituted and made available to reflection.

But when morality is manifested in its judgemental aspect, Rorty (1989: 59-60; emphasis in original), in the second part of his argument, reminds us of what this judgement consists by citing

Wilfrid Sellars's thesis that morality is a matter of what he calls "we-intentions," that the core meaning of "immoral action" is "the sort of thing we don't do." . . . On Sellars's account, as on Hegel's, moral philosophy takes the form of an answer to the question "Who are 'we', how did we come to be what we are, and what might we become?" rather than an answer to the question "What rules should dictate my actions?"

Although morality may be emotionally charged, it is more than simply emoting. It is emoting about something that matters, and that something, again to borrow from MacIntyre, consists of the goods peculiar to our practices and the virtues that give rise to the traditions in which our practices are enmeshed. It is these contingent goods—that is, goods which are in a perpetual state of making—in concert with and against which we come to define who we are, what we do, and to which communities we belong. In Peircean terms, our habits of action become continuous with the morality
that is actualized in the unfolding of our practices, which, in turn, draw us into affiliation with particular communities and their respective conventions while removing us from others. Thus Rorty (1989: 60; emphasis in original) brings the two strands of his argument together:

This Oakeshott-Sellars way of looking at morality as a set of practices, our practices, makes vivid the difference between the conception of morality as the voice of a divinized portion of our soul, and as the voice of a contingent human artifact, a community which has grown up subject to the vicissitudes of time and chance, one more of Nature’s “experiments.”. . . if the demands of a morality are the demands of a language, and if languages are historical contingencies, rather than attempts to capture the true shape of the world or the self, then to “stand unflinchingly for one’s moral convictions” is a matter of identifying oneself with such a contingency.5

It is, then, Peirce’s habits of action read, per Rorty, as moral convictions, that in practice overwhelm and thereby thin and prioritize surplus organizational information. In doing so, leadership experience is given coherence and administrative work is made purposeful. To frame leadership as an interpretive moral praxis is to seek in the presidential interviews recounted in the fifth chapter those contingencies unflinchingly affirmed as the moral convictions that are the transparencies for beliefs given practicable form as habits of action. Likewise, it is to take account of those aspects of the presidency and the university that are flinched at and, therefore, excluded from or minimized in practice.

Knowing Administrative Experience: The Interview

Although the phrase "habits of action" underscores the irrevocable relationship between belief and what is said and what is done, it should not suggest that these habits are immediately accessible to administrative practitioners or to those who observe them. On the contrary, as Peirce’s terminology implies, habits, because they are routine, are no longer serviced by the attention and awareness elicited by that which is novel. As Grant McCracken (1988: 23), in his book The Long Interview, remarks:

Most respondents have difficulty giving a full account of what they believe and what they do. Long ago, their beliefs became assumptions and their actions became habits. Both are now almost completely submerged
beneath the surface of consciousness. The investigator must help the respondent to recover his or her beliefs and actions from this taken-for-granted state.

To recover beliefs or to ferret out habits of action, the interview must break through the largely unconscious conventions that can make experience, even the experience of one's own moral convictions and actions, elusive.

The masking of belief by the habitual is intensified by the fundamental ambiguities of purpose, power, experience, and success that, according to Cohen and March, are inherent in presidential experience and ubiquitous in institutions of higher education. As Cohen and March note, these ambiguities can fuel a somewhat tired "social rhetoric" that secrets the uncertainty within which administrative praxis must be realized. As leaders seek to shore up the illusion of control, ambiguity typically prompts an experiential counterfeiting in which platitudinous certainties are substituted for the vagaries of everyday life and the unforeseeable hazards that attend decision making:

Almost any educated person can deliver a lecture entitled "The Goals of the University." Almost no one will listen to the lecture voluntarily. For the most part, such lectures and their companion essays are well-intentioned exercises in social rhetoric, with little operational content. (Cohen and March, 1986: 195)

The purpose of the interview in this study and the triangulation of its themes through the presentation of ancillary information is, first, to penetrate this social rhetoric in order to explore the ambiguities characteristic of presidential experience. Second, the pricking of the habitual camouflage that can make presidential beliefs all but invisible would permit insight into the moral convictions through which ambiguity is contested by purpose. To "analyze" the interviews conducted as a part of this study is to listen for these ambiguities and the convictions that would surmount them knowing that the expectations and prejudices of their reporter will invariably become interwoven with the expression of each. Risking Birnbaum's "cognitive distortion" and "expectancy bias," the task is to open social rhetoric in order to explore the less public beliefs individual presidents rely upon to make sense of their experience and to give orientation and "operational content" to their work and meaning to its settings.
The interview, particularly the long interview, supplies a medium that can invite, instigate, and support such openings. A "highly unusual speech event" (McCracken, 1988: 12), the long interview is a special kind of conversation distinguished by the creation of a sustained intersubjectivity that clarifies experience as it makes it communicable. Speaking in the vocabulary of science, Harry Stack Sullivan (1970: 3), the eminent American psychiatrist and student of interpersonal communication, emphasizes the interview's peculiar synergy that can surface material which is somehow more than the information contributed by either participant and which is finally the property of neither:

The processes and the changes in processes that make up the data which can be subjected to scientific study occur, not in the subject person nor in the observer, but in the situation which is created between the observer and his subject.

Translating Sullivan's thinking to an interpretivist perspective, the long interview provides a signal opportunity to move beyond the dichotomy between objectivity and subjectivity while making accessible and clarifying that which would otherwise remain unspoken and, perhaps, unthought. In Weick's terms, the interviews reported below provide an unusual, present-tense window into the practice of presidential sensemaking-in-action.

This window, however, is not a fixed aperture through which a static arrangement of beliefs are glimpsed and recorded. On the contrary, it is a tentative frame mutually, contingently, and continually constructed by the interviewer and the interviewee as questions and responses shape its limits and what lies within them. Both frame and contents are actively bartered in the interview, which, itself, is an emblematic instance of reciprocal sensemaking within negotiated comfort levels.

Tracking Oakeshott's image of conversation as "an unrehearsed intellectual adventure," the interview provides a context for the saying that can result in unanticipated meanings and unexpected connections between them. As Clark Kerr (1984: xvii) points out, the expressive opportunity created by the interview may be very special indeed for higher education presidents:

In our interviews, which were confidential, the presidents spoke frankly about their private reactions to their public lives. They hold rather lonely positions and have few confidants with whom they can talk as they could
with us. We even found presidents and spouses who—until we talked
with them—had not been frank with one another about how they saw their
respective roles.

Through reflection, the conjunctions of meaning and circumstance surfaced in
interviews can be extended and, thereby, assume both a deeper and a more
heightened significance than was initially apparent to the parties involved. Weick
(1995: 12) underscores this relationship between saying, sensemaking, and
unanticipated meaning in his citation of an engaging anecdote told by Graham Wallas
in his 1926 book *The Art of Thought*:

> think about the wonderfully compact account of sensemaking mentioned
> by Graham Wallas. "The little girl had the making of a poet in her who,
> being told to be sure of her meaning before she spoke, said: 'How can I
> know what I think till I see what I say?'" (Wallas, 1926: 106) . . . . The
> concept of sensemaking highlights the action, activity, and creating that
> lays down the traces that are interpreted and then reinterpreted.

The hermeneutic perspective within which the interviews were conceived,
completed, and through which they are now contemplated is sympathetic to the notion
of poiesis, outlined by Shakotko and Walker (1996; see endnote 6, Chapter 3) and
advocated by Lee Thayer (1988: 259) as a heuristic that can bring new insights to
leadership study. This outlook, which emphasizes the exercise of creative imagination
in the fashioning of private and public experience, is consistent with the interpretive
function of leadership that, in accordance with Linda Smircich and Gareth Morgan
(1982: 260; emphasis added), has unending opportunities for organizational exercise:

> occupancy of an authority role presents the leader in every situation with
> an existential dilemma—how to define and structure the element of
> organizational reality encountered at a given time.

Thayer (1988: 250, 254; emphasis in original) expresses this hermeneutic function of
leadership eloquently, linking the executive mythos of control more benignly to the
human need for stability and order:

> The leader is thus one who alters or guides the manner in which his
> followers "mind" the world by giving it a compelling "face." A leader at
> work is one who gives others a different sense of the meaning of that
> which they do by recreating it in a different form, a different "face," in the
> same way that a pivotal painter or sculptor or poet gives those who follow
> him (or her) a different way of "seeing"—and therefore saying and doing
> and knowing in the world. A leader does not tell it "as it is"; he tells it as it
might be, giving what "is" thereby a different "face." . . . The leader is a  
sense-giver. The leader always embodies the possibilities of escape from  
what might otherwise appear to us to be incomprehensible, or from what  
what might otherwise appear to us to be chaotic, indifferent, or incorrigible  
world— one over which we have no ultimate control.

But where Thayer stresses the organizational sense-giving function of poietic  
leadership, I am more immediately concerned with the personal sensemaking through  
which presidents seek to assuage ambiguity in order to make their experience of  
shared but variously interpreted events and circumstances coherent, comprehensible,  
and compelling.

Leadership in Higher Education: Some Preliminary Remarks on the University  
Presidency

As we have seen in the previous chapters leadership is difficult to define directly  
and still more difficult to understand fully. This is so in spite of an extensive and  
diverse body of literature that has sought to make leadership intelligible and the work  
that it entails communicable. Various organizational, psychological, cultural, and  
philosophical perspectives have all sought to provide coherent pictures of leadership  
and what is required for its successful actualization. But leadership remains a  
stubbornly complex phenomenon, which, as we saw in the third chapter, is not easily or  
adequately reduced to either a causal arrangement of empirically discoverable  
elements or to a final set of prescriptive principles.

The study of leadership in the context of the university, where traditions of  
shared power and a range of professional rights and privileges obtain—rights and  
privileges increasingly expressed in the contractual and contracted language of labor  
relations—is made even more complex. To these provisos must be added Clark Kerr's  
(1984: xi; 1994: 41) caveat:

The only truthful generalization about colleges and universities in America  
that can be made without exception is that no truthful generalization can  
br be made without exception except for this generalization.

Although Kerr's qualification may be less binding in Canada where there are fewer  
universities with less structural differentiation among them, dissimilarities in regional
attitudes, provincial political cultures, and institutional histories and personalities make it applicable in only a mildly weakened form.

The many ambiguities that surround leadership per se are, thus, multiplied when the milieu for leadership is the university. The ability to usefully generalize to and predict accurately from observations made in specific higher education settings is concordantly diminished. Our most familiar notions of leadership, for example, link effective administration to the ability to master internal organizational occurrence and to shape collective performance. The leader is the person "in charge of" and accountable for the actions of subordinates and for the outcomes of organizational action. As an administrator s/he is the person responsible for making sure that things are done right; as a leader s/he is responsible for making sure that the right things are done. We have seen, however, that this linkage of administration to effectiveness and of leadership to discernment may be mythic even within the ordered hierarchies, the formal protocols, and the "hard" and audible financial bottom lines of the corporate world. Within the university where objectives are unclear and often strategically contradictory, where power is diffuse and elusive, where experience can be a poor teacher especially of the best students, and where standards for success are highly mutable, the equation of leadership with organizational mastery seems patently inappropriate.

The bad fit between the university as an organization and our standard ideas about leadership have resulted in a trend among researchers and practitioners to portray higher education leadership in a harsh and unhappy light. Although many of these studies are authored by scholars and presidents who carry with them unhappy memories of the seige atmosphere characteristic of the university in the late '60s, most capture perplexing aspects of higher education that we have little difficulty recognizing today, albeit in their more mature, metastasized forms. In his 1973 study *The Leaning Ivory Tower*, Warren Bennis depicts the university as a problematic institution with many players seeking to politically implement often conflicting agendas from a variety of power bases both within and outside its walls. With the arrival of higher education realpolitik and ideological hardball, each increasingly exercised in the belligerent rituals of labor relations and trials of the politically correct, it is no surprise that Bennis's
contemporaries (Schmidt, 1970) have chronicled the diminution of the once grand role and wide operating scope of the university president.

Although claims for individual leadership effectiveness continue to be made, the overall picture of leadership in higher education is not rendered optimistically by most scholars and a goodly number of practicing, and former presidents. If Bennis’s (1976) claim that the university is an "unconscious conspiracy" against leadership once sounded extreme, it, in all likelihood, no longer does. It may even be taken as a truism by presidents heir to increasingly shorter tenure, subject to the overtly antagonistic rhetoric—if not the binding legal obligations—of collective bargaining, and ready targets for the vigilante mentality legitimated by an omnivorous political correctness that stifles the open exchange of ideas, inhibits inquiry, and polices even once private musings and offhand, if to some, indecorous attempts at humour.

Benezet, Katz, and Magnusson (1981) conclude that the university presidency has become a largely managerial activity retaining only that power which is not challenged by other groups and that the office now has lost what may have remained of its collegial character. They note that a seemingly fortuitous alignment of circumstances and personalities determine perceptions of presidential effectiveness. The very title Presidential Passages: Former College Presidents Reflect on the Splendor and Agony of Their Careers (Carbone, 1980) reveals that many who have served as presidents in the contemporary university have intensely divided feelings about the quality of their personal and professional lives. In conveying personal experiences of the university presidency, Carbone depicts the disappointment and resentment which can result when presidential idealism must accept the conflictual nature of even circumscribed decision making.

Joseph Kauffman (1980: 109), whose tracing of the college presidency's evolution is both perceptive and sensitive, prefigures the language that has become familiar through discussions of professional "deskilling" when he says:

There is not much joy in being a college or university president today, partly because of the external constraints placed on presidents in addition to those resulting from problems of governance. Further, we in higher education have gradually eliminated considerable areas of presidential judgement and discretion by adopting uniform procedures, formulas, and policies that command our fealty more than does our good sense. As
Ashworth has observed, "Like Pavlov's dogs, administrators bit by bit are being conditioned to stay within very limited and well-trodden paths by shocks, commands, intimidations, and orders.

Kauffman concludes that it has been made all but impossible to attract the gifted mavericks who can potentially make a "real" difference in the development of an institution and in the furthering of educational ideals.

In spite of its impassioned call for renewing the higher education presidency, Clark Kerr's Carnegie Commission funded 1984 study of university leadership, Presidents Make a Difference: Strengthening Leadership in Colleges and Universities, is a catalogue of reasons why such a renewal may, in practice, be untenable. Kerr's presentation of presidential leadership as a faltering enterprise is captured perhaps too fully in a paragraph from his foreword in which he itemizes the reasons why university presidents typically avoid exercises in planning:

Presidents explain this lower level of preparation for the future in several ways: more pressing current problems and more constraints in responding to them than before; more pressures from many sources on the presidents' time and for their attention; greater uncertainties about the future, which make planning harder; managing decline is more difficult than managing growth and advance planning might actually be counterproductive in terms of exacerbating tensions on campus (the only safe plan, one president said, is "pie in the sky, and there is no more pie in the sky"); and the relatively short terms of presidents, which reduce the opportunity, and even the incentive, to plan for the future. Also, some presidents have been repudiated by their boards when they have made tough and controversial plans; the word of this spreads quickly and widely. (Kerr, 1984: x)

The presidential rationales Kerr lists for avoiding planning seem, on the one hand, hardly unrealistic and, on the other, unlikely candidates for the quick therapeutic of reform. On the contrary, they seem to speak the sort of unabashed, functional, and perennial wisdom Machiavelli (1981/1513: 91; emphasis added) long ago dispensed to and in The Prince:

the gulf between how one should live and how one does live is so wide that a man who neglects what is actually done for what should be done learns the way to self-destruction rather than self-preservation. The fact is that a man who wants to act virtuously in every way necessarily comes to grief among so many who are not virtuous. Therefore if a prince wants to maintain his rule he must learn how not to be virtuous, and to make use of this or not according to need.
But Machiavelli’s unadorned pragmatics prove impolitic among those, like Kerr, who champion elevated beliefs about the kind of organization the university is and the sorts of leadership which are appropriate to it. Contra Kerr’s liberal optimism, Machiavelli reminds us that much in human nature and the practice of leadership is as intractable as it is indelicate and that seeking to change either is more a vendible than a venerable enterprise.

Kerr’s well-intentioned wish to remedy much that is, according to senior administrators, sensible in their conduct and suitable to its settings also illustrates how difficult it can be for presidents to make themselves heard about how, in practice, they must often act. The interventionist predisposition to improve also exaggerates the plasticity of institutions of higher education, where traditions abound and significant change is typically measured in centuries rather than in months or years. Surely, as the date of Machiavelli’s perhaps all too useful counsel demonstrates, there is little new in authority doing what authority must in order to maintain itself, whether in the university or elsewhere. To pretend otherwise is to affect a disingenuous innocence that can give rise to fanciful reforms (e.g., "leaderless groups") and enticing slogans (e.g., "empowerment"), but that takes poor account of practical affairs.

More important still, high sounding pretensions disqualify too much that makes organizational experience human, understandable, and real. As the following story recounted in 1936 by H. W. Dodds (in Knight, 1940: 16; emphasis added), then president of Princeton University, underscores, that which is most veritable to administrative practitioners may lie outside the implicit moralism that makes so much current leadership literature appear either tepid or otherworldly:

There is the classic story of the new college president who expressed to a seasoned veteran the thought that his first year would be the hardest. "Such was not my experience," replied the other. "My third year was the hardest. It was in that year that the faculty found out that I was a liar." This story I am inclined to discount. A good executive would not have let the faculty find out.

Leavened by an insider’s sardonic humor, Dodds’s anecdote hints at why, per Kerr’s remarks above, most presidents "in-deed" must "hold rather lonely positions" in which frankness, even in personal reflection, not to mention with a spouse—or an interviewer—can be an attitude too costly to cultivate. Such, bluntly stated, may simply
be the price that must be paid for the authority that accompanies positions of leadership, whether in the university or elsewhere, a thousand years ago or today, in the West or in the East.¹¹

Despite his advocacy of an ideal that may, in the end, be only that, Kerr has a keen and a veteran eye for observing the presidency and its limitations. With Marion Gade (1986) and again sponsored by the Carnegie Corporation, he has, in *The Many Lives of Academic Presidents: Time, Place & Character*, deepened his reading of the more than 800 interviews conducted for *Presidents Make a Difference*. His purpose in doing so is to explore the situational conditions and personal characteristics that have shaped the public and private lives of American college and university presidents. In accepting the biographical vignette as the best way to convey images of leadership, Kerr and Gade acknowledge the irreducibly individual character of each presidency. In their own words:

The theme is that there is no such thing as the presidency in the singular, only presidencies in the plural; and no such thing as the presidential type. (Kerr & Gade, 1986: xiii; emphasis in original)

Lucid, comprehensive, and often persuasive in their presentation of dilemmas faced by presidents, Kerr and Gade remain steadfastly convinced of both the vulnerability and the viability of the presidency. Their diagnosis of the institutional conditions which they feel are largely responsible for the depreciation of the presidency and for the isolation and frustration of individual presidents serves a mission that is clearly restorative. Unwinding the complex interaction of time, place, and character that give rise to particular presidential experiences and outcomes, they issue a sustained and densely documented call for strengthening an office which, they claim, is diminished at the university’s expense. In their staunch advocacy of a strengthened presidency, the authors would discredit the more radical notions of institutional indeterminacy and the unapologetic depreciation of the presidential role that they see being advanced so inauspiciously by their conceptual antagonists Michael Cohen and James March.

Cohen and March’s astutely "contrarian" book-length research paper/essay *Leadership and Ambiguity: The American College President* was reprinted in a revised and expanded format by the Harvard Business School Press in 1986, the same year in
which *The Many Lives of Academic Presidents* would make its first appearance. Originally published 12 years earlier, *Leadership and Ambiguity* was, ironically, one of twenty-one reports on American higher education issued over a six year period by the Carnegie Commission under Clark Kerr's guidance (Mayhew, 1973). It is hardly possible to conceive of a set of observations, attitudes, and recommendations that could differ more from those that Kerr would defend so earnestly throughout his distinguished professional career as a senior academic administrator and researcher. It is equally difficult to imagine how Kerr could have maintained his equanimity upon receiving a document so blatantly antithetical to his views, yet nominally prepared under his auspices.12

Where Kerr speaks as the paradigmatic progressive, who combines high-minded optimism with an indefatigable penchant to improve what he observes, Cohen and March speak as savvy social ironists and methodologically ingenious organizational observers whose trenchant perceptions of the presidency are unswayed by the university's pretensions or its past. Think of Clark Kerr, the distinguished intellectual and inveterate defender of the modern university as *the* home of inquiry, *the* creator of knowledge and *the* engine of human betterment in good times and bad, reading for the first time the following passage:

> The American college or university is a prototypic organized anarchy. It does not know what it is doing. Its goals are either vague or in dispute. Its technology is familiar but not understood. Its major participants wander in and out of the organization. These factors do not make a university a bad organization or a disorganized one; but they do make it a problem to describe, understand, and lead. (Cohen & March, 1986: 3)

Although it may not be difficult to empathize with Kerr's distress,13 it is difficult to resist the pretension-deflating freshness of remarks that seem to finally escape the flowery oratory and the clichéd predictability characteristic of most discussions of the university and its leadership. Not only do Cohen and March shake off euphuisms particular to the idiom of higher education, they also separate the university from the rational bureaucratic organization within which there is a distinct hierarchy of authority and expertise, rule-governed procedures designed to achieve clearly articulated goals, and objective standards for judging the success of initiatives (Perrow, 1986). In contradistinction to the ideal-type of the rational bureaucracy, Cohen and March tell us
that organizational anarchies often appear to run backwards with a "supply side" abundance of decision-makers and solutions seeking a dearth of choice opportunities within an institution where goals are confused if not discrepant, where technologies of achievement are either speculative or flawed, and where an invasive arbitrariness compromises every attempt at measurement and evaluation. Even without using the somewhat derisive but arguably apt "garbage can theory of decision making" (Cohen, March, & Olsen, 1972), it becomes clear that choice making in the university is actualized under an unusual and somewhat paradoxical set of conditions. Effectively decoupled from metaphors of leadership commonly associated with authority, knowledge, power, and control, the presidency can appear as a position in search of a function, or, as Cohen and March (1986: 2) put it still more baldly:

The presidency is an illusion. Important aspects of the role seem to disappear on close examination. In particular, decision making in the university seems to result extensively from a process that decouples problems and choices and makes the president's role more commonly sporadic and symbolic than significant. Compared to the heroic expectations he and others might have, the president has modest control over the events of college life. The contributions he makes can easily be swamped by outside events or the diffuse qualities of university decision making.

Cohen and March create a novel if controversial context within which traditional ideas concerning the university and its leadership may be "re-viewed" rather than providing analysis and recommendations through which the once central role of the presidency might be restored. They would move the play of ideas concerning administration and the university outside the limitations of existent language games in order to bring new possibilities to the re-thinking of each. To contrast Kerr and Gade with Cohen and March is to compare the values of what Rorty (1980: 320; emphasis added), extending the metaphor of knowledge-making as conversation, (1980: 320) calls "normal" and "abnormal" discourse:

*normal* discourse is that which is conducted within an agreed-upon set of conventions about what counts as a relevant contribution, what counts as answering a question, what counts as having a good argument for that answer or a good criticism of it. *Abnormal discourse* is what happens when someone joins in the discourse who is ignorant of these conventions or who sets them aside. "Επιστημή is the product of normal discourse—the sort of statement which can be agreed to be true by all
participants whom the other participants count as "rational." The product of abnormal discourse can be anything from nonsense to intellectual revolution, and there is no discipline which describes it, any more than there is a discipline devoted to the study of the unpredictable, or of "creativity."

In order to avoid disparaging either form of discourse needlessly, it is worthwhile to note Rorty's (1980: 321) comment that the normal discourse that he equates with epistemology and the abnormal discourse that he equates with hermeneutics each have their respective applications, depending upon the work that wants to be done and the conditions that obtain:

The difference is purely one of familiarity. We will be epistemological where we understand perfectly well what is happening but want to codify it in order to extend, or strengthen, or teach, or "ground" it. We must be hermeneutical where we do not understand what is happening but are honest enough to admit it, rather than being blatantly "Whiggish" about it.

Epistemic push comes to hermeneutic shove, however, when the conflation of the mastery of familiar vocabularies and the mastery of what these vocabularies describe is challenged. Such challenges raise the possibility that what we are able to say may have little relationship to what we are able to do, or, to use Rorty's terminology, that our convictions, our knowledge, and our putative capabilities may rest on nothing more than a habitual and hypnotizing way of speaking that begins to impose unhelpfully upon our experience of the world.

In proposing new vocabularies for the description of experience, a more fundamental contest about what constitutes knowledge is, thus, initiated. As Rorty (1989: 9) suggests, things begin to get interesting when this contest can no longer be resolved quietly in favor of the established way of reporting observations:

Interesting philosophy is rarely an examination of the pros and cons of a thesis. Usually it is, implicitly or explicitly, a contest between an entrenched vocabulary which has become a nuisance and a half-formed vocabulary which vaguely promises great things.

A hermeneutic partisan, Rorty (1989: 9) helps us to appreciate what Cohen and March are about as he delineates the "method" or, better still, the "practice" through which abnormal discourse arises and the aspirations that it harbors:

The method is to redescribe lots and lots of things in new ways, until you have created a pattern of linguistic behavior which will tempt the rising
generation to adopt it, thereby causing them to look for appropriate new forms of nonlinguistic behavior, for example, the adoption of new scientific equipment or new social institutions . . . . It says things like "try thinking of it this way"—or more specifically, "try to ignore the apparently futile traditional questions." It does not pretend to have a better candidate for doing the same old things which we did when we spoke in the old way. Rather, it suggests that we might want to stop doing those things and do something else.

That Cohen and March have had difficulty being heard, not to mention being understood, by those most invested in the frameworks through which the university and leadership have been traditionally apprehended, demonstrates the tenacity of established perspectives, metaphors, and vocabularies. It is no small matter to convince defenders of normal, epistemic discourse and the desire to ensure administrative mastery of institutional circumstance that traditional answers as well as traditional questions may miss what is most important in our knowledge of organizations and their leadership. Possessing the intellectual resources, the research "findings," and the institutional clout needed to disparage that which is novel, the proponents of normal discourse are able to fortify the exclusivity of their purchase upon what is seemingly rational, reasonable, and self-evident. What they exclude from consideration becomes literally "incredible."

In the case of leadership, the retention of tired contexts, habitual questions, and unproductive answers can keep us from seeing what March (1984: 32) states as he, in one startling paragraph, moves the discourse about organizational leadership from the mechanics of problem solving and decision making to the iterative, hermeneutic formulation of belief through which experience can become meaningful:

Life is not just choice. It is also poetry. We live by the interpretations we make, becoming better or worse through the meanings we impute to events and institutions. Our lives change when our beliefs change. Administrators manage the way the sentiments, expectations, commitments, and faiths of individuals concerned with the organization fit into a structure of social beliefs about organizational life. Administrative theory probably underestimates the significance of this belief structure for effective organizations. As a result, it probably underestimates the extent to which the management of symbols is a part of effective administration. If we want to identify one single way in which administrators can affect organizations, it is through their effect on the world views that surround organizational life; those effects are managed through attention to the
ritual and symbolic characteristics of organizations and their administration.\textsuperscript{15}

Rupturing the normal discourse about organizations and leadership, March moves through the opening he creates to sketch what it allows to be seen, but which had been previously kept from view. In doing so, he presents an atypical image of administration that is vital and well suited to the peculiar organizational properties he assigns to the university.

Indeed, March is not alone in describing a highly unusual organization in oxymoronic terms like "organized anarchy." Riesman's (1956) characterization of the university as a series of "antagonistically cooperative" relationships seems an equally apt descriptor of a centrifugal institution distinguished by: multiple, sometimes incompatible, and often arcane specializations; an organizationally unusual but prized dispersion of knowledge and power; and localized decision making in a pluralistic context imbued with uncertainty. It would, however, be, as Cohen and March suggest, a mistake to assume that such organizational characteristics or the antagonisms they can generate preclude either leadership or its comprehension. On the contrary, both signal us to look for new configurations of leadership and new patterns of organization that may not fit within now standard concepts, descriptions, and methodologies.

If, as Cohen and March argue, the university is a paradigm case of what Weick (1976) calls a "loosely coupled" system, overtly directive functions of leadership and rationalistic images of organization must themselves loosen their conceptual hold upon our ways of describing and understanding administration. Weick (1982: 676), making March's comments immediately above operant, calls up Pondy's (1978) Wittgensteinesque formulation that leadership is a language game in which organizationally segregated and disparate meanings are recombined to create the threshold conditions required for coherence, signification, and communication:

The ties in a loosely coupled system are tenuous, which means that the chief responsibility of an administrator in such a system is to reaffirm and solidify those ties that exist. This can be done by a combination of symbol management, selective centralization, consistent articulation of a common vision, interpretation of diverse actions in terms of common themes, and by the provision of a common language in terms of which people can explain their own actions in a meaningful way and communicate with one another in similar terms.
Recast in this way, the questionable fit between the university as an atypical, command-proof organization and our extant ideas about leadership must be adjusted so that presidential experience falls victim to neither implausible heroic expectations nor outmoded concepts of administration and its settings.

The attempt to link presidential *praxis* to organizational mastery quickly leads practitioners, their employers, and their researchers to the frustrations, disappointments, and perhaps misjudgments expressed with seemingly appropriate irony by A. Bartlett Giamatti (1988: 17):

> Being president of a university is no way for an adult to make a living. Which is why so few adults actually attempt to do it. It is to hold a mid-nineteenth century ecclesiastical position on top of a late-twentieth century corporation. But there are those lucid moments, those crystalline experiences, those Joycean epiphanies, that reveal the numinous beyond and lay bare the essence of it all. I have had those moments. They were all moments of profound and brilliant failure—but string those glistening moments of defeat into a strand and you have the pearls of an administrative career.

Giamatti's perspicuous, if too self-deprecating, observations convey that the managerial image of educational leadership is discontinuous with both the culture of higher education and the experience of university administrators. The claim that management paradigms are ill suited to higher education can be extended with little revision to the public schools where administrative will is constantly upset by the run of daily events, contrary-minded vested interests, and an increasingly prevalent unsureness of purpose. To expect educational organizations of most kinds to conform to management dictates is not only an idle wish, it is to make the experience of administrative failure and institutional double-talk inevitable.

By attending to the talk of those who lead we can begin to adjust the way we talk about leadership so that it is more continuous with the way that administrative life in higher education is experienced. Even so, descriptions of leadership, however faithful to the experience of administrators, are also different from that experience:

> There is an old Spanish proverb: *No es lo mismo hablar de toros, que estar en el redondel*, which translates, "It is not the same thing to talk of bulls as to be in the bullring." So it is with us here. It is not the same thing to talk of leadership as to be in a leadership situation; to talk of
leadership, as we do here, is not the same thing as leadership. (Thayer, 1988: 254)

As inquirers we stand necessarily at a remove from what we seek to understand conversationally through the medium of language. In the hermeneutic ventures through which strong readings are made of what others see, say, and mean, the risks of misunderstanding and, hence, misreporting are in an unsure balance with the potential gains of unanticipated insights into that which is normally unavailable to us.

When we use, per Rorty, "a half-formed vocabulary which vaguely promises great things," these risks can appear daunting. This is especially so, as R. D. Laing (1968: 18) underlines bluntly in The Politics of Experience, when we use this vocabulary to speak about the lived experience of others:

I cannot experience your experience. You cannot experience my experience. We are both invisible men. All men are invisible to one another. Experience is man's invisibility to man.

And yet, as Laing (1968: 18) reminds us, giving words to the paradox that conditions all our knowledge of the selves outside our own,

Experience as invisibility of man to man is at the same time more evident than anything. Only experience is evident. Experience is the only evidence.

In Laingian terms, knowledge-making about experience is a perpetual risk where the stakes are a world potentially made less isolating and forbidding by tentatively and fallibly relieving the reciprocal invisibility of self and other. In this gamble, wagering can be made prudent only by recognizing the instability resident in each attempt to know, while, at the same time, remaining participants in a game whose prize is something more—however intractably mysterious that something more may be—than the immediate winnings or losses.

Although they cannot and, perhaps, should not be eliminated, the risks that attend hermeneutic knowledge-making can be disciplined. Following Immigart's (1988: 274) advice about knowing administration:

If an investigator really wants to get at leading and what is involved in leadership, real-world situations offer the best prospects, we can begin to test our concepts about leadership by moving them toward the lived world of administration rather than testing observation by seeing how well it withstands
reduction to preexistent concepts. To do so in the specific inquiry that orients this dissertation is to take seriously the prospect that the primary and most experientially privileged researchers into university leadership may be none other than presidents themselves. Through listening to and making sense from their recounts of professional and personal experience, we may come to a better accommodation of theory and practice by learning how each is made.

In accordance with Emerson's (1995/1841: 26) contention that,

The key to every man is his thought. Sturdy and defyng though he look, he has a helm which he obeys, which is the idea after which all his facts are classified,

the speech event that is the long interview may be expected to surface those ideas that order presidential experience and the beliefs that shape presidential action. The reporting of interviews that follows is an attempt to see where both normal/epistemic and abnormal/hermeneutic discourses about administration cohere with and separate from the experience of university leaders.

But it is also more than that. As McCracken says it, "One wants to go through the utterance into the assumptions and beliefs from which it springs." The intent in locating the Peircean habits of action made evident in individual presidencies and altered by presidential experience is to give broader significance to what it means to lead. It is also to begin to understand more fully why leadership is regarded as a phenomenon so central to our particular cultural organization of experience. Thayer (1988: 254) helps us to see that the articulations of the interview are but the beginning of a sensemaking process that must ultimately redefine what it means to know by engaging the same poietic functions integral to leadership itself:

the practical or the "theoretical" or the human value of any utterance is not to be found in the utterance, but in the auditor's interpretation of it. . . . To describe leadership is therefore as uniquely creative as any other work of art. What one learns is not how to be a leader, or even how to think about leadership. What one learns is what one is capable of learning about all such matters.

To extend MacIntyre one critical step, the knowledge inherent in narratives is made firm not only in their composition but in their communication and interpretation. Said yet another way, the narratives that are the expressions of the unity of a human
life can, through critical reflection, tell us more than the contents of the particular practices within which they are initially articulated. At its best, the comprehension of such narratives pushes us to test the limits of our learning, the resiliency of our methodologies, and the sufficiency of our knowledge. In reducing the invisibility of the other, however contingently, we incrementally reduce the invisibility of our selves and our cultural moment.

The Long Interview as Narrative Expression and Experiential Reportage: "Final Vocabularies" into "Passing Theories"

In *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Rorty (1989: 73) puts legs under MacIntyre's somewhat abstract concept of narrative by reminding us that the stories which give unity and distinctiveness to human lives must be told in words, words intimate to their speaker and familiar to her/his audience:

All human beings carry about a set of words which they employ to justify their actions, their beliefs, and their lives. These are the words in which we formulate praise of our friends and contempt for our enemies, our long-term projects, our deepest self-doubts and our highest hopes. They are the words in which we tell, sometimes prospectively and sometimes retrospectively, the story of our lives. I shall call these words a person's "final vocabulary."

"Final vocabulary" is a companion term to the Peircean beliefs that are fleshed out in everyday life as habits of action. Final vocabularies are the set of words we use when we respond to the larger and more pressing "why-questions" we may ask ourselves and which may be asked of us. In operational form, a final vocabulary is composed of the words we use when we most want to say what it is we mean; it is the vocabulary we use when we express our beliefs. In helping us to speak that which is most significant to us, this vocabulary bespeaks the conceptual screens through which a multifarious and abundant world is perceptually thinned and, thereby, made amenable to sensemaking. It is this filtering of information that allows us to factor out what, in our terms, is extraneous, thereby reducing ambiguity and making coherence in action and its justification possible.

What we tend to forget, and what some—especially the scientists and metaphysicians among us—seem intent to forget, is that the expressions phrased in
"final" vocabularies are tentative, fallible, and passing constructions subject to change when they no longer help us to make sense of experience. As Rorty (1989: 73) notes in his description of the ironist temperament, a temperament he shares and philosophically entrepreneurs, our lack of access to a determinative reality against which claims can be adjudicated limits our options for knowledge-making to an essentially comparative enterprise:

Ironists who are inclined to philosophize see the choice between vocabularies as made neither within a neutral and universal metavocabulary nor by an attempt to fight one's way past appearances to the real, but simply by playing the new off against the old.

The hermeneutic approach taken to the narratives reported and critically conveyed in the chapter that immediately follows is informed by the ironist position Rorty espouses. It begins with the admission that no determining archetype of presidential experience, against which these narratives may be judged either superior or wanting, has presented or is likely to present itself. Lacking a unitary, sufficient, and complete "original" against which individual narratives may be finally authenticated, the reduction of "findings" to a standardized, robust, and exportable set of conclusions that is the centerpiece of normal research practice is both expended and expendable. As a consequence, the ambitions of objective evaluation and the search for a universal troubleshooting diagnostic for educational leadership can, within the approach taken herein, be set aside. But something practicable, pragmatic, and critically telling can, as Rorty (1989: 80) says completing a thought cited in the previous chapter, be put in its place:

Since there is nothing beyond vocabularies which serves as a criterion of choice between them, criticism is a matter of looking on this picture and on that, not of comparing both pictures with the original. Since there is nothing beyond vocabularies which serves as a criterion of choice between them, criticism is a matter of looking on this picture and on that, not of comparing both pictures with the original. Nothing can serve as a criticism of a person save another person, or of a culture save an alternative culture—for persons and cultures are, for us, incarnated vocabularies.

Following Rorty, much can be gained from exploring, through comparison, the kinds of final vocabularies in which presidents articulate their experience. First, the interplay of practitioner narratives will allow us to examine points of sameness and
difference concerning beliefs about the presidency, its conduct, and its setting. Second, we can see what these individual articulations of the presidency might suggest about the *praxis* of leadership in higher education, and in educational settings in general. And third, we may, through critically reflecting upon the similar and the contrasting beliefs narratively expressed, speculate about alternative possibilities to the ways we now seek to organize and lead, and how we might make a more interesting and engaging knowledge about each.

The transition from epistemology to hermeneutics aids the exchange of objectively funded reductive analysis for the interpretive exercise of "comparing and contrasting vocabularies" (Rorty, 1989: 77), which can appreciate "final vocabularies as poetic achievements rather than as fruits of diligent inquiry according to antecedently formulated criteria" (Rorty, 1989: 77). As Rorty's comments emphasize, the hermeneutic turn redefines research in a way that is specifically advantageous to the present study, the empirical core of which is formed by exploratory conversations with practicing university presidents:

This notion of interpretation suggests that coming to understand is more like getting acquainted with a person than like following a demonstration. In both cases we play back and forth between guesses about how to characterize particular statements or other events, and guesses about the point of the whole situation, until gradually we feel at ease with what was hitherto strange. The notion of culture as a conversation rather than as a structure erected upon foundations fits well with this hermeneutical notion of knowledge, since getting into a conversation with strangers is, like acquiring a new virtue or skill by imitating models, a matter of *φρόνησις* rather than ἐπιστήμη. (Rorty, 1980: 319)

In order to expand this sense of understanding as dialogical easement into what had previously been unfamiliar, Rorty (1989: 14) references the thinking of Donald Davidson (1984):

In a recent paper, nicely entitled "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs," Davidson tries to undermine the notion of languages as entities by developing the notion of what he calls "a passing theory" about the noises and inscriptions presently being produced by a fellow human. Think of such a theory as part of a larger "passing theory" about this person's total behavior—a set of guesses about what she will do under what conditions. . . . To say that we come to speak the same language is to say, as Davidson puts it, that "we tend to converge on passing theories." Davidson's point is that all "two people need, if they are to understand
one another through speech, is the ability to converge on passing theories from utterance to utterance.

Precisely in the sense which Rorty and Davidson express, the attempt made in the chapter that follows to listen to and to make sense of the words exchanged in interview and the inscriptions exchanged in the completion of a postinterview questionnaire, is an attempt to "converge on passing theories from utterance to utterance" in order to understand how presidents perceive their work and its settings.

This convergence is, again, not a convergence upon what is imagined to be true, permanent, and, therefore generalizable in the experience of the higher education leadership. On the contrary, it is, as Davidson so aptly underscores, a convergence only upon the evanescent "passing theories" that help us to continue a conversation about leadership that has no natural limits. Premised in the desire to expand conversation rather than to make it final, "one's aim" in such convergences, somewhat paradoxically, "becomes an expanding repertoire of alternative descriptions rather than The One Right Description." (Rorty, 1989: 39-40).

Endnotes for Chapter 4

1. *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary* (1986) defines "whole cloth" as "pure fabrication." This is also the sense in which I use the term, although in my definition "fabrication" is equivalent to the "human making" to which, within a thorough-going pragmatic hermeneutics, we have no alternative.

2. A clipping from the *Globe and Mail* used to hang in the senior doctoral students' office in the Department of Educational Administration, O.I.S.E., as an encouragement to students struggling to have their "findings" fit their speculations. It confirmed aphoristically what is known in every researcher's heart of darkness: "Torture the data long enough, and it will confess."

3. Critical of Merton's (1948) view that self-fulfilling prophecies are inherently specious and lead necessarily to a "reign of error" that perpetuates organizational mistakes, Weick (1995: 147) sounds very much the postmodernist:

   What Merton has described is a means to create sense, although it looks to be inaccurate sense. But look again. When a self-fulfilling prophecy is said to begin with a "false definition," the question arises, false in whose view? And relative to what goals? The definition is said to be a false rendering of "the" situation, as if there were only one way the situation could be read. Multiple realities and overdetermination
apparently have no place here . . . . Merton treats the original prophecy as if it had one and only one meaning, which is contrary to the more likely possibility that all prophecies represent "unfinished business" capable of different readings. The achieved validity is said to be "specious," but in fact, one could argue validity is validity. If the situation has been altered, and if it is read in light of the original prophecy, then the reading is accurate, no matter how that accuracy was accomplished. What is unleashed is not so much a reign of error as a new set of organized cues that have become meaningful.


5. In his eagerness to show how pragmatism is capable of sustaining moral commitment, Rorty risks overplaying Shumpeter's "unflinching" stand for contingent moral convictions. By suggesting the value of something like an absolute commitment to that which is contingent, Rorty (1989: 73-4) seems to lose track of his valuation of liberal ironists who are:
   - never quite able to take themselves seriously because always aware that the terms in which they describe themselves are subject to change,
   - always aware of the contingency and fragility of their final vocabularies, and thus of their selves.
Surely flinching at the multiple contingencies that would normalize thought and action is as morally honorable as not flinching given the ironist's "realization that anything can be made to look good or bad by being redescribed" (Rorty, 1989: 73). Rorty, however, might well respond to this criticism by noting that "unflinchingly" is not at all the same as "unrelentingly."

6. Edgar W. Knight (1940: 22) includes in his entertaining and insightful book What College Presidents Say the following 1937 quotation from President Charles Seymour of Yale University which he found in that year's Journal of Proceedings and Addresses of the Association of American Universities:
   You may remember that Lord Acton once, in talking to a young Cambridge don, said, "If ever you make the mistake of entering upon a discussion of an educational problem, remember also to begin with a platitude, because then the clever people in your audience will go to sleep and you will have no criticism from them, and all the stupid people will say, "This is a sound man," and you will have their support."

7. In his book Presidents Make a Difference: Strengthening Leadership in Colleges and Universities, a report compiled for the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, Kerr (1984) provides numerous recommendations for renewing what he regards as an imperiled presidential leadership in American higher education. In spite of its assertive title, Kerr's book is a compendium of reasons why the difference presidents can make is being increasingly compromised. Having completed "over 800 interviews with current and past presidents, with board members,
with persons who have refused presidencies, with executive search consultants, and with many others." (Kerr, 1984: xi) Here is some of the disheartening news that Kerr (1984: ix) brings back from the leadership front:

Now only about one-half of top academic officers (the one greatest single source of new presidents are interested in becoming presidents.

To this Kerr (1984: xviii) adds:

We found that about one-fourth of all presidents are quite satisfied with their situations (some are even euphoric); about one-half are clearly more satisfied than dissatisfied most of the time; and about one-fourth are dissatisfied—some even in despair. This observation of ours is consistent with the average 30 percent turnover of presidents every two years: approximately one-quarter or one third are in some stage of leaving or thinking of leaving, voluntarily or involuntarily, during any two-year period.

David Riesman (in Kerr & Gade, 1986: xxii) provides a slightly different and a more sobering reading of the half of the presidential sample that Kerr describes as being more satisfied than not most of the time:

Among the other half of the large number who were interviewed, the presidential lot appears to be accepted with a certain fatalism.

Notwithstanding Kerr's self-confessed "optimism" about the higher education presidency, his conclusion centers around a presidential metaphor that bespeaks a condition of captivity rather than of leadership:

Over the past 20 years, the strength of the presidency in most, but by no means all, institutions of higher education (particularly public institutions) has been weakened.

There are more constraints—as one person said: "More barbed wire around smaller corrals." (Kerr, 1984: 99)

For Kerr, these observations are indicators that the higher education presidency is in serious trouble and in need of immediate mending. For Cohen and March, who, among others, are much less convinced of Kerr's valuation of presidential leadership, these same indicators might be read merely as unavoidable signs that what presidents and most who observe them think they can and should be doing is a vastly exaggerated measure of what presidents actually can do. The gap between great expectations and the obstacles that effectively nullify them may lead many—perhaps too many—presidents to collude with those who judge their efforts unfavorably.

8. No less than Henry Mintzberg (1994, see especially Chapter 4. "Some Real Pitfalls of Planning"), the seasoned student of organizations, would endorse as appropriate most of the reasons Kerr quotes presidents giving for avoiding planning. Once the president of the Strategic Management Society, Mintzberg, in his book The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning referred to previously, recognizes that strategic planning is both an oxymoronic phrase and an oxymoronic activity. To be fair, he does not dismiss planning altogether, but he does recognize, often with very good humor, that planning is a convention ill-suited to a world that refuses to stand still and that is only hampered when made, even in imagination, to do so.

Several years ago an op-ed piece on presidential searches appeared in The Chronicle of Higher Education. (A critic refers to the publication as the academic equivalent of the old Pravda.) The author, a faculty member of a presidential search committee, recommended that colleges hire stage actors as presidents. The ultimate justification for this intriguing suggestion was that, as far as he could see from his perch on the search, what was wanted was someone who would appear to be a tough-minded educational leader and decision maker, but when it came down to it, the last thing that the faculty, student, and alumni constituencies wanted was someone who really had an educational philosophy (it might not be mine) and who would actually make decisions (they might not go my way). On the other hand, the president is called on to make a fine public appearance and speak eloquently about the liberal arts (to all those graduating majors in Bus. Admin.). Surely a professionally trained actor could do much better than the average inorganic chemist promoted into high office.

O’Brien, who was president of the University of Rochester from 1984 to 1994 and of Bucknell University between 1976 and 1984, does not mention whether this op-ed piece predates or postdates the American presidency of Ronald Reagan. If the former, it certainly becomes interestingly prognostic; if the latter, it loses in originality but certainly not in applicability.

10. All this suggests that shrewd administrators who seek to avoid earnest interviewers probably share the sentiments expressed in Bob Dylan’s (1964) line from "Black Crow Blues": "Don't ask me nothin' about nothin', I just might tell you the truth."

Unfortunately, from the interviewer’s perspective this means that the big ones, metaphorically speaking, almost always get away and that research, therefore, seldom transcends more average normative assumptions and expectations.

11. Hence Chapter III or the Tao Tê Ching (in Waley, 1982: 145) counsels against moralism in selecting leaders, noting that the overt search for moral leadership will usually end in either duplicity or disappointment:

If we stop looking for ‘persons of superior morality (hsien) to put in power, there will be no more jealousies among the people. If we cease to set store by products that are hard to get, there will be no more thieves. If the people never see such things as excite desire, their hearts will remain placid and undisturbed. Therefore the Sage rules

By emptying their hearts
And filling their bellies,
Weakening their intelligence
And toughening their sinews
Ever striving to make the people knowledgeless and desireless (wu-yü).
Indeed he sees to it that if there be any who have knowledge, they dare not interfere. Yet through his actionless activity (wu-wei) all things are duly regulated.

12. There are many indications that Kerr found equanimity out of the question. He was, for example, so rankled by Cohen and March's disparagement of change that he quotes March at length, apparently thinking that no right-minded person could find sense in, what were to him, self-evidently outrageous remarks.

This model of the president more as a figurehead than leader and of the "presidency" as "illusion" does not trouble March, for he says (also in the David D. Henry Lecture) that "most proposed changes are bad ideas" and, "on the average, an organization will be hurt by being the first to try a new direction." "Resistance to change . . . is . . . a generally sensible strategy." Consequently, if presidents cannot give leadership to change, this is all to the good; and, if they could, it would be mostly bad. (Kerr & Gade, 1986: 150)

Perhaps Kerr hoped that if March himself would but listen carefully to what he had said, he would be bound to reverse his position and return to the reformist fold. Kerr's inability to believe that anyone, especially a scholar of March's capabilities and grasp, could seriously attack the viability of planned change tells us more, however, about Kerr and the liberal quest than it does about the unusual thesis advanced by Cohen and March (see endnote 13 immediately below).

13. That the views of Cohen and March distressed him is made evident in Kerr's (Kerr & Gade, 1986: 151) somewhat cutting commentary on what he, in The Many Lives of Academic Presidents, calls "The Organized Anarchy Model:"

The skills needed for the president under this model are quite different from those in the other models described in this volume: to be able to analyze realistically what can and cannot be done and, because not much can be done, to relax and enjoy the perquisites of the job. Others on campus will also, then, be able to enjoy their lives more; they also well be able to relax.

It is no small irony that Kerr's slight parallels the theory of leadership propounded quite sincerely in Chapter LVII of the Tao Tê Ching (in Waley, 1982: 211)

'Kingdoms can only be governed if rules are kept;
Battles can only be won if rules are broken' (a military maxim)
But the adherence of all under heaven can only be won by letting-alone.
How do I know that it is so?
By this.
The more prohibitions there are, the more ritual avoidances,
The poorer the people will be.
The more 'sharp weapons' (clever people) there are,
The more benighted will the whole land grow.
The more cunning craftsmen there are,
The more pernicious contrivances will be invented.
The more laws are promulgated,
The more thieves and bandits there will be.
Therefore a sage has said:
So long as I 'do nothing' the people will of themselves be transformed.
So long as I love quietude, the people will of themselves go straight.
So long as I act only by inactivity the people will themselves become prosperous.
So long as I have no wants the people will of themselves return to the 'state of the Uncarved Block.'

Kerr, like many other scholars and practitioners of administration, is unable to break out of the activist/interventionist mind-set to even imagine the viability of alternatives to it. Chapter XXIX of the Tao Tê Ching (in Waley, 1982: 179) warns of the problems to which such one-sidedness inevitably leads:

Those that would gain what is under heaven (i.e., empire) by tampering with it—I have seen that they do not succeed. For that which is under heaven is like a holy vessel, dangerous to tamper with.

Those that tamper with it, harm it.
Those that grab at it, lose it.

14. In terms of this dissertation's central themes, the double meaning of "novel" to denote that which is "new" as well as that which is "narrative" in nature is not insignificant.

15. Reading March, as this paragraph illustrates, is a provocative and an enriching experience. Some further remarks about March's background and sensibility may help the reader understand why. In their introduction to the two volumes of Organizational Science (vol. 2, February 1991 & vol. 3, February 1992) containing papers honoring March, Michael D. Cohen and Lee Sproull (1991) offer the following observations about him and his distinguished career in organizational studies:

At the conference [the May 1989 conference held at Carnegie Mellon University, during which several of the papers contained in the two volume special set of Organizational Science were first presented] there was an evening set aside to appreciate Jim [March], at which he was given a first English edition of Cervantes' Don Quixote. It is a story he loves, and it is fitting that he should admire a book in which the often absurd encounter between the world and human distortions of the world exalts striving and yields both illumination and laughter. Many of us found that our feelings for Jim March share much with Sancho Panza's admiration for Don Quixote: he may seem "crazy," but "he says things that, to my mind, and indeed everybody's that listens to him, are so wise and run in such a straight furrow that the devil himself couldn't have said them better" (Part II, ch. xxxiii)." A whole discipline can be proud to follow him.

In an article in the San Francisco Business Journal republished in Education Digest (Routson, 1986), titled "Read classics to learn about leadership, says professor," the
professor is James March. Here March demonstrates his breadth and humanistic bent in his comments about "training" versus "education" that apply as much to educational administration as they do to the business school environments he is immediately addressing:

"We've tended to underestimate the intellect of students. While they are looking to us for training in the techniques of business—accounting and finance—they also have an intellectual side and ask fundamental questions. I don't think we have quite met their needs," he says.

The columnist, Joyce Routson, goes on to remark:

All the assigned works in his class [Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, Sontag's *On Photography*, Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, Shaw's *St. Joan*, Shakespeare's *Othello*, and T. S. Eliot's and Adrienne Rich's poetry] help teach the three Cs—conflict, contradiction and confusion. The works show students how conflict and contradiction can push an organization ahead instead of having to eliminate it.

Indeed!
Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

Chapter 5
The Long Interview: Five Conversations and Their Audit

Never did two men make the same judgment of the same thing; and "tis impossible to find two opinions exactly alike, not only in several men, but in the same man at diverse hours.


When we say something, our subjective intention or situation is always involved. So there is no perfect word; some distortion is always present in a statement. But nevertheless . . . we have to understand objective fact itself—the ultimate fact. By ultimate fact we do not mean something eternal or something constant, we mean things as they are in each moment. You may call it "being" or "reality."

When you listen to someone, you should give up all your preconceived ideas and your subjective opinions; you should just listen to him, just observe what his way is. We put very little emphasis on right and wrong or good and bad. We just see things as they are with him, and accept them. This is how we communicate with each other.


The five presidential interviews, the results from post-interview questionnaires, and the texts of speeches or related publications composed by the presidents in the research sample are the empirical materials presented in this chapter. The interview, prepared and conducted as a long interview paced by questions directed to specific areas of interest, is the most intensive and important of the three. The questionnaire is, however, more direct as its completion was unmediated by my presence. As the responses to its items required presidents to divide points among the provided organizational models and leadership analogues to indicate the degree to which each conformed to and confirmed their experience, the questionnaire results are represented numerically. I suggest that these numeric representations are, like the images that
called them up, metaphorical in character. The "pictures" that are their graphical representations may be the most suitable way of taking in the information they present. The lines that pattern each graph can be read, I suggest, as visual preference profiles that, with a little imagination, can be associated with the person and personality of each of the presidents. That is, each profile is indicative of the respective president's experience of organization and leadership; each may be viewed as a distinctive organizational signature. The texts from speeches and related publications become significant primarily because the presidents participating in the study selected them freely. The interviews, then, may be understood as the primary generator of the empirical information for this study, and the questionnaire and presidential texts as tools that assist in its audit.

The epigraphs for this chapter focus on the two ineradicable elements inherent in the interview that jeopardize its information gathering value: the interviewee and the interviewer. As Montaigne states, the interviewee, even in moments of deepest sincerity, is subject to unceasing change. The interviewer, as Shunryu Suzuki teaches, is subject to all the hazards that attend listening to an individual who, much like, in this case, himself, is prone to distortion and subject to the inexact relationship between words and what they can and would express. In accordance with Montaigne and Suzuki, the interview supplies an imperfect photograph if a fixed and final "truth" is the subject that would be captured through its lens. A flawed mechanism for photographing still lifes, it is, nevertheless, a much better instrument for taking snapshots of the fleeting reflections evoked under the limitations that constitute passing conversations. In this regard, I think, it will be helpful to the reader, having acknowledged the limitations that the interviews reported herein share, to review the considerations that shaped their making, and to preview my presentation of the "data" derived from them.

The schedule of interview questions (Appendix A), thematically reviewed in the first chapter, was composed as a set of initiating queries that would seed presidential reflections upon leadership experience in the contemporary university. In order to facilitate frankness and to dampen the tendency toward public rhetoric, confidentiality, as far as it could be practically realized, was promised to each of the five presidents participating in the study. For two of the presidents, this was an important
consideration in their decision to take part in the project, to three it was dispensable. Even the two, however, understood that efforts towards confidentiality would not always preclude recognition, especially by those familiar with campus circumstances and institutional and personal histories. There is something about the university presidency that makes it an indelibly public practice even in its most private moments, and this was accepted by those in my research sample.

To help ensure the prospect of confidentiality, presidents are identified sequentially hereafter by the first five letters of the alphabet as President A, B, C, D, and E. Identifications of place and sensitive details have been omitted (their omissions are signified by a seven space underline: "________"). These identifications include the province, city, and name of each university, as well as other particulars that I thought could be too telling. I have assigned the letter designations for each president on the basis of institution size and type. In the nomenclature used by The Maclean's Guide to Universities, President A's university is designated as a "primarily undergraduate" institution ("Primarily Undergraduate universities are those largely focused on undergraduate education, with relatively few graduate programs"), typically ranked by Maclean's in the first quartile of its nineteen member classification group; President B and C's institutions are designated as "comprehensive" institutions ("Comprehensive universities are those with a significant amount of research activity and a wide range of programs—including professional degrees—at the graduate and undergraduate levels") with President B's university typically ranked in the second quartile of its nine member classification group and President C's university in the fourth quartile; President D and E's institutions are designated "medical/doctoral" institutions ("Medical/Doctoral universities are those with a broad range of Ph.D. programs and research, as well as medical schools") with the President D's university typically ranked in the second quartile of its eleven member classification group and President E's university in the first quartile. The presidential designations A through E represent a progression from the smallest, mission specific universities to the largest and most diversified.

A providential factor—procrastination's brighter side—in helping to ensure confidentiality is the time that has elapsed since the interviews were conducted in the
early '90s. Only two study participants remain presidents of the institutions in which I interviewed them. Three have since been through transitions that range from the tumultuous to the anticipated. Although these may be matters for different studies operating under a different set of permissions, confidentiality keeps me from sharing the often interesting moments in these transitions as well as other equally significant details of individual backgrounds. I have, however, chosen not to disguise the gender of the interviewees as this attribute can give rise to quandaries worthy of the reader's consideration. President D is the only woman in my sample.

Throughout the process of designing the interview schedule, conducting and transcribing the interviews, and my many rereadings of them, I thought about how to present the information gathered in a manner that would be not only consonant with my approach, but which would reinforce my sense of how hermeneutic research might engage the reader. Ideally, such research would moderate the privilege of the investigator—in this case, me—by providing whatever audience there may be for these words with the same or much of the information from which I would draw my conclusions and make my speculations. The reader, in short, would be given recourse to this researcher's bent.

In order allow the reader to engage in the comparative "looking on this picture and on that" central to hermeneutic sensemaking, I decided to present selected interview responses in a set of synoptic tables, one for each major question, in which the words of each of the five presidents participating in the study are recorded in contiguous columns for ease of comparison. The text appearing in each column has been abstracted from the more continuous narratives transcribed from audio recordings of the presidential interviews. The columnar arrangement is derived from my divinity school education where I first encountered the synoptic gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) similarly arranged in the then standard Throckmorton version of Gospel Parallels, first published in 1936. This arrangement assisted the "polychroming" or color coding of identical and similar texts appearing in two or more of the gospels.

The practice of polychroming has its origins in the form-critical studies of the old and new testaments. The rudiments of these studies originated among Eighteenth Century German scholars who sought to hermeneutically appreciate both the historical
and cultural contexts of biblical texts and the beliefs that the original authors were trying to express in their redactional constructions. Their work, as is the exercise of polychroming itself, was an outgrowth of the Protestant reformation, which, aided by the printing press, aspired to equip individuals with the tools needed to perform their own biblical exegesis so that nothing need stand between believers and a text of pivotal importance to them. Together with my wish to hermeneutically explore the culturally embedded beliefs disclosed in presidential remarks, I share this desire to mitigate the necessity of scholarly mediation between text and reader.

Each of the synoptic tables (Tables 1-18, pp. 225-247), which presents one of the questions I asked of the five participants in the study, appears under one of eight major topic headings indicated by Roman numerals that delineate the general area of inquiry addressed by each question. The tabular presentation is, admittedly, redactional in that I have chosen the text you now may choose to join me in reading. My textual selection was, however, disciplined by a commitment to present statements that economically convey what each interviewee most wanted to say—not by, to the degree that I could consciously manage, what I wanted them to say. Each excerpt from the full interview transcript was also selected bearing in mind the considerations of confidentiality that are mentioned above. My summaries of the presidential responses are arranged under the same major topic headings as are the tables and begin with brief remarks on the origins of each question and transition to my summative sense of what the presidents are saying in response to it. For the most part, my summaries endeavor to let presidents speak for themselves as they consist, for the most part, of quotations from the synoptic tables that, in my view, address the questions most directly.

My more explicitly editorial comments appear within a text box so that they can be identified as my interpretive readings. I have tried to give unity to my critical comments by suggesting the degree of coincidence between what the presidents have had to say and the four ambiguities that Cohen and March have suggested, in their epigraph to the fourth chapter, are characteristic of the presidency: the ambiguity of purpose, the ambiguity of power, the ambiguity of experience, and the ambiguity of success. Along the way, I add two ambiguities to their list: the ambiguity of career and
the ambiguity of practice. In making my summative and my more critical remarks, I draw upon what I saw, what I heard, and what I remember of conversations that were each, in their own way, fruitful and memorable.

Interview Responses and Analysis

1. Institutional Purpose and Function (Questions 1-2)

Question 1. Several recent criticisms suggest that the university is in an intellectual and philosophical malaise; that it has lost sight of its purpose.

1.1. To what extent do you think that Canadian universities share this condition?

The first major topic heading concerns the question of purpose in contemporary higher education and the role presidents play in shaping it within their institutions. The first question has its origins in a line of thought of which Allan Bloom's (1987) The Closing of the American Mind: How Higher Education Has Failed Democracy and Impoverished the Souls of Today's Students is emblematic. A Canadian, and at times a less erudite, critique that parallels Bloom's overt cynicism about many of the activities that pass for scholarship on the contemporary campus is offered by David Bercuson, Robert Bothwell and J. L. Granatstein (1997) in their most recent book Petrified Campus: The Crisis in Canada's Universities. This volume extends arguments initially made in their previous critique of university education in Canada, The Great Brain Robbery: Canada's Universities on the Road to Ruin (1984). While much in each volume is polemical, each also manages to question of the purpose of the university in a provocative and pertinent manner that cannot be easily dismissed. Bloom and Bercuson and his colleagues would force a reconsideration of the university as an institution that may have allowed itself to serve purposes inferior to its potential.

The notion of a malaise, in which self-indulgence may appear to overtake values traditionally fulfilled through the submission of the self to ideals that transcend it, is taken from the initial title of Charles Taylor's (1991) Canadian Broadcasting Corporation Massey Lectures, The Malaise of Modernity. This volume is a much abbreviated version of Sources of The Self: The Making of the Modern Identity, in which Taylor (1989) seeks to turn the contemporary appearance of malaise, contra MacIntyre, into a harbinger of the Occidental philosophical project’s fulfilment. Taylor's
A scholarly and intellectually robust survey of Western thought and practice indicates that the question of purpose—both individual and societal—is central to our moment in history. It is, as Bloom and Bercuson and his colleagues underscore, a question that becomes especially pointed when we discuss the purpose of educational institutions which act on behalf of others, past, present, and future, and which command so many of our cultural, intellectual, and financial resources.

President A admits malaise or potential loss of purpose in the contest between access and accessibility that he feels calls the university's mission into question. President D, the only president who had no previous university administrative experience, acknowledges what she calls a "perceived lack of purpose" and initially attributes it to the persistent underfunding of higher education. She, however, qualifies her opening comments by placing the issue of funding in the context of larger questions of purpose that involve, in her words, nothing less than a "paradigm shift" in how we conceive of knowledge and its teaching. The use of the term "paradigm" may signal a familiarity with Thomas Kuhn's (1970) thinking most comprehensively presented The Structure of Scientific Revolutions. This reference is made more likely given President D's previous senior involvements in Canada's scientific community.

Presidents B, C, and E, who individually and collectively represent the greatest higher education administrative experience, are more accepting in outlook. While acknowledging that pressing questions of purpose are currently being asked, they feel that such questioning is endemic to what universities are—i.e., "self-conscious, self-critical communities" (President B), and "a varied institution, a variegated institution" (President C). Presidents B and C admit that "consensus is improbable to say the least" (President B) in institutions that "are so complex that it's very difficult to find anything like an institutional view" (President C). President C goes somewhat deeper when he notes that "contradictory things" are expected of universities by the people within as well as by the people outside them. President E, for the first but not the last time, voices the somewhat different concern that there may be too much consensus, especially among universities in Canada, when he says:

There is a great set of forces homogenizing all postsecondary institutions and I think that's a fundamentally unhelpful and unhealthy phenomenon.
President E also acknowledges that universities have invited much of the malaise that now besets them by having been poor choicemakers about what they can and should do.

1.2. In your view, what purpose(s) should shape Canadian Universities?

In responding to the second subquestion concerning purpose, President A, after suggesting that more attention should be paid to undergraduate teaching programs, an issue central to his smaller, primarily undergraduate institution, seconds President E's previous remarks by noting:

we are horrible about making hard decisions. . . . I agree very much with Bernard's [Shapiro's, then Ontario's Deputy Minister of Colleges and Universities] observation that you've got to confront some hard choices and I don't think generally we've been able to do that very well.

President B reminds us that "inevitably there are conflicting purposes" at work in the university as he goes on to list those characteristic of various "constituency" groups. Admitting that "I'm not a purist," President B states that his hierarchy of values, which is headed by knowledge, must also satisfy other claims upon the university. Again, President C is in agreement as he states "I find at my university that there are several different views of what the university is or should be." President D stays with her call for a paradigm shift as she defines the university's ideal purpose in terms of a redefined mandate to teach students how to think critically and creatively, whatever their field of specialization. President E calls for two formative meta-purposes: "differentiation" or "diversity" among institutions and "definition of mission and role" within them. Together differentiation and definition of mission would demand that the universities abandon their perhaps lucrative trade in ambiguity in strategically or inadvertently attempting to be all things to all people.

The presidents, singularly and collectively in their responses to questions 1.1 and 1.2. substantiate the prevalence of Cohen and March's first ambiguity, the ambiguity of purpose at the institutional level. Organizational ambiguity is understandable and tolerable more to some presidents than to others, but it mobilizes and gives purpose
to the efforts of each, whether those efforts are directed towards formulating strategic plans, mission statements, or institutional consensus. In short, presidents tend to perceive institutional ambiguity as a hole they must strive to fill albeit with different kinds of things. Continuing this metaphor, we may speculate that differences in presidencies are largely shaped by what kinds of holes are perceived and what presidents decide to fill them with. It is significant that presidents perceive ambiguity in institutional terms and not in terms of the presidency itself. Indeed, presidents use organizational ambiguity as an opportunity to lessen the ambiguities that might otherwise cloud their own thought and action with uncertainty. That is, presidents use their diagnoses of institutional ambiguities to formulate and to drive their respective leadership agendas. In short, presidents use institutional ambiguity to find things to do.

1.3.: As president of your university, what role do you play in defining institutional purpose?

This question encourages the presidents to reflect upon the agency of the presidency in shaping institutional purpose. President A, who, at the time of the interview, was recently renewed for a second term, notes that he intends to move from his role as a catalyst in defining institutional purpose to a more overtly directive leadership role. President B accents the role of presidential knowledge and persuasion in defining institutional purpose. He also emphasizes the president as provocateur:

I try to engender a debate over where we should be going, a long term and large sense of what we stand for; the kind of place we are. And I'm an active participant in that debate; I'm not just a stage manager and I do my very best on particular issues to persuade people to do what is, as I think, what should be done.

Noting that his perspective is uniquely informed by views originating in many different segments of the university, President B says: "I try within a very widely accepted collection of values to define a course of action and see if I can bring people with me." He notes that he is "very keen" to harmonize the initiatives and the ambitions of others in the university.
President C highlights his central administrative function and strategic positioning in his role as the chairman of the senate and referee of its discussions, and his being "the key person with the board because he is the C.E.O." President D accentuates her primary and risky role in championing an encompassing strategic plan that has now been passed by the senate. In addition to creating broad outlines for mission, this plan is the precursor to an elaborated academic plan that will fuel the paradigm shift she discussed earlier. President E speaks of his increasingly successful struggle to reduce the mission of his university to one sentence and to bring all other considerations into alignment with it. Again, the point of this exercise is to inform the choice-making required to meet the twin objectives of institutional focus and improvement:

There are thousands of things we could do, but we have to choose to do some things and not all things.

Each of the presidents provides a detailed response to Question 1.3. as each defines the role that he or she plays and plans to play in the dynamics of their respective institutions. Whether this role is one of an overt leader, a provocateur/persuader possessing "big-picture-knowledge," a holder of key administrative posts, a champion of change, or an evangelist for choice-making, presidents readily specify what they see as their role in defining institutional purpose. While they know what they do and why they do what they do, what the presidents do not know, in the language of Foucault noted in Chapter 2 above, is what their doing does, or how their initiatives effect their institutions. Presidents may, through their individual agendas, work intently to minimize the ambiguity of institutional purpose, but the ambiguity of power obscures what effect these attempts may ultimately have upon organizations that are, if Cohen and March are correct, largely leader-proof.

Question 2. What do you think are the key things that Canadian universities should be doing that they are not doing now?

This question, an extension of the first, asks the presidents to play Bloom or Bercuson et al. in thinking about what might constitute remedies for the questions of
purpose that their efforts would address. Said another way, the presidents in the sample are asked in the second question to enumerate issues that might constitute an agenda for future presidential actions. President A confirms President E's call for differentiation and specificity of mission when he says:

we [universities] need to be more sharply differentiated among ourselves . . . in that sense become a little more segmented and market segmented really.

President A questions the Canadian preoccupation with universalism when he is critical of all universities mimicking the "model of the big university" exemplified by the University of Toronto and Queen's. In his view, this copycatting has resulted in dilution of resources and a depletion in quality and distinctiveness.

President B opens with a caution that discussions of purpose in higher education can be presumptive:

I don't even know what it's [the university's] doing now, it's doing so many different things . . . I'm constantly finding out things that are being done.

Adding that he "is not a great fan of differentiation," which, in his view, too easily becomes "a proxy for tiering, creating a hierarchy," he endorses continuing planning exercises within a context of long range goals. President B feels that cyclic planning allows institutions to maximize opportunities by having "that general sense of what you'd like to be when you grow up."

President C thinks of external possibilities and obligations when he notes that universities should be making more of an effort to form partnerships with other organizations and to speak directly to issues of accountability, neither of which need threaten institutional autonomy:

To me it's a great embarrassment that universities are being dragged kicking and screaming into the world . . . . We've just been so concerned about autonomy that we've viewed anything that others thought was good as being a threat to it.

He also feels that in order for the university to fulfill its mission as "the home of intellectual leadership in the country" individuals within it should be encouraged to speak to pressing local, national, and international issues.

President D opens by returning to a fiscal slant on the contest between specialized institutional missions and universalism when she says "In Canada we have
every institution trying to do everything and we're all going broke." She adds, "I really think it's a question of mission, mandate, avoiding duplication, identifying your strengths, being honest about your weaknesses." She takes up a theme introduced earlier by President A when she says, "you have to make very hard corporate decisions."

President E provides a sobering reminder of continuing fiscal constraint when he says,

in North American universities, the explosion in knowledge and the rate of expansion of possible areas of endeavor for the university is far greater than any imaginable increase in resources.

His conclusion is consistent with his previous remarks: "the only way to improve quality will be to increase focus . . ." Only through focus and a redistribution of institutional talents and resources across existing internal organizational boundaries will universities avoid financially induced closures of entire units or schools. President E ends his response with a clarion call to heed market realities. This call runs full-throttle against the widespread assumption that the state is capable and has an obligation to regulate the sameness and to secure the well-being of higher education institutions in Canada. President E pulls no punches when he says:

the public policy of higher education in Canada for twenty years has been a process of homogenization. And it's clearly . . . a perverse policy from the point of view of all institutions. . . . We tried a public policy and it turns out that it hasn't worked . . . . And we've seen that twenty years of increased regulation in a world that has come to reject socialism, reject regulation believing deregulation, competitiveness, market forces, imagination, entrepreneurship, leadership—all the things we've denied for twenty years in university regulation—have become the ideas that have taken the world, the planet by storm. What we need to do is realign public policy towards higher education in Canada to take account of what we now understand about how the world works that we didn't understand as clearly twenty years ago. So this isn't malicious, it isn't critical, we're just saying we need to change the way we think about our industry.

Perhaps surprisingly, the presidents, for the most part, do not take up the value-centered remedies to perceived problems in higher education advocated by Bloom or Bercuson et al. Instead they find hope, with the lone exception of President B, in
freeing market forces to work in a higher education "system" heretofore steeped in regulation and operating within an ethos of sameness. President B remains, true to the Canadian stereotype, a steadfast advocate of planning and state involvement, and a skeptic about market-driven differentiation. His tacit counsel not to presume too much in discussions of purpose further separates him from his colleagues and is as sobering as is President E's free-marketeering. Only President B seems truly at ease with the ambiguity of purpose within the university. The other presidents would "re-purpose" higher education by introducing variations of a market-driven dynamic that seems to run against the grain of Canadian culture and politics. Among the participants in the study, President D and President E, the two presidents of larger, research oriented universities, seem most proactive in the service of this agenda of deregulation, competition, and unfettered entrepreneurship.

II. Personal Motivation, Institutional Motivation, and Expectations of Self and Employer (Questions 3-5)

Question 3. What expectations, desires, and other factors led you to seek and to accept the presidency of your current institution?

The second major topic heading involves the issue of the expectations that lead individuals to seek the presidency and institutions to gratify that search. In raising a cluster of questions about motivation and expectation, this group of questions begins to elicit presidential views about why and how administrative careers in higher education are made. For all the participants with the exception of President C, a presidential career did not result from planning, strategic choice-making, or conscious aspiration. On the contrary, President A tells us that the application for his first presidency "was a bit of a lark," President D says "I am not a professional educator; this is not something I ever saw myself doing," and President E notes "I came into academic life by fluke." While President B sees the presidency as a natural extension of his other leadership positions in academe, only President C acknowledges an explicit interest in educational leadership and only he posses something of a presidential pedigree:
I guess it helped that my father was a university president. But by the
time he became a president, I was already so far along that track that I
couldn't get off anyway.

The largely accidental quality characteristic of the presidential career path does
not, however, imply a tepid enthusiasm for either the job or the institution that is its
setting. Both Presidents A and E speak of their love for their institution and the
fulfilment they have found in leading it: "Except for my love of _______ and my belief
that they were doing a lot of good things there was no plan in it whatsoever" (President
A); "I have a deep love affair with the institution . . . . [it] is, outside of my family, by far
the most important thing in my life . . ." (President E). Presidents A, B, and D speak
with a quiet passion of their "belief" in the university and the things of which it is ideally
capable. As President B puts it:

In terms of what the job had to offer . . . I am a romantic about it . . . . I said to myself, "if someone stopped you in the street and said here is a
billion dollars, you have five years to spend it in order to enlighten the
lives of people and develop knowledge for the benefit of the world, then
who would say no?" You'd be crazy. So I didn't say no; I said yes
because those are the things I believe in;

and President D:

And so with the motivation of strictly an idealist who believed universities
were wonderful places, too precious to be bashed by society, and too
precocious and precious on the inside not to be changed, that maybe I
could do something.

Nor is the joy taken by President C in the creation of opportunities for others made less
by the fact that his path to the presidency was more foreseeable than those of his
colleagues.

The operations of chance have seemingly had only a positive impact upon
presidential enthusiasm about the work of university leadership. It may well be that
rational planning is as overrated in professional lives as it is in organizational
settings. Nevertheless, as President C reminds us, planning does not necessarily
exclude the fulfilments that can be derived from leadership practice. Many may
reach the university presidency fortuitously, but the responses to question 3 reveal
that the presidents have deep-seated emotional reasons as well as rational justifications for seizing the opportunity to lead when it is offered.

If we add a fifth ambiguity, the ambiguity of career, to those listed by Cohen and March, we can see that it plays a large role in the making of presidents. Although presidents feel little need to retrospectively rationalize the serial accidents that led them to the presidency, the participants in the sample spend a great deal of time trying to limit the operations of chance in the present. Said another way, once they arrive in the presidential office, chance is no longer regarded as an ally, but rather it is something to subdue. It is the supplanting of chance with planning and purpose that becomes, as we shall see below, the organizing principle for presidential work.

That contingency and the accidental are so predominant in the evolution of administrative careers casts more than a little doubt on the value of programs that would train individuals in leadership attitudes and "skills." Leaders, in the end, may be neither born nor made, they may simply the one's who show up in the "right" place at the "right" time. But when they do show up, they are inducted into a practice where mastery is central and rational means are predominant.

Question 4. What do you think were the most important factors that led to your selection as president of your current institution?

The abundance of scholarly and professional literature on presidential selection indicates that deciding upon a new president or upon the continuity of an incumbent is often experienced as an important moment in the life of an institution. As Birnbaum (1988b: 498) points out, choosing a new president presents opportunities for institutions to come to judgement on past events, to reconsider organizational goals, and to rearticulate institutional hopes:

Organizing has been thought of by Weick as a process in which an organization converses with itself and in so doing discovers meanings. The [presidential] search process is part of that conversation.

Such occasions for the exercise of seemingly rational procedures may, however, conceal complex self-deceptions in which irrational, symbolic readings of similarly
qualified candidates can betray both parochial considerations and unrealistic expectations.

As Birnbaum (1989b: 126) would later point out, the ceremony surrounding presidential selection may also be one of the primary ways of masking the innocuousness of the presidency and of underwriting a mythic construction of leadership in higher education settings:

Given the widely held popular idea of the efficacy of leadership, what is perhaps most surprising is that there is little evidence to suggest that succession is likely to lead to conspicuous organizational improvement. Indeed, much of the data currently available challenges the presumption that succession significantly affects organizational functioning at all.

Bearing in mind the distinct possibility of these self-deceptions, my question was designed to find out, first, how presidents perceived their selection and, second, to see how the perceived implicit and explicit expectations of those who hired them factored into their decision to accept the presidency and into their work experience.

Each of the presidents has very definite ideas about why they were appointed by their boards. President A, benefiting from an unexpectedly positive review of his first term, feels that his renewal was due to the desire of a board that "really wanted continuity" in an institution that "has devoured each of its presidents in the second term." A board, "very anxious to see if we can establish a two-term presidency," had reason to believe it had the right candidate to accomplish the task. President B was not confronted with a defined mandate, but "as a citizen of the university" he "knew the university had problems" with its reputation, the appearance and organization of its campus, and an unusually high degree of "fractiousness." In the case of President C, the board made it clear that they wanted a "much more public person, who liked working outside, who like building linkages . . .," given their view that the previous president suffered from the lack of a pronounced community profile. President C also mentions an interesting assessment procedure of his candidacy: his board sent an "undercover" team to the university where he was then president to assure themselves that he was the right person for the job. President D noted that she was pursued by her board which made explicit a presidential mandate for change. What her board did not mention was that she would be "the first person from the outside to come in a senior
position in a hundred and three years." Likening herself to an anthropologist, perhaps as Oliver Sacks (1996) expresses the strangeness of his own vantage point in his recent title *An Anthropologist On Mars*, she describes the upshot of this unmentioned fact as "quite a cultural experience." In addition to his "being youthful, vigorous, articulate," President E feels that the board wanted him to replicate a successful deanship during which he had accomplished in microcosm the focus, resource sharing, and choice-making that were now desired by the board in the context of the university as a whole.

Unlike presidential careers looked at from the inside, the prospective presidential employer seems able to reduce ambiguity readily in what is hoped for in candidates. Whether it is leadership continuity, reputational repair, an active public persona, a change agent, or a forceful and charismatic choicemaker, boards are able to convey their wants readily. But the expression of these wants can, as President D found out and as President A suspected, be based upon unrealistic expectations while remaining either silent on or ignorant of the impediments to them. More importantly, the outwardly rational and business-like appearance of the search process can induct incoming presidents into a set of ill-founded beliefs concerning presidential possibility that, in turn, can reinforce rather than lessen the ambiguities of power, experience, and success enumerated above by Cohen and March. It can also leave unchecked or, worse, reinforce the often faulty images that board members have of an institution they can only know tangentially.

**Question 5. Given your experience as president:**

5.1. **Were the expectations of those who appointed you realistic?**

This question, which completes the line of thought begun in question 4, invites presidents to reflect upon whether their work experience countered or confirmed the expectations they attribute to their employers. Although President A feels that the "university's expectations . . . were probably too high," he carries a sense of accomplishment that he partially credits to a prolonged honeymoon that took him
through three and a half years of his first term and ended only when he was faced with a faculty strike. In passing, he also raises the point that many deeds which are attributed to the president are actually the work of others. President B implies that the board's expectations were realistic as he has lived up to the responses given to the "what would you do if you were president?" questions in his hiring interview. President C, citing feedback from his annual reviews, states that "I am, in fact, doing those things . . . they [the board] hoped would happen." President D answers this question with a flat "no," and adds:

The people who appointed me were realistic in knowing I would try and do what I would try and do, but I don't think they knew what had to be done.

President E concedes that it has been "far harder" than anticipated to duplicate in the university as a whole what he had accomplished in his deanship. Foreshadowing President A's comments to question 10.1. about the difficulty of leading larger institutions, he states: "because of the scale of the institution you have to accomplish everything through others . . . there is nothing I can do personally." I detected some impatience in his admission that the need to build consensus, culture, and teams means that "the pace of change is much restrained."

With the exception of Presidents B and C, we learn from the responses to this question that employer expectations may outrun what is realistically possible and must, accordingly, be moderated by presidents. Things seldom happen as planned and, even when they do, the reasons may be only loosely coupled to the personnel involved, as in the case of the serendipitously prolonged honeymoon period enjoyed by President A that enhanced his perception in the eyes of many. Nevertheless the importance of board expectations is not diminished because the future is neither transparent nor occurs in conformity with desire. However myopic these expectations may be, they can serve to simultaneously unify the board and to systematically misinform their sense of institution and the leadership appropriate to it. As President D suggests, presidents may be placed in a situation where they must re-educate their boards lest they be disciplined by them.
5.2. Were your initial expectations of yourself realistic?

President C, using Kerr's language of difference-making, notes that experience confirmed his belief in an active and effective presidency, "my expectations for an opportunity to lead an institution and to really make a difference at it have been exceeded." President A feels that his expectations were "a little more realistic" than those of his superordinates and colleagues in the university community. His early success with a fund raising campaign and strengthening the visibility and the reputation of his campus result from what he calls a "sticking to our knitting" approach which intensified the "focus on what we already do well," and proved the wisdom of not "going off on any wild new directions." President B feels that his expectations were unrealistic in that he "both undershot and overshot the mark." Opening a theme that is further elaborated below he notes,

I never imagined how demanding it could be . . . . I certainly can't imagine more intensive demands than the ones that I've responded to in the last seven and a half years.

On the other hand, President B says "I never actually thought we could do a lot of the things it turned out we've done."

When President E

expected the opportunity to wake up every morning knowing if I did my job well, it would be deeply rewarding in the sense that it would make the world a better place,

he did not anticipate accurately how long it would take and how hard it would be to bring about the change of perspective and practice that both he and his board agreed was necessary. He concludes his thought about the unlikeliness of quick change in university settings by making an argument for "why you shouldn't change presidents too often." He notes that most "good change" comes from "relatively experienced presidents with enough time to shape the institution and give it direction."¹ Radicalizing President E's sense that change comes slowly, President D underscores the error of her expectations when she says, "No. I was too idealistic, I hoped too much, expected change too fast." Again evoking Kuhn's sense that rival paradigms of understanding seldom overlap, President D says of her faculty and administrative colleagues, "The
biggest difference was the world I saw was not the world they saw." This is no small difference and explains her pensive closing, "It is very difficult; very difficult."

As President B noted, presidents both under- and overshoot the mark in their expectations of what educational leadership can be and do. They tend to be idealists strongly motivated by both intellectual and more visceral values and personal beliefs. The raising of this idealism that seems part-and-parcel of the presidential selection process can land presidents in situations that do not measure up to their anticipations. The intractability of the problems they encounter and of which they have been either little or misinformed can raise self-doubts that have a personal and professional impact.

The more experienced academic administrators (i.e., Presidents B, C, and E) and the recently renewed president (President A) have made the adjustments needed to blunt the difference between expectation and experience. President D, the newest and least socialized president, is having the greatest difficulty navigating the rift between what William Blake would call innocence and experience. Self-expectation and the perception of the expectations of significant others can heighten all of the ambiguities listed by Cohen and March by concentrating them in what we might call the "ambiguity of practice."

III. The Work of the Presidency, Successes, and Failures (Questions 6-9)

Question 6. What do you feel are the most important things that you do as president of your university both on and off campus?

The sixth question seeks the inside view of what Mintzberg calls the nature of managerial work, work which he gauged mainly from his observations of external activities. At its most basic the question asks for a prioritized ranking of the work that constitutes the practice of the presidency. Perhaps not surprisingly, each of the presidents produces a list as distinctive as their personalities and the institutions in which they work.
For President A, "to know as many people as possible" ranks first in priority, visibility in his university's local community ranked second, and third-ranked was a presence on governmental and other bodies concerned with higher education policy issues. The issues of external visibility arises from President A's concern that, 

We are very vulnerable [because of our small size]. You know, we could be snipped out just like that and nobody would even notice.

Although not vulnerable because of institutional size, President B listed off-campus advocacy as his first job priority. Explaining his hesitancy to engage in a fund raising campaign during an economic recession, and in a manner consistent with his diffidence towards market oriented reforms, he defines the focus of this advocacy:

as any number of people have pointed out, half a percentage point in our government grant, which rolls on forever, is so much more important than the largest private donation would could ever anticipate. So from that point of view advocacy, in terms of policy change, is about the most important thing that I can do outside the university.

Anticipating a later question concerning "values," President B says that inside the university

... about the most important thing that I do ... is to help to define the values of the university and the strategies for advancing those values.

On a pragmatic note, he adds, "there are a lot of practical tasks but they descend from values and strategies."

President C lists "program shaping" as his first priority. Reinforcing the unique knowledge presidents have of their institutions (see President B in response to 1.3.), he notes that he enjoys a "breadth of vision" that allows him "to see different connections both within the university as well as between the university and the outside." President D lists five activities, first is cheerleading ("you've got to believe and show it."), second is the ability to learn and to push others to learn through asking probing "why questions," third is "becoming utterly familiar with the culture" (by being a "real time anthropologist . . . . you should know more about your institution than anybody else on campus . . . . otherwise you're delegating into a vacuum . . . ."), fourth is to "create an expectation of change with imaginative responses to it," and fifth is "to be financially prudent." President E had something of a formulaic but forceful and felt response that codes closely to his perception of institutional mission:
managing the institution to a higher level of quality within its mission and gaining greater acceptance of the distinctiveness of that mission both on campus and in our relationship with the private and public sectors.

He concludes by adding:

That's my job in a nutshell; and then trying to assemble the public and private sector support to recognize, reinforce, and then promote that mission.

Each of the presidents adopts the pragmatic attitude phrased neatly by President B when he says of his translation of values into strategies,

Obviously I'm defining that strategy to the practical things that have to be done. If you're only a strategist and you're not there making things happen, then your strategy will come to naught.

No better paraphrase of Peirce's translation of beliefs into habits of action is imaginable. Each of the presidents demonstrates how the gap between ambition and accomplishment is reduced by translating the former into operational terms through their words and deeds. As President E points out, the usefulness of this translation can only be borne out by measuring, however fallibly, the outcomes resulting from actions. In the operationalization of ambition, the ambiguity of practice, purpose, and experience would be made less formidable. Presidents, then, can be said to be in the business of making ideas pragmatically applicable to the practices and purposes they, in turn, would make characteristic of the university in general and their university in particular.

Question 7. When you want to assess how well you are doing as president:

7.1. How do you go about doing it?
7.2. Where do you look and to whom do you talk?
7.3. What key factors do you consider?
7.4 What measures of assessment do you use?

Assuming that the work of the presidency, like most other occupations, is at least partly about learning what constitutes productive actions, the seventh question is designed to find out how presidents complete the feedback loop needed to verify the
effectiveness of their habits. In terms used by Cohen and March, I wanted to see how presidents see themselves going about the business of reducing the twin ambiguities of experience and success.

The less administratively experienced presidents gave answers that listed various sorts of reference groups whose advice they actively sought. In saying that he bounces his experience "off two or three of the other presidents that I've gotten to know extremely well" and by consulting a friend who is an experienced senior academic, President A notes:

I'm probably more prone to do that than some of the other presidents, I think, because I, mainly I was never a dean, I was never a department chair, I never had any real responsibilities, so all of a sudden I am in a position of responsibility . . . so I need that reassurance.

President D points to informal input ("I take feedback from the facial expressions of the audience you happen to be speaking to") and more formal feedback mechanisms that involve consultation with board members, faculty, and students. For President D, a new figure in an established environment as well as a novice president, trust was the *sine qua non* of her feedback loops. Without it, she feels that the "information" needed to confirm or modify her work can quickly degenerate into flattery or other less benign deceptions.

Presidents B, C, and E, who constitute the experienced subgroup in my sample, provided variations on the theme that the best advice a president can have must come from introspection rather than from others. In the words of President E,

I've decided if you want to be a really effective agent of change, popularity and press clippings are probably a pretty poor measure of whether you're doing a good job. So I now have decided to judge myself largely by myself. This may sound maniacal to you, but I've decided that I was chosen to do this job for a reason. And that on balance I am probably better at it than the available alternatives at the time, and so I better impose my judgements . . .

President B seconds this view when he says: "I think I am probably the best informed and the sternest critic of my performance." In a similar vein, President C adds "I do not go out and specifically look for feedback except for my annual thing with the board officers. I believe *I can tell.*"
As a reading of the parallels in Table 7 shows, each of the three "experienced" presidents supplements introspection with feedback from others. President E remarks on his professional style which is "highly consultative, highly open—listen, listen, listen . . ." President B says,

I tend to consult myself, two or three of my closest associates . . . vice-presidents I think can be depended upon to give me and themselves a decent assessment of what we're doing.

He adds that this insider advice is judiciously supplemented by "all kinds of inputs" from faculty, students, board members, and newspapers, although "Few of them have the same information that I have and many of them have very particular perspectives and interests . . ." And President C endorses the value of the informal feedback cited by President D when he talks about what he calls a "feel" for the way things are going:

I believe I can tell when I go into a reception downtown how the leaders in the community are feeling about ______ and about me in particular just by interactions. I mean people either come over to talk to you and put a hand around you or they go back to another conversation when they see you.

Although the experienced presidents' self-reliance is tempered by a consultative manner, the responses to this question suggest a peculiar and perhaps unexpected relationship between administrative experience and openness, and between expertise and learning. This relationship is suggested economically by Shunryu Suzuki (1983: 21) in his book Zen Mind, Beginner's Mind when he says: "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities; in the expert's there are few." Suzuki's apothegm amends the 1960 Nixon campaign mantra "experience counts," to read: "experience dis-counts;" and what it discounts is a great deal of the information that those lacking experience must attentively seek out and consider.

The closure that may become more and more premature with increasing professional experience may inspire a sense of expertise and self-reliance that can have a distinct impact upon organizations as well as upon those who lead them. As Weick (1995: 2-3) cautions:

Experts overestimate the likelihood that they would surely know about the phenomenon if it actually were taking place. He [Westrum] calls
the fallacy of centrality": because I don't know about this event, it must not be going on. As Westrum (1982) puts it, "this fallacy is all the more damaging in that it not only discourages curiosity on the part of the person making it but also frequently creates in him/her an antagonistic stance toward the events in question . . . . Because of the fallacy of centrality, the better the information system, the less sensitive it is to novel events.

A sureness which belies the essential ambiguity of experience and which can be manifested as self-reliance, may prepare the way for the often devastating broadsides that presidents made comfortable by experience never see coming. A hardening of habits of action may also account for untold opportunities never perceived or taken advantage of by institutions that "learn" to block them as extraneous noise or eliminable problems.

Question 8. What do you regard as your most important successes?

Questions 8 and 9 focus more specifically on the issue of learning and the presidency. In asking these questions I was trying to understand how presidents come to understand the outcomes of their actions. I wanted to see how they define success and failure and how they have learned to deal with the consequences of their work. More importantly, I was interested in comprehending how perceived successes and perceived failures related to their continuing learning "on the job" of a complex practice enacted in a still more complex setting. My comments on the responses to both questions follow question 9 in the usual text box.

President A and D speak of their successes in concrete terms. President A lists a fund raising campaign, the start of a new and institutionally significant academic program, and the institution's increased visibility. President D spoke of the material she had succeeded in moving through the senate, material that effected a reshaping of academic programs, clarifications in academic regulations, and improvement in the institution's fiscal situation achieved through an across-the-board roll-back in faculty salaries—salaries set previously in a collective agreement with the faculty union.

Presidents B, C, and E tend to speak in more general terms. Ostensibly addressing labor relations, President B seems to extend his remarks to a broader issue
when he says, "we took a highly conflicted university and we've moved to what I would regard as acceptable levels of conflict." Similarly, when he speaks of academic planning, he addresses the virtues of planning per se:

planning requires reflection and self criticism and statements of aspiration and all of those things which are energizing. It also throws up good ideas and attracts interesting people . . . . Your instincts are informed and there is a coherence about what you're doing.

President C locates his most important successes in the shaping or "growing" of individual careers through the creation of opportunities for professional development. President E finds his successes in the choices being made to give focus and reality to his university's mission.

Question 9. What do you regard as areas of failure or disappointment?

The question concerning failures or disappointments is the flip side of the previous question concerning successes. Both questions indirectly address the issue of how presidents balance experience with self-image and how the "realities" of administrative life are construed in a manner that sustains self-worth while recognizing the institutional effects of presidential actions. In putting this question, I am focusing on some of the same issues raised by Anna Neumann (1990: 388) in the research that led to her article "Making Mistakes: Error and Learning in the College Presidency."

Do college presidents typically see themselves as making mistakes? What kinds of mistakes do they report? How and why do presidents appear to make these errors? What do they learn from them, and what is the nature of that learning? When during their terms do presidents make what they see as their "biggest mistakes," and what may account for presidential error—and its recognition?

These questions, of course, apply equally to successes, and by comparing presidential responses to the questions of success and failure, the insights gained from asking only about one may be verified and deepened.

Both Presidents A and D, the presidents with lesser administrative experience, respond with remarks about disappointments rather than about failures, and for each the disappointment involved aspects of labor relations. President A speaks about the strike that ended his three and a half year period of grace during his first term remarking:
I couldn't believe what was happening on the final night just before they went out. Because I just thought at some point rationality is going to set in here and we're going to be able to solve this problem . . .

President D noted,

the labor relations has been quite a surprise for me and a disappointment that it was so bad when I got there . . . it's ten years history of horrors as I now discover . . .

The switch from "failure" to "disappointment" allows Presidents A and D to speak about circumstance rather than about their own actions; it engages a dynamic of attribution rather than one of responsibility.

The administratively experienced presidents take a different tack. Presidents B and C use the word "failure" and accept personal responsibility for shortcomings.

Echoing the call for civility currently associated with Vaclav Havel (1992), President B says:

A thing in which I have failed is to moderate the pathological manifestations of that [a fundamental fractiousness characteristic of his university] . . . amongst colleagues particularly it would be nice to think that we could behave well.

When he mentions his hope to reduce "the bizarre and extravagant behavior that sometimes accompanies it [conflict]" he notes how fundamental the issue of civility is: "you succeed if you manage somehow to transform the psychic life of the institution."

President C, referring to what was experienced as a major campus crisis that threatened the university's reputation, discusses his frustration with his inability to learn from errors:

That's where I feel a real sense of failure. I should be able to learn from my mistakes and be sure that they won't happen again.

Referring to a decision he made in the crisis noted immediately above, he adds:

if the same thing were to happen, I don't know what I'd do differently. And that is a sense of failure on my part.

Clearly learning to learn as well as learning what to learn come no more easily to presidents than to any of us.

Acknowledging that he has "spent too much time on some unproductive issues" and admitting that "I missed some warning signals . . . I missed some funding problems. All kind of regrets, sure," President E adds: "you know, you can't undo the harm you do
by making mistakes, but you can learn from it." He concludes with the following remarks:

I'd rather be able to say that I've done two thousand things rather than to have been so cautious to have done only a hundred things and regret only one of them. I'd rather do two thousand and regret two hundred. That's my nature.

Both Presidents C and E mention the issue of learning from mistakes and President D alludes to it on an institutional level suggesting her role in facilitating organizational learning. Perhaps it is the presidential engagement in a continuous process of learning that gives balance to the practical doing that can easily end in less than happy institutional and experiential outcomes.

In a manner somewhat similar to question 7, and as at least a partial corrective to the speculations emerging from it, there is a marked difference in how experienced and novice presidents understand and articulate their successes and their failures. Where novice presidents tend to see their success in concrete terms, experienced presidents have a more abstract and "philosophical" perspective on them. Complementing this tendency, the administratively experienced presidents had less difficulty owning up to perceived failures than did the novice presidents. The latter partially conforms to Neumann's (1990: 399) findings in her study of presidential mistake-making:

College presidents, as all people, are prone to err. Most presidents can identify a critical mistake they have made during their terms, and the most experienced among them admit a tendency toward frequent error. . . . Furthermore, presidents appear to be engaged in learning as a result of their mistakes . . .

However, where Neumann's presidential sample tended to acknowledge errors that occurred primarily in the early or novice years of their presidencies, the presidents in this study decidedly did not. In fact, the most experienced presidents (Presidents B and C)—in contradistinction to the novice presidents—spoke of failings that were current and which transcended specific events. Similarly, President E confirms that success, failure, and learning are intrinsic to both his professional practice and who he is as a person. That experience appears to facilitate the
admission of error and, therefore, initiates the learning that can consequently occur, moderates the tendency of experienced presidents to become overly self-reliant. Presidents, then, may be joined in a solidarity with those who study them and which is formed by a continuing learning about leadership constrained only by the limit Thayer cites above: "What one learns is what one is capable of learning about all such matters."

IV. Presidential Influence (Question 10)

Question 10. Clark Kerr is associated with the assertion, "Presidents make a difference."

10.1. To what extent do you think that the President does make a difference to your university?

The origin of this question speaks for itself. My point was to see how practitioners would respond to this seemingly perennial question rather than to derive an answer from external observation or speculation. I also wanted to give specificity to the practitioner's view of presidential difference-making by exploring in which matters presidents feel they make a difference and how they think they go about doing so. My remarks on the responses to questions 10.1, 10.2, and 10.3 will be given in the text box appearing at the end of question 10.3.

Replies to question 10.1 are varied. President A feels that presidents can make a difference in smaller institutions, like the one of which he himself was then president. Making use of a telling metaphor, he doubted presidents in large institutions enjoyed similar suasion:

I'm not persuaded that you can [make a difference] in a bigger place . . . I think it's like the Titanic, I don't think you can stop it from hitting the iceberg.

President A adds, however, that in a smaller institution where people know each other better "the mystique of leadership" is proportionately lessened, and as a consequence "you can have some pretty terrific battles" on your way to getting more things done.
President B, who, at the time of the interview, had been a president of his institution for over seven years, equates effectiveness with professional experience noting that on an effectiveness scale of one to ten "the first year is zero and it curves, against a ten it might be seven or eight now." President C admits that "they're [presidents are] on the periphery," adding quickly: "but, that is the way you go about making them [differences] is on the periphery." Speaking of his activity outside the university, President C says:

If you go out and fritter around on that periphery making these connections back into your institution . . . even if ten percent of them catch, then . . . you have made a fundamental difference in what is being done in the university and the way that the community is viewing and is cooperating with the university.

He concludes his response with a confirmation that is a statement of administrative faith:

You can make a difference in these . . . ways; I believe that very strongly. And when I stop believing it, when I have evidence to the contrary, I'll stop doing the job.

While it might be quipped that the job would have already stopped being done by the time this realization was made, President C provides a vivid and a potentially productive reading of Weick's epistemic twist: "believing is seeing." President C suggests that belief conditions what presidents see and what they do in regard to the matters most central to their leadership practices.

President D, two years into her first term of office, qualifies her response by saying "it takes time before you know if you've really made a difference." Endorsing President B's remark that the response to this question "depends how you define making a difference," President D says, "you've got to decide what kind of differences you're making . . . what are the pathways open to you . . ." She goes on to offer what seems sage advice:

I think, it very much depends on where it is you're trying to go as to whether Clark Kerr is right or wrong . . . it seems to me that presidents make a difference if personality and the qualities of leadership and the qualities of scholarship match the pathway that you have to most likely follow to get to the goals. If they mismatch you can be headed towards oblivion.
After energetically confirming his sense that good presidents "absolutely, absolutely" make a difference, President E goes on to frame a Pascal-like wager:

I think the good news is a bad president can't do much harm because the institutions . . . diffuse authority . . . you don't see many cases where a president is able to run an institution down badly through doing a bad job. But you do see cases where people do a good job and it makes a big difference. So it's actually quite an attractive set up.

When asked why these organizational defense mechanisms don't work equally well in stopping intelligence as well as bad judgement and folly, President E responded:

Well they do, they do; of course, that's what makes change difficult. But the good news is effective leaders can in fact create a culture and an environment and directions of change that do make a difference.

10.2. In what matters can and should presidents make a difference?

For President A, the biggest difference presidents can make concerns the development of community, and, anticipating question 10.3., he endorses the notion that "talk is the work" when he says that he helps to make this ideal a reality by using "the word 'community' a lot in what I say." Noting that the difference presidents can make is "very institution specific; circumstance specific" and that "you can't do everything at once," President B counsels, in anticipation of question 18:

The very first thing, in temporal order, the first thing you have to do is to learn how to manage yourself. That's the one thing I would say very strongly to anyone who would be a president.

President C, whose institution has its origins and an important base in its local community, emphasizes the making of links with "corporations, government departments, or what have you that are related to the work of a particular department or school." With his comprehensive knowledge of the institution and his multiple contacts in the broader community, the president is in a position to effect linkages which can create initiatives and support existing programs of excellence.

Repeating a theme pronounced earlier by President E, President D feels that presidents make a difference by leading in the making of the tough institutional choices that others with more partisan interests may not perceive as either essential or imminent. I did not ask this question of President E because of time constraints, and
because I felt he had already given his answer in his insistence that the president must play the key role in forcing questions of mission and making the choices that will allow an institution to maximize its limited resources within selected areas of excellence.

10.3. Speaking pragmatically, how do presidents go about making a difference in these matters?

Consistent with his previous remarks about community, and about the importance of knowing people on a first name basis, President A responds by stating: "The most important thing for me is to have an open door and to be accessible to people." He relates what he calls the "symbolic" act early in his presidency of moving his office from a relatively "remote" upper floor to a far more accessible ground floor location where an open door meant that someone would usually walk through it.

President B states that presidents must adopt sound "principles of allocation" given the limited resources at the university's disposal and the need for the president to "gain credibility" through their disbursement.

President C speaks of his development of a "small, close, and cohesive" management team that acts in an advisory capacity to him and which is responsible for determining university-shaping initiatives. He fills out his role in entrepreneuring new ideas by adding:

I have to be convinced, but once I am convinced, then it's my idea to take that shape and persuade others of it, bring them along, communicate it to them.

President D accentuates the potential value of non-action when she says in revision of her entry plan:

I'd have a different plan coming in because I'd focus the first three months one hundred percent on culture and history, one hundred percent. I would refuse to make any major decisions, but I would also refuse to let them [other decisionmakers in the university] make any major decisions too.

She adds that having come to know the history and culture of her institution she is no longer dependent upon others to tell her where key people are and what they can do.

Again, time constraints did not allow me to ask this question of President E, although he answers it amply in his responses to questions 1.3, 2, 4, and 6.
It seems clear from the responses to question 10.1. that presidents are convinced that they do indeed make a difference, although they differ in how this difference can be effectively made. Only President D raises the possibility that personality and circumstance may make some presidents not only ineffective but dangerous. Being dangerous, however, still makes the presidency a site for difference-making, albeit of a negative kind. In minimizing this negative difference-making while supporting his claim that good presidents make a difference, President E creates a neo-Pelagian formula that underwrites the positive aspects of presidential leadership while organizationally diminishing the harm presidents may cause.

The overall endorsement of the presidency’s effectiveness by interviewees may be interpreted in a number of very different ways. It may be taken, for instance, as self-serving rationalization, an indication that the mythic construction of leadership is so powerful that it can even overwhelm contrary practitioner experience, or a significant indication that presidents really do make a difference, at least in certain things in certain ways. Whichever it may be, we see that presidents are readily able to trace their beliefs about their office into the content and methods of their presidential work in spite of—and, perhaps, because of—the ambiguity of purpose they recognize as characteristic of the university.

Every president has probably encountered a similar ambiguity concerning mandate as that recounted by President B in his response to question 4:

Now I suspect that of the ten or a dozen people on the search committee, each of them had different expectations; there was no collective expression of "this is what we want done.

And, in all likelihood, they have responded much like President B when he says, "I pretty quickly shaped up an agenda and I pursued it fairly rigorously."

Presidents can hardly be faulted if this agenda is built around accomplishable tasks, the significance of which has been impressed upon them through their typically long socialization in the university. They have, after all, come to be presidents through repeated rehearsals of scenarios that endorse, through apparent successes, their ability to make their immediate environments better places than they found
them—even though the standards that might support such evaluations are highly contingent and unstable.

V. Values, Conflict, and Resolution (Questions 11-13)

Question 11. How do your personal values (i.e., enduring beliefs defining that which is worth doing) influence how you conduct the presidency? (e.g., Do personal values influence how you establish institutional priorities?)

As is noted above, "values" has of late become a trendy word in leadership studies. I wanted in questions 11, 12, and 13 to see how leadership practitioners—i.e., individuals who an increasing number of researchers and scholars regard as entrepreneurs of values—experience the balancing of the nomothetic (i.e., collective, public, and normative) and the idiographic (i.e., personal, private, and idiosyncratic) dimensions of organization. I was especially interested to see if presidents would speak about value conflicts that test principles that would be given pragmatic solidity as habits of action. I opened this mini-inquiry into how personal values and individual beliefs fare within organizational constraints by asking if presidents see values playing a role in what they do in their official capacity as institutional leaders.

President A feels there is a "pretty close correlation" between his personal values and his conduct of the presidency. Consistent with points made earlier, he specifies the values of "openness and directness" being central to his professional life. After saying that "I've certainly tried to be very open, very direct," he adds that values cannot always dictate professional practice:

I certainly can play the political game reasonably well, but I don't really like it. But I recognize it's part of the process within an institution.

President B initially distinguishes between "two sets of personal values" noting that "you have to bring them as close together as you can manage":

There are the personal values you hold in your heart of hearts and there are the personal values which you espouse as president.

After suggesting again that congruence between the two is desired, he introduces "a third set of congruencies, which is that the institution's values should be positively related to yours." Reminiscent of A. O. Hirschman's (1970) typology of exit, voice, and
loyalty, President B underscores the importance of congruence between personal values and professional practice:

> If there were too great a divergence between those [the values held in your heart of hearts] and institutional norms, you'd feel very uncomfortable and you'd either surrender your own principles or give up your job, I suppose.

He concludes by rejecting "the notion of the presidency as a value-free, technocratic expertise" noting that "there are values deeply implicated in decisions and processes . . ."

President C begins by reflecting on what is for him the personal and professional importance of honesty. He goes so far as to say "I cannot abide lying" and talks about his efforts to create sufficient trust in his institution so that individuals can feel comfortable saying what they really feel. In doing so he provides an illustration of how personal values can find their way into institutional practice. One might pause to reflect, however, whether honesty is really valued at all times and all places given the upbeat public presentation of self and institution central to presidential work.

After remarking that values like "integrity, honesty, and quality" "play a fairly large role" in her work, President D adds somewhat sarcastically that this may hamstring her tactical operating room, "I can't abide games playing which is a weakness for a president." Although President D says she holds a firm line on matters of principle, she acknowledges the public and normative pressures that structure much of the presidency when she says:

> You have to give up your self, I'm afraid. It's a terrible thing to say, but you really do have to give up your self. You are utterly consumed. You somehow have to hold on to your self, a narrow thin cord of it, the rest they eat. But, the values are sometimes the only things that keep you sane.

In speaking about collegiality, she notes that values in the university are too often self-servingly defined by those seeking advantage and who are willing to act unscrupulously to achieve their ambitions.

President E brings values to the issue of self-evaluation that he has spoken about previously. Conformity with values, for him, is the bottom line in determining if he is doing the job right:
it turns out, I think, the most important test of whether or not I am doing a good job is asking myself "am I being true to the basic values and goals I've said that have caused me to be chosen as president and have caused me to want to do the job?" If I'm true to those, and I ask myself honestly if I am being true to those, I think I'm on target.

He goes on to list the beliefs that shape his presidential practice and the self-evaluations that allow him to take stock of his performance:

I believe in hard work, dedication to purpose, the sum is greater than the parts, I believe in the virtues of education, freedom, free inquiry, of the public interest, these kinds of things. They are all chunks of me.

And although "looking on the bright side" may not have the depth of more traditional values, President E comments that showing optimism and banishing cynicism are hallmarks of who he is as well as how he enacts his presidency:

people think I'm probably more optimistic than most people. I probably believe more is possible than most people believe is possible. I think I have to have that character. I'm less cynical than almost anybody on campus.

Presidents A, B, and D acknowledge a tension between personal value and presidential practice. Each recognizes that certain aspects of institutional life will inevitably contravene the principled actions dictated by conscience. President B makes explicit the continuing negotiation between self and organization through which the individual seeks value congruence while the institution demands that its requirements are met. President B also underscores the inescapability of values that are implicated in every decision and every process within the university. President D calls attention to the nomothetic voraciousness of organizations and the double-talk of practiced institutional actors that makes presidential sanity and coherence dependent upon the maintenance of at least the personal commitment to principle. Here values become, if not a guide to the present, a remembrance of things past. Countering President D's axiological discouragement, President C provides an example of how personal values might be translated into a broader organizational practice. And President E, hailing the virtue of optimism, regards values as points of orientation that determine both professional practice and its evaluation. We might
conclude from all this that President B is right when he says that the university leadership is not a value-free, technocratic exercise. But with values, the devil is in the details of definition and enactment. In addition to asking which values orient presidential practice, we need to see if and how presidents see these values being translated into actions that are consistent with them.

**Question 12. Have you encountered situations of significance that have raised real or potential value issues and/or conflicts with other individuals or groups within the university?**

President B responds: "the tensions I have between value sets really revolves around the university's relationship to the private sector." He says that many in the private sector have a view of the university I don't share. An exploitative view, a dismissive view... And so in dealing with those people, as one has to do politely and positively, I find I do bite my tongue and play them along in terms of what they believe in.

He adds, "hopefully we're not completely at odds." Using the felicitous language of holidays, he ends with a comment on how a public practice may impose private restraint:

I find a lot of my own political and personal views having nothing to do with universities are not ones which I advertise and I have sort of taken a holiday from all of my personal crusades.

For President A and D, value conflict occurred in their handling of labor relations matters. President A points to the strike that both ended his honeymoon and awoke him to some of the harsher realities of the collegiality President D disparaged earlier. Not only were his attempts at fairness and reasonableness rebuffed by an adamant faculty union, but President A was forced to watch uneasily as his cherished idea of the university community seemed to be willfully ravaged and exploited:

A measure of, for me, how much that bothered me, is I lost twenty pounds in three weeks. I mean I was really knotted-up because I thought that the faculty were holding the students as hostage. I couldn't see it as anything else but that and I thought that was just despicable.
President D speaks of the conflicts she encountered in salary negotiations that induced a similar moral indignation:

I find it extraordinary to be arguing about high salaries for work when I see others in society losing their jobs a quarter of a mile away. I have a big problem; I find it almost immoral to be involved in those kinds of discussions.

President D also speaks of the conflict she has, given her valuation of "imaginative, enriching, and innovative research" when she sees "some second rate mediocrity under the guise of research."

Presidents C and E address, in different ways, the conflict between individual and organization values. President C speaks of the heart/head conflict when "Somebody who you really like and whose family you care deeply about is doing a lousy job and has to be fired." The resulting conflict is between what President C calls "two values":

the concern for the good of the institution and the interest in excellent performance on one hand, and the concern for an individual and his or her personal circumstances on the other hand.

Noting that "The head/heart conflict arises more often than one would like" and that it is "the most difficult kind of value conflict that I get," President C adds that the organization must prevail:

the bottom line is the interest of the institution, there's no question about that. That is always the bottom line.

President E ties value conflict to difference-making when he says:

If you're going to make a difference in these institutions, you're going to have a fair number of people unhappy . . . . If everybody agrees with everything then there's something wrong.

Speculating, perhaps naively given the size of his university, that there is "a pretty high congruence with my values and what most in the university believe in," President E makes a point that is too often overlooked in discussions of values in education: "The challenge is to realize them. To give full meaning to them." Indeed! Coinciding with President C's organizational bottom line, President E articulates a concise version of the administrator's creed:
as an administrator you have to believe in [an] organization that inevitably impinges on some individuals and gets in some tension with the strongest visions of individual autonomy as opposed to university autonomy.

Our presidents are not strangers to conflicts of value or value difference which can trigger intellectual, emotional, and more visceral reactions. But to be a university president is hardly to occupy a bully pulpit for personal values and beliefs. On the contrary, it is to be a steadfast partisan of the institution and a player of strategic games, as President D reminds us in her response to question 11, that may violate much of what presidents privately think honorable, reasonable, and right. As President B notes, also in response to question 11, when the rift between personal values and institutional requirements increases, so must the ambiguity of practice, experience, and success.

Question 13. Would you tell me how you dealt with one such situation that was important for you?

President A, in reacting to the strike that divided his campus, "tried to be the president of the whole university" rather than being simply "the representative of the board or the administration." For him, this transcendence of partisanship meant attending to the needs of the students and the staff as well as to those of the faculty. In seeking to extend the virtue of collegiality to staff as well as to students, President A tried to remake the "community"—"a value that I hold really high"—that the strike had at least temporarily sundered.

In returning to the value of civility that he voiced in response to question 9, President B notes that the redevelopment of his university's campus provided a perhaps not readily perceived opportunity to enhance both community and civility. By pragmatically linking this redevelopment to the immediate need to increase space for classes and academic activities, President B had a chance to do nothing less than "transform the psychic life of the institution" (see his response to question 9):
And so by articulating this notion that we had to be a community and to feel like a community, we had to be a place where people could feel good about living and working. I was able to launch a master plan exercise and link that to the need to build up the physical assets of the university, and building buildings gives you an opportunity to reconfigure space and create the new aesthetic and do all of those things . . . But it started with a commitment to transformation of the campus for spiritual reasons.

Refraining from mentioning specific events or encounters, President C states that values can be made manifest "through speeches" and primarily through "personal example, you just behave the way you believe." When he notes that you're always in public so people are always going to watch you," President C argues that presidents—at least presidents of universities—do, in fact, enjoy a moral leverage in which both deeds and words matter.

President D recalls that she responded to what she regarded as "misinformation, disinformation, and lies spread about me, about my senior people under circumstances which are absolutely unnecessary" by her unionized "scholarly colleagues," by sending "An open letter to the entire community" in which "we just put out the facts and let the community make its own decisions." She added that "We also then held open meetings . . . people could come and ask questions."

President E uses the power of the purse to dampen dissension and to encourage others to take up his charge to increase focus and reorganize activities now being carried out in traditional ways. He notes:

I have put in the budget this year a five-fold increase in the funds available for new initiatives and quality enhancement within the context of this increasingly focused mission. So I'm trying to put some financial oomph behind it . . . it means challenging people to ask how can we shape the university more specifically to do this. What should we stop doing, and what things are we not doing that we should be doing . . .

In taking these fiscal measures, President E demonstrates one of the many ways that presidents may create tactical incentives which preempt divisiveness and induce colleagues to rally behind a common value-driven perspective.

As the responses to this question illustrate, presidents have an arsenal of possible responses to value conflicts and a range of inducements through which they may
construct consensus around value-oriented issues before conflict can occur. The many tools presidents have to make real their aspirations towards principle range from budgetary incentives to a creative interlinking of initiatives that advance agendas sometimes invisible even to those within the institution who champion them. Presidents seem to have the leverage to turn the surplus ambiguity available within universities to their advantage.

Perhaps the cardinal presidential advantage comes in recognizing that whatever reality is social constructed can be deconstructed and reinvented. President A provides a ready example when he simply refused to give credence to his faculty union's fractionation of his campus. By using their strike to become what he calls "president of the whole university," he, through persistence, worked to make a fractured institution once again whole. And in his view, the institution made whole supplied the overwhelmingly positive reviews of his first term that, in turn, led his board to reappoint him. As we have seen through their responses, each of the presidents recounts similar examples of social invention and "reality" construction.

VI. Personal Impact of the Presidency (Question 14)

Question 14. What are the most prominent features of the work of president that have had the greatest impact—positive and negative—upon you as an administrator and as a person?

This question again comes at the nomothetic-idiographic contest that, I speculated, must affect leaders as much as it affects other organizational participants. Here the presidents are invited to talk about how their public practice has changed their private lives, both for better and for worse.

On the negative side, all the presidents participating in the study had a similar tale to tell about the high price the presidency exacts from incumbents. They said respectively: "It's [the presidency is] very consuming . . . . It is very hard to get distance, extremely hard to get distance from it" (President A); "the demands are considerable on one's personal life and individual career" (President B); "very demanding, very demanding" both physically and psychologically, and "Very intrusive"
(President C); "you completely lose your private life; sitting in a goldfish bowl. Everybody wants a piece of your time" (President D); and, "it's very hard on your family and it's a rapidly aging process . . . Time . . . this takes a grotesque amount of time" (President E). According to presidents, the presidency is a very full-time job.

On the other hand, presidents are not complaining and are even enthusiastic about their work. In their own words: "being a university president really is interesting . . . . I just find it endlessly interesting because nothing is the same" (President A); "Constantly in a very positive sense, a daunting sense even, a learning process . . . . in terms of breadth, I would say it's been very positive" (President B); "the constant interaction with people of widely varying kinds is the most prominent element of the presidency and it has had an impact on me . . . . I thrive on that very variety and the demands and the challenges that we're talking about (President C); "an ordeal by fire, yes, but it's been good" (President D, response to question 17); and, "So it's about six days a week and it's very long days. None of that's a complaint" (President E).

If the lived aspects of the university presidency are beginning to seem paradoxical, presidential responses to this question do little to lessen that perception. Indeed, they, as do the responses to several of the previous questions, suggest a verisimilitude that escapes neat categorization or reduction to uncomplicated fact. This verisimilitude is much like that expressed emblematically by Dickens in his oxymoronic but existentially resonant introduction to A Tale of Two Cities:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

Although Dickens' description is decidedly not the stuff of social science or "normal" philosophy, it speaks amply and recognizably to the human condition we share. And so do the presidents in their ability to hold together very different perceptions that preclude the reduction of their work to simple formulae, codes, or rules. The
presidency seems to provide both the worst of times and the best of times.

While we might debate the usefulness of the presidency or its necessity, there is no debate concerning the intensity with which it is experienced by the men and women who enact it. That their professional lives are shaped by polar opposites may confound scholars intent on monistic renderings of administrative experience, but for the rest of us, it invites the possibility of empathy begun in understanding.

VII. Learning and Its Costs (Questions 15, 16, & 17)

Question 15. Has your understanding of the university changed over time and with experience? In what ways?

Questions 15 and 16 are invitations for the presidents to think through what sorts of things they have learned on the job, first about the university, and, second, about the presidency. Question 17, rephrased, asks how this learning has changed the learner.

Elaborating one "eternal paradox" perhaps peculiar to educational organizations, especially the university, President A speaks about his lived experience of the "huge tension" between administrative decision-making and collegial consultation:

On the one hand, the enormous desire to be collegial in the classical sense of collegial and to consult and to involve the community and so on and so forth, and on the other hand, we put this person up here and we want him to lead. We want him to tell us the things we've got to do and I've become very conscious of that tension.

He has also learned how complex the university and the role of the senior administrator can be. He recalls his naiveté as a faculty member when administrative support for ideas was treated as an expectation rather than as a work that had to be carefully accomplished.

President B makes a similar point when he says: "I would say understanding that this is a far more complex institution than I ever dreamt." He draws out this insight to illuminate yet another paradox, one that he has learned only through presidential experience:

I've certainly come to understand its [the university's] complexity, its strengths and weaknesses. In a certain way both its indestructibility and
its fragility. Indestructible in the long term and highly fragile in the short term.

President C remarks that his initial understanding of the university as "more structured and greyer in a way, stable with clear hierarchies and presidents for life" has been altered by his experience of it as "a very alive, vital, disordered, chaotic, complex, vigorous institution." The university has turned out to be an institution which he finds both more likable and "more interesting" than his previous static vision of it.

President D again vents impatience and shares hard-earned personal knowledge when she says:

I think the universities are far, far more process oriented than I had ever believed. And I think that the process just overtakes the goals. I have never seen so much time wasted on committee meetings.

She does the same when she adds:

I am boggled about how parochial the universities are . . . . Literally provincial, everything, every aspect of that word parochial . . . . People have forgotten how to dream, scholars have forgotten how to think nationally, scholars have forgotten to look at the bigger picture as well as at the tiny picture.

Contrary to President D's experience, President E states:

My experience with academic communities is that on the whole, public impression to the contrary, they welcome change and vitality and direction . . . . I don't find people lining up to say "No," I find people standing up and applauding saying "Hey, good for you excellent."

From the responses to question 15, we learn that presidents continue to learn about the setting of their work as they develop their professional administrative practice. Perhaps the primary lesson presidents learn is not to be stymied by the paradoxes characteristic of the their office and the university that is its setting. With experience comes the ability to transcend stupefaction when confronted with the seeming ambiguities and contradictions inherent in university life.

Gradually the anarchic aspects of organization become, to use the vocabulary of Cohen and March, the organized aspects of anarchy, or, at least, they are fitted into narratives that tell a progressive story of the administrative subjugation of chaos. Presidents, as we have seen above, are generally able to tell a coherent story that
more often than not endorses their effectiveness in subduing an unruly environment. We might speculate that those unable to tell such stories are now past presidents. Whether or not such narratives are more broadly shared within institutions, probably depends upon the ability of presidents to persuade others of their readings of what they regard as key moments in an institution's life.

**Question 16. Has experience changed your view of the presidency?**

Again President A's lack of administrative experience allows him to articulate a discovery usually unmentioned because of its seeming obviousness:

I discovered that the president is actually expected to lead and that the age-old device of referring it to committee doesn't work at the presidential level where people actually expect you to make a decision and do something . . . . I suddenly realized that I had to take decisions; that in the end people were going to hold me accountable for whether something worked or didn't work . . . . More than anything, I think that came home to me.

President A, who acknowledges "I was pretty naive," recognizes that his "discovery" tells much about the "sheltered" quality of the university community that protects most of its members from the hard realities of decision and responsibility. President D, who also lacks administrative experience in a university setting, learned that,

most people on campus treat the president like a politician . . . that was maybe my big, huge surprise . . . I mean, talk about naive; I'm a scholar and I expected to be treated like a scholar and a researcher, but . . . . anyone in administration is seen like a politician, the president in particular.

Reinforcing President E's previous remark about the perverseness of public policy, she adds,

I had no idea that my hands were going to be so tied by government. There are all sorts of things I know we could do [if they weren't].

Continuing his theme of the university's complexity, President B has found that, "as you move into a problem that seems simple . . . even though it looks simple it's not that way." He has also found learned through his presidency that "It's one thing to deal
with something at an intellectual level, it's another to convert it into operational behavior."

President C seconds the difficulty of this conversion of idea into practice:

I suppose originally I thought that presidents could cause things to happen in a more direct and simple way than I now know they can.

He has learned, as he noted previously, that presidents can make a difference by frittering around on the periphery (see response to question 10.1) and facilitating connection making rather than by issuing directives and commands. President E, noting that president's must disturb the status quo to be effective, states:

This is not a job for people who need applause. That's one of the lessons I've learned. Being president of a university it's virtually inevitable that you will retire far less popular than the day you took the job . . .

President B's comment that "It's one thing to deal with something at an intellectual level, it's another to convert it into operational behavior," is remindful of Thayer's (1988: 254) quotation of the Spanish proverb cited in the previous chapter:

No es lo mismo hablar de toros, que estar en el redondel, which translates, "It is not the same thing to talk of bulls as to be in the bullring."

To talk glibly about the university as a complex or even a paradoxical institution is not the same as to experience its enigmas or contradictions in the first person as one struggling to lead it. To appreciate the responses to this question, like all others in this interview schedule, we must give up some of the surety and the security that is the privilege of observers and imagine what it might be like to stand inside the shoes of those charged with leading the organized anarchy that is, as Cohen and March tell us, the university.

As the responses to questions 3, 15, and 16 suggest, presidents inevitably bring ideas and expectations about the presidency and the university to workdays which routinely upset them with unpredictabilities, ambiguities, and "crises." We might guess, from a review of responses to the questions asked in this study, that presidential expectations coincide with their experience about half of the time. These are the moments of confirmation when predispositions are verified by event and
experience. The other fifty percent of the time, in which there is an irreconcilable
incongruity between idea and event, presidents are called upon to revise what
Birnbaum (1989a) calls their implicit theories of leadership. They must reframe and
rephrase the narratives through which they give meaning to experience.

Whether right or wrong in their expectations, presidents are always learning,
always corroborating or modifying their assumptions about self, other, and setting.
Given that as often as not they will be called upon to revise the assumptions resident
in their personal storehouse of knowledge, it is understandable that their images of
leadership and organization are as much like works-in-progress featuring continuous
improvisation as they are like constant "north star" points of orientation.

Question 17. Has your work as a university president changed you? In what ways?

The presidents speak as if in one voice about how the presidency, by
demanding that they learn new things, meet new people, and face situations previously
little thought about or imagined, has changed them as people by expanding their
knowledge of self and profession:

it's enormously widened my horizons. A whole range of people that I
would never have met, friends that I've made, things that I've got myself
into that I never imagined in a million years that I would have (President A);

learning new things and getting away from your stock in trade . . . . Just
comprehending the complexity demands of you a series of intellectual
skills that I didn't have. Understanding that every problem has multiple
implications . . . . So, to me, as you experience situations and learn to
deal with complexity, it becomes kind of a moveable feast. You take it
from one problem and apply it in another problem. That's part of the
learning process that I've experienced. (President B);

I know an immense amount more than I would have known had I not been
a president. I know a lot more people. I know a lot more about
people . . . I know more about myself, I know more about what I am
capable of (President C);

I think it's made me far broader, given me a far broader understanding of
human nature than I ever expected . . . . my skills on the personnel side
have probably been the ones stretched in ways I never could have imagined (President D); and, speaking about both the presidency and a critical medical problem suffered by his son, President E says simply, "It's made me a better person."

But this development of personal and professional knowledge, as we have seen previously, does not come easily nor is it without personal cost. Expressing appreciation of the role that his wife has played in supporting his presidency and the placement of his son in a nearby boarding school, President A says, "It has certainly changed our [his and his family's] personal lives. There's no question about that."

President B begins his response by saying, "I'm older. More tired." Remarking that "it's [the presidency has] toughened me," President C adds:

And the major challenge becomes not losing your sensitivity under those circumstances, not just hardening yourself to other people and their concerns. That's a tough challenge because you do need a thick skin, but you still need to feel.

President D states: "I've developed the stamina of an ox." She also comments less happily:

I think it's [the presidency has] given me a healthy dose of cynicism which I didn't have before and which I don't want to keep.

President E's earlier comment that "It's made me a better person" gains specificity, depth, and eloquence when it is returned to its original context in which he speaks of how the personal crisis of his child's illness changed aspects of his presidency:

this has made me a lot tougher. It's made me a better person. My priorities are a little clearer than they were before. And it's made me less, less sympathetic to what I view as trivial hardships, and trivial problems, and trivial complaints that people have. And it causes me to go a little faster and a little harder and push a little harder at the edge when I now have a deeper understanding of what really is tough ... I'm less sympathetic to people whining and complaining about trivial matters and I'm more likely to confront them now.

President E also notes how this family crisis led him to apply his mission statement for the institution (i.e., greater focus through strategic choice-making) to both his leadership practice and his personal life:

It's also caused me to be more focused with the use of my time, because I have less of it, I have to make more choices.
The quid pro quo in the professional and personal lives of presidents, in which benefits can be factored against costs, is a bargain that triggers ambivalence. As our presidents make clear in many of their comments, what veneration there might have once been for the office of the presidency as the center of educational leadership has been exchanged for a less convivial relationship between administration, faculty, staff, and students who are more and more prone to see themselves as competitors for a scarcity of resources rather than as colleagues united by a common and ennobling purpose. The relationship between the university and its many, diverse external publics has also become increasingly characterized on both sides by wariness and suspicion. Presidential influence at best can fare unevenly in a field of internal and external institutional interaction where perception is fluid, issues are experienced intensely, and differences of opinion and knowledge proliferate.

All of this is exacerbated by growing doubts about the survival of specific institutions and of the university itself as the primary purveyor of the advanced teaching and research we associate with higher education. As Clark Kerr's (1994: 4) observations underscore, President A speaks for presidents of many institutions when he worries about the possible discontinuation of his university, and President B is not alone in struggling to restore civility on an increasingly fractious campus:

Institutions of higher education are ever more concerned with their future prosperity and even survival—which can no longer be so taken for granted.
Internally, there is a decline in general citizenship responsibilities and an increase in fractionalization of interests.

Questions of survival and baseline issues of civility can easily preempt broader discussions of purpose and possibility. In such environments leadership can become, as Cohen and March suggest, a loose aggregate of managerial techniques and catch phrases, overt and furtive political manipulations, and after-the-fact rationalizations.

Nevertheless and in spite of the many hazards the university may hold for presidents, the presidency remains a captivating, if trying, position for those who have experienced it. Whether it remains captivating for the right reasons is a question that is open to debate. The reflections of those who lead, however, tell us
that the disjunctions characteristic of presidential life may be prods to personal and professional learning rather than terminal limits that dictate action, outcome, and experience.

VIII. Summary Question (Question 18)

Question 18. If someone you know and respect were to come to you to seek your advice on the advisability of accepting an appointment to a university presidency in an institution comparable to your own, what advice would you give?

This final question was intended to elicit responses and to catch material that may have been missed in other questions. It is the most "blue-sky" question in the interview schedule as it allows presidents to speculate freely on their work and its organizational setting. The presidents are invited to imagine themselves in a situation in which they are the trusted mentor advising a respected friend on a practice and a setting they have come to know through the often difficult lessons taught by experience.

President A, focusing on a central belief about higher education, says: "Because I think universities are so important, that higher education is so important, I would be enormously enthusiastic." But this enthusiasm is not offered without qualification. Listing the "the negatives," President A mentions:

forget about continuing your scholarly life. I think if that's important to you, you'd better not take the job . . . . I think if you really love teaching too, you've got to recognize that you're probably going to be pretty far away from it. I think that the other element is you should recognize what it is going to do to your spouse, because it's going to change your personal life.

He adds that "you've got to have a lot of energy" and that you must be "outgoing" stating, "the reflective scholar president; it won't work [for] the '90s." He also advises the cultivation of "endless patience . . . and a willingness to listen." And he warns against the "temptation of the glib reply" and losing "your cool."

President B calls attention to the fact of difference in personality, situation, and timing when he says:

Just be realistic and know yourself and it isn't everybody's job and not every presidency would provide equal satisfaction. It is likely to be very different in different situations, But even in awful times, it's a pretty good job.
President C responds:

it's challenging, it's demanding, it's tiring, but I don't consider it to be stressful in the sense that there's more stress than I am comfortable with; there's just enough to make it fun.

Part of this lack of detrimental stress results from the ability for one's spouse to be involved in presidential work—President C refers to the presidency as "our job"—and from the president's ability to effect change: "Once you get to the top of an organization . . . . if you don't like something, you're able to change it." The latter statement differs from the statements of the other presidents, as well as from some of President C's previous remarks that it can be difficult and sometimes impossible to effect change in the university. Indeed, in his response to this very question, President C again acknowledges that presidents seldom have power to direct occurrence.

President D says that she "would really try to focus on the expectations" and goes on to state:

I think it's a standard joke and it's a well worn joke that presidents can't do anything. But I think, as I've tried to tell you, I think presidents can do some things, but some things they can't do. And it's very important to work out what the expectations are. If there are too many on "the things you can't do" side, I think a little gentle warning might be helpful . . . . I would tell this mythological person to think hard about it, to realize that in maybe five or ten years you could really make a difference; but that you can only make a difference in certain things.

Again, I did not have the time to ask this question to President E, however, his vision of what would be an ideal evaluation of his own presidency is indicative of what he might have said:

I think we can hope that people would admire your integrity, your openness as to what you're doing, your level, I hope people will say, "the man at least did what he thought was right with integrity. The man tried hard. The man dedicated himself to the interests of the institution as he interpreted them." . . . I hope the dedication will be there and that over time that earns respect.

President E's advice to governing boards also sheds some light on the tall order that likely would have been contained in his response:

I think that's a healthy phenomenon going with relatively youthful people because of the demands of the job and the freshness they bring to it. It does mean you have to try to choose people who you think you would be prepared to live with for an extended period and who you think have
enough commitment to the institution not to accept the job offers that we all get all the time . . . . So you've got to pick people with a commitment that the thing they most want to accomplish in life is that they want to see that institution move forward.

Although they may be enthusiastic idealists, question 18 reveals that presidents are, nevertheless, circumspect about the presidency. It is not, as President B tells us, a job for everyone who may be nominally qualified to do it. Aside from the announced qualifications, the demands prospective presidents should consider, according to the presidents in our sample, are many and varied. They include: being a confirmed extrovert in psychological orientation; possessing sufficient raw energy to tolerate an intensely demanding schedule; having a spouse who is willing to take on what will inevitably be shared demands upon and intrusions into a once private life; a willingness to set aside one's scholarly life and commitments to teaching; having endless patience, a willingness to listen, and the self-control to avoid both glibness and sarcasm; the ability to downsize and focus expectations upon what can actually be done; and the dedication to institution that makes sacrifice tolerable if not rewarding. Perhaps the greatest requirement of presidents is the ability to live amiably with the multiple ambiguities that make thought and action ventures in risk-taking for which there is a very small audience not readily given to applause.

Above all else, our interview findings illustrate that it is hazardous business first to find uniformity in, and second to extrapolate general leadership principles from presidential reflections. In refraining from the temptation to generalize, we may take solace in the remarks Bensimon, Neumann, and Birnbaum (1989: 20) made at the conclusion of their far more extensive study of the American higher education presidency:

While advice for leaders is not lacking, such advice is often contradictory and confusing . . . . while all the advice appears sensible, much of it is contradictory. Scholars, observers of leadership, and former and present academic leaders disagree about whether successful leadership requires remaining distant or being intimately involved with constituents, whether it should emphasize the acquisition of resources or focus on academic matters, whether it involves accountability or fostering creativity, or whether it requires setting goals or helping others to achieve their own goals.
1. Institutional Purpose and Presidential Function (Questions 1-2)

Question 1. Several recent criticisms suggest that the university is in an intellectual and philosophical malaise; that is, perhaps universities are chronically seeking for a sense of direction; which is why they're universities. Things are expected of them by people outside and by people inside—often contradictory things.

1.1. To what extent do you think that Canadian universities share this condition?

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<td>Perhaps to some degree I do, I think the great challenge right now or the great ambiguity that universities are trying to deal with is on the one hand trying to deal with the question of accessibility which I would characterize as the buzz word of the late '80s while arguing publicly that they can no longer deliver the quality of education that they would like to deliver. I get asked more than anything else is, &quot;what is our mission?&quot;</td>
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<td>I think universities are chronically groping for a sense of direction; which is why they're universities. Things are expected of them by people outside and by people inside—often contradictory things. ...we are at a historical juncture where all institutions are being examined and subjected to radical critique and it would be surprising if universities were exempted. You would expect that critique to be loudest in a self-conscious, self-critical community like universities. ...consensus is improbable to say the least. Universities, I think, have always filled multiple objectives and always will fill them and at any given moment the balance will shift hither and yon, but there will always be competing objectives that have to be reconciled.</td>
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<td>It's difficult to say that the university doesn't know what it is, doesn't know what it should be doing because the universities that we have now-in-days are so complex that it's very difficult to find anything like an institutional view. My guess is that the greatest consensus [of a commission to determine what the institution has become and where it will go in the next half century] will be on the view that there is room for honest differences of opinion within the institution about what it is and about what it exists for...a varied institution, a variegated institution, and that's what we are....I think we'll find out that there is not consensus on mission in any particular way. —decisions are made all over the place—</td>
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<td>It's difficult to say that the university doesn't know what it is, doesn't know what it should be doing because the universities that we have now-in-days are so complex that it's very difficult to find anything like an institutional view.</td>
<td>I think there is a lack of purpose, but it is a perceived lack of purpose. It's a perceived lack of purpose because, in fact, the malaise that's present in the Canadian universities is a malaise due to fifteen years of cutbacks or constraints on funding...whether you have philosophical differences or you have intellectual differences, the point is nobody's got any money. And that is really the deep source of the malaise, in my opinion.</td>
<td>Yes and no. The world is a lot more complicated than Professor Bloom's vision of education would suggest. The fact that we're grappling with that complexity is not evidence that we've lost direction or lost purpose, but rather that we're attempting to continue to elaborate that purpose...</td>
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<td>My guess is that the greatest consensus [of a commission to determine what the institution has become and where it will go in the next half century] will be on the view that there is room for honest differences of opinion within the institution about what it is and about what it exists for...a varied institution, a variegated institution, and that's what we are....I think we'll find out that there is not consensus on mission in any particular way.</td>
<td>Putting more money into the current system [alone] will not solve the problem. The system has to undergo a profound paradigm shift...Since I am a president who is driven intellectually by ideas..., I find it distasteful to think that the university I would preside over would be a university entirely governed by someone else's idea of what my budget ought to be. So, you've got to be intellectually driven, and I think right now we're asking questions in the university which are as profound as they asked during the time of the dissolution of the monasteries.</td>
<td>...where &quot;yes&quot; might be more appropriate is, I think that universities for a variety of reasons have not made as wise choices as they might about what they should be and what they shouldn't be. There's been a spread of activity, a spread and reach of activities that in my view has not been as carefully thought out as it might be.</td>
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<td>—decisions are made all over the place—</td>
<td>The paradigm shift comes in what constitutes the boundary conditions of critical and creative thinking; what constitutes the set of indicators so the people you graduate are seen to be critical and creative thinkers; and what constitutes the curriculum in any particular subject.</td>
<td>The harder dimension relates to the blurring of the boundary of what constitutes work that's best done in the university and work that is highly intellectual, indeed scholarly, but doesn't need to be done in the university.... We don't need to claim that all research should be done in the university.</td>
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<td>There is a great set of forces homogenizing all postsecondary institutions and I think that's a fundamentally unhelpful and unhealthy phenomenon.</td>
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1.2. *In your view, what purpose(s) should shape Canadian universities?*

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| I do agree broadly with Smith [the Smith Report]...I think that we've got to focus more strongly on undergraduate education. Generally, I don't think the universities are doing a marvellous job in that whole area. Obviously, I have a bias where I come from, but I think that undergraduate education needs to be strengthened. I think that we've got to get to the point of making some harder choices about what it is we offer. I think we are horrible about making hard decisions about axing programs and letting them die. I agree very much with Bernard's [Shapiro's—then Deputy Minister of Education, Province of Ontario] observation that you've got to confront some hard choices and I don't think generally we've been able to do that very well. | I think inevitably there are conflicting purposes. The purposes of the society which supports the university both financially and spiritually,..., that society would naturally see the university as a vehicle for its ambitions...People who are in the knowledge business...would lay greatest stress on the knowledge aspects of the university. Students who are seeking, some of them enlightenment and others credentials would attribute their respective views to the university and say, "that's what the university ought to be doing." And employers would say we want trained people. And people with strong moral positions want morally sensitive people. | What I find at my university, which is a fairly large, complex one...is that there are several different views of what the university is or should be. ...

...our roots are very much in the community itself and I think very much of the community. And that's another element of the university we try to foster, that we're not just in the community but that we are of it. That we're very much a corporate citizen of the community. We don't want walls around the campus or anything like that. And, of course, that fits very well with the orientation I described before and the sort of motivation for appointing me. |

I do come from the knowledge business and I view that as very, very high on my personal agenda. As an ethical position, I think we have to be concerned because universities have become gatekeepers for opportunities, concerned that the opportunities we dispense are dispensed in a socially responsible fashion. I think as people dependent upon the community we have for pragmatic if not principled reasons to satisfy the community to some extent that we're doing what it wants done....I start in the hierarchy of values with knowledge and acknowledge that in different ways and in different proportions you have to serve these other things. I'm not a purist. |
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<td>What I find at my university, which is a fairly large, complex one...is that there are several different views of what the university is or should be.</td>
<td>Universities, in other words, that merely try to see their students as young potential professors are missing the boat. Universities who pretend that scholarship is only that which was studied in the past and is not something that might be totally new in the future are missing the boat. Disciplines that think there is not change have missed the boat.</td>
<td>I call it differentiation, diversity, definition of mission and role. The word differentiation has come to carry a lot of baggage in various debates particularly in Canada it has become offensive word to some because it is thought to deal not with diversity of institutions but with hierarchy of institutions and tiering of institutions which I think is really unhelpful language.</td>
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<td>...our roots are very much in the community itself and I think very much of the community. And that's another element of the university we try to foster, that we're not just in the community but that we are of it. That we're very much a corporate citizen of the community. We don't want walls around the campus or anything like that. And, of course, that fits very well with the orientation I described before and the sort of motivation for appointing me.</td>
<td>Another part of the paradigm shift is that everybody's in a life-long learning mode now. This is not education between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two; this is education for a life, not a career, not a job, a life. And you need different sets of skills for life which is why I get back to critical and creative thinking, because that's the best thing we can do for anybody is teach them how to be critical, creative thinkers, and doers through the vehicle of history, English, physics, biology, whatever.</td>
<td>...the point I want to make is that there has been an expansion, I believe, an insufficient discrimination by the university in thinking about what activities it might pursue, both in the business side and on the research side. With respect to the teaching/educational side, I think the claim is less well taken, there is less cause for concern.</td>
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1.3. As president of your university, what role do you play in defining institutional purpose?

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<td>Well, I would have said that I would try to be a catalyst for the process; until about six months ago. I just underwent a presidential review and I’ve been reappointed and we’ve recast the mandate of the presidency, of the next part of my presidency, and it says that I am to take a lead on these matters...the university is looking for some clear leadership and some clear direction in these matters. In planning in the general sense and in defining more sharply our mission and our sense of direction...I intend to take quite a strong leadership position.</td>
<td>I try to engender a debate over where we should be going, a long term and large sense of what we stand for; the kind of place we are. And I’m an active participant in that debate; I’m not just a stage manager and I do my very best on particular issues to persuade people to do what is, as I think, what should be done. Not because I think it but because the positions I take I hope are informed by discussion and information and reflection and a breadth of contact that very few people in the institution are privy to. So I try within a very widely accepted collection of values to define a course of action and see if I can bring people with me...At the same time lost of other people have initiatives and one of my jobs is to try to harmonize those initiative and to allow people to realize their ambitions. And I'm very, very keen to do that. You have to get people thinking about things and you have to catch their attention and catching their attention in a university often involves competing perspectives...</td>
<td>When I'm meeting with senate to make a basic academic decision, I am the referee of the discussion, I am the chairman of the group, it's an established procedure. The president is the key person with senate because he chairs it, this is in a typical structure like ours; the key person with the board because he is its CEO.</td>
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### Defining Institutional Purpose?

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<td>...the first year I was there we spent a really Herculean year putting through a strategic plan for the university that was fully endorsed by senate and the board. Not much sleep that year, but we did it...The plan doesn't act as a rigid way of confining our activity; it acts as a continual screen. Does it fit? It doesn't fit, you'd better give me a good idea why we're going to put it there. And if it does fit, it gets priority...ultimately it is the president who had to spear-head it to get it through the senate and to get it through the board. I had to put my prestige on the line to get it through. It's not the primary vehicle, but it's a very important one because that's the new academic agenda coming through. Having gotten the new academic agenda coming through, all you can do as president, I believe, is saying what to do and why. The faculty have to buy in to do the how-to-do-it. And who's going to do it. And by when it's going to be done. So the president goes from essentially leading the parade to now standing there and reviving people on. The troops have to take over or it's not going to happen.</td>
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I began by struggling to reduce the mission of the University of ______ to one sentence, because we have a statement of institutional purpose that is seven pages....the mission of the University of ______ is to be an internationally significant research university with graduate, undergraduate, and professional programs of excellent quality. Since then, I've moved to have that statement incorporated, the same sentence, incorporated into...to be the first sentence of the statement of institutional purpose. I've moved amendments to our policy that governs the appointment of all members of the teaching staff to say all appointments should be governed by this purpose. And I've launched an exercise this summer which will take its principle life this fall under the direction of the provost to ask how can we increase the focus and enhance the quality of our academic programs consistent with this mission. And how can we rethink our enrolment strategy so as to make it more congruent with this mission. And how can we change the administration of our compensation for faculty on a merit driven basis so as to more clearly reinforce this mission.

There are thousands of things we could do, but we have to choose to do some things and not all things.
**Question 2. What do you think are the key things that Canadian universities should be doing that they are not doing right now?**

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<td>...perhaps the universities generally are trying to be all things to all people...we need to be more sharply differentiated among ourselves...in that sense become a little more segmented and market segmented really...I think there are a group of universities in Canada that are trying to ape Toronto and Queen's and the traditional model of the big university...I think there's a dilution, a fairly serious dilution, of the quality of graduate education in a number of universities, not just in Ontario but more generally...we've, in the great Canadian way, spread ourselves very thin and we don't have real centers of excellence in a number of highly skilled graduate areas.</td>
<td>I don't even know what it’s doing now, it’s doing so many different things...I'm constantly finding out things that are being done....Generically I think that most things that we can imagine doing are being done; whether they're being done with sufficient intensity, quality, and breadth or whatever... ...it is stimulating; no one imagines that we've got it [30 year planning exercise] right but what we have committed to is a continual revisiting of the exercise. The important thing, however, is that opportunities are few and far between and that unless you have that general sense of what you'd like to be when you grow up, you will not be in a position to seize those opportunities.</td>
<td>We should be going way out of our way, and much further than we have gone in the direction of partnerships with other organizations. We should be actively pursuing the accountability thrust. To me it's a great embarrassment that universities are being dragged kicking and screaming into the world of sharing with people what they're all about. I think that's disgraceful....We've just been so concerned about autonomy that we've viewed anything that others thought was good as being a threat to it. And that includes accountability. It's not a threat to it. If we had taken the leadership, our autonomy would be a lot safer than it now is.</td>
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<td>I'm not a great fan of differentiation in the sense in which it is usually used. Which is as a proxy for tiering, creating a hierarchy. Nor do I believe that differentiation will result in great economies, which many of its proponents believe. I do believe that there's room for highly distinctive institutions....I believe that in certain kinds of specialties it's extraordinarily silly to multiply nuclear reactors or whatever, but that an awful lot of activity should be common to all universities....I think there are a range of things that people expect of us and that we should provide.</td>
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<td>I think all the institution can do is encourage that [individual's speaking to current issues of importance] and notice it, commend it when it happens, which is something that I try to do; when I see my guys on the Journal or Canada A.M. or in the Globe, the next opportunity I have, I let them know that I saw it and that I think it's a good thing for them to be doing, even though I may not agree with the position that they're taking....it is difficult for me to see that the institution as an institution should be doing things, but those in it should be playing a major role...we are supposed to be the home of the intellectual leadership in the country and people should be expressing well researched, rational views on subjects of importance to the country publicly.</td>
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We should be going way out of our way, and much further than we have gone in the direction of partnerships with other organizations. We should be actively pursuing the accountability thrust. To me it's a great embarrassment that universities are being dragged kicking and screaming into the world of sharing with people what they're all about. I think that's disgraceful... We've just been so concerned about autonomy that we've viewed anything that others thought was good as being a threat to it. And that includes accountability. It's not a threat to it. If we had taken the leadership, our autonomy would be a lot safer than it now is.

I think all the institution can do is encourage that [individual's speaking to current issues of importance] and notice it, commend it when it happens, which is something that I try to do; when I see my guys on the Journal or Canada A.M. or in the Globe, the next opportunity I have, let them know that I saw it and that I think it's a good thing to be doing, even though I may not agree with the position that they're taking...it is difficult for me to see that the institution as an institution should be doing things, but those in it should be playing a major role...we are supposed to be the home of the intellectual leadership in the country and people should be expressing well researched, rational views on subjects of importance to the country publicly.

In Canada we have every institution trying to do everything and we're all going broke. We have community colleges who want to run research projects, we have faculty being asked to teach remedial English at research universities. This whole situation is out of control. Decisions have got to be made and that's why there's no single paradigm shift. The whole thing in my view has to be looked at.

...we're being pushed to access, and quality is deteriorating. I'm not saying we're doing a rotten job...My question is "where do you draw the line in the 1990s?"

I think every institution needs its own mission and mandate and strategic plan. It's a set of goals and objectives with a ten year horizon...I really think it's a question of mission, mandate, avoiding duplication, identifying your strengths, being honest about your weaknesses. And I have a very quick phrase for that, "is it good?" If the answer is "yes" fine and if the answer is "no," then "is it necessary?" And if the answer to necessary is "yes," we'd better do something about it. The next question is, "do we do it ourselves, or do we do it in partnership with somebody else who is good at it?" And if the answer is "no, it's not necessary," get rid of it--why are we doing it anyway? So you have to make very hard corporate decisions.

...in North American universities, the explosion in knowledge and the rate of expansion of possible areas of endeavor for the university is far greater than any imaginable increase in resources. And so any university that wishes to improve quality over the next two decades must increase focus. Over a period of budget reductions and nil or insubstantial budget additions, increasing focus will be a common ground, a common strategy for those universities that will improve quality, because the only way to improve quality will be to increase focus, in my view.

The central agenda is confronting people with focusing and then second, asking within the resources available in different organizational units, how can they be drawn upon across boundaries so as to get excellent interdisciplinary programs and cross-boundary benefits. Those are the two issues: focus and cross-boundary work, both of which dominate in my view, closing units.

...the public policy of higher education in Canada for twenty years has been a process of homogenization. And it's clearly...a perverse policy...we've seen that twenty years of increased regulation in a world that has come to reject socialism, reject regulation....what we need to do is realign public policy towards higher education in Canada....we need to change the way we think about our industry.
II. Personal Motivation, Institutional Motivation, and Expectations of Self and Employer (Questions 3-5)

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<tr>
<th>Question 3. What expectations, desires, and other factors led you to seek and to accept the presidency of your current institution?</th>
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<td>I was at ______ for two years in the '60s and they were very formative years for me. It was my first job...So I always had a very fond feeling for ______...I was doing a lot of really interesting things; I was having a lot of fun. And some people from ______ phoned and said they wanted to put my name up and would I be agreeable and I said, &quot;Oh sure&quot;...I didn't honestly have that sense of wanting to be a president. I had a good feeling about ______. I thought I was very low in the pecking order even to be a serious candidate because I was an associate professor and I was an associate dean and I'm not a sparkling academic; I've done a lot of solid work and published a fair amount but I'm not the cutting edge in my field....I quite enjoy the tension between administration and teaching and research....So, to a considerable degree it was a bit of a lark....I was amazed when I was told I was on a short list and that they wanted to interview me....I was totally amazed; absolutely amazed....Except for my love of ______ and my belief that they were doing a lot of good things, there was no plan in it whatsoever. [on contract renewal]...in spite of having been through a strike, I feel that there's an enormous reservoir of good will in the place and I still believe profoundly in what they're doing and think I can contribute a bit more...</td>
<td>Essentially I've done one job all my life in slightly different roles....for myself a shifting in activity is very important. I guess from my own perspective too I wanted that shift to be in aid of a cause I could believe in and I do believe in universities....again from a personal point of view, I wanted it to be something which would permit me to return to my academic career. I hope that's still possible. Time will tell. I certainly intend to try....In terms of what the job had to offer...I am a romantic about it....I said to myself, &quot;if someone stopped you in the street and said here is a billion dollars, you have five years to spend it in order to enlighten the lives of people and develop knowledge for the benefit of the world, then who would say no?&quot; You'd be crazy. So I didn't say no; I said yes because those are the things I believe in.</td>
<td>I guess I've always been interested in leadership. The thing I like most about the opportunities I've had for leadership is the opportunity to help a career develop....As you move up through the hierarchy, you are removed from individuals, but you still have an opportunity to do that with groups and every once in a while you come across an individual who by virtue of something you were able to do with that person's group, found a chance....And I think I have an opportunity to make that happen; that's certainly what I get my greatest joy out of. So, I guess, I got into the presidency because increasingly large domains became available for me to cause that to happen in some ways....I guess it helped that my father was a university president. But by the time he became a president, I was already so far along that track that I couldn't get off anyway.</td>
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"A," I didn't seek it; I was nominated. I got a phone call and I was probably as surprised as anybody else I got the phone call. Secondly, why did I let my name go forward? Because in the position I was at the time, I felt just about every problem in this county...having to do with science and technology policy and economic and environmental issues, education issues, came down to two words: "education" and "attitudes"....I am not a professional educator; this is not something I ever saw myself doing. I did see myself as a change agent, as a scientist who's been in the research laboratory for thirty years it's very difficult not to live with change and uncertainty continuously. And so with a motivation of strictly an idealist who believed universities were wonderful places, too precious to be bashed by society, and too precious and precious on the inside not to be changed, that maybe I could do something.

I came into academic life by fluke....all along there was another side of my life, which is what I consider myself particularly good at, relatively, is organizing things, making things happen, creating contexts, environments, and organizations....it was always my colleagues' sense of me and my sense of myself that my comparative advantage lay in making things happen for my colleagues rather than simply doing my own work....so it was a natural extension of that to see if those skills could translate to a broader arena and various people started to ask me if I would be a candidate to be president of the university because I was a relatively successful dean. I had no desire to do it anywhere else...all my life I had been in one way or another connected with this university. I have a deep love affair with the institution...

I knew if I could even fractionally enhance the environment of this institution and lead it effectively it would satisfy every instinct I had for public policy, every instinct I had for any desire about being a manager/entrepreneur/administrator, and it left me in the heart of the institution which is, outside of my family, by far the most important thing in my life...it was kind of a perfect merger of personal and professional concerns playing to my comparative advantage.

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**Synoptic Table 3., p. 229**

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Question 4. What do you think were the most important factors that led to your selection as president of your current university?

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<td>...they [the board] came to me and said, you know, &quot;you've had a very, very positive review. In fact, a really positive review. We'd very much like you to consider staying and taking another term....I think one other element. _______ has devoured each of its presidents in the second term. They're very anxious to see if we can establish a two term presidency. I think I don't want to beat around the bush on that one. They feel quite strongly as a board that that's important and they clearly believe that I have a chance to do that....I think the board really wanted continuity. I think that was very important. And I think that the board has had a very, very positive view of what I have been able to achieve. I stepped into a fairly major mess. My predecessor and the board had created quite a mess and I had to deal with it.</td>
<td>It's interesting; they didn't lay out an agenda for me. I knew that the university had problems. I am sure that they wanted those problems addressed. I'm sure we discussed them. And I've applied myself fairly diligently to addressing those problems. Certainly there wasn't much of a definition of how they would be addressed or even in detail of what they were or a strategy or anything like that. The university had reputational problems, a shortage of space, a degree of fractiousness. They didn't tell me that, I knew that as a citizen of the university...financial problems. And there was a kind of tacit understanding that I would address those....But no one ever sat me down and said here is your mandate. Interestingly I just received some documentation a few months ago from Trent which was in the process of reappointing its president. And he had an initial mandate for his first term and a specific mandate for his renewed term. It's not a bad idea but it's not something that we do. Now I suspect that of the ten or a dozen people on the search committee, each of them had different expectations; there was no collective expression of &quot;this is what we want done.&quot; They may have said that to each other, but they never said it to me....I pretty quickly shaped up an agenda and I pursued it fairly rigorously.</td>
<td>...they [the board] wanted a president who was a much more public person, who liked working outside, who liked building linkages, who was engaged with the affairs of the external community in various civic leadership activities. Because I had been, I guess that was confirmed in these discussions they had, and I'm quite certain that's the primary reason probably that I was chosen over some other well qualified people. I, for example, chaired the United Way campaign in _______ when I was president of the University of _______. That's the kind of person I am. That's the way I like to do the job. As I said, I like to deal with faculty members; I like to see what they're up to and enjoy their successes. And I like to be downtown and I like to be overseas....they [the board] sent a delegation from the search committee, the chairman of the board and one of the faculty member on the search committee. And they went to _______. I don't whether I was in town or out of town, I never knew they were there, and they talked to the mayor and they talked to some business people and they went into the cafeteria on campus and talked to people there to try to find out if I was the kind of person they wanted for this outward reaching sort of stuff.</td>
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President C  

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President D  

I have been told explicitly by the board that I was brought here with a mandate for change. What I discovered at ______ I wasn't told at all by the board, I have discovered since I got there....Let me put it this way, I am the first person from the outside to come in in a senior position in a hundred and three years. Some institutions take to outsiders very happily, they're used to it. ______'s an institution that when an outsider arrives they say, "what was wrong with the insider?"....it's very much the corner from away. You know, it's a wonderful university, it really is, but it's been quite a cultural experience.

President E  

Being youthful, vigorous, articulate on behalf of the university, that I would gain greater attention for the university and its particular needs and mission. That I could represent it in a wide array of arenas. That I would be able to attract resources to it. And that I would bring a strongly academic intellectual focus to the institution but would do so in creative ways, that is the nature of my deanship had been to rethink the curriculum, the appointments, every aspect of the academic foundations of the school....That, in microcosm was what the university wanted at a macro level, so I think that what the search committee was expecting from me was that I could do at the university level, that at the university level I would bring the same general direction of academic focus to international significance and the making it happen...that I would try to do at the university level what I did at the ______ school.
Question 5. Given your experience as president:

5.1. Were the expectations of those who appointed you realistic?

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<td>I think the university's expectations, the university community's expectations were probably too high. Although I think it's the view among my peers that I've probably had the longest honeymoon of any new president in ...My honeymoon really went on for over three and a half years until we headed into the strike. So well past three and a half years. Where I did a lot, a lot of things got done that appeared to be the result of what I did. They weren't, obviously....A lot of good things happened at ...So, I think that the university's expectations were very high, but I think we achieved quite a bit.</td>
<td>...it [the presidential interview] tended to be, &quot;what would you do if you were president?&quot; Which is standard interview technique and I gave them what I would do and I suppose they like it because they appointed me president.</td>
<td>I get an annual review by the board officers and the feedback I get has been, &quot;yes, that this is just what they wanted,&quot; that I am, in fact, doing those things...they hoped would happen.</td>
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<td>I get an annual review by the board officers and the feedback I get has been, &quot;yes, that this is just what they wanted,&quot; that I am, in fact, doing those things...they hoped would happen.</td>
<td>No. The people who appointed me were realistic in knowing I would try and do what I would try and do, but I don't think they knew what had to be done. Because I think it's very difficult for anyone except the president, maybe the provost, to actually know everything. You don't get the overview to do that. And I can even see a difference between myself and the provost, who is an absolutely first class person, but I mean I just see a broader overview; I have to.</td>
<td>It turns out it's far harder to do it [repeat previous success within a specialized faculty] at the university level; it's an extraordinary...it's order of magnitude is different...just [a] far greater degree of diversity in the university which makes it correspondingly that much tougher to bring focus to the institution as a whole....because of the scale of the institution you have to accomplish everything through others... [in] this place there is nothing I can do personally, I can only do it through building teams of men and women with shared purpose, with all the real hard work being done by people other than myself. As a result, the pace of change is much restrained by the need to build that consensus, build the culture, build and assemble the team of men and women who can do these things.</td>
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[M.B. Is part of your work, then, educating the board about what can and what can't be done?] You bet.  

[M.B. It's ongoing?] All the time.
5.2. *Were your initial expectations of yourself realistic?*

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| I think I was a little more realistic about what we could achieve. I think symbolically getting a fund raising campaign as far as we have got it at this point is one of the things that has amazed me...I guess my expectation on strengthening ____'s reputation has been, I think, reasonably realistic. I think we have strengthened the reputation of the university in the last four or five years...I think the public perception, certainly the provincial perception of ____'s role in the system is much better than it was before. I think we've achieved that sort of thing....in my installation speech I really talked about sticking to our knitting...I said I think we need to focus on what we already do well and see if we can strengthen that. I don't see us going off on any wild new directions.  
...
we talked some time ago about expectations. I guess I am kind of surprised still, a little bit, that we've been able to do as much as we have done. I think that's very much a function, though, of having a really good group of people to work with. I've been very well supported by my senior colleagues and we've really worked very well as a team. | I think I both undershot and overshot the mark. I undershot it in the sense that I never imagined how demanding it could be. And possibly I overshot it in the sense that I never actually thought we could do a lot of the things it turned out we've done. So I would have to say in both of those senses, they weren't realistic expectations.  
Long days and lots of days. And days which are filled with very different kinds of activities and frequently shifting gears from one situation to the next and it's an enormously complex and demanding job. I don't have any basis for comparisons with anything else, but I certainly can't imagine more intense demands than the ones that I've responded to in the last seven and a half years. | ...my expectations for an opportunity to lead an institution and to really make a difference at it have been exceeded.                                                                                                                                 |


**Synoptic Table 5.2., p. 232**

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<td>„...my expectations for an opportunity to lead an institution and to really make a difference at it have been exceeded.“</td>
<td>No. I was too idealistic, I hoped too much, expected change too fast. The biggest difference was the world I saw was not the world they saw. And when I tried to present it to them in workshop format, after I had been there for three weeks, with some of the best speakers in the country, so that they would see it—not because I told them. I wanted them to find it for themselves. They all thought it was a fantastic, exhilarating, futuristic experience, but they didn't know what it had got to do with us. It is very difficult; very difficult.</td>
<td>I expected the opportunity to wake up every morning knowing if I did my job well, it would be deeply rewarding in the sense that it would make the world a better place. Because this institution is of great importance to the quality of the city, the province, our country. It's been longer and harder than I anticipated it being....This is an argument for why you shouldn't change presidents too often unless you're bringing in someone with incredibly clear vision and great command of the facts in the institution; who is extraordinarily effective in generating change quickly....I think if you look at presidential leadership of higher education, the places where you really see most of the good change now as compared to earlier eras, come from relatively experienced presidents with enough time to shape the institution and give it direction. So I see Derek Bok for twenty years at Harvard,.....in fact, I think what you see is you can't have institutions of this size jerking around. You've got to set a direction, then assemble your forces, then assemble the ideas, then create a culture, and drive it ahead.</td>
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### III. The Work of the Presidency, Successes, and Failures (Questions 6-9)

#### Question 6. What do you feel are the most important things that you do as president of your university both on and off campus?

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<td><strong>make a point of trying to know as many people as possible.</strong> I think I can introduce you to 90% of our faculty by first name and 50% of our staff by first name. So, I think that's very important. The next thing that I thought was extremely important was to provide visibility for the university in the community. And again my predecessor is a very shy man, was not evident in ______. And I thought it was extraordinarily important because although we talk about ourselves and we are a national university, we really depend upon ______. It's a very important thing for us and the community isordinately proud of the university, but was seen as quite remote. So I joined all the clubs and spoke and I did. And I am very active in the community. I think it's extremely important to do that in a small town... It sounds like I have a preoccupation on the external and I don't...we are among the smallest universities in Ontario. We are very vulnerable. You know, we could be snipped out just like that and nobody would even notice. So I thought it was quite important to become very active in the [Council of Ontario Universities]...I thought it was important, not for me, but for ______ to get us into people's consciousness more than we had been in the past.</td>
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<td>While off campus, first of all, advocacy, I would call it, of the interests of universities in general and of ______ in particular. For various reasons I haven't engaged in a fundraising campaign. I would have been engaged in one now had the recession not set in. We were all geared up to go, but it would have been stupid to do, so we didn't. But I do a lot of advocacy and as any number of people have pointed out, half a percentage point in our government grant, which rolls on forever, is so much more important than the largest private donation we could ever anticipate. So from that point of view advocacy, in terms of policy change, is about the most important thing that I can do outside the university.</td>
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<td>Case in point: program shaping as the result of an introduction I made or a meeting I convened or some idea I had, because I'm in a position all presidents are—to see potential connections in the interests of their institution that others can't. Because they simply by definition can't have the same breadth of vision. They're not paid to spend all of their time nurturing that breadth of vision. They have other things they have to do. I'm paid to have it and so I am able to see different connections both within the university as well as between the university and outside.</td>
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How as president of your university both on and off campus?

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<td>On campus, keep smiling to make everybody believe that it's possible.....If the senior executive does not look as though he or she believes that it can be done that malaise will come. So you've got to believe and show it. Secondly, by being totally new and from the outside, I had so much to learn. This allowed me to...ask questions whereas somebody maybe from the inside if they'd asked those questions immediately they would have been stalled. Now, of course, I'm stalled too. The other important role of the president...you have to become utterly familiar with the culture....you should know more about your institution than anybody else on campus...otherwise you're delegating into a vacuum....So the president has to smile and lead and believe. The president has to bring about change simply by asking questions and probing all the time. To continually create an expectation of change with imaginative responses to it. I think the president also has to know the culture intimately, because all of this is about human nature, that's what it comes down to, you're an anthropologist. A real time anthropologist. And the fifth thing would be the president has to be fiscally prudent....otherwise you will never get away from the older '60s and '70s expansionist views when everybody thinks that the problems will be solved by more money.</td>
<td>...managing the institution to a higher level of quality within its mission and gaining greater acceptance of the distinctiveness of that mission both on campus and in our relationship with both the private and public sectors. That's the heart of the mission: focus, focus, focus. Manage quality to a higher level. And we can only manage what we can measure. So you've got to measure the quality and then you've got to manage it to a higher level...and we can only do that in the modern era by increasing the focus, by making more and more choices, you increase the focus so you've got enough resources to be really internationally significant at a high level of quality....That's my job in a nutshell and then trying to assemble the public and private sector support to recognize, reinforce, and then promote that mission.</td>
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Question 7. When you want to assess how well you are doing as president:

7.1. How do you go about doing it?
7.2. Where do you look and to whom do you talk?
7.3. What key factors do you consider?
7.4. What measures of assessment do you use?

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<td>I think mainly by bouncing it off two or three of the other presidents that I've gotten to know extremely well. And by one friend who isn't a president but who is very much involved in the life of another university, but who has had a lot of experience at a very senior level. I really have had three presidents that I spend a lot of time with....And as I say, I have one other who is a professor at the U. of T. actually, who I talk to endlessly about these things because he's had a lot of experience. But those would be the four people who I try to bounce myself off.....I'm probably more prone to do that than some of the other presidents, I think because I, mainly I was never a dean, I was never a department chair, I never had any real responsibilities, so all of a sudden I am in a position of responsibility and I'm not insecure, but I don't have — virtually all of them were deans or vice-presidents academic or something and I don't have any of that background — and so I need that reassurance. That's why I bounce ideas off them as much as anything.</td>
<td>Well I think I am probably the best informed and the sternest critic of my performance. I tend to consult myself, two or three of my closest associates...vice-presidents I think can be depended upon to give me and themselves a decent assessment of what we're doing. Underneath there are all kinds of inputs, things that faculty members and students, board members, and newspapers, and so on say. Few of them have the same information that I have and many of them have very particular perspectives and interests that ought to shape their critique. I listen to them. And they are often helpful and important. But overall, I think I depend more upon my own judgement and the views of maybe two or three people. [M.B. Self-deception is not a problem?] It's an enormous problem.</td>
<td>I do not go out and specifically look for feedback except for my annual thing with the board officers. I believe I can tell. I believe I can tell when I go into a reception downtown how the leaders in the community are feeling about _______ and about me in particular just by interactions. I mean people either come over to talk to you and put a hand around you or they go back to another conversation when they see you. And it's the same thing internally; you walk into the faculty club and there's either warmth there or there's an interest in avoiding getting engaged in conversation with the president. So that's probably the best feel for it that I get and I try to go out when I can to pick up that feel. I do carry a lot that is not sharable, but, no, I don't feel alone. That doesn't cause me to feel alone. I still have lots of people....I can always talk with my wife about this stuff if I want to, but I don't particularly want to; when I go home I like to talk about country music or football or something.</td>
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7.3. What key factors do you consider?
7.4. What measures of assessment do you use for each?

President C

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President D

I take feedback from my own senior officers. I take feedback from the facial expressions of the audience you happen to be speaking to. I take feedback from certain members of the board who I respect enormously, particularly the chair of the board. And I take feedback from individuals, faculty who happen to be in the position of chairing a committee or in charge of a particular project. But you won't get good feedback unless there's a sense of trust, you never do. So you have to know the difference between honest feedback and between hearing just what another fantastic occasion that was.

Oh students; add students to that list, of course I spend time talking to students, absolutely. I teach them; I spend time monthly with the student's union people....I go into the classroom and they see me there. But I also have formal meetings with the students. We see each other quite a lot actually. And I certainly get feedback from them.

...on my epitaph it will be written, "she tried to make a change; you judge".... I have no problem with accountability. I can be accountable. But I reject, and I think many of my colleagues do to, reject being accountable on somebody else's toes. I mean, if its a bad policy, why should I be judged accountable under a bad policy?

President E

I've decided if you want to be a really effective agent of change, popularity and press clippings are probably a pretty poor measure of whether you're doing a good job. So I now have decided to judge myself largely myself. This may sound maniacal to you, but I've decided that I was chosen to do this job for a reason. And that on balance I am probably better at it than the available alternatives at the time, and so I better impose my judgements, using that my style which is a highly consultative, highly open—listen, listen, listen—but I'd better ask my conscience every morning "am I doing a good job?" "Am I doing the right thing?" And rely on that test more than any other test.

That said, I have a chairman, I have a governing council, I have twenty-six deans and principals, I have literally hundreds of friends on this campus. I meet once a month around this table with twelve randomly selected faculty members and I ask each of them "how's the university doing and what should I be doing about it?" And that's an indirect form of feedback.
**Question 8. What do you regard as your most important successes?**

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<td>There's one thing that I have done and it really came out of a chance encounter with some faculty fairly early on, people new to ______ that I didn't know when I got there. And they came to me and they said they really believed that ______ could do something very strong in the ______ area. [the program became a hallmark program of the institution] I think the greatest success probably would be the fund raising campaign. I think that's been very, very important for us and the greatly strengthened emphasis on the ______ program [referred to immediately above]. I think those have been very positive things....I guess the other broad thing is just the visibility of ______; I think I have done quite a bit to get ______ more visible and I think that's important.</td>
<td>I think by and large, in terms of our formal labor relations...I think we've had a modestly successful policy...we took a highly conflicted university and we've moved to what I would regard as acceptable levels of conflict. ...academic planning....Something I have taken very, very seriously, something that I have spent a lot of time on. Planning not because I necessarily believe that it is possible to run a command economy, but because planning requires reflection and self criticism and statements of aspiration and all of those things which are energizing. It also throws up good ideas and attracts interesting people....you get a very general sense that you know where you want to get to. Your instincts are informed and there is a coherence about what you're doing... I would say at given moments senate, which is a typical academic talk shop, I've managed to get some to get serious about certain things in certain moments in time. And to a certain extent, isolated people who were being unconstructive. Administrative interventions, but that's episodic.</td>
<td>The kind of thing I talked about earlier, where someone's career has been significantly shaped in a positive direction by virtue directly of something I did. And then as you move up the hierarchy you have collections of that.</td>
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President C

The kind of thing I talked about earlier, where someone's career has been significantly shaped in a positive direction by virtue directly of something I did. And then as you move up the hierarchy you have collections of that.

President D

I looked through the material we did at the senate and it's really rather impressive over the two years. I was really surprised myself because when you're in the middle of it you don't look at the greater whole...we have really started to reshape some of the academic programs quite nicely. So item one, beginning to see the beginnings of the reshaping take place. Two, we've clarified the academic regulations....Thirdly, pride of place...Whether it's keeping library hours open the right length, keeping the grounds clean; whether it's showing some pride in the achievements and putting reward and recognition in place for the achievements of the faculty and the staff and the students....We've made a huge improvement in our fiscal situation. We went from something like, it's been horrible this year, but we went from a projected eight million dollar deficit, we managed to get the faculty and staff to agree on an across-the-board roll-back in their salaries despite the fact that we had a three year agreement....So these are tangible results; but I've only been there two years and the trouble is you can't answer all these questions on such a short time schedule.

President E

[M.B. So making choices?] Yeah. That's what it's all about.
[see President E's responses to questions 1.3. & 13. for elaboration of choices about what things]
Question 9. What do you regard as areas of failure or disappointment?

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<td>Biggest failures. Well, obviously, having a strike is a pretty major disappointment... That was an incredible disappointment to me that that actually happened. I couldn't believe what was happening on the final night just before they went out. Because I just thought at some point rationality is going to set in here and we're going to be able to solve this problem...</td>
<td>Well, I guess there's one that sort of sits on the cusp, which basically has to do with the quality of relations that people in the university have with each other... is fundamentally a fractious community. I think all universities to some extent tend to be because they are full of opinionated, articulate, principled people. But you know, maybe we have too much of a good thing. A thing in which I have failed is to moderate the pathological manifestations of that. The attempt in a sense to turn the clock back in terms of moderate speech, of reasonably decorous argument, those sorts of things; I'm not looking for economy or consensus, but amongst colleagues particularly it would be nice to think that we could behave well. We don't particularly. We have a very very passive student body, but they are in a radicalized phase at the moment and students will be students, and will express themselves in extreme ways... I don't object to conflict. The thing that I object to is the bizarre and extravagant behavior that sometimes accompanies it. So I would say on that score I've failed. And of course you don't succeed in something like that by preaching, you succeed if you manage somehow to transform the psychic life of the institution.</td>
<td>I guess the disappointments I have are the case where things didn't go well and I don't understand why they didn't go well or what I could do or would do differently if they were to come up again. That's where I feel a real sense of failure. I should be able to learn from my mistakes and be sure that they won't happen again. I had one point at which I had to make a strategic decision in the toughest of all these meetings [meetings about a crisis concerning the university and its reputation], the one with all the faculty, I knew it was going to be tough, I had to make a decision of whether to let the media in or not and I decided, &quot;yes,&quot; that it would probably be worse if I didn't than if I did because they do exit interviews anyway. I still think it was the right decision, but it was a decision that led to the exacerbation of the problem to do the public washing of dirty linen and all that sort of stuff. And I guess it was not a good experience for us, none of us would like to go through that again. But if the same thing were to happen, I don't know what I'd do differently. And that is a sense of failure on my part.</td>
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President C

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President D

The labor negotiations, the labor relations has been quite a surprise for me and a disappointment that it was so bad when I got there...it's ten years history of horrors as I now discover....I'm quite confident that eventually we'll get the labor relations sorted out and that's one of the key objectives of this coming year. The only good thing that I can say is that when things get so bad, everybody agrees we've got to do it a different way. Let's hope. So we've got to a very important position where everybody, the faculty association and the administration agree, that the old way is not the way to do things. And so I'm optimistic that we're going to have a much better process...there is definitely an adversarial root in labor relations there because that's the way they did it in the 70s. And that has to be part of the cultural change. We've got to agree that we don't need to argue to agree.

President E

Oh yeah, I underestimated how difficult it would be for me to get my arms around the place, I underestimated how demanding...how many distractions and demands there would be in the job, I spent too much time on some unproductive issues that I could have delegated to others and too little time on some major issues of overall strategy and direction. I missed some warning signals...I missed some funding problems. All kind of regrets, sure. But nothing that you can't correct and nothing that...you know, you can't undo the harm you do by making mistakes, but you can learn from it and keep your eye on the longer term goal and on the longer term goal, I'm not discouraged at all. But in terms of what I'd change twenty-three months into the game, I'd change a couple of hundred things that I've done. Out of the couple of thousand that I've done, there are a couple of hundred that I'd like to redo, but I'd rather be able to say that I've done two thousand things rather than to have been so cautious to have done only a hundred things and regret only one of them. I'd rather do two thousand and regret two hundred. That's my nature.
IV. Presidential Influence (Question 10)

Question 10. Clark Kerr is associated with the assertion, "Presidents make a difference."

10.1. To what extent do you think that the President does make a difference to your university?

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<td>I think they do in smaller places. I think it's the context that's quite important. And I think that in a smaller place where you can actually personally reach people, you can make a difference. I'm not persuaded that you can stop it from hitting the iceberg. But I think in a smaller place you can. I really do believe that if you can have a personal relationship with a large number of people that you can make a difference because you can share on a personal level what it is you're trying to do and you can hear them and I just don't think that's an opportunity that's available to people in larger institutions in quite the same way. I think that the mystique of leadership in a smaller place in some ways may not be as strong because the person is known to the people in the institution on a more personal basis.... they can see things coming as you start to make a speech because they've had enough experience of you. So, a little bit of that mystique is gone...because they know you and it's a little more personal so I think you can get more things done, but I think you can also have pretty terrific battles as well because it is a little more informal and you have more contact with people.</td>
<td>Well, the first year is zero [on a 1-10 scale measuring difference-making, with 10 indicating maximum effect] and it curves, against a ten it might be seven or eight now. But again it depends how you define &quot;making a difference.&quot; You reconcile the two ends of the spectrum by reducing the differences.</td>
<td>In a sense, they're [presidents are] on the periphery, but that is the way you go about making them [differences] is on the periphery; but if it works well, the difference made can be quite fundamental...you can create both trust and motivation among the troops, as it were. And if the troops do trust the management and one another and are motivated in largely the same direction from an institution wide perspective, then the difference being made is a very fundamental one even though it was just bringing a bunch of people together and sharing stuff. If you go out and fritter around on that periphery making these connections back into your institution and view everything you do outside as a potential connection for your own institution and those things catch, or even if ten percent of them catch, then, if there are enough of them, ten percent is a good slug, you have made a fundamental difference in what is being done in the university and the way that the community is viewing and is cooperating with the university. You can make a difference in these other ways; I believe that very strongly. And when I stop believing it, when I have evidence to the contrary, I'll stop doing the job.</td>
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That's such an interesting question and I don't know if I'm ready yet to reply to it. I certainly do know, having been there for two years now, and I was chairman of an agency before, it takes time before you know if you've really made a difference....I certainly think the president does make a difference. But I also think things are so complex now that you've got to decide what kind of differences you're making....So you have to say what is your initial position and where is it you're trying to go; what are the pathways open to you; and which president can make what kind of difference for what kind of pathway. Because, I think, it very much depends on where it is you're trying to go as to whether Clark Kerr is right or wrong....it seems to me that presidents make a difference if personality and the qualities of leadership and the qualities of scholarship match the pathway that you have to most likely follow to get to the goals. If they mismatch you can be headed towards oblivion.

...with a bit of luck, if the president is fortunate, occasionally you can shape the collective direction.

Absolutely. Absolutely. I think a president who does the job well can make a meaningful difference to the quality of the institution and I think there's lots of evidence of that around. And there's also, I think the good news is a bad president can't do much harm because the institutions, of course, we're in this for the long run, we diffuse authority in the institution: you don't see many cases where a president is able to run an institution down badly through doing a bad job. But you do see cases where people do a good job and it makes a big difference. So it's actually quite an attractive set up.

[M.B. But why don't these defense mechanisms work on the other side too? To stop intelligence as well as stupidity?] Well they do, they do; of course, that's what makes change difficult. But the good news is effective leaders can in fact create a culture and an environment and directions of change that do make a difference.

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10.2. In what matters can and should presidents make a difference?

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<td>I feel very strongly that a university is a community and I use the word “community” a lot in what I say. I know it’s an ideal, but I think we have to maintain the ideal, I think it has to be very visible there.</td>
<td>I think that's very institution specific; circumstance specific. Clearly you can't do everything at once. And there are some problems which are too extreme to ignore and others to intractable to address. And hopefully they're not the same problems. And you try to get the final list of important things and get on with them....So don't try to do everything at once. The very first thing, in temporal order, the first thing you have to do is to learn how to manage yourself. That's the one thing I would say very strongly to anyone who would be a president.</td>
<td>For example, as president, I can make links with corporations, with government departments, or what have you that are related to the work of a particular department or school. And I can put those two parties together...then six or eight months later I can run into someone from that particular school whose excitedly telling me about what she's doing now...as a result of that meeting six months ago. Well, I get a huge kick out of that; I just love to see people working in my institution for the interests of my institution who are turned on because it is synonymous with their own interests.</td>
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<td>As the president, every day I get up and make a statement about choices, tough choices now. Who makes the choices? Either we make the choices or the government will make the choice eventually. So that's part of the paradigm shift. But I'm quite confident we're going to do it. I really am. It's just going to take longer than I thought. You asked me about what's different now, how I would see it differently. It's going to take a lot longer than I thought because the faculty, in particular, are not as far up the learning curve as I thought they were. And one of the symptoms of not being up the learning curve is they're not as Canadian, or as national, or as macroscopic in their thinking and far, far too deep down in their discipline based view. And the only village they interact with is not the global village, it's the other historians or the other physicists.</td>
<td>[see President E's responses to questions 1.3., 2., 4., 6., &amp; 13.]</td>
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### 10.3. Speaking pragmatically, how do presidents go about making a difference in these matters?

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| **Well, I think the most important thing for me is to have an open door and to be accessible to people. I do keep an open door, I do try to keep in touch with as many members of the faculty and staff as I can and with a large number of students....We did something symbolic when I came there. My predecessor had an office on the top floor of the library...and people had said, you know, that he was seen as very remote and that his office symbolized that...it's on the very top corner of the library. And so I kicked the vice-president academic out of his office which was down on the ground floor of the library, right in the middle of the library. It's in a corner but it's clearly in the library. And I was the only member of the administration down there. So I was all there by myself for a year and the door was open and I have one secretary and that's it.** | **...you're living in a political economy of scarcity and the scarcest resources are time and energy. And that's the first thing you have to realize; to make good use of resources and gain credibility. And whatever you do you don't have enough of them. And so you have to comprehend that fact and decide on some principles of allocation. And until you do that I think you will not successfully address the problems of the institution.** | **The management team itself, and particularly at my university, is a very close team, it's a small team. I have reduced the vice-presidencies to just the two classical ones and we have only five deans. We have twenty-two thousand students, but only five deans. All of the professional schools are placed within big faculties and so the directors of the professional schools report to a dean. So I've got a very cohesive management team which is used to having a major role in the development of policy options, in long range planning, in critical management decisions.**

**...the basic shape [of the university] still comes, that is the shape we want to achieve, is determined within the management team concept, which is basically advisory to me. And I have to be convinced, but once I am convinced, then it's my idea to take that shape and persuade others of it, bring them along, communicate it to them.**

I think it's balancing different balls around and knowing when to involve one ball in the deliberation process and it's also communicating with the various groups: the senate, the board, and the management team, and this other group, just keeping them all informed about what each other is doing and where the action is at the moment and why. So there's an important communication responsibility to it.**
**Making a difference in these matters?**

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<td>...if I were to come back in to _______ or any institution from the very beginning, I'd have a different plan coming in because I'd focus the first three months one hundred percent on culture and history, one hundred percent. I would refuse to make any major decisions, but I would also refuse to let them make any major decisions too, because I know that everybody would be trying to ram things through before you would find out. Everybody says focus on the budget. Well, I focused on the budget, I knew the budget inside out within six months, but the trouble is without knowing the history and the culture, it didn't mean a thing to know the budget. Because you understand the history better, because you understand the culture, and because by this time, after two years, I have a much better idea of the strength of the people I have and where the talented ones are. There are talented ones everywhere. But different tasks require different types of talent. And so in the beginning I had to rely on everybody's advice to me because I had nothing to do with _______ before I got there, so I didn't know anybody. Now I've got enough personal experience, I still take advice, but...</td>
<td>[see President E's responses to questions 1.3., 2., 4., 6., &amp; 13.]</td>
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[**Synoptic Table 10.3., p. 239**]
V. Values, Conflict, and Resolution (Questions 11-13)

Question 11. How do your personal values (i.e., enduring beliefs defining that which is worth doing) influence how you establish institutional priorities? (e.g., Do personal values influence how you establish institutional priorities?)

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<td>Well, I think for me there would be a pretty close correlation. I basically put a very high value on openness and directness and on people’s word being their word. And that’s certainly been the way that I’ve tried to do things. I’ve certainly tried to be very open, very direct. And if I say I’m going to do something, I will do it. I certainly can play the political game reasonably well, but I don’t really like it. But I recognize it’s part of the process within an institution.</td>
<td>There are two sets of personal values which one has and you have to bring them as close together as you can manage. There are the personal values you hold in your heart of hearts and there are the personal values which you espouse as a president. And, as I said, you achieve as great a congruence between the two as possible, but having done that I then think it’s very important from my point of view, from the way that I am a president, that we’re understood to stand for certain things and that is the third set of congruencies, which is that the institution’s values should be positively related to yours. That may involve you’re not pushing things your heart of hearts values on certain kinds of issues. If there were too great a divergence between those and institutional norms, you’d feel very uncomfortable and you’d either surrender your own principles or give up your job, I suppose. But to achieve congruence from one level to the next, I think that’s quite important. But the notion of the presidency as a value-free, technocratic exercise is not one that I would espouse. Planning is essentially a political process....catalyzing the thinking and mobilizing people, in that sense political...because it’s not purely technocratic there are values deeply implicated in decisions and processes...</td>
<td>It’s hard to know exactly what you mean by values. I guess one value that I hold very dearly is honesty. I do not lie, I cannot abide lying and that does enter into my approach with people. I believe that trust is absolutely essential in running a university. I believe that trust is based primarily on people believing you and therefore it is important to convince people that you are being honest, that you value honesty, that you want them to be honest and that when you’re together deliberating on something that it’s very important for everybody to feel totally comfortable in being fully honest and not holding stuff back....my guess is that because people do know that it’s appropriate for them to be fully honest with this outside group, this important outside group, that that fact itself will probably be conveyed as a strength. Their comfort in being honest will be conveyed as a strength to the task force, perhaps by them themselves, and so, to that extent, that particular value does influence what I do and I think how the institution presents itself.</td>
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**Synoptic Table 11., p. 240**

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<td>They play a fairly large role. For example: integrity, honesty, quality. I can't abide games playing which is a weakness for a president. You have to put up with a lot of it, but I simply can't. I'm a very straightforward person. [M.B. Do you sometimes have to play them; swallow the value and play?] No, I wait till they're exhausted and then say &quot;can we get on with it?&quot; I won't swallow that value....I am a very pragmatic person. You have to give up your self, I'm afraid. It's a terrible thing to say, but you really do have to give up your self. You are utterly consumed. You somehow have to hold on to your self, a narrow thin cord of it, the rest they eat. But, the values are sometimes the only things that keep you sane.</td>
<td>...it turns out, I think, the most important test of whether or not I am doing a good job is asking myself &quot;am I being true to the basic values and goals I've said that have caused me to be chosen as president and have caused me to want to do the job?&quot; If I'm true to those, and I ask myself honestly if I am being true to those, I think I'm on target. I have a strong belief that not many people are born as geniuses and on the whole, effort is what counts. I'm certainly in the category not born as a genius....I believe in hard work, dedication to purpose, the sum is greater than the parts, I believe deeply in the virtues of education, freedom, free inquiry, of the public interest, these kinds of things. They all are chunks of me. ...people think I'm probably more optimistic than most people. I probably believe more is possible than most people believe is possible. I think I have to have that character. I'm less cynical than almost anybody else on campus.</td>
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**Metaphorical inversion (which is worth doing) influence how you conduct the presidency? (Institutional priorities?)**
Question 12. Have you encountered situations of significance that have raised real or potential value issues and/or concerns among other individuals or groups within the university?

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<td>...certainly the strike did. I guess it didn't in the broad sense that I was quite convinced that, and I haven't changed my view, that the position that we were taking was a fair and reasonable...I think a measure of, for me a measure of how much that bothered me, is I lost twenty pounds in three weeks. I mean I was really knotted-up because I thought that the faculty were holding the students as hostage. I couldn't see it as anything else but that and I thought that that was just despicable. I just could not understand and I cannot understand teachers' strikes. I think that you're in a position of trust and we simply have got to find some other way of dealing with these kinds of issues. I still am persuaded that the head of the union wanted a strike...He wants to co-manage the university...I don't know why everybody else sort of bought into it, I don't understand that to this day, I just don't. But that's my greatest disappointment by far.</td>
<td>I guess one of the tensions I have between value sets really revolves around the university's relationship to the private sector....I think a lot of [people in the private sector] have a view of the university which I don't share. An exploitative view, a dismissive view....And so in dealing with those people, as one has to do politely and positively, I find I do bite my tongue and play them along in terms of what they believe in—hopefully we're not completely at odds. And I find a lot of my own political and personal views having nothing to do with universities are not ones which I advertise and I have sort of taken a holiday from all of my personal crusades.</td>
<td>Well, the deepest one that you always get, I shouldn't generalize like that, the one that I get most frequently is the heart/head conflict. Somebody who you really like and whose family you care deeply about is doing a lousy job and has to be fired. That's a pretty tough decision to make. And those two values, the concern for the good of the institution and the interest in excellent performance on one hand, and the concern for an individual and his or her personal circumstances on the other hand. The head/head conflict arises more often than one would like. But that's the most difficult kind of value conflict that I get. ...the bottom line is the interest of the institution, there's no question about that. That is always the bottom line. It's how you get there that varies depending on the case. How sensitive you are, how gentle you are, how many chances you give a person, how you present the circumstances to the person, whether you do it yourself or delegate it...</td>
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<td>I may place a very high value on doing scientific research, but that doesn't mean to say I'm trying to turn everybody into a scientist. But the fact that I place a high value on research period, on imaginative, enriching, and innovative research makes me very depressed when I see some second rate mediocrity under the guise of research. I would say that primarily happens in labor relations. I find it extraordinary to be arguing about high salaries for work when I see others in society losing their jobs a quarter of a mile away. I have a big problem; I find it almost immoral to be involved in those kinds of discussions. But that's called labor negotiations and bargaining and so I will continue the discussions in good faith, but I must say that was a bit of a problem this Spring.</td>
<td>...if you're going to make a difference in these institutions, you're going to have a fair number of people unhappy. You don't want all of the people unhappy all of the time, but you cannot expect everybody to say that you are doing the right thing....in terms of actual decisions, if everybody agrees with everything then there's something wrong. I don't think many people disagree with my values, indeed I think that to the extent that people are comfortable with my being president there is probably a pretty high congruence with my values and what most in the university believe in. The challenge is to realize them. To give full meaning to them. If there's a tension that would be almost inherent to the nature of the job....as an administrator you have to believe in [an] organization that inevitably impinges on some individuals and gets in some tension with the strongest visions of individual autonomy as opposed to university autonomy, in which I believe deeply....if you ask my colleagues what they think of me, maybe sometimes they think, &quot;ah shit, he interferes a bit too much in our lives, he organizes too much, leave us alone....&quot; So there's a character trait in me that is probably over intrusive and there may be an element of tension there.</td>
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Question 13. Would you tell me how you dealt with one such situation that was important for you?

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<td>Well, I tried to be the president of the whole university. That is what I thought was most important. That I couldn’t be the representative of the board or the administration. It seemed to me that I had to be president of the whole university which involved the students and the staff and the faculty of the university. Therefore it was incredibly important for me to maintain as much contact with those three constituencies as possible....I really went out of my way to protect the staff. I feel very strongly that the university’s sense of community and collegiality doesn’t extend to the staff....I still really find that the intellectual arrogance of a professor and his relationship with a secretary, for example, is just something that I can’t stomach. And I feel very strongly about that. So, I went out of my way to be involved with the staff, to keep them informed about what was going on and I did the same with the students.....to me there really are three parts to that community and that is the faculty, the staff, and the students. And what I am trying to work out in my own mind now is how do you balance those. It’s a sort of an endless balancing game. The faculty represent what the university is about in its profoundest sense. The creation and dissemination of knowledge to use those words. But they can’t do it without students and they can’t do it without the support that they receive from the staff. And so, I think that it’s quite important to me, it’s a value that I hold really high.</td>
<td>...try to balance out the egalitarian and the elite themes of the institution. And they’re both powerful and morally compelling. One might lose out here and another might lose out there, but I think that both have to be respected and you just can’t pretend that you’re not engaged in a balance of various models. One of them would be the redevelopment of our campus....It [the campus] inhibited a sense of community and civility. The practical implication of that for the campus [was]...a terrific shortage of space....And so by articulating this notion that we had to be a community and to feel like a community, we had to be a place where people could feel good about living and working. I was able to launch a master plan exercise and link that to the need to build up the physical assets of the university, and building buildings gives you an opportunity to reconfigure space and create the new aesthetic and do all of those things.... But it started with a commitment to transformation of the campus for spiritual reasons.</td>
<td>You can only do it in a very subtle way. You can’t do it...well once in a while you can help it a bit though a speech....So, you can do a little bit of it through speeches, but you do more of it through personal example, you just behave the way you believe. You’re always in public so people are always going to watch you. And in cases with your immediate lieutenants when they’re struggling with something, they often want some counsel, they often want some advice, sometimes they don’t, but you can, whether they want it or not, you can give it to them. And in that way you can help to develop their administrative abilities in the directions which you think are important and that gets disseminated out.</td>
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President C

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[follow to question 12, top; M.B. Do you confront the practitioners of mediocre research when you see it?] As much as I possibly can without introducing too much shock into the system. Because, you see, if nobody has ever said that before, you can't come and lay blame for something that somebody up 'til now has been rewarded for doing. So you have to be very subtle in your encouragement. Fortunately at ______ there is some pretty good stuff going on, so this is hardly a major problem. The problems are quite different ones.

[follow to question 12, bottom] In that particular case, when the time was right, I simply sent out a letter telling everybody what the facts were and tried to stay absolutely above it. I did not take sides. [M.B. An open letter to the community?] An open letter to the entire community. I also got my negotiating team to do exactly the same thing. Purely the facts. We did not try to answer every single criticism, or complaint, or lie; not that, we just put out the facts and let the community make its own decisions. We also then held open meetings. All the nonsense over the budget, we held open meetings; people could come and ask questions.

President D

[Synoptic Table 13., p. 242]

President E

...to back it [to effect congruence with mission and quality enhancement through choice-making] all up with money, I have put in the budget this year a five-fold increase in the funds available for new initiatives and quality enhancement within the context of this increasingly focused mission. So, I'm trying to put some financial oomph behind it over the next three years by a five-fold increase in budget lines; a three-fold increase next year and a four-fold and five-fold three years from now. So, we then, in terms of the specifics of it, it means challenging people to ask how can we shape the university more specifically to do this. What should we stop doing, and what things are we not doing that we should be doing which could bring us more closely into alignment [with our articulated mission].
VI. Personal Impact of the Presidency (Question 14)

Question 14. What are the most prominent features of the work of president that have had the greatest impact—positive as an administrator and as a person?

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<td>So I had for the first year and a half, two years, I dreamed about the university every night about whatever the problem was or the issue was. I still dream about it probably 60% of the time. It's very consuming. I had no idea how consuming it would be. I think I totally underestimated that. I didn't believe you could just go home at five o'clock or seven o'clock and just put it aside, but I had no idea how consuming the job is. How everything is wrapped up in it. It is very hard to get distance, extremely hard to get distance from it. I really agree with something that David Johnson said a few years ago, &quot;that it's the most interesting job in the world.&quot; I mean, I haven't had a lot of other jobs, but being a university president really is interesting. Because you're working with a lot of extremely bright people. You're doing something that society still values pretty highly. And you're dealing with young people, well less and less as the composition changes, but you're dealing with people who really want to come and learn and learning is probably the most interesting, creative activity there is. So I just find it endlessly interesting because nothing is the same. I think that when it all becomes the same then you've got to move on and do something else.</td>
<td>I would say the number of things that I think I have had to learn in order to do my job has changed me the most.... they run from very mundane things like how to operate a p.c. to quite academic things like efficiently mastering academic disciplines that you're not familiar with so that you can act plausibly as their advocate or so that you can judge their claims for resources...to areas of public policy that I never thought about. Constantly in a very positive sense, a daunting sense even, a learning process. So I think I am, generally speaking, the better for it. Now, that's cost me a lot in terms of my own special expertise which has atrophied. But in terms of breadth, I would say it's been very positive. The demands are considerable on one's personal life and individual career in terms of perhaps depending on the sort of person you are, the sort of family you have, and the sort of future you envisage for yourself. Certainly there's a crisis every minute of every day. Very intrusive.</td>
<td>I guess the constant interaction with people of widely varying kinds is the most prominent element of the presidency and it has had an impact on me... It's very demanding, very demanding. Physically demanding. I average about five and a half hours of sleep a night and most of the rest of the time is working. It's also very demanding psychologically....in a typical day you're going to go through probably a dozen very discrete interactions: meetings, speeches, receptions, openings, firings, asking for money, God knows what it might be. The range is limitless. And so each of those dozen interactions is very, very different—there's no flow from one to the other....and you have to be psychologically up for it you have be enthusiastic, you have to be sensitive, you have to be thoughtful, you have to give it your entire attention, even though you've just finished firing a guy five minutes ago, you've got to get that out of your mind.... when the day is over and you finally get home with your briefcase, you've got to follow through on all the specifics that you agreed to when you fired that guy....So you have to be up, you have to be psychologically on top of things. You have to be happy. You know, I think it's very, very important to be happy and to be seen to be happy; and I am. In fact, I thrive on that very variety and the demands and the challenges that we're talking about.</td>
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### Synoptic Table 14., p. 243

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<td>...you completely lose your private life; sitting in a goldfish bowl. Everybody wants a piece of your time.</td>
<td>...it's very hard on your family and it's a rapidly aging process. Time. I spend less time with my family than I ever have in my life and I regret that. Because this takes a grotesque amount of time....five days a week I do nothing but the job of the institution from when I wake up until I fall asleep....On weekends I try to take a day off if I can, as much as I can....I'll have this much paper work, you know, eight or ten inches of paper work every single day, so I'll probably work six hours on Sunday just at my desk at home, if all goes well I won't come in to this office....So it's about six days a week and it's very long days. None of that's a complaint.</td>
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**VII. Learning and Its Costs (Questions 15-17)**

*Question 15. Has your understanding of the university changed over time and with experience? In what ways?*

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<td>Oh yeah, I think so....I think I was pretty naive about what it was all about. Again, I think that reflects the fact that I had not had very much senior administrative experience....But I guess what I've learned is that that's a very complex business. It seemed [while a faculty member at another university] pretty easy to me [getting financial support for ideas] and every time I had a good idea I went to the dean or maybe once in a while I went to [the president] and we always got the support. I didn't realize how difficult it was to find that support and generate it. Particularly the financial support...it's very hard in a small university. There's no little pockets of money sitting around. ...there is also that huge tension about giving up the right to make a decision and passing it on to the President. And I've seen that as the eternal paradox...I understand it more clearly than I did at the time. On the one hand, the enormous desire to be collegial in the classical sense of collegial and to consult and to involve the community and so on and so forth and on the other hand, we put this person up here and we want him to lead. We want him to tell us the things we've got to do and I've become very conscious of that tension.</td>
<td>I would say understanding that this is a far more complex institution than I ever dreamt. I'd been a dean before, but you see a very limited part of the university. I've certainly come to understand its complexity, its strengths and weaknesses. In a certain way both it's indestructibility and its fragility. Indestructible in the long term and highly fragile in the short term. Those are all questions you don't have much occasion to think about until you're in one of these jobs. ...it [the university] is in fact complex in its particulars as well as in seeing the thing overall.</td>
<td>I think of it differently. It is a different place now than what I originally thought universities were, what they probably were when they started the university is a very alive, vital, disordered, chaotic, complex, vigorous institution. And I thought of it as much more structured and greyer in a way, stable with clear hierarchies and presidents for life. And there were, they were that way....I think that in the last twenty years we've seen a more fundamental destabilizing—and, I think, a fun one, I kind of like it, it makes it more interesting</td>
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<td>My vision of the university, of what it can be, that hasn't changed so much as my strategies for doing it that have changed...I had a lot to learn going up the learning curve. Not about management, but about the culture. In my particular case, and the answer might be different for other people, it was really getting to know the culture and an overview of the whole of the, not only of the institution, but of the community it's in...it's learning that every problem in your office has got this long tendril back into the past...</td>
<td>My experience with academic communities is that on the whole, public impression to the contrary, they welcome change and vitality and direction, as long as those directions are properly thought through, reflect the ambitions of the institution, resonate with the members of the faculty as to appropriate directions for the institution, enjoy the support of the board, and create that kind of consensus. I don't find people lining up to say &quot;no,&quot; I find people standing up and applauding saying &quot;hey, good for you, excellent.&quot;</td>
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<td>I think the universities are far, far more process oriented than I had ever believed. And I think that the process just overtakes the goals. I have never seen so much time wasted on committee meetings.</td>
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<td>I am boggled about how parochial the universities are. It's very curious...Literally provincial, everything, every aspect of that word parochial...People have forgotten how to dream, scholars have forgotten how to think nationally, scholars have forgotten to look at the bigger picture as well as at the tiny picture.</td>
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Question 16. Has experience changed your view of the presidency?

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<td>I was then invited...to speak at a function and I was wondering what to say and in the end, I think this may sound very trite but for me it was something I hadn't understood at all, and I titled my talk &quot;There Are No More Committees.&quot; I discovered that the president is actually expected to lead and that the age-old device of referring it to committee doesn't work at the presidential level where people actually expect you to make a decision and do something. I guess I was pretty naive too. I, like anybody who gets into these jobs, is pretty naive at least for the first year or so... It would go back to something I said earlier and that is that I suddenly realized that I had to take decisions; that in the end people were going to hold me accountable for whether something worked or didn't work, whether we achieved whatever it was. And I think the university community is so sheltered that you don't realize that. If you're a member of faculty even in a reasonably senior position there's always another committee, there's always somewhere else to go. More than anything I think that came home to me.</td>
<td>...you do, therefore begin to understand as you move into a problem that seems simple that often it is the way it is because it's complicated, even though it looks simple it's not that way. I certainly have done a lot of things that I never dreamt of doing, never though I'd be doing. I feel if my heart were in it I could build and run a large corporation...My heart isn't in it. But I have a lot of the skills required. Certainly a lot of the people I see running corporate and private organizations, I reckon I could do a better job than some. It's one thing to deal with something at an intellectual level, it's another to convert it into operational behavior.</td>
<td>...my job has become a lot more complex and a lot busier. And in some ways a lot more fun, because it's more challenging; it's new, it's stuff that hasn't been done before and I'm not ready to retire yet. I suppose originally I thought that presidents could cause things to happen in a more direct and simple way than I now know they can...The way to get things done is to go and chat with a professor in the business school that you think might have some potential interest in it, tell him that there is an opportunity there and then walk away. And if it's going to catch it will bubble up through the dean to the vice-president and it will get done and be owned by the person who is going to deliver it. You cannot lay stuff on people. And so, I guess that I had thought that it was a little more possible to do that then it really is.</td>
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I suppose originally I thought that presidents could cause things to happen in a more direct and simple way than I now know they can....The way to get things done is to go and chat with a professor in the business school that you think might have some potential interest in it, talk to him about it, tell him that there is an opportunity there and then walk away. And if it's going to catch it will bubble up through the dean to the vice-president and it will get done and be owned by the person who is going to deliver it. You cannot lay stuff on people. And so, I guess that I had thought that it was a little more possible to do that then it really is.

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...most people on campus treat the president like a politician....that was maybe my big, huge surprise....I mean, talk about naive; I'm a scholar and I expected to be treated like a scholar and a researcher, but they don't. Anyone in administration is seen like a politician, the president in particular. And after a while all these strange things that happen and you begin to realize that's because they think you are....people expect everything you do to have a political component. So if I get in a limousine that's considered political. If one of my deans gets in a limousine, that's considered convenient. It's very interesting...

I had no idea that my hands were going to be so tied by government. There are all sorts of things I know we could do [if they weren't].

---

...there are a lot of vested interests in the status quo. If you believe the status quo has got to change, as I do, you can't expect applause from everybody. This is not a job for people who need applause. That's one of the lessons I've learned. Being president of a university it's virtually inevitable that you will retire far less popular than the day you took the job....only a decade or so later will a fair assessment come of whether or not you've done a good job.
Question 17. Has your work as a university president changed you? In what ways?

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<th>President A</th>
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<td>Oh, it's enormously widened my horizons. A whole range of people that I never would have met, friends that I've made, things that I've got myself into that I never imagined in a million years that I would have...I had been leading a pretty sheltered life. I had nothing to do with the business community. My father was a businessman but I was really going to be an academic and so that whole range of things. And the whole range of being a leader in a smaller community. That is a whole new experience for me. In a smaller town, I am a pretty large shot. I had no sense of that at all. I had just assumed that...I hadn't thought about it, but we arrive in ______ and you get invited everywhere and you're supposed to be involved in everything and you're important and ______ is on page three of the local newspaper six days a week. You're there all the time. I'm being interviewed all the time on television and radio...It has certainly changed our [his and his family's] personal lives. There's no question about that. We either collapse and do nothing—vege. Or we're involved in something. And that's made a big difference, a very big difference. And she's been really, really supportive. We only have one son and he's sixteen and he's actually at boarding school and I think that's probably just as well for him.</td>
<td>I'm older. More tired. Learning new things and getting further away from your stock in trade. Although in a peculiar way you do find that your behavior as president is constantly drawing on whatever you've brought to the job. And people bring very different things. You find a way to use those things. I suspect often mysterious insights from your academic work or whatever help you to understand situations. I just had a proportion of it in my academic interests.....it's a bit different than if I had been a microbiologist or something. But I am sure microbiologists would have ways of making use of microbiology to study organizations and categorizing the things that go on in them. Just comprehending the complexity demands of you a series of intellectual skills that I didn't have. Understanding that every problem has multiple implications....So, to me, as you experience situations and learn to deal with complexity, it becomes kind of a moveable feast. You take it from one problem and apply it in another problem. That's part of the learning process that I've experienced.</td>
<td>...certainly it has. I know an immense amount more than I would have known had I not been a president. I know a lot more people. I know a lot more about people, individually and generally. I know more about myself, I know more about what I am capable of. I know that I can push myself further than I thought beforehand, and that's nice to find that out, that when you're tired and when a real tough thing is about to pop-up on your agenda, that you can find resources to deal with it, that's nice to learn. I think I not only know a lot more, I appreciate a lot more. And the reason for knowing more and appreciating more is that you're simply exposed to more. And so you become a more knowledgable person. I think it's toughened me. Basically I think I'm a pretty sensitive person and I've had to develop a very thick skin because you're everybody's target, you have to be. And the major challenge becomes not losing your sensitivity under those circumstances, not just hardening yourself to other people and their concerns. That's a tough challenge because you do need a thick skin, but you still need to feel.</td>
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<th>President E</th>
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| Working til two in the morning about six days a week and starting breakfast meetings at seven thirty...It is literally like that. The first year it was like that, this year it's got slightly better mostly because I think everyone is so exhausted over the negotiating....An ordeal by fire, yes, but it's been good. It's going to be a good summer this summer because we can all look back and say, "hey we did it."

I've developed the stamina of an ox. I think it's made me far broader, given me a far broader understanding of human nature than I ever expected. Well indeed I had run things before, I have never had twenty-five thousand people all of whom had a different concern about once an hour. And therefore I think my skills on the personnel side have probably been the ones stretched in ways I never could have imagined. I have to speak to dozens of groups a month. I have to speak to little old ladies who want to know what Japan's going to do to Canada....all the way through to talking to four hundred or five hundred senior business leaders of the country to explain to them why tenure is something which is important and academic freedom should not be confused with mediocre arguments for job security....I think it's given me a healthy dose of cynicism which I didn't have before and which I don't want to keep.

Yeah, I've become...there's another element here [President E discusses a critical medical problem suffered by his son]...I sleep at the hospital...most nights for the last six months....I go to the hospital and I work at the hospital until late at night and then I'm up with him a lot in the night....this has made me a lot tougher. It's made me a better person. My priorities are a little clearer than they were before. And it's made me less, less sympathetic to what I view as trivial hardships, and trivial problems, and trivial complaints that people have. And it causes me to go a little faster and a little harder and push a little harder at the edge when I now have a deeper understanding of what really is touch. After watching what my son goes through, I'm less sympathetic to people whining and complaining about trivial matters and I'm more likely to confront them now. It's also caused me to be more focused with the use of my time, because I have less of it I have to make more choices.

In terms of how the job has changed my view, I guess the point about popularity, applause, a clearer appreciation of that as a result of the job and coming to understand that nothing in the university can get applause from all sides and therefore don't look for it, cause you won't do anything, you'll be neutral all the time.
VIII. Summary Question (Question 18)

Question 18. If someone you know and respect were to come to you to seek your advice on the advisability of accepting a university presidency in an institution comparable to your own, what advice would you give?

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<td>I would say it is an enormously enriching experience because it allows you to see a university in a way you would never see it as a regular member of faculty and it just simply opens up a whole range of things....you learn a lot more about people and how you deal with people both positively and negatively....I feel that I'm a much more tolerant person than I was five years ago. I've learned a lot about a lot of things that I just wouldn't have learned about before. Because I think universities are so important, that higher education is so important, I would be enormously enthusiastic. The negatives, I would say, forget about continuing your scholarly life. I think if that's important to you, you'd better not take the job....I think if you really love teaching too, you've got to recognize that you're probably going to be pretty far away from it. I think that the other element is you should recognize what it is going to do to your spouse, because it's going to change your personal life. I think you've got to have a lot of energy. I think you've got to be very outgoing. I think the reflective scholar president; it won't work in the '90s....I think the other is endless patience....and a willingness to listen....And to avoid the temptation of the glib reply....And never lose your cool.</td>
<td>I would never say to people &quot;this is a horrible job don't go near it with a ten foot pole, never.&quot; Just be realistic and know yourself and it isn't everybody's job and not every presidency would provide equal satisfaction. It is likely to be very different in different situations. But even in awful times, it's a pretty good job.</td>
<td>...you're not saying, &quot;This is the way it will be,&quot; and have that stick and have it happen. You can't do that, it won't happen; we all know that. So then the challenge is, do you find other ways to make the things happen or do you say, &quot;It can't happen, so my job is just to keep the dogs apart and enough money on the table to meet the payroll.&quot; To me that would be the most unpleasant job you could imagine, and, fortunately, you don't have to do that in a university. ...it's challenging, it's demanding, it's tiring, but I don't consider it to be stressful in the sense that there's more stress than I am comfortable with; there's just enough to make it fun. And the two main reasons for that are one...that you can engage your spouse in it, that she can become engaged in it. My wife spends about a third of her time on the presidency and she builds her own networks in the community....She picks and chooses the things she does, but always knowing the things she picks and chooses will be helpful to our job. So, therefore, that potential source of stress is removed....[and second] Once you get to the top of an organization....You know, if you don't like something, you're able to do something about it.</td>
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I would try to find out what that person was really thinking the job was because I know that there's such a difference between what I thought it was and what it turned out to be. So I would really try to focus on the expectations. I think it's a standard joke and it's a well worn joke that presidents can't do anything. But I think, as I've tried to tell you, I think presidents can do some things, but some things they can't do. And it's very important to work out what the expectations are. If there are too many on "the things you can't do" side, I think a little gentle warning might be helpful.... I would tell this mythological person to think hard about it, to realize that in maybe five or ten years you could really make a difference; but that you can only make a difference in certain things. You have to run faster than they can and then you have to know where to go. Because there comes a time when "a" each person, you've spent all the currency you've got and it's time for someone else to come in. And these days for a C.E.O. the most important, the second most important decision, is to know when to go, and not to hang around....But you can get things done, even in five years.

...you have to pull people out of their discipline troughs, get them to take a greater interest in what is going on elsewhere in the university.

[This question was not asked of President E as our interview was ended by an unanticipated matter that required his immediate attention. Given his statements like: "This is not a job for people who need applause," it is not hard to imagine what this advice to aspiring presidents might be. In this regard, President E's vision of his own eventual assessment is also instructive: "I think we can hope that people would admire your integrity, your openness as to what you're doing, your level, I hope people will say, 'the man at least did what he thought was right with integrity. The man tried hard. The man dedicated himself to the interests of the institution as he interpreted them.'...I hope the dedication will be there and that over time that earns respect."]

[President E also offered the following advice to boards on presidential selection] I think that's a healthy phenomenon going with relatively youthful people because of the demands of the job and the freshness they bring to it. It does mean you have to try to choose people who you think you would be prepared to live with for an extended period and who you think have enough commitment to the institution not to accept the job offers that we all get all the time....So you've got to pick people with a commitment that the thing they most want to accomplish in life is that they want to see that institution move forward.

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**Synoptic Table 18., p. 247**

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The Post-Interview Questionnaire: Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues

The post-interview questionnaire concerning organizational models (see Appendix B) and leadership analogues (see Appendix C) was given to each of the five participating presidents following the interview. The presidents were asked to complete both sections of the questionnaire at their leisure and to return it to me in the stamped and preaddressed envelope attached to it. The questionnaire itself was intended as both a check on what presidents said in the more conversational encounter of the interview and a means to focus specifically upon how the work of administration and its organizational setting are perceived by practitioners. The form and content of the questionnaire were largely derived from similar instruments used by Cohen and March (1986) in their research into the American college presidency referred to above; the four cognitive frames and related institutional forms (structural, human resources, political, and symbolic) developed by Bolman and Deal (1984) to assist administrators in understanding and managing their organizations; the models of organizational functioning (collegial, bureaucratic, political, anarchical, and cybernetic) specified by Birnbaum (1988a) in his attempt to explain "how colleges work," Bensimon's (1987b) research into "good presidential leadership" in which she applies Birnbaum's typology in a study of enacted leadership; and the ideal types of university presidents (structured by the dichotomies: internal-external target of attention, initiating-reacting mode of action, and connecting-distancing patterns of relatedness) presented by Neumann and Bensimon (1990) in their study of how images of leadership roles held by college presidents aid them in "constructing the presidency."

Like its predecessor instruments, the questionnaire used in this study was designed to surface the beliefs through which presidents filter experience, and, thereby, shape the "realities" of their work and its settings. As Cohen and March (1986: 41) find:

Presidents live in an ambiguous world. The "reality" in terms of which they act, and from which they learn, is an invention that depends heavily on the models and ideologies of leadership with which they approach the sporadic, noisy information generated within their careers.

Birnbaum (1989a: 126) making a similar point, if somewhat less radically, underscores that a familiarity with presidential leadership models can help us to appreciate how
presidents will interpret and act upon the ambiguities they confront:

Understanding the leadership models implicitly held by presidents is important; these models may affect how presidents interpret their roles and find meaning in the flow of events they encounter.

But presidents do not only hold implicit models of leadership, they also have images of organization concretized as metaphorical models that imply distinctive patterns of action and leadership roles:

When presidents or other participants within the university consider the possible arrangements of governing activities, they bring along an assortment of metaphors. They have some ideas about the kind of organized system the university is. These metaphors, or models, are borrowed from a variety of other institutions and theories of institutions, ordinarily without much conscious selection . . . . Each functions in a different way and demands a different conception of the presidential role. (Cohen & March, 1986: 30)

By making explicit, through analogical selections, the models of organization and the images of leadership central to the participants in the study, we may glimpse a telling manifestation of the beliefs that form their distinctive habits of action and shape their respective presidential practices.

The instructions to the first section of the questionnaire, titled "Organizational Models," ask the president completing the form to distribute 100 points among five organizational models (see Appendix B) that accentuate very different aspects of the university. Model I, the Rational-Structural model, describes the university as a traditional bureaucracy, the work of which is to reduce internal and external ambiguity through rational methods of discovery and analysis. Model II, the model of the Collegium, describes the university as a community of scholars where authority is diffuse and in which the president consults and persuades with consensus as the goal. Model III, the Political model, describes the university as a collection of antagonistic constituencies that the president attempts to build into coalitions through brokering divergent interests and priorities. Model IV, the Atomistic-Symbolic model, describes the university in terms of Cohen and March's "organized anarchy" in which semi-autonomous units are loosely coupled and assume seeming coherence only through common symbolic rituals and the holistic presidential interpretation of institutional events. Model V, the Adhocracy model, describes the university in Mintzbergian (1989)
terms as a pool of resources assembled, under presidential incentives and auspices, into temporary ad hoc units in order to meet emerging internal and external needs. The presidents were asked to read through all of the models before assigning points to each in accordance with the conformity of the models to their view of the university—greater conformity being indicated by a higher point assignment.

The instructions to the second section of the questionnaire, titled "Leadership Analogues," ask the president completing the form to distribute 100 points among twelve distinct analogues for leadership: 1) Politician, 2) Problem Solver/Analyst, 3) Guide, 4) Entrepreneur, 5) Director, 6) Mass Leader, 7) Charismatic, 8) Colleague, 9) Manager, 10) Negotiator/Mediator, 11) Coach, 12) Philosopher King. Each of the analogues, which is briefly described in the questionnaire, bears a logical relationship to one or more of the organizational models and, therefore, the point allocation among them indicates the degree of consistency with both the models of organization prioritized in the first section of the questionnaire and with interview comments. The twelve leadership analogues and their questionnaire descriptors are contained in Appendix C. Again the presidents were asked to read through all of the analogues before assigning points to each in accordance with the conformity of the models to their view of university leadership, greater conformity once again being indicated by a higher point assignment.

The point allocations of each president, as well as the aggregate point allocations, for the organizational models (Part I of the questionnaire) and leadership analogues (Part II of the questionnaire) are displayed in Table 19 (see p. 253). These allocations are graphically represented for each president in Graphs 1-5 (see pp. 254-258). Where Table 19 permits an inter-presidential comparison of how the participants in the study differentially prioritize their images of organization and leadership, the graphs invite comparisons between organizational models and leadership analogues selected by each president. As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the two graphs for each president also picture an organizational and leadership preference profile that, read now, can enhance the evolving sense the reader has of each participant in the study.
This correlation is made more explicit and more meaningful in Table 20 (see p. 260) which facilitates comparison among projected relationships between organizational models and leadership analogues. The degree of "internal" correlation between organizational models and leadership analogues is made more explicit by first bringing together under the five organizational models the leadership analogues that, in my view, are logically related to each (Table 20, A.). The second section of the table (Table 20, B.) then shows, for ease of comparison with the logical relationships I drew, the relationship between the actual points assigned by individual presidents to organizational models and leadership analogues. Graph 6 (see p. 259) visually represents the total points assigned by all presidents to the various organizational models and leadership analogues. It is, therefore, a visual representation of the overall preferences for each model and analogue.

A reading of the "Total" column of Table 19 and its visual representation in Graph 6 shows that the presidents collectively ranked the models of organization as follows:

1. Collegium (120 points);
2. Rational-Structural (110 points);
3. Political (105 points);
4. Adhocracy (100 points); and,
5. Atomistic-Symbolic (65 points)

The leadership analogues were ranked:

1. Entrepreneur (70½ points);
2. Negotiator/Mediator (60½ points);
3. Politician (53½ points);
4. Colleague (46½ points);
5. Coach (45½ points);
6. Philosopher King (45½ points);
7. Guide (41½ points);
8. Charismatic (38½ points);
9. Manager (31½ points);
10. Problem Solver/Analyst (31½ points);
11. Director (28½ points); and,
12. Mass Leader (18½ points)

Although these total point allocations do indicate an overall range of preferences, they should not be overread, especially given the high variation in individual point allocations for organizational models and leadership analogues arrayed in Table 19 and displayed visually in Graphs 1-5.

What we can say from looking primarily at the higher and lower ranked selections is that the presidents veer away from unusual organizational models ("Atomistic-Symbolic," a cipher for organized anarchy) and leadership analogues ("Mass Leader," a descriptor for a very non-normatively oriented president ), and that they affirm what is familiar and generally shared when we think of the university as an organization (i.e., "Collegium" and "Rational-Structural") and the contemporary presidency as a leadership practice (i.e., "Entrepreneur," "Negotiator/Mediator," "Politician," "Colleague," and "Coach").

Table 19, however, shows more difference in point distributions by individual presidents among both organizational models and leadership analogues than might have been expected, given that presidents do the same sort of work in institutions more alike than different and which possess comparable organizational norms and cultures. Similarly, Table 20 shows that while many of the relationships I projected between organizational models and leadership analogues hold, the presidents also deviate freely from what I saw as logical associations, especially in their combinations of second, third, and fourth choices among leadership analogues. Again, difference seems to outrun conformity and expectation as presidents construct their own logics of leadership and build their own metaphors for organization through the differential selection of analogues and models for each. A brief synopsis of the individual point allocations will help us to build on the interview in developing a fuller sense of the person and persona of the presidents by constructing a preference profile for each.

President A is consistent in his point allocations with the emphasis he places in his interview on collegiality and community in a relatively small, stable, and traditional organizational setting. Among the organizational models, he ranks the Collegium first (40 points) and the Rational-Structural second (30 points). Three leadership
Table 19: Organizational Models & Leadership Analogues

### Organizational Models: Points Assigned

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<tr>
<td>Rational-Structural</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>110</td>
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### Leadership Analogues: Points Assigned

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<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>8½</td>
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<td>Manager</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8½</td>
<td>31½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiator/Mediator</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>8½</td>
<td>60½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8½</td>
<td>45½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosopher King</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8½</td>
<td>45½</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph 1. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues, President A

President A

Points Assigned

Rational-Structural Collegium Political Atomistic-Symbolic Adhocracy

Organizational Models

President A

Points Assigned

Politician Problem Solver/Analyst Guide Entrepreneur Director Mass Leader Charismatic Colleague Manager Negotiator/Mediator Coach Philosopher King

Leadership Analogues
Graph 2. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues, President B
Graph 3. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues, President C

President C

Points Assigned

Rational-Structural  Collegium  Political  Atomistic-Symbolic  Adhocracy

Organizational Models

President C

Points Assigned

Politician  Problem Solver/Analyst  Guide  Entrepreneur  Director  Mass Leader  Charismatic  Colleague  Manager  Negotiator/Mediator  Coach  Philosopher/Teacher

Leadership Analogues
Graph 4. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues, President D
Graph 5. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues, President E
Graph 6. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues: Total Assigned Point Distributions

Organizational Models: Total Point Distribution

Leadership Analogues: Total Point Distribution
Table 20: Leadership Analogues Arranged Under Pertinent Organizational Models Compared With Presidential Point Allocations For Each

A. Projected Relationships Between Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Model I. Rational Structural Related Leadership Analogues:</th>
<th>Organizational Model II. Collegium Related Leadership Analogues:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Problem-Solver/Analyst</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td>Coach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Mass Leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizational Model III. Political Related Leadership Analogues:</th>
<th>Organizational Model IV. Atomistic-Symbolic Related Leadership Analogues:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politician</td>
<td>Guide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negotiator/Mediator</td>
<td>Philosopher King</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charismatic</td>
<td>Mass Leader</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Organizational Model V. Adhocracy Related Leadership Analogues:       | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Entrepreneur                                                         | | |
| Coach                                                                 | | |
| Guide                                                                 | | |
| Politician                                                            | | |

B. Presidential Point Allocations for Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President A Point Allocations</th>
<th>President B Point Allocations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org. Models</td>
<td>Leadership Analogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegium (40)</td>
<td>Entrepreneur (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rat./Struct. (30)</td>
<td>Colleague (20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhocracy (20)</td>
<td>Neg./Med. (20)</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>President C Point Allocations</th>
<th>President D Point Allocations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org. Models</td>
<td>Leadership Analogues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adhocracy (40)</td>
<td>Entrepreneur (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collegium (20)</td>
<td>Charismatic (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rat./Struct. (15)</td>
<td>Politician (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political (15)</td>
<td>Neg./Med. (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coach (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phil. King (10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| President E Point Allocations | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Org. Models                   | Leadership Analogues          | Org. Models                   | Leadership Analogues          |
| Rat./Struct. (35)             | All rated equally             | Political (30)                | Guide (15)                    |
| Collegium (35)                | (@ 8½)                        | At./Symbolic (25)             | Entrepreneur (15)             |
| Political (20)                |                               | Adhocracy (20)                | Neg./Med. (15)                |
analogues receive his highest point assignments: Entrepreneur (20 points), Colleague (20 points), and Negotiator/Mediator (20 points). These selections connect with his unexpected experience as a successful fundraiser and a less successful collective agreement negotiator, as well as with his community-building role as an intentionally noticeable equal among colleagues. President A's preference profile, then, reinforces the communitarian image that predominates his interview responses.

President B's assignment of the highest number of points to the Political organizational model (40 points) confirms his worry that his campus is too divided into actively antagonistic camps for its own good. His concern with values, which he speaks about in the interview as permeating every aspect of university life, is evident in his selection of the value-centric Philosopher King analogue as one of his highest leadership point assignments (12 points). The assignment of an equal number of points to the Entrepreneur analogue reinforces President B's asserted pragmatic ability to roll values and more palpable university initiatives together. Although it is not surprising that the Politician analogue also received a relatively high number of President B's points (10 points), the assignment of the same number of points to the Charismatic analogue may be more unexpected from a reading of his interview responses. The Charismatic selection, however, becomes more comprehensible upon meeting President B, who manifests an unpretentious and quiet forcefulness made evident in his firm expression of idea. The preference profile for President B reinforces the sense of a reluctant politician intent on civilizing his university, and a quietly enthusiastic entrepreneur of university initiatives and the values that, in his view, make these initiatives meaningful.

President C's highest point assignment to the organizational model of the Adhocracy (40 points) is a faithful reflection of his emphasis on community relations, partnerships, and bringing opportunities to his university through his off-campus associations. His highest leadership analogue point allocations to the Entrepreneur and the Charismatic (15 points each) are consistent with his selection of organizational model. Through personal engagement he brings the resources to his campus that call up special initiatives that, in turn, receive presidential support and encouragement. President C's preference profile reflects his belief that he can, through force of office
and personality, engage his university in innovations that bring with them novel projects, creative alignments of staff, newfound resources, and reputational rewards.

President D assigns her highest point total to the Political organizational model (30 points) and the second highest to the Atomistic-Symbolic model (25 points). She is the only president to give the Atomistic-Symbolic model, again, the cipher for Cohen and March’s organized anarchy, both an allocation of points and a ranking this high. Similarly, President D is the only participant in the study to rank the leadership analogue Guide, which, in my view, is the analogue most appropriate to the Atomistic-Symbolic organizational model, among her highest preferences (15 points). Equally ranked were the leadership analogues of the Politician, Entrepreneur, and the Negotiator/Mediator, which reflect, respectively, a political identity more assigned than wanted, a desire to bring resources to her campus, and her difficult time with labor relations matters. The preference profile for President D reflects a president underrehearsed in the university’s norms, something of a skeptic, and a leader willing to try on unfashionable ways of thinking about her work and its setting.

President E, with his straight ahead mission and clarity of mandate, assigns most points to the Rational-Structural and the Collegium organizational models. This seemingly odd pairing becomes less so when President E’s admission of necessary reliance upon others, who are, for the most part, hierarchically positioned in the mega- and multiversity that is his campus, is considered together with his successful deanship in a smaller, less impersonal, and more defined setting. Interestingly, President E assigns an equal point value to each of the leadership analogues (8 1/3), thereby distinguishing himself from his colleagues—and introducing the annoyance of a fraction into point calculations. The preference profile for President E, then, captures a leader who is pragmatically protean in style, while acting through the established hierarchies necessary to create at least a semblance of collegiality in a complex and large institution.

In summary, and repeating a theme introduced above, it seems that the variations evident in point allocations among organizational models and leadership analogues overwhelm the more generic themes that can be abstracted from the interviews. At the same time individual preferences reinforce the definitions of role and
setting particular to each president. Convergence upon a single image of the presidency and a uniform sense of its setting give way to divergence; there seem to be as many images of organization and leadership as there are presidents in the sample.

The relatively wide variation evident in the responses to the organizational models and the leadership analogues helps to make explicit a predisposition normally concealed in the conduct of research. That predisposition is the tendency to search data for samenesses that can fund generalizations rather than to be attentive to the differences that produce more idiosyncratic, contingent, and situated appreciations of what is observed. As we have discussed extensively above, this movement from sameness to generalization within administrative studies is an integral part of the agenda of mastery, an agenda that would establish exportable means for predicting and controlling what occurs within organizational boundaries. Seeking mastery, we tend to search data for what generally applies, and what generally applies we proceed to apply generally. The rest we either dismiss or ignore.

That we continue to seek and "find" grist for the mills of generalizability is, however, as indicative of our epistemic predispositions as it is of what is "in" the data. If we take the questionnaire responses as cues to read the interview data from the perspective of difference rather than of sameness, we find that we begin to turn away from the normal and normalizing discourse of epistemology towards the non-normative, idiosyncratic discourse of hermeneutics. In short, we avoid overreading the data for likeness and we admit the difference that would normally be either marginalized or passed over. When we do so, we find, not surprisingly, that difference abounds.

The decision to "re-search" for sameness or difference in data is a fundamental and formative choice. It is a choice that leads, on the one hand, to the seeming comfort of generally applicable truths that converge in the regulation of experience and, on the other, to a more vertiginous apprehension that knowledge can be constructed in multiple, differing, and often divergent ways. Each predisposition provides a distinctive reading of observation. One reading is premised in the agenda of mastery and concentrates upon developing universal and repeatable means to uniform ends; the other reading is attentive to exceptions and views difference as the pluralistic entranceway to possibilities not yet contemplated. In terms of the conversational
metaphor introduced by Oakeshott and championed by Rorty, the predisposition towards sameness seeks to eradicate the variation in tone and content essential to good conversation, while the predisposition towards difference seeks to engage and develop it. Where reading for sameness seeks a final vocabulary commensurate with the way things "really" are, reading for difference finds value in seeing that there are many final vocabularies each of which give import and distinctive content to what is regarded as real. The implications of the contrast between sameness and difference, monism and pluralism, fact and interpretation, generalizability and situatedness, truth and contingency, and normal and abnormal discourse for administration, organization, and knowledge are more fully played out in the sixth and final chapter.

**Presidential Speeches and Texts**

As part of my data gathering, I asked the presidents to enclose with their completed questionnaire a copy of a speech or publication that they felt strongly presented their views on the university and its leadership. Each, with the exception of President D, did so. In addition to being a third point for the triangulation of presidential consistency, the submission of speeches and publications provided presidents with the opportunity not only to respond to someone else's questions, but to frame and elaborate the issues that they feel are most urgent for the university and most indicative of their work.

President A sent a copy of his installation speech given at the university of which he became president not long after our interview. The speech is titled "Accountability," which President A proceeds to define in a way that complements rather than conflicts with institutional and professorial autonomy. Pausing in his speech to reflect on the importance of leadership in the university, President A restates a paradox offered in his interview:

Here, then, is one of the great paradoxes of university life and of life in general. We all want to be consulted, we all want to express our views and have them valued and, at the same time, we also want direction and leadership based on a shared vision.

Describing leadership as "the art of the possible," President A, again as he did in his interview, makes a plea for community within the university and for the cooperation
of that community with the president in confronting the difficult decisions that must be made in order to ensure institutional well-being. Within this context, President A goes on to redefine accountability in a manner that might be described as broadly hermeneutic and conversational:

The first step towards fuller accountability must be better communications with our many publics. We need to celebrate our achievements; we need to tell our story in ways that have meaning for new and old audiences and we need to demystify much of what we do.

President A remains consistent, then, in his continuing attempt to reconcile leadership and community within the operations of the university.

President B provided a speech titled "The Ivory Tower and the Boardroom: The University as an Organizational Laboratory." The speech was presented to a meeting of a prestigious club whose membership is composed of the Canadian business elite. In his speech, President B tells the story of a "once upon a time" corporation that:

achieved a productivity increases of 40%; managed to meet its bottom line each year, in a very tough financial environment; repositioned itself by moving upmarket at the same time as it diversified; and made major capital investments without generating any long-term debt load.

This corporation is, of course, President B's university. In pointing out that what would have been a major success story in a business context was largely ignored, President B goes on to speak of his university as a cutting-edge proving ground for innovations that are only beginning to be talked about in the business community. He tells what we may suspect is a skeptical audience that, "Universities are the quintessential knowledge-based industry," an industry that has an established track record in successfully creating the very environments that businesspeople now consider ideal.

Several themes from his interview are reinforced along the way. President B, for example, points out that every positive feature of the knowledge-based organization has its distinctive downside, noting "each of these assets, as I have tried to say, is paradoxically also a liability." He illustrates this point by noting that the university, and those who would lead it, are simultaneously beneficiaries and victims of an ongoing contest between the individualism of free and rambunctious thinkers and the aspirations for community that draw independent minds together:
The faculty's sense of "owning" the university, which so complicates efficient management, is at the same time a manifestation of their loyalty and commitment. The faculty's right to participate makes crisp decisions impossible and gives rise to terrible time-wasting committees . . . . The cynicism and fractiousness which so startle and alienate outside observers are the inescapable negative side of the one indispensable quality of all knowledge workers: their free-ranging intelligence.

Reviewing the sacrifices that his university has had to make to achieve its organizational gains, President B notes with the quiet but telling philosophical humor of a senior administrator about to retire:

I know that there will be a day of reckoning, but like every university president, I dwell in the hope that I will be gone from office by the time that day arrives.

President C supplied a copy of his presentation at a general faculty board meeting. In this speech he addressed the crisis of confidence that had been visited upon his university in the form of a public attack upon its reputation. He begins his speech by stating that his general theme is "advancement through adversity," and he proceeds to deal with the many causes and outcomes of what he refers to as an institutional "identity crisis." Never seeking to evade responsibility for what has occurred, he traces recent unhappy events to their deeper sources in order to convert a "problem" into an "opportunity" for institutional renewal:

the crisis revealed a lot of confusion and dissatisfaction among ourselves regarding the priorities and principles that underlie our policies and practices in such matters as admissions criteria, academic standards, student services, teaching quality, planning procedures, administrative practices, public relations, and the basic values and beliefs that guide our decision making and shape whatever distinctiveness we have within the Canadian university system as a whole.

Referring specifically to fiscal constraints, President C issues a call to his university community to create fundamental improvements needed to avoid future crises:

we must become very creative in making substantial adjustments to our structures, programs, and methods of delivery so that we can live within our means while at the same time maintaining our quality and responding to new opportunities that will enable us to prevail in an increasingly competitive setting.

President C's call for greater accountability, the development of partnerships, and improvement in the service orientation of his campus reflect themes stated in his
interview. But most in keeping with the interview is President C's willingness, and, perhaps, eagerness to find opportunities for learning in moments experienced as personal and institutional failure.

President E enclosed three excerpts from the minutes of proceeding and evidence of standing committees on finance and human resources development that he addressed in the House of Commons. What is reflected most in the transcripts is President E's ready grasp of complex issues and his ability to articulate responses clearly and forcefully in terms that are direct and readily comprehensible to his political audience. After faithfully delivering a prolegomenon, in which he celebrates his university's distinct identity, mission, and mandate, he offers a no-nonsense rejoinder to announced government intentions to cut by 80% existing funding arrangements for higher education:

It is a grossly disproportionate reduction in federal support for post-secondary education, more disproportionate than in any other field identified so far in the social policy review. And this is in the face of the charge from the Minister of Finance [who, President E deftly points out, holds not one but two degrees from his university] that our challenge is to create a new infrastructure of ideas and innovation for Canada. I can imagine no area more inappropriate for a grossly disproportionate reduction than the capacity of our nation for training the next generation and for doing the research and innovation necessary for Canada's future.

But President E is not simply doing what Canadian university presidents have made into a minor artform: pleading ad nauseam for more money from government coffers. On the contrary, he makes the university—and his university in particular—an ally in the government's project to "spend smarter" in an era of diminishing resources:

I wouldn't be doing my duty as President of _______ if I didn't come here to alert you to the danger that the Government of Canada might get it wrong instead of getting it right.

What, then, would getting it right mean? To get it right would mean to seize the opportunity to reform the way we spend at present, to spend less if that is necessary but to spend more effectively and more wisely.

President E's brief address is concluded with a sharp challenge to his political hosts:

Unless you can answer in the affirmative that your proposals, in total, will strengthen the nation's capacity in this regard [developing highly skilled human capital and a world-class research infrastructure], I think you will be betraying the next generation of Canadians, on whom all of us will count for our economic and social and cultural strength.
In his responses to questions following his address, President E reiterates some of the central themes in his interview. For example, he reinforces his belief that universities have been reluctant to make tough choices and that they will improve only when they are no longer protected from market forces:

In reality, the universities have been very slow to change, in my mind, in their use of resources on campus; and,

I'm proposing an environment that would be much more competitive. I believe competition works. It would mean being competitive in the universities, who would be competing to attract students . . . . If we have to compete to attract students, then we will perform better. We'll be more responsive to the needs of those students. A system that invests the money directly in students and lets them choose is inherently superior to a circumstance in which the money is given to the institutions and the students don't have that same capacity for choice . . . . Second, with respect to research, again, dollars should follow performance . . . . That is competition as it should be.

Having the brashness to speak directly in terms that would be alien to the great majority of Canadian educators—as a parallel case, imagine a Canadian principal or school board trustee passionately advocating introduction of the voucher system!3—President E is unapologetically assertive in his push for market reforms in higher education. Once again, as in his calls for differentiation among universities, specificity in mission, and the making of tough choices, he risks heterodoxy if not heresy. And he does so with typical resolve and panache.

As might be expected, the texts provided by presidents convey a range of concerns of varying importance to each of them. Showing high internal consistency with themes developed in individual interviews and with the related rankings of organizational models and leadership analogues, the issues addressed in the texts are significantly different from each other. Each confirms a distinctive perspective on the presidency and the issues that are central to the contemporary university.

The range of issues and perspectives evident in the interview, questionnaire, and textual materials reported and reviewed above underscores President B's and President C's interview observations, once these observations are extended to speak about all universities as well as about the pluralism internal to each:
Universities, I think, have always filled multiple objectives and always will fill them and at any given moment the balance will shift hither and yon, but there will always be competing objectives that have to be reconciled. (President B, Table 1);

and,

there is room for honest differences of opinion within the institution about what it is and about what it exists for . . . [the university is] a varied institution, a variegated institution, and that's what we are. (President C, Table 1; emphasis added).

Universities are varied and variegated institutions led by presidents who have shaped distinctive administrative practices through the habits of action that sustain and make concrete their individual beliefs. Although they share a common institutional heritage, culture, and structure, universities are communities made paradoxical by their reliance upon difference rather than sameness. They are places where serial agreements to disagree fund the conversation that, at its best, is higher education. That this conversation shows few signs of reaching conclusion may be at least partially credited to a leadership institutionally constrained from implementing the controls and uniform procedures that are the hallmarks of scientific management.

Some Concluding Beginnings

The first chapter in Cohen and March's Leadership and Ambiguity is titled, with their usual sense of paradox, "Some Introductory Conclusions." In that chapter they outline the results of their research into the higher education presidency and introduce the core observations elaborated in the roughly three hundred pages that follow. Underscoring insights into the presidency and its setting that are ignored in more effusive studies of educational leadership, they supply points of comparison that help contextualize the issue of difference raised in the empirical materials reported and reviewed immediately above.

They do so by underlining some of the sameness that are characteristic of the university presidency. Most of these samenesses can seem obvious, but it is this seeming obviousness which leads to their being discounted when we consider what presidents have to say about their work and its institutional setting. The points that follow are, then, a corrective that underscores the common existential verities that
inform presidential beliefs and condition the exercise of presidential habits of action. This corrective excavates the modest but significant common ground upon which the many differences that constitute diverse presidencies are constructed. It is in this sense that Cohen and March's conclusions make a beginning to the attempt to balance points of difference and sameness central to the next and final chapter.

Extending President D's (see Table 15) reflection about the university, conveyed in her remark:

I am boggled about how parochial the universities are. It's very curious . . . . Literally provincial, everything, every aspect of that word parochial . . .

Cohen and March (1986: 1; emphasis added) begin their itemization of conclusions by characterizing the presidency itself as being fundamentally parochial:

*The presidency is a parochial job.* Presidents are not normally strangers to the institutions that choose them . . . . Insofar as a president compares his performance with other presidents, he tends to compare it with a group of presidents who are in his own experiential "neighborhood." Insofar as he is visible through the media, he is ordinarily visible only to his local community.

Within Canada, where the university community is relatively small in size and limited in differentiation, it is hard for the presidency not to be parochial in the sense that Cohen and March use the term. It may, however, also be hard for "insiders" to perceive, let alone to admit to, this parochialism. It is, after all, only President D, this sample's "outsider," who can see the university in this light and who suspects that many of the time and energy consuming tasks normally associated with the presidency may have little to do with getting things done.

In spite of the difficulty of avoiding parochialism in the Canadian context, this characterization applies more to some presidents in this study's sample than to others. Presidents A, B, and E, who each had long-time professional and personally significant associations with the universities that are the settings of their presidencies, certainly fall within Cohen and March's descriptor. Parochialism applies to a somewhat lesser degree to President C, whose previous presidency was in a smaller and less diverse institution, but who was, nevertheless, an established citizen in the relatively small community of Canadian university presidents when appointed to his current position. To return to our earlier observation, presidential parochialism applies least to President
D, who is a newcomer to university administration and who has not, as her often sharply insightful and simply sharp responses make plain, been fully socialized into the norms that govern university practice. As is made clear in her interview responses, she pays a continuing price for both of these career-path omissions.

Cohen and March (1986: 1-2; emphasis added) next tell us:

Presidents are academic. Their careers are almost entirely in academic institutions; their values are those of academe. Since the academic creed is not completely different from the general American organizational creed, college presidents are similar in many ways to administrative heads of other kinds of institutions. Nevertheless, they are recognizable as products of academe.

But for President D, this generalization applies to all the presidents in our sample. Presidents A, B, C, and E hold fast to beliefs, values, and sentiments that have been shaped through their long association with the university which has been their institutional home and their employer for the whole of their adult lives. It is interesting in the case of President D, that she, in a sense, is more academic than are the presidents whose careers are rooted in the university. That is, her idealism, unmediated by mundane experience of detail, makes her less tolerant of the everyday practices that distinguish academic from other organizational cultures and to which her colleagues are accustomed.

Although university cultures are separate and distinct from most other organizational environments, the parallel Cohen and March draw between academic and organizational managerial creeds is reinforced by President B's response to question 16: "I feel if my heart were in it I could build and run a large corporation... I have a lot of the skills required." University presidents, however, do not have their hearts—or their hands—in such enterprises, which for the most part, they never manage or build. While they are not uncommonly given to speculations like those of President B, especially when confronting a corporate world that is becoming increasing skeptical of the university, they remain, for the most part, creatures of academe.

Cohen and March (1986: 2; emphasis added) continue:

The presidency is conventional. The president comes to his job through a series of filters that are socially conservative vis-à-vis his major constituents. He sees his job in the standard terms reported in the academic and management literature. He allocates his time in response
to a series of conventional expectations. He leaves and enters his job in a manner that has strong normative components. The president cannot effectively argue with conventional claims on him; nor does he really wish to do so. His actions, his activities, and his self-perceptions are constrained within social expectations that he accepts as essentially legitimate.

The presidents in our sample fit within this description of conventionality in that they, as we have seen in their interview responses, are self-confessed partisans of the nomothetic. As Cohen and March predict, the expectations presidents do upset are the normative expectations held by many of their less "conventionalized" constituency groups or what Tony Beecher (1989) calls, in the title of his book, the less nomothetically colonized Academic Tribes and Territories. The conventions that our presidents affirm are, by and large, the conventions of their employers, the board, however much personal anguish such affirmations may cause. And however diverse boards of governors may be, each board member, by the fact that he or she accepts a role believed to be both authoritative and determinative in university governance, must affirm a belief that the university is, in fact and deed, governable.

Presidents must believe the same, and, as our presidents tell us in so many ways, they do. Even though they may differ as to the specific purposes a university should fulfil and the means to ensure this fulfilment, each views the presidency as a site for the effective management of circumstance. Whether this management is exercised from the periphery inward or from the center outward, whether it is hierarchically administered or introduced more surreptitiously makes little difference. As the office where aspirations to govern meet a, perhaps, ungovernable institution, presidents must affirm the former and find ways to overcome or rationalize the latter. Interview comments indicate that our presidents try diligently to do both.

Next to last in Cohen and March's (1986: 2; emphasis added) introductory conclusions is:

*The presidency is important to the president.* It is the peak of his career. He obtains the job as a reward for his previous record. It is the best job he has ever had or is likely to have. It is a mark of his success. His self-esteem depends on being viewed as a good president, but his reputation depends on the reputation of the school more than it does on his activities as president. Although the route to the job is clearly not random, each president's "career" tends to be a *post factum* construct.
Typically, each stage of his career is a relatively discrete event produced by a vacancy.

Obvious, but seldom stated, the importance of the presidency to the incumbent accounts for the content and the phrasing of many of the views expressed in the interviews reported above. Given their socialization, the process of their selection, and their career path, presidents cannot help having a "leadercentric" vision of the world at whose center, at least within their respective institutions, they find themselves.

To appreciate the weight of Cohen and March's point made immediately above, we need but think about the question, "Where can incumbents go from the presidency that will be an improvement in terms of self-esteem, social status, and remuneration?" Outside of the unlikely appointment to the federal senate or participation in the occasional royal commission or government task force, presidents of universities seem to have but two viable options for professional life after their term has expired: moving on to the presidency of another institution—for the fortunate, a "bigger and better" institution—or a return to the professoriat, which, for many, includes a return to a bargaining unit that not long ago was a source of antagonism.

The presidency is, then, a position which, however fortuitously reached, quickly becomes a destination from which incumbents tend to look, in terms of career path, more backward than forward and more horizontally than vertically. It is understandable that the perceived importance of the presidency can persuade many incumbents to restructure their pasts to show how events lead purposefully to a position which will probably be the apex of their careers. As what lies beyond the presidency may, for most, consist of relatively few and very predictable prospects, the temptation to recall, and in the process to edit, the road to the presidency can become irresistible. There is no shortage of memoirs by university presidents.

When presidents think autobiographically, or, as Nabokov (1966) puts it, when they "speak memory," it can be expected that they, like other historians of the self, will construct a life rich in the coherence and direction so often denied lived experience. In complying with Cohen and March's (1986: 25) contention that "A presidential career is an after-the-fact invention" fabricated from the outcomes of a set of serial and often unanticipated vacancies, presidents inevitably create narratives that bring together the
parochialism, conventionalism, and academicism central to their experience with a sense of the inevitable. Hence President C's (Table 3) remark:

I guess it helped that my father was a university president. But by the time he became a president, I was already so far along that track that I couldn't get off anyway.

Or President E's (Table 3) qualification of his remark that he entered administrative life by a "fluke":

... it was always my colleagues' sense of me and my sense of myself that my comparative advantage lay in making things happen for my colleagues rather than simply doing my own work... so it was a natural extension of that to see if those skills could translate to a broader arena and various people started to ask me if I would be a candidate to be president of the university...

Even President A's assertion that "there was no plan in it whatsoever" (Table 3) is to invite nothing less than providence to fill the void abandoned by human intention.

Cohen and March (1986: 2) complete their introductory conclusions with the previously cited observation that: "The Presidency is an illusion." This, of course, does not mean that the presidency does not exist; it does mean, however, that the presidency does not exist as many presidents, or, for that matter, most observers of the presidency, like to think it does. This is because the setting for the presidency is what, as we have seen above, Cohen and March (1986: 3) call "a prototypic organized anarchy."

The assertion that the university is an organized anarchy is not only a provocation to those predisposed to think otherwise. It is meant as a serious institutional characterization that challenges the adequacy and the applicability of traditional notions of administration and governance. Collaboration of the antipathy between governance and, what Cohen and March tell us is, the university's organizational structure can be found in the preferences for organizational models and leadership analogues summarized in Tables 19 and 20 and Graph 6. This evidence is most noticeable in the allocation of the fewest aggregate points to the Atomistic-Symbolic organizational model, again, the model that most closely parallels Cohen and March's organized anarchy. As Table 19 and Graph 6 show, only President D, the president least socialized into the norms of academic administration, assigns the
Atomistic-Symbolic model more than 15 points, the point value assigned to it by President B—the only other president to assign it any points at all. Clearly, a highly centrifugal vision of the university, which is held together only by symbolic and ritual behaviors and interpretive renderings of event and circumstance, appeals least to presidents who harbor aspirations to govern, as all the presidents in our sample, understandably, do.

Similarly, the leadership analogues that relate most closely to the Atomistic-Symbolic organizational model (Guide, Mass Leader, Charismatic, and Philosopher King) rank well below the analogues of Politician, Entrepreneur, Colleague, and Negotiator/Mediator in total point allocations. The lack of an overwhelming consensus around specific leadership analogues is, however, as or more interesting than the constellations of point allocations. The high variation among individual presidential point allocations for both organizational models and leadership analogues as well as the lack of a definitive clustering of aggregate point allocations coincides with the following admission of presidential difference by Cohen and March (1986: 57):

Our examination of images of what the presidency should be indicates that there does not seem to be a clear core of objectives that presidents should pursue and, consequently, no clear set of attributes that will assure success. Neither is there a well-defined model of the presidential job . . . . There are many things that presidents should do or be, but none that most presidents . . . see as taking clear priority.

Even though the constellation of higher point allocations around the Politician, Entrepreneur, Colleague, and Negotiator/Mediator finds corroboration and a certain significance in Cohen and March's (1986: 57 & 59; emphasis added) data, more important still are the caveats that qualify the wont to draw conclusions:

Among presidents and top administrative leaders in the universities, there is a tendency to define the role as some appropriate mix of political, administrative, and entrepreneurial activities, but the nature of the mix is badly specified and variable over time . . . . According to his own beliefs and the beliefs of others around him the president should be an administrator, an entrepreneur, a political manager, and (in addition) should act virtuously. As we have noted, this is not necessarily a consistent set of demands. There is obviously potential for the inconsistency of specific behaviors. And there is also potential for inconsistency of styles and orientations to leadership.
In stating,

There is ample room for the ambiguous events of modern university life in almost any set of beliefs that might become accepted among presidents or students of the presidency,

Cohen and March (1986: 79) admit the pluralism endemic to the university presidency that is considered in the next and last chapter.

Endnotes for Chapter 5

1. The sensibleness of President E's remarks seems to elude boards of education that have a policy of mandatory rotation of principals, who, typically, are permitted to serve no more than five years in one school. It is hard to imagine how a principal in such circumstances could command the respect of a unionized staff, most of whom have longer service in the school than she will ever have, or develop sufficient personal and professional investment to take the prudent risks requisite to school improvement initiatives that take time to have effect. Unfortunately, as President E suggests, mandatory principal rotation too often ends in mandatory principle rotation. It is hard to imagine how consistency, not to mention virtue, might survive in environments so intentionally destabilized by "educational" policymakers. President E's recommendation that boards of governors think in the long term in making presidential appointments is, then, at least as sensible as it is self-serving.

2. Pelagius lived in the 5th Century A.D. and antagonized St. Augustine with his view that the doctrine of original sin was itself corrupt. Williston Walker (1970: 168) says in his authoritatively regarded book A History of the Christian Church:

Augustine's most famous controversy, and that in which his teaching on sin and grace came to clearest expression, was with Pelagius and that teacher's disciples. Pelagius was a British, or perhaps an Irish monk, who . . . denied any original sin inherited from Adam, and affirmed that all men now have the power not to sin.

Pelagianism is now more broadly associated with the family of beliefs that hold to human freedom, the salvific quality of works over grace, and a relatively benign attitude towards evil as a transcendental force. In essence, Pelagianism holds the same tenets as modern liberalism. President E is something of a neo-Pelagian on two counts: first, in his avowal that works not grace are the stuff of presidential salvation, and, second, in his downsizing of presidential "evil" within the university.

3. It is worth noting that even the "conservative" Harris government which is anathema to teacher federations and school boards alike, has not had the temerity to introduce anything vaguely resembling a voucher system that would enable parental choice. It is an oddity bespeaking profound cultural difference that such market-driven educational reforms, which in Canada are too hot for even "arch-conservative" governments to touch, are, in the form of the charter schools movement, advocated in the United States
by self-proclaimed liberals, who, traditionally, have been advocates of government intervention in social affairs and advocates of teachers unions.

Seymour Martin Lipset (1991: 2), in his book *Continental Divide: The Values and Institutions of the United States and Canada*, in the manner of Max Weber, helps clarify why this may be so:

The very organizing principles that framed these nations [the United States and Canada], the central cores around which institutions and events were to accommodate, were different. One was Whig and classically liberal or libertarian—doctrines that emphasize distrust of the state, egalitarianism, and populism—reinforced by a voluntaristic and congregational religious tradition. The other was Tory and conservative in the British and European sense—accepting of the need for a strong state, for respect for authority, for deference—and endorsed by hierarchically organized religions that supported and were supported by the state.

Lipset provides evidence that the Canadian penchant for what he calls "a 'socialist monarchy,' a deferential welfare state" (Lipset, 1991: 226), is alive and well, and transcends affiliations with nominally different political parties:

The responses to the March 1989 *Maclean's*-Decima question on giving the government the power to suspend civil liberties reaffirm that Americans are much more suspicious of the state than are Canadians, particularly Anglophone Canadians. Those in the north continue to have a more deferential attitude toward government. (Lipset, 1991: 225)

Lipset's observations, predominantly gleaned from Canadian sources, make President E still more of an anomaly in his happiness to abandon a state interventionist tradition that he feels has given rise to "a perverse policy" of hyper-regulated homogenization (response to interview question 2).

4. Cohen and March (1986: 25) elaborate some of the peculiar effects of this long socialization that both indelibly marks presidents as academic beings and simultaneously creates expectations of solidarity in various university constituency groups that can only be disappointed:

Presidents commonly come to the job after 20 to 35 years of socialization into the values of academe . . . .

The result of the socialization is twofold. On the one hand, presidents tend to be strongly committed to conventional academic values . . . . College presidents easily recognize major normative constraints on their behavior . . . . They accept the institution and support it.

At the same time, socialization produces an expectation that presidents will share the values of their subordinates and the members of important subgroups inside the college . . . . In particular, we find that presidents feel disagreement with their faculties or students to be distinctly painful. This is only partly for the obvious strategic reasons. Disagreement with students or faculty is not only a political event for many presidents; it is also a problem of identity—and a surprise.
This insight illuminates much that was said in the interview responses of our presidents. For example, it helps us to empathize with President A's inability to envision or, to this day, to comprehend the faculty union tactics that, through a strike, tore at his belief in community. Cohen and March’s elaboration of what I have called the "ambiguity of career" can similarly be seen in President E's recognition that there will be little applause for presidential accomplishments, in President B's disappointment over his inability to civilize the fractiousness of his university community, and of President C's difficulty in learning how to navigate the organizational realities of the university without error. It may also be seen in the experience presidents' reticence to rely upon anyone other than themselves for evaluation. But the socialization conundrum is perhaps most pronounced by President D, who, lacking collegiate administrative experience, found that her socialization as a scholar had—for her, surprisingly—little to do with her role as president or with how others would act towards her:

the value of collegiality is important to me personally. And I talk to other faculty and I have never seen such a misused word in my life . . . collegial basically means "consult your faculty association," most of whom do not represent the bigger views of the faculty. [M.B. When you say "faculty association," you mean the union?] Yes, the union executive. And I have seen misinformation, disinformation, and lies spread about me, about my senior people under circumstances which are absolutely unnecessary and that just shocked me, it shocked me that scholars do that. The answer is of course that they're not scholars. (response to question 11; the last line is in the original transcript but was not included in Table 11)
Leadership in Higher Education: Towards Alternative Constructs of Administration, Organization, and Knowledge

Chapter 6
A Concluding Unscientific Postscript: Neither Objectivism Nor Relativism

It would be presumptuous to end by proposing some particular therapy by which we might escape from the tight circle of the modern fate. The decisions of western men over many centuries have made our world too ineluctably what it is for there to be any facile exit.

—George Grant, "The University Curriculum" in Technology and Empire (1969: 132)

"You're searching, Joe,
For things that don't exist; I mean beginnings.
Ends and beginnings—there are no such things.
There are only middles . . .
It would take me forever to recite
All that's not new in where we find ourselves.
New is a word for fools in towns who think
Style upon style in dress and thought at last
Must get somewhere. I've heard you say as much.
No, this is no beginning."

"Then an end?"

"End is a gloomy word."


The two epigraphs to this chapter are intended to speak to the epigraphs that appear as a frontispiece to this dissertation. Those earlier epigraphs employ a topographical or spatial metaphor to describe the ends that this dissertation would reach and the predictable difficulties it would have in reaching them, given the nature of its topic. Grant's words immediately above would silence the expectation of a concluding therapeutic for resolving ambiguities concerning the issue of organizational leadership that reflect a fundamental cultural ambivalence about the place to which we have come as moderns. There is no remedial magic, Grant tells us. There is no
singular pacifying certainty to be pulled from the pluralistic hat of modernism, a hat that holds so many existential predicaments. The ambiguities characteristic of the contemporary university and its leadership may be as irremediable as the manifold qualities that distinguish such organizations from the machine analogues that give rise to the currently favored but simplistic interventionist metaphors of restructuring, reengineering, and reinventing.

The excerpt from *In The Home Stretch* by Robert Frost is part of a longer conversation between a husband and wife retrospectively debating the reasons for their just completed move from the city to a more rural setting. The poem questions movement and many of the supposed rewards we seek in our fascination with a seeming progress that takes us from place to place and from time to time. In Frost's peculiar and gifted merging of immediate circumstance with transcendent question, the reader is left to ponder the value of searching as a human preoccupation. Frost intimates poetically and paradoxically that to seek may be to become diverted from that which is most important. Both Grant and Frost, in ways that are peculiar to each, undo the ease with which we search for endings sufficient to secure experience from doubt. Each author would preclude the facile encapsulation of experience in unambiguous closings. Life, Grant and Frost tell us, may be many things, but it is not simple, and our conclusions about it should, therefore, avoid the simplistic.

In this, the final chapter of what has been a long journey through many complex, vexing, and still unresolved ideas, I will provide a final summary of the empirical information gathered for this study and reviewed immediately above. This summary is provided, first, in a final summative "sketch" of each of the participating presidents and some of the major ideas that they have articulated in conversation, questionnaire, and text. This is followed by what I have called fourteen antithetic inferences from the data concerning the presidency itself.

In the middle section of the chapter, I present a framework developed by Alasdair MacIntyre that permits a segregation of the different kinds of knowledge respectively appropriate to practice, narrative, and tradition. This incorporative schematic is then placed in the context of *praxis* by reading it in the light of ideas elaborated most effectively by Richard Rorty in his advocacy of a post-objectivist
paradigm for knowledge-making that is neither reductive nor relativist in orientation. I conclude this middle section by modifying MacIntyre's schematic so that it can provide a framework for the summary expression of the distinctive knowledge of the university presidency offered by each of the presidents in the sample. The chapter ends with a return to the contest cast by MacIntyre in After Virtue between Nietzsche and Aristotle that permits concluding reflections upon administration, organization, and knowledge as we stand within the regime of modernism and as we begin to look beyond it.

Presidents Making a Difference or Difference Making Presidents?

The above question gives rise to a paradoxical response. In the debate in which Clark Kerr and his associates claim, on the one side, that presidents make a profound difference to their universities, and Michael Cohen and James March and their partisans claim, on the other, that the difference presidents can make is so modest that it often can be attributed to chance, both parties may be right. As President B (Table 10.a.) responds when asked how much difference he, as a president, makes to his institution: "it depends upon how you define 'making a difference.'" Indeed, as presidents made circumspect by their choices can and sometimes do testify, it does.

It is worth underlining that each of the university presidents in our sample finds a way to define "making a difference" that enables him/her to respond affirmatively to the same question that brings Cohen and March to a generalized skepticism about the efficacy of the presidential role. And, as we have suggested earlier, such a reaction cannot be surprising among those conditioned by experience and expectation to see educational administration not only as a viable practice but as a rewarding one both in terms of inner satisfactions and external compensations. But even if we allow willfulness and self-interest to play a large role in the construction of interpretations, it would be unlikely that presidents and the many eyes that observe them could be completely caught up in the work of clothing emperors. In a world that is susceptible to at least some aspects of human will, it is not difficult to believe that presidents, like most of us, find things to do with their time that have a traceable impact on the circumstances in which they find themselves.¹
In addition to the readiness of presidents to define difference making in a way that endorses their positional viability, if not their essentialness, what stands out most in our sample are the multiplicity of ways that a relatively small number of presidents, in the words of President D (Table 10.a.)," decide what kind of difference's [they're] making." Even a cursory look at Graph 7 (see p. 298) shows that each of the presidents taking part in this study developed a distinctive profile of the presidency through their selection of the images of organization and leadership they felt most apposite to their professional experience. If Victor Baldridge (1983: 45; also see Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, and Pepper, 1970), is right in his assertion that our metaphors and images are not innocent, for the way we view the world and summarize it with models helps determine the way we act, these differences are indicators of significantly diverse habits of action, beliefs, convictions, and practices that have pronounced and unlike effects upon the institutions that are their settings. In the vocabulary of MacIntyre, the proliferation of difference in presidential practices is, in turn, evidence of a plethora of internal and external goods capable of justifying them and directing the aspirations of practitioners. Within the fairly broad normative constraints dictated by the traditions common to universities and particular to individual campuses, the presidency thus becomes many things to many people. When we speak of the presidency, as Kerr and Gade note above, we must speak in the existential plural.

Five Provisional Sketches of Presidents and Fourteen Antithetic Inferences

Although the interview responses and the supplementary materials collected for this study may not be sufficient to create detailed portraits of each of the five participating presidents, they do allow a venturing of provisional, summative sketches. The descriptions that follow are intended to create a more holistic image of person than abstracts from interview transcripts, quantitative summaries of questionnaire selections, and excerpts from speeches and publications permit. They also allow me to integrate with the "harder" data reported in the previous chapter the non-verbal impressions each of the presidents made upon me during the short time we spent together. Ideally, the presidential sketches would supply a human armature capable of supporting and giving
unity to data-driven observations as well as to more speculative conjectures. The variety of these sketches represents the aspect of difference made unavoidable in the data gathered from those participating in this study.

The individual presidential sketches are followed by what I call "fourteen antithetic inferences from the data." These inferences convey some of the dichotomies that became salient for me in my scrutiny of data arising from this study's empirical instruments, and from my meetings with Presidents A, B, C, D, and E. The inferences are qualified as "antithetic" because they seek to bring together elements of presidential experience that might normally be considered as contraries and, accordingly, represented as opposing tendencies rather than as complementary qualities capable of enriching what otherwise might be a constricted uniformity. The inferences are, then, my attempt to focus upon the samenesses that put common, if at times paradoxical, ground beneath the presidencies that individual incumbents construct (Neumann & Bensimon, 1990).

**Five Presidential Sketches: Aspects of Difference**

President A, who came to the presidency with little university administrative experience, is motivated by communitarian aspirations and puzzled by the university's failure to embrace his hopes. A beneficiary of serendipitous circumstances and events, including an unusually long three and a half year honeymoon as a new president, he has also been confronted with obstacles. The most significant was the faculty strike that jeopardized the sense of community that, as he tells us in his interview, he had worked earnestly to build. As he deepens his sense of how difficult and happier times combine to make a presidential career, President A continues to struggle with the issue of how leadership can take practicable form in the unusual and, at times, upsetting organization that is the university. I sensed that President A is still learning the presidency as he struggles with the ambiguities of power, experience, and setting summarized by Cohen and March in their epigraph to the fourth chapter above.

In the course of his interview, President A was attentive to my questions and deliberate in his answers. He would often pause to gather his thoughts before responding to my questions, even when he had adjusted to the sort of questions I was
asking and the kind of information I was seeking. Rather than being a defense against saying the wrong thing in a semi-public moment, I felt his thoughtfulness was indicative of a more general way of approaching matters that demanded his engagement. In spite of his own advice that "you've got to be outgoing. I think the reflective scholar president; it won't work in the 90's" (President A, Table 18), President A seemed to possess many of the better qualities of the introvert. The disparity between personality and position that I perceived may not be uncommon for presidents recruited from the ranks of the professoriat, as was President A, where the more private "culture of scholarship" takes precedence of over the aspects of public performance common to the "culture of administration" (Dill, 1984).

President B, whose "philosophical" disposition towards the presidency may be buoyed by his pending retirement, is at ease with the multiple and even contradictory purposes that are characteristic of his institution. He is, however, less comfortable with the lack of civility that attends manifestations of difference on his campus. Being an inveterate harmonizer and not easily put off balance, he weathered this fractiousness as he continues in his project to transform confrontation into conversation. Perhaps more importantly, as a pragmatic administrator President B seems to have a knack for converting value-oriented issues, matters of principle, and spiritual impulse into practical initiatives for improvement. What may be bricks and mortar to some, are, for President B (Table 9), tools "to transform the psychic life of the institution." President B's calm demeanor, steadfast commitment to improving life on his campus, and propensity to reflect, express a quiet, value-driven constancy in approach to institution, profession, and person.

The interview, which took place in President B's office, was something of a no-frills affair. Like President B himself, the mood was quiet and reflective and had no discernable aspects of performance. Similarly, his office was modest in furnishing and location, and had few visible accoutrements of power. Lest my observations suggest otherwise, I would underline that President B's visible reserve did not blunt his intellectual edge, his pride in institution, or his personal force. I sensed that he had come to a workable resolution of the tension between self and persona, private and public, and home and institution in a way that other presidents might envy. In finding
maturity in the presidency, he had managed to avoid cynicism without having to exaggerate his accomplishments or to hide his failures.

President C is a veteran president who seems unruffled by the multiple ambiguities characteristic of the presidency and its institutional setting. But he is not immune to crisis, and is still not happy with how he handled a major predicament that focused a great deal of unwanted attention on his university. As he shows in the text of the speech he provided, however, even this crisis became an opportunity to sort through existing institutional problems and to describe possible pathways to their resolution. Nevertheless, I left the interview feeling that although President C's efforts in the president's office, the boardroom, and the community, often recoup benefits for his institution, his framing of issues and his interpretation of event somehow miss the center of the institutional target.

President C seemed the consummate President in demeanor, comportment, and speech. He carried himself as a public figure and was clearly capable of acting with professional equanimity amidst the vagaries and the upsets of university life. I had the feeling that President C was so practiced in being a public figure that it was difficult to penetrate his presidential identity. This being said, he is the president who spoke most concretely about the often difficult divide between private feeling and public office—what he called "the head-heart conflict" that "arises more often than one would like" (President B, Table 12). Like President A, he also talked forthrightly about the effect of his work on his spouse, although I was unsure how to "take" his statement of what he called, in acknowledgement of his wife's participation in his work, "our" presidency. While long service as a university president may have thickened President C's persona, his comments suggest that the often difficult lines separating the private from the public self, and idiographic wish from nomothetic necessity have been neither erased nor eased.

President D is the most uncharacteristic president in the sample. By gender, by background, and by character, she is largely a stranger in what for her, in many ways, remains intransigently a strange land. As she confronts circumstances and procedures head-on that more experienced presidents decorously avoid or dampen, her insights are as penetrating as they are witty. She feels and expresses in a Swiftian manner the
impatience that more practiced players of the university game have long ago learned to translate into subaudible mumbles, gnawed pencils, and ulcers. But her outspokenness about the university's many pretensions is grounded in a fundamental respect for what that institution can and should be. And, as might be expected, she makes no compromises in her absolute commitment to translate what "ought" to be into what "is."

As we sat cramped in the hotel cloak room which was the impromptu setting for her interview, amid the clatter of dishes and afternoon conversation, President D lost none of her focus or her intensity. She is truly a forceful personality. Unfortunately, I suspected that her uncompromising manner and her unwillingness either to look away from or to be bemused by the many contradictions inherent in daily university life, would test her viability as a president. Her metaphor of being "a real time anthropologist" (President D, Table 6) was both an indicator of the work she had done resolutely in order to become familiar with her institution, and an index of her status as an outsider. In spite of her sympathies with the ideals of academe—and, perhaps, because of them—I sensed that President D found it difficult to "keep smiling" (President D, Table 6) in a position which demanded more than many sensible and sensitive people would be willing to contribute. As she put it:

You have to give up your self, I'm afraid. It's a terrible thing to say, but you really do have to give up yourself. You are utterly consumed. You somehow have to hold on to your self, a narrow thin cord of it, the rest they eat. (President D, Table 11)

President E is the most vivacious and charismatic of the presidents. He wears the presidency well and with vigor; his identification with his institution is so strong that he seems a visible representation of it. Passionate in the service of his university and utterly focused upon where he sees that institution going under his leadership, he speaks with an optimism that eludes triviality and with a conviction that is broadly informed and attractive. He and President D were the two presidents in the sample with the strongest and most detailed vision of how Canadian universities should develop in the future. Each was able to look beyond their own institutions in stating that, differentiation, specificity of mission, and tough choices were central to the agenda of what had to be accomplished by and among institutions of higher education.
Viewing market forces as sobering friends of universities, President E is committed to ensuring that his institution plays a leading role in the transition to a more competitive Canadian higher education environment.

President E, however, is not always the "institutional man." Sitting only partially at ease in a relatively regal office suite that signifies the presidency of a major university, I was somewhat taken aback when President E broke from what had been a convivial but formal interview to confide an extremely serious family crisis. The memory of his change in tone and physical demeanor are still pronounced for me as he spoke of the illness and the hospitalization of his son. Having a son myself and knowing the happiness and the worry of fatherhood, I shifted from listening to empathy as the presidential role fell away and I was, without anticipation, fully in the presence of a human being very much like myself. This conversational rupture was soon passed over as we returned to more routine presidential matters, but the impression of person it left is indelible. Retrospectively, I realized that I had been subject to an experiential object lesson that underscored my susceptibility to the power of role to shape conversation, perspective, and impression.

If the Presidents were to be characterized from the information we have about their beliefs and practices in terms of Rorty's notion of final vocabularies, we might be able to agree on the following summations. President A speaks in a final vocabulary of learning and key words in his lexicon are "community," "leadership," and "collegiality." President B speaks in a reflective final vocabulary expressive of tolerance for complexity and, even, contradiction; key words are "pluralism," "civility," and "values." The final vocabulary for President C is one of patience and professionalism; keywords are "accountability," "partnership," and "facilitation." President D's final vocabulary is one that combines skepticism about what is and belief in what can be; key words are "scholarship" "quality" and "idealism." And President E speaks in a final vocabulary of practical optimism and compelling vision; keywords are "focus," "improvement," and "competition." The presidents address the presidency and their particular universities in distinctive vocabularies that frame the thoughts and actions that intermix to form their individual praxes of leadership.
And what do our presidents have to say collectively about the presidency as an enterprise? Again, they say many and diverse things that can be captured best interpretively in dichotomies that express some of the more pronounced tensions that structure the presidency as a vocation and the setting in which it is enacted. In Davidson's terms, the following inferences are my rendering of fourteen of the "passing theories" I have constructed through my listening to presidents and in my attempts to make sense of their experiences.

Fourteen Antithetical Inferences: Aspects of Sameness

1. The presidency is a test of both innocence and experience.
   Presidents learn. Whether they come to the presidency with much or little experience they are confronted by surprise both in institutional event and in the limits of their office. Consequently they must learn new administrative behaviors, modify existing beliefs, and reformulate expectations. What presidents learn is often not what they thought they would have to learn, what they would like to learn, or what may be ultimately best to learn.

2. The presidency is a site where reason and passion entwine and conflict.
   Presidents, like the issues they confront and the individuals they engage, are both passionate and rational. But habits of the heart do not always lend themselves to administrative habits of action, and the surmounting of passion by reason does not always effect reasonable outcomes, although it can result in disaffection and disenchantment.

3. The presidency forces choices between the idiographic and the nomothetic.
   Presidents are people and the presidency is a role. The separation between the two is often clouded by what is best in human beings and what is worst in organizations, and vice versa. As enactors of roles, presidents must often make choices about what they will do as people, and, as people, presidents must often make choices about what they will do as leaders. Each of these choice-making situations can occasion agony, misunderstanding, and regret as much as accomplishment, pride, and reward.

4. The presidency presumes sameness but is immersed in difference.
   Presidents are expected to bring continuity and coherence—that is, sameness and a lack of surprise—to both institution and role, but they must spend most of their time improvising among the unanticipated, the ineffable, and the intractable circumstances they confront daily as manifestations of institutional difference. To please their employers, presidents must speak in a language of mastery and control; to effect empathy with those immediately around them, presidents must
acknowledge the power of the unexpected and the importance of prudent
improvisation. What norms exist are usually contingent and situation specific;
to generalize is to ignore the particulars that make practical knowledge possible.

5. The presidency is a contest between idealism and pragmatism.
Presidents must speak values and accomplish tasks. At its worst this can lead
to hypocrisy, at its best it can bring values to action. Between these two
extremes, interpretation must do its work and rationalization must take its
course. And both idealism and pragmatism can lead presidents astray.

6. The presidency is a hierarchically advantaged and positionally constrained.
Presidents sit at the top of the university's hierarchy and while the view from the
top may be encompassing and sometimes grand, it is also removed from the
sites where local issues are argued and sometimes grand, it is also removed from the
sites where local issues are argued and small but cumulatively telling decisions
are made. The culture of administration, in which presidents are immersed, is
different from the cultures they must influence and effect. As a consequence
presidents are simultaneously both at home and strangers in the university.
That most presidents come from the introspective culture of the professoriat can
make them strangers not only to others, but even to themselves.

7. The presidency is a confluence of chance and intention.
Presidents, who acknowledge that their careers are shaped by chance, are
expected to place intention where chance once was. But presidents know
intuitively that institutional opportunities are often created when chance
overrides planning, and, likewise, that administrative achievements are often
realized in the retrospective transformation of fortune into accomplishment.

8. The presidency is continuously constructed from failures and successes.
Presidents taste both failure and success, although with time one may be
transformed into the other. Through experience presidents learn that successes
can haunt them and that failures can provide opportunities for solidarity with
their colleagues and subordinates. Moments of perceived failure may be the
most profound moments of a presidency, while moments of perceived success
may pass with little lasting impression upon people or organizations.

9. The presidency is demanding and fulfilling.
Presidents report that their work is extraordinarily arduous, that it can impose
upon family and private life, and that it is exhausting and toughening. Yet, these
comments would be regarded as confidences, not as complaints, and as
sacrifices well worth making. For the quid pro quo of the presidency to make
sense, the boundary between self and office must be highly permeable. If only
in the narratives presidents construct, role must coincide more than it differs with
person.
10. **The presidency is a center of influence and a focus of constraint.**

Presidents are busy people who spend most of their days seeking to influence others through talk, exemplary behaviors, and incentives. Simultaneously their words and their actions are constrained by multiple, diverse, and divergent expectations and by the monitoring of seemingly innumerable and ever vigilant "constituency" groups.

11. **The presidency evokes pride but demands humility.**

Presidents feel pride in position and can instill in others, through ritual functions, symbolic actions, and the speaking of words, pride of place. Their office and its hierarchical placement is as visible to them as it is to their administrative, faculty, and staff colleagues. This visibility means that as presidents share a great deal of credit for institutional accomplishment, they must also absorb a great deal of blame for institutional failures. Their actual agency in either may be modest.

12. **The presidency provides joys that are rich in tribulation.**

Presidents enjoy being presidents, and presidents experience the tribulations of their institutions with little or no mediation. Presidents live in an academic setting that prizes the intellect, but the impact of their administrative work and the upshot of daily circumstance is often visceral. Presidents can know what it is like to be a candle that is being burned at both ends.

13. **The presidency is shaped internally by beliefs and values; the presidency is shaped externally by expectations and predicted effects.**

Presidents believe in values and value beliefs in settings that reward visible behaviors and promised outcomes. As a result presidents may conceal much, much that others in their company may discuss freely. The distance between the inner world of presidential thought and belief, and the outer world of presidential action can be experienced as infinite. Observations of the presidency are, then, at best partial.

14. **Presidents act reflectively and reflect actively.**

Presidents try to do what they think and they try to think about what they do. But they must often act before they have a chance to think and, therefore, must make sense of their actions retrospectively. Presidents who think too much before they act can allow ideas to displace opportunities for action. On the other hand, presidents who act precipitously can find their actions resistant to their own sensemaking efforts as well as to the sensemaking efforts of others. The presidency is a laboratory within which the familiar dichotomy between thought and practice, in which the former always precedes the later, is often revealed as a fiction.
Difference and Sameness: Prospects of Reconciliation?

The fourteen antithetic inferences recounted immediately above suggest one way that some of the more fundamental differences characteristic of presidential experience can be brought together to give sense to a shared professional practice. MacIntyre provides a more abstract means of giving unity to simultaneously occurring experiences of difference and unity in matters that have a distinctively moral impact, as does the exercise of leadership. In his 1988 Gifford Lectures, delivered at the University of Edinburgh and published under the title of Three Rival Formulations of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition, MacIntyre (1990) describes a typology of the three predominant and, according to him, ultimately irreconcilable perspectives through which moral issues may be approached and through which they are distinctively formed. The schema MacIntyre develops provides a useful way of picturing more generally how difference and sameness may coexist without having to resort to paradox.

The first perspective, which MacIntyre calls the encyclopaedic formulation, presumes that the progressive development and integration of knowledge will gradually bring certainty and coherence to matters of difference. It would realize this objective by empirically establishing a knowledge base sufficient to give moral truths the quality of indisputable facts. The second, which MacIntyre, in somewhat ironic homage to Nietzsche (1969/1879), refers to as the genealogical formulation, displaces the hope for a unitary and determinative moral truth with the recognition that individuals must create their own metaphors and vocabularies through which moral positions may be articulated and made sensible. The genealogist replaces the encyclopaedic hope for the discovery of a unitary and unifying moral knowledge with a call for the creation of individual perspectives through which coherence may be given serially to moral experience. The third perspective, which MacIntyre denotes by the word tradition and which I refer to subsequently as traditionalist (Holmes, 1984, 1986a), disciplines moral knowledge by placing it within explicit sets of holistic, encompassing, and normative beliefs and values. To distinguish among the three approaches to moral matters we need only note how their epistemic trajectories differ: the epistemological orientation of the encyclopaedic perspective is empirical and inductive; that of the genealogical
perspective is interpretive and synthetic; and that of the traditionalist perspective is
deductive in character, framed by determinative metaphysical principles and/or the
regulating strictures of belief.

Referencing earlier discussions in this dissertation, we can see that MacIntyre's
encyclopaedist is a surrogate for the scientist. For the encyclopaedist, what is true
reduces ultimately, through the application of a methodologically regulated empiricism
to matters of fact. Similarly, the genealogist is the interpretivist who operates in
accordance with non-objectivist, hermeneutic permission to endow experience non-
reductively with sense and meaning. Still again, the traditionalist begins with "truths"
ascertained through either revelation or philosophical insight, and brings experience
into line with these truths through a practice that we may call "subscriptive alignment."

If we view the typology of moral approaches delineated by MacIntyre as being
descriptive of a continuum of three distinct but related and complementary—
not as three divergent and mutually exclusive—strands of moral discourse, we may
begin to clear away some of the misunderstandings that threaten the relationship
between moral knowledge and ethical action both in the applied work of leaders and
the in the scholarship of educational administration. We may, also begin to see how
experiential difference may find pragmatic resolution with the sameness characteristic
of normative guides and expectations. Figure 3, "Three Strands of Moral Discourse,"
on page 293 below attempts to do this by assigning each of the three perspectives
developed by MacIntyre to a specific domain of influence and listing the kinds of
activities to which each typically applies and the primary epistemic assumptions each
entails.

When the three strands of knowledge interwoven in experience are not
distinguished in reflection there is a confusion of domains and epistemic assumptions
that results in what may seem to be an unbridgeable gap between moral awareness
and action. Campbell's finding that administrators and teachers seem removed from
the moral enactment of their beliefs is one instance of such a gapping. If we begin,
however, by recognizing that each of the three strands or types of moral discourse
separated in Figure 3 simply do a different kind of work, the appropriateness of which is
dependent upon context, we can begin to clarify the relationship between kinds of
### Figure 3: Three Strands of Moral Discourse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective/Approach</th>
<th>Activity &amp; Domain</th>
<th>Epistemic Assumptions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Encyclopaedic</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The practitioner as intuitive scientist.</em></td>
<td>Scholarship/Research</td>
<td>Empirical knowledge will clarify moral considerations by creating objectively verifiable and generalizable knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inquiry disciplined by methodology</td>
<td>Inductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Science (Natural &amp; Social)</td>
<td>Tests of reliability and validity obtain; commensurability of idea with &quot;reality&quot; is the goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Imagination, Creation</td>
<td>&quot;Seeing is believing.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inquiry becomes invention through creation of methods, metaphors, and vocabularies</td>
<td>Synthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Art/Poiesis</td>
<td>Knowledge is particularistic, contingent, and non-isomorphic (i.e., perspectival).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
<td>Extrinsically determined values delimit moral autonomy through establishing truth criteria and ethical standards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Insight through subscription to extrinsic truths and limits</td>
<td>Deductive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religion/Metaphysics/Ethics</td>
<td>A regulative, universal knowledge is developed through conformity with epistemic and moral truths embedded in traditions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;Believing is seeing.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
moral knowledge and the ethical action appropriate to each. In seeing how each strand is related to the other two in shaping distinctive but interrelated and simultaneously occurring dimensions of moral life, the relationship between knowledge and action can become less enigmatic, oppositional, and perplexing. We, for example, can refrain from using genealogical tools, which are appropriate for understanding the experience of individual leaders, to produce either encyclopaedic or traditionalist knowledge claims, and vice versa.

In much leadership theory, the three distinctive strands of moral discourse and the domains to which each applies are either not distinguished at all or are freely mixed together. The confusion that can result from this intermixing can be illustrated when genealogical knowledge, which is most useful in comprehending the development of an administrator's personal moral life or idiographic narratives, is used to determine the moral status of an institutional issue or a normative practice. As many a president, both of universities and of larger, more explicitly political jurisdictions can testify ruefully, the determination of an issue's moral status lies predominantly within the collective, normative domain described by what we may call the traditionalist discourse, not within the genealogical perspective of the individual actor. We see a similar confusion of domains when we become puzzled that the methodological relationship between repeated observations and eventual generalizability does not seem to hold for our perceptions of individual leaders. In this case, the non-isomorphic, interpretation-dependent, multiplex knowledge of the genealogical perspective is confused with the knowledge-making assumptions appropriate to the encyclopaedic perspective premised in objectivity and methods suited to its determination.

It is not surprising that, when the three strands of moral discourse are conflated as if they were but one, incorporative moral vocabulary, the consequent quest for a discernable moral unity is interrupted with contradictions that jeopardize virtue by problematizing the relationship between moral knowledge and ethical action—between "how we talk and how we act" (March, 1986). My suggestion is that this dissociation between knowledge and action, that, in turn, produces the moral dissonance MacIntyre finds so disturbing and the ethical disjunction that Campbell finds perplexing, is the result of a correctable conceptual confusion rather than of an irremediable and
substantive muddle. In order to get better at bringing comprehensibility, constancy, and consistency to the relationship between moral knowledge and action within the complex realities that are educational organizations, we must first get better at knowing when to ask which kind of questions of what sort of things. We must be sure that we are looking in the right places for moral realities that do not export well to other complementary but different frameworks.

This still leaves one very important issue unresolved: how do we know which moral discourse is to prevail in a given situation or context; that is, how are we to know when to ask which questions of what things, or when we are looking in the "right" place? For example, how are we to ascertain when a university president's personal narrative is independent of professional practice in the sense that it leaves untouched the normative traditions that safeguard an institution's identity and welfare. Restated in MacIntyre's language from *Three Rival Formulations of Moral Inquiry*, how are we to know more generally when a moral issue falls within the encyclopaedic, genealogical, or traditionalist domain, and, therefore, which kinds of moral knowledge might be appropriate in addressing it?

Here the Richard Rorty (1989) of *Contingency, irony, and solidarity* is of pragmatic assistance. Rorty's distinction between private irony and liberal hope reminds us that the genealogical discourse, that can speak eloquently to questions of self-creation and personal meaning, applies primarily to the private life of the individual. And although it may make possible the articulation of objectives yet unimagined by encyclopaedic or traditionalist discourses, it is unable to speak well or immediately to the issues addressed by either. These issues, which include, for Rorty, the public hope that we may build a social solidarity morally premised in the reduction of cruelty to others while maximizing the individual freedom for self-creation, must be spoken primarily in a normative vocabulary that references existing social traditions while simultaneously pointing beyond them. To admit that the encyclopaedic, the traditionalist, and the genealogical discourses each have specific domains of application is not to admit that moral discourse is hopelessly fractured. It is, on the contrary, only to recognize that virtue speaks in one vocabulary when it addresses the individual and in another when it addresses the collective.
Nevertheless the encyclopaedic perspective may, given the nature of its suppositions, be deaf in all but the most superficial of ways to the vocabularies through which virtue can speak. Said another way, the empirically reductive language of facts may simply be unable to support the substantive discussion of values and the practicable discussion of beliefs that is the beginning of virtue. This means that the encyclopaedic accumulation of more knowledge will not, by itself, resolve the sometimes agonistic tensions between what is private and what is public, and what is moral and what is not. Similarly, the traditionalist perspective that would make moral knowledge derivative from fixed ethical signposts, cannot sufficiently contain, as we have seen in analysis of MacIntyre’s arguments made in After Virtue, either the longings or the possibilities inherent in human nature. As Rorty (1989: 197) admits, these perhaps permanent stresses invite a set of moral dilemmas that challenge not only what we know, but the very vocabularies within which our knowledge is expressed and our actions are justified:

The existence of these two sides (like the fact that we may belong to several communities and thus have conflicting moral obligations, as well as conflicts between moral obligations and private commitments) generates dilemmas. Such dilemmas we shall always have with us, but they are never going to be resolved by appeal to some further, higher set of obligations which a philosophical tribunal might discover and apply. Just as there is nothing which validates a person’s or a culture’s final vocabulary, there is nothing implicit in that vocabulary which dictates how to reweave it when it is put under strain. All we can do is work with the final vocabulary we have, while keeping our ears open for hints about how it might be expanded or revised.

The dilemmas to which Rorty points are not so much problems to be solved as they are existential tensions endemic to the human situation as we now know it. By finding new ways to think and to talk about the human condition itself, and, thereby, to expand its possibilities, we can, potentially, become both more human and more humane. That the continuing tensions ever engendered by the distinction between public and private domains will not reduce to either an empirically or a metaphysically fact-based resolution leads us, then, to a perhaps paradoxical moral hope rather than to an epistemic dejection.
This hope, expressed in social terms, is, as Rorty puts it, the hope for the creation of solidarity through a gradual widening of a constricted and isolated sense of "us" into an open and more inclusive sense of "we." Operationally, this hope can be enacted in the push to broaden interpretations towards inclusivity in place of an inherent bias to reinforce exclusivity. Within the metaphor of conversation, this hope would be realized in the valuation of variation rather than to stress methods for its systematic reduction and eventual elimination. It implies that we would begin to develop vocabularies and grammars that lend themselves as much to the expression of difference as to the establishment of sameness. It is finally to admit that coherence neither requires nor is benefited by the establishment of a fixed language that speaks in a predictable monotone.

To include, in its broadest terms, such ambitions as part of a new agenda for leadership studies within the field of educational administration points beyond the manifold attempts to reduce human experience to formulas for social manipulation. The individual within the context of organizational studies would no longer be a problem to be solved through the artifice of management, but a harbinger of a solidarity towards which we might aspire and struggle. And the hope of administration would be to make this struggle humane through a leadership that would seek the moral unfolding of possibility in place of codes and categories that would stabilize current experience through its control and containment. This change in agenda reflects but one of the more imaginable prospects for the development of educational administration as a discipline when leadership is released from its status as a regulative professional practice to find its fulfilment as a praxis ordered by the continuing iterations of the moral impulse.

A Summative Graphical and Tabular Presentation of Data: Contextualizing Difference

One final graph and one last table are presented as a way of giving synthetic focus to the empirical data developed in and through this study. Graph 7 (see page 298) provides a visually summative presentation of the differences among presidents in their respective point allocations to organizational models and leadership analogues. It is, I think, a self-explanatory rendering of non-trivial difference as a significant attribute
Graph 7. Organizational Models and Leadership Analogues Intergroup Comparison: Presidents A, B, C, D, E

Rational-Structural
Collegium
Political
Atomistic-Symbolic
Adhocracy

Points Assigned

Organizational Models

Points Assigned

Leadership Analogues
of the presidential sample for this study. Summative Table 21 (see page 300) brings the graphical representations of difference and the variations expressed in interviews and presidential texts, within an organizing framework based on MacIntyre's tripartite schematic, which, under a Rortyesque reading, becomes a framework for giving provisional coherence—not final resolution—to moral difference. As the graphical lines are metaphorical constructs that constitute, for the purposes of this study, distinguishing presidential "signatures," the framework is an invented heuristic that would facilitate comprehension rather than a discovered principle that would reify what can only be a projected order.

The graphical representation for the organizational model and leadership analogue preference profiles are presented in miniature under each president's letter designation as a quick visual reference to the differences characteristic of the sample. The profile for organizational analogues is the upper graph for each; the profile for leadership analogues is the lower graph for each. The graphs are presented in full size as Graphs 1-5 in Chapter 5. The information tabularly summarized under the three headings "narrative," "practice," and "tradition" is based on data summarized in this chapter and the one immediately before it.

The "Professional Practice" column at the center of the table indicates the organizational models and leadership analogues most preferred by each president. In the sense in which Baldridge mentions above, these metaphors for organization and leadership are strong indicators of the habits of action that guide presidential thought and behavior. They represent in highly condensed form the practicable beliefs presidents have about their organizations and their work. They are continuous with the "world-hypotheses" (Pepper, 1984) that prefigure what presidents see, what they do, and how that doing is narratively rendered. In terms of MacIntyre's tripartite schema, professional practice would bring together the encyclopaedic (i.e., technical), genealogical (i.e., interpretive), and the traditional (i.e., normative) aspects of the presidency that, when endowed with moral impulse, would effect the unity of idea, belief, and action that Hodgkinson refers to as praxis.

The "Narrative-Idiographic" column presents my summary of what is most salient in the presidential interviews and texts that speaks to the personal apprehension of the
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presidents</th>
<th>Narrative-Idiographic</th>
<th>Professional Practice</th>
<th>Tradition-Nomothetic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Learning presidential leadership and the organizational constraints of the university</td>
<td>Organizational Model(s) Collegium Rational/Structural Leadership Analogues Colleague Negotiator/Mediator Entrepreneur</td>
<td>President as first among equals in a community of shared vision Communitarian Catalyst for innovation and community Collegial leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Value and belief centered &quot;Philosophical&quot; about the presidential role and its limitations</td>
<td>Organizational Model(s) Political Leadership Analogues Entrepreneur Philosopher King</td>
<td>President as coherence-giver to a fractious community of independent intellects Development of the intellect Encouraging and civilizing campus discourse Transforming confrontation into conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>High identification with the presidential role The dividing line between role and private life can be difficult to negotiate</td>
<td>Organizational Model(s) Adhocracy Leadership Analogues Entrepreneur Charismatic</td>
<td>President as bridge between the university and its publics Restoring practicable standards and deepening the connection of the university to its immediate community Developing opportunities within the university for new initiatives and projects that are societally in demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>High identification with the presidential role</td>
<td>Organizational Model(s)</td>
<td>Transforming confrontation into conversation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The dividing line between role and private life can be difficult to negotiate</td>
<td>Adhocracy</td>
<td>President as bridge between the university and its publics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership Analogues</td>
<td>Restoring practicable standards and deepening the connection of the university to its immediate community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
<td>Developing opportunities within the university for new initiatives and projects that are societally in demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charismatic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>An &quot;outsider&quot; working her way in by using the skills of a &quot;real-time anthropologist&quot;</td>
<td>Organizational Model(s)</td>
<td>President as repairwoman for past organizational problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active incredulity to what for others might be taken-for-granted aspects of university life</td>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Re grounding of academic programs in new models of inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Atomistic/Symbolic</td>
<td>Enforcing standards of professional excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership Analogues</td>
<td>Restoring financial prudence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Guide</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Politician</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiator/Mediator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Entrepreneur</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Practical optimism</td>
<td>Organizational Model(s)</td>
<td>President as charismatic leader and exemplar of practical knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High personal identification with the university</td>
<td>Rational-Structural</td>
<td>Defining mission; keeping mandate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth, vigor, and charisma</td>
<td>Collegium</td>
<td>Engendering the competition that creates strength, focus, and efficiencies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
presidency by those in the sample. This column contains condensations of much more complex data that point to the hypotheses and structures around which the more idiosyncratic world of the presidency is constructed. This, in MacIntyre's terminology, is the genealogical dimension of moral knowledge conditioned by the nomothetic limit of expectation. These communally, societally, or culturally shared expectations, in turn, are indicated in the "Tradition-Nomothetic" column. Here I have provided condensations of each president's overarching ethos of what should constitute the normative aspects of the presidency. The table, then, works from the left and right hand columns towards the center as idiographic and nomothetic elements of the presidency press to find form in a praxis that is a carrier of both social requirements and individual conviction. As the metaphors that shape professional practice seek enaction, we enter the contested territory delineated by Rorty, in which conflicting moral obligations seek temporary reconciliation in both individual practices and collective outcomes.

The graph and the table permit certain observations that are, admittedly, more constructions resulting from the conventions used to derive and present data as they are findings methodologically secured as facts. First, the presidency combines personal vision and desire with extrinsic expectations about what presidents should do and how they should do it. Personal impulse is, per MacIntyre, disciplined by the goods internal and external to practices that pre-exist individual practitioners. To be sure, these "goods" are contingent—they vary by institution, historical moment, and circumstance—but they are there and they do matter, often greatly, to those who would become competent and respected university presidents. Among the plenitude of possibilities continuously introduced by an institutional setting high in ambiguity and equivocality, presidents must select only certain things to do. In selecting where they shall direct their attention, presidents invariably, if often unreflectively, engage moral issues.

Second, the nomothetic aspect of the presidency is overwhelmingly pragmatic. That is, the things that presidents choose to do must be seen to make a difference in the eyes of their constituents and employers, but, still more importantly, in their own eyes. The stories presidents tell about their presidencies, as the stories told by the
presidents in our sample bear out, are inevitably stories of achievement. And these achievements reflect, at least so the respective stories go, a coincidence of internal goods with external goods—with things that matter to presidents with things that matter to their institutions. At their most strained, presidential narratives must assert that the goods individually sought coincide with the goods needed by the institution even if those within the institution do not immediately recognize this coincidence. Presidents seek goods whose achievement is possible and can be verified, ideally to the community at large, but in situations where such consensual validation is unavailable, at least to themselves.

Third, presidents cultivate virtues capable of supporting their professional practice and the narratives they compose about it. Whether these virtues are President A’s communitarianism, President B’s quest for civility, President C’s desire to connect to his university’s publics, President D’s restoration of excellence, or President E’s achievement of mission and mandate through a competitiveness believed invigorating, they help presidents form habits of action that give order and coherence to their presidencies. To use the language developed above, presidents translate beliefs into practicable habits of action that allow them to speak in a consistent final vocabulary that indicates moral conviction and directs action. The genealogical discourse indicative of the idiographic, narrative rendering of experience and the traditional discourse that frames and phrases nomothetic expectations, merge to shape the rudiments of presidential practice by educating the virtues that give it orientation. The question of the sufficiency of this education and the virtues that are its curriculum, returns us to Rorty’s injunction to continue to enlighten the final vocabularies we now use to address moral matters presented as individual choice.

Fourth, and finally, presidents "grow" final vocabularies that meld aspects of the agenda of organizational mastery to the uneasy fit this agenda has to the university. Although the presidents in this sample each have an agenda that they are busy accomplishing in their daily work, they also recognize the personal and organizational limits that will attenuate the achievements they actively seek. This is most readily seen in the ability of experienced presidents to address failure as well as accomplishment. Nevertheless, as we have seen repeatedly in data gathered from interviews,
questionnaires, and texts, presidents by and large construct images of leadership and organization that lend themselves more to mastery than to its limits.

Presidents are, in Birnbaum's (1986) phrase, "intuitive scientists" who learn, like MacIntyre's encyclopaedist, from experience. As in all human knowledge-making, however, this learning is imperfect. Like experience itself, learning is shaped as much by individual beliefs, needs, and expectations as it is by the desire to develop an intellectually critical awareness:

Presidents build schemas of effectiveness that are based upon previous career success and upon the normative expectation that presidents have critical effect on institutional life. When they encounter new and ambiguous situations, they are likely to anticipate, and therefore to observe, successful outcomes and to attribute these to their own efforts. When outcomes are not successful, they are likely to consider them as a result of factors outside their control and are thereby able to discount the disconfirming data. (Birnbaum, 1986: 392-3)

It is no surprise then, that as presidents move through the multiple institutional ambiguities in which they find opportunities for presidential work, they interpret their actions, the situations that give rise to them, and their outcomes in a manner that supports presidential efficacy. But, as Birnbaum (1986: 393) goes on to point out, extending his epigraph to the fourth chapter, the selective appropriation of experience and event is not the exclusive prerogative of presidents:

We are all subject in some measure to errors induced by cognitive distortion. That is true not only for college presidents, but also for those who study college presidents. We can argue that our scholarly skills and detachment identify us more as formal scientists than as intuitive scientists, but we might have a difficult time supporting that assertion with evidence. When drawing conclusions about presidents and leadership, are we not subject to the distortions of the availability heuristic just as presidents are?

In seeking to "read" the presidency, we are inevitably subject to the misprisions characteristic of the presidential behaviors we observe. The practice of research into leadership is, then, as prone to the seduction of mastery as are its subjects. Needing to find that circumstance is controlled, we attribute the ability to control it to those we call leaders and, in the process, prepare ourselves to submit to their voices. In doing so we inject leadership with the mastery that we convince ourselves is discovered by objective methodologies and that is, therefore, a essential characteristic of
administration and essential to organizational well-being. The equation of mastery and leadership is regarded as an objective and objectifiable fact only because its status as a human projection is disregarded.

We in educational administration too readily allow a guiding fiction abetted by systematic and subliminal "cognitive distortion" to foreclose alternative constructs of what we can mean by leadership, organization, and knowledge. By unloosening the hold of mastery upon concept and practice we may begin to make administrative studies the source of enlivening contributions to a continuing conversation about the kind of moral enterprise education is and can be. We may finally come to realize that this conversation need be constrained by no limits other than those generated by the human imagination. As Christopher Hodgkinson (personal conversation, 1998) has astutely remarked, the territory to be decorously and delicately explored in these conversations is none other than that in which mystery challenges mastery in the experience of leaders and in the reports we continue to write about them.

At the Edge of Modernism: Reclaiming Nietzsche as Moral Progenitor

A revisiting of the contest cast by MacIntyre in After Virtue between Nietzsche and Aristotle brings us to the limits of this dissertation, and, hence, to its conclusion. Although we do not have space, or, perhaps, patience, for a full examination of the repercussions of the fundamental philosophical antipathy this matching represents, the significance of the pairing for how we are able to think about our shared destiny as moderns merits further consideration.

To begin, MacIntyre's selection of antithetical philosophical protagonists is telling.\(^3\) While Aristotle is a seminal personage within and a cipher for the classical Occidental tradition of metaphysics and systematic rationalism, the figure of Nietzsche stands more enigmatically at the threshold of the contemporary world. Nietzsche is both perspicacious expositor and unflinching critic of the tradition that has led to the ills and the advantages of the modern consciousness. He is not, however, a pacific philosopher. Where ancient philosophical systems promise a metaphysically established order and security,\(^4\) Nietzsche speaks in an ironic, discomfiting voice as he unrelentingly exposes the insufficiency of the certainties that would govern human life.
Nietzsche’s incredulity towards metanarratives is amply meted out and his readiness to expose their fictive nature is too often, and I would argue mistakenly, read as an invitation to a destructive nihilism.\textsuperscript{5}

Admitting that the capability of the human spirit to reckon with the Nietzschean perspectivist agenda may be doubted, we cannot, as Maclntyre inadvertently illustrates, easily explain him away or escape the implications of his thoughts. He stays with us.\textsuperscript{6} As George Grant (1974: 24) observes, the impact of Nietzsche’s work penetrates to the core of who we are:

Indeed it might have been better for humanity if Nietzsche’s works of high genius had never been written, or if written, published. But to raise this possibility implies that it is better, at least for most men, not to be told where they are. Nietzsche’s words raise to an intensely full light of explicitness what it is to live in this era. He articulates what it is to have inherited existence as a present member of western history.

Central to this existence is Nietzsche’s recognition that past metanarratives or overarching systems of meaning no longer possess the efficacy they once enjoyed. He summarizes this in his perhaps most audacious and most misunderstood statement: "God is dead." Viewed as an instance of unbridled intellectual hubris, this declaration is misused to dismiss Nietzsche’s insights as the excited speculations of an undisciplined personal animus and a generalized philosophical petulance. But it is an error, and one widely made, to consider Nietzsche the prideful perpetrator of an act that had already been collectively, if largely unconsciously, committed well before his observation was given voice.

Nietzsche’s announcement that God is dead is a retrospective compression of where his contemporaries had come historically through their thinking and their doing. In Nietzsche’s eyes, human beings had become more than the animal that is capable of telling stories. On the path to and through modernism, we had also become capable of looking askance at the most inclusive and regulative stories we have been able to create.

Reflecting his ambivalence towards this new skeptical consciousness, Nietzsche does not present God’s death as either a victory or a cause for satisfaction. Rather his statement that "God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him" (Nietzsche, 1967/1882: 95; emphasis added), presses Nietzsche to explore the moral
consequences of this singular and irreversible deed as he asks, "How shall we, the murderers of all murderers, comfort ourselves?" (Nietzsche, 1967/1882: 95). And Nietzsche warns of the still unfolding repercussions of the resultant "devaluation of the highest values," (Vattimo: 1988):

The greatest recent event—that "God is dead," that the belief in the Christian God has ceased to be believable—is even now beginning to cast its first shadows over Europe . . . . the event itself is much too great, too distant, too far from the comprehension of the many even for the tidings of it to be thought of as having arrived yet, not to speak of the notion that many people might know what has really happened here, and what must collapse now that this belief has been undermined—all that was built upon it, leaned on it, grew into it; for example, our whole European morality . . . (Nietzsche 1967/1887: 447)

As Walter Kaufmann (1967: 115) notes in his commentary to Thus Spoke Zarathustra, where the announcement of God's death receives its most remembered form, Nietzsche's recognition imposes forcefully upon the human enterprise.

Faith in God is dead as a matter of cultural fact, and any "meaning" of life in the sense of a supernatural purpose is gone. Now it is up to man to give his life meaning by raising himself above the animals and the all-too-human.

In recognizing that all metanarratives, including the greatest metanarrative ever told, must now be read as fictions, Nietzsche throws the responsibility for the moral life back upon humankind. As MacIntyre (1984: 114) notes, echoing Rorty's comments on the Nietzschean project that appear earlier in this dissertation,

The problem then is how to construct in an entirely original way, how to invent a new table of what is good and a law, a problem which arises for each individual. This problem would constitute the core of a Nietzschean moral philosophy.

The phrase "in an entirely original way," however, both concords with and exaggerates the Nietzschean view. It is concordant in that each individual who aspires to what is truly human would have to do the work of building the moral perspective within which a coherent and unique existence may be realized. To use MacIntyre's terms, each individual would be responsible for creating a practice within a narrative quest that has reference only to traditions of an indeterminate and constructed kind. That is, after Nietzsche the individual is responsible for creating a moral life rather than
for discovering the principles that, complied with, would authenticate it. Indeed, Nietzsche's own biography (see Kaufmann, 1974a) presents an example of how this condition, that can place what is moral beyond current moralistic strictures, might be lived out in both its difficulty and its richness. Maclntyre's claim exaggerates, however, by implying that the construction of a moral life must be wrought upon a stage from which all previous philosophical and cultural effects have been removed. Nietzsche's work, which is replete with often telling references to the history of philosophy and culture—both Occidental and Oriental—is enough to dispel this latter notion.

Minus its strategic exaggeration, Maclntyre's statement of the Nietzschean moral charge coincides with his own apparent acceptance that human action and the narratives that give it orientation and coherence cannot be unequivocally defined by determinate metanarratives. For both Nietzsche and, finally, Maclntyre, the responsibility for the creation of meaning, value, and coherence in the narrative quest that is a human life ultimately falls to the individual and to the community of which s/he is a part. There is no singular normative moral perspective that can relieve this responsibility peculiar to the being that is human. To seek such relief is to engage in a nostalgia for an existence made unambiguous through the workings of a determinative metanarrative. It is to continue to seek a god that can speak in a final vocabulary that requires only submission rather than to write the contingent narrative of one's own life. The way backwards to this perhaps comforting moral innocence is synonymous with Grant's sense of not wishing to know where one really is and, therefore, can only be achieved through pretense. It is only available to those who would close their eyes; and neither Nietzsche nor, in the end, Maclntyre can in good faith counsel such a self-inflicted, philosophic blindness.

But if the option to re-enchant the world by breathing new life into exhausted metanarratives is closed, can we, contra Maclntyre, move forward without sacrificing our ability to find purpose, meaning, and moral coherence in life? If we forgo the certainty associated with a singular normative teleology, can we sustain the practices, narratives, and traditions through which we develop and interact purposefully as individuals and communities? If we accept that tradition and teleology exist only in plural and contingent forms, can we retain a moral perspective capable of informing our
actions and our thoughts? Can we sustain moral discourse in a world denied moral and epistemic determinants by Nietzsche's notice of the end of metanarratives? In sum, as Glenn Tinder (1989: 68-72) ponders, "Can we be good without God?"

As our immediate experience confirms, these questions are answerable in the affirmative, although these affirmations are injected with distinctively modernist considerations that make new and exacting demands. Deprived of the resolution point supplied by either determinate foundations or transcendental certainties, the moral imagination must now do more within less clear parameters. That is, as metanarratives are redefined as contingent, constructed, and contestable, the orbit of moral discernment is expanded and the moral imagination must traverse greater and less continuous distances. To answer Tinder's question is to admit that without God, as with God, we can be both good and bad, although we must walk ever more in the moral shadows that Nietzsche first glimpsed over a century ago.

Given Vattimo's Nietzschean observation that modernism is progressively defined by the "devaluation of the highest values," we must qualify the moral sensitivity we can bring to our acts and to our thoughts on two counts. The first qualification results from the varieties of technical rationalism that have sought to fill the vacuum left by the withering of metanarratives. In the absence of axiologically authoritative perspectives, the technical discipline of science manifested in the metanarrative of mastery has succeeded in making control and efficiency the dominant virtues of our time. As technicism advances, we live increasingly in the world of "last men" that Nietzsche describes disdainfully in Thus Spake Zarathustra.10 As previously observed herein, this is a world of beings whose wills are too frail to rise above the satiating happiness they pridefully and amply produce.

Hypnotized by their ability to "satisfice," the last men forget the ends that their making might otherwise serve. Lacking desire to pursue the ends of which they are capable but willfully ignorant, these beings find a placating contentment in making means ends in themselves. It is this transposition of means and ends that, as MacIntyre points out, marginalizes the virtues in the ascendent culture of bureaucratic individualism preoccupied with technique and putative expertise. Within this culture, moral horizons are continuously drawn in as society is substituted for civilization,
organization displaces community, life is subsumed by career, and the serendipitous is superseded by strategic planning. A belief in the possibility and the desirability of the regulation of self, other, and the collective replaces a valuation of the fortuitous, as predictable satisfactions obsessively supplant the risks entailed in meeting the unknown. Progress itself, as Grant has reminded us, is defined within the technicist perspective as the incremental reduction of chance and the systematic increase in mastery. Within the modernist culture of bureaucratic individualism, the message of Socrates is transmogrified; increasingly it is the unplanned—not the unexamined—life that is not worth living.

Maclntyre is right in seeing that within this culture, driven by the technical regulation of the natural and the human worlds, moral issues are regarded as atavistic emotivisms which contribute nothing to the enterprise of mastery. But Maclntyre grounds his insight in a mistaken causal relationship between the efficacy of metanarratives and the sustenance of moral discourse. It is the promotion of the surrogate and morally empty values of technique, efficiency, and control—not the perceived devolution from classical, holistic philosophical perspectives—that jeopardizes the moral life. And it is the surrogacy of technicism that transmutes leadership into bureaucratic management and which would reduce human affairs to the predictable effects of organizational variables. If leadership is to be sustained as a truly moral enterprise capable of developing meaning from organizational event, this technicism must first be disciplined. The need for this discipline, however, does not mean that we must seek refuge in metanarratives that, as Maclntyre demonstrates, have become untenable even for those who would advocate them.

The second qualification of the goods of which we as moderns are capable results from the increasingly conflicted character of individual and social life after metanarratives. The propensity for the appearance of Maclntyre's tragic dilemmas in which two antagonistic goods clash increases when the determinative quality of metanarratives is explicitly denied. The recognition of the insufficiency of metanarratives interrupts the regulative or screening function they had previously exercised. Once it is acknowledged that "such nets over chaos are simply comforting
illusions" (Grant, 1974: 36), the competing goods and standards that inhere in practices, narratives, and traditions contest more openly for primacy. In short, the exercise of our will is, at times, made vertiginous as a plurality of divergent ends contests for allegiance. Indeed, we are presented with the possibility—dramatically rendered so well in Shakespeare's tragic protagonists—of willing nothing given the seemingly unorderable range of choices with which we may be confronted.

To existentially capture this condition, Nietzsche creates the image of "the nihilists," who, in Grant's (1969: 34) terms, "have no given content for their willing." Retaining a directionless will, these failed beings who rise but a half-step above the last men, spawn

the violence and cataclysms which will come forth from men who would rather will nothing than have nothing to will. They will be resolute in their will to mastery, but they cannot know what that mastery is for. (Grant, 1969: 34)

That Nietzsche reviles both the last men and the nihilists is too easily forgotten. Disregarding his rebuke of both the self-assured complacency associated with the modernist culture of technique and the willfulness exempted from moral scrutiny that is the common property of zealots, Nietzsche is too readily presented as a mystagogue of the unilluminated will and as the philosophical father of a Twentieth Century fascism that would have repulsed him. Nietzsche's unfortunate choice of the term *ubermensch* to convey what he regarded as a viable existential alternative to either the last men or the nihilists has mired his thinking in a rhetoric that makes for distortion rather than clarity.

For present purposes, it is sufficient to recognize that Nietzsche, in his life and in his philosophy, earnestly sought an alternative to the hedonism of the last men and the blind willing of the nihilists. We may circumvent the inflation of the individual that is Nietzsche's salvific doctrine of the *ubermensch* by looking instead to the model of conversation as a more ordinary and shared context within which we may both exercise and edify our moral imagination. By seeing organization as an enduring conversation about purposes and practices, we may augment and capitalize upon the goods inherent in the difference that is pluralism. Extending the metaphor of conversation to administration, we may also begin to redefine leadership in a way that moderates the
drive towards mastery through an accentuation of the "moral relevance" defined above by Rorty (1989: 82) as the potential to "alter one's sense of what is possible and important."

In the absence of a definitive good, we may choose to engage in a continuing, if sometimes trying, conversation about how conflicting "oughts" may be arranged. This conversation represents an engagement of the other in a non-foundational and fallible attempt to derive meaning, orientation, and action from the ambiguities of experience. As this conversation unfolds, practices, narratives, and traditions are continuously revised, as may be the languages within which they are articulated. Leadership consists more in participating in this conversation and safeguarding its development than in seeking to dominate it through the exercise of power or in adopting the control-oriented behaviors normally associated with managerialism.

Unless we find value in conversation—a conversation informed but not limited by our cultural heritage, organizational assumptions, and personal predilections—as a pragmatic metaphor for administration, it seems that we have but two options. Either we will continue to seek, as does MacIntyre, a way to end a discourse that we disparage as intractable noise, or we will subscribe to the "metavalue" (Hodgkinson, 1978: 180–186) of technical control as a sufficient end for organizational striving. Each option follows a different route to the same destination: to reestablish mastery as a hedge against the chaos believed to attend unchecked pluralistic difference. And each option, accordingly, precludes the realization of administration as a non-prescriptive moral praxis.

To move outside the orbit of mastery, we need to unfix our horizons from the regulative certainties promised by metaphysics, empiricism, and technicism. We need the conceptual wherewithal to exchange the quest for a mastery based upon a determinate metanarrative for the conversation which engages a plurality of narratives each capable of speaking "an image of truth" (Blake 1966/1790-1793: 151). As "hermeneutics is an expression of hope that the cultural space left by the demise of epistemology will not be filled . . ." (Rorty, 1980: 315; emphasis added), conversation is an expression of hope that the cultural space left by the demise of metanarratives will not be filled. Forsaking the ambition to conclude conversation, attention may be more
usefully directed to ensure conversation's sustenance. In place of a singular epistemological narrative capable of regulating human inquiry and discourse, the moral impulse may now seek realization as, rather than through, conversation.

It is through the initiation and sustenance of the hermeneutic conversation Rorty advocates that we may avoid the pitfall of presumptive certainty and the pratfall of seeking to establish a technical mastery over the unpredictabilities of human circumstance. Conversation, as the medium in which our narrative truths are made, revised, and remade through a process of continuing interpretation, supplies a model for knowledge-making that can avoid the either/or options characteristic of dichotomic thinking. Contrary to either reductive empiricism or prescriptive metaphysics, conversation invites a multiplicity of voices that can be recognized and heard once discourse is relieved of the strictures imposed by metanarratives.

In distinguishing himself from those who would operate within the extant agenda of organizational control and behavioral manipulation, Greenfield (1980: 35) illustrates how the exchange of epistemology for hermeneutics, an exchange made possible by the movement from Aristotle to Nietzsche and the understanding of inquiry as conversation rather than as inquest, works itself simply and without affectation into procedures for research and patterns of administrative practice:

They would overlay action in the world with a scientific and objective explanation that has universal applicability. I would seek to understand the action by working from the perspective of those involved in it and would find explanation only in the juxtaposition of those understandings and in the interpretation of them.

Abandoning the search for the constituent variables or the normative prescriptions believed to determine administrative behaviors, research must begin in a conversation with those who enact the practices we wish to understand. In accepting the mode of conversation, the project to render individuals and social collectives predictable, and, therefore, within the orbit of epistemic or administrative control is no longer primary. Allowing voice becomes more important than finding and applying the supposedly effective, generic principles of a management science that would establish conformity by silencing the dissonance of difference within organizations. In this revised perspective, administrative research and practice come to share an interest in making
audible rather than reducing diverse narrative histories of self, other, and organization either to a common statistical measure or to an all-encompassing metaphysical prescription.

Allowing the other to define her/himself in open conversation, however, entails risk as well as potential gain. Once the risk is taken "to transform a certain kind of silence into speech" (Merleau-Ponty, 1962: 59), the possibility of a vertiginous uncertainty emerges. While this risk attends any stepping beyond metanarratives, it also makes possible an unexpected reward: the reward of the unexpected—

Our casuistic analysis of what happens when two persons engage in discourse may thus serve as a corroboration and further explication of one of William James's profound insights into life in a pluralistic social world. James (1962b: 197) maintained: 'You accept my verification of one thing, I yours of another. We trade on each other's truth.' And such 'trading on each other's truth' may also generate states of genuine uncertainty with respect to what is being meant which, at least under certain conditions, make for transcendence of a person's repertory of pre-established 'meanings'. The moment when a previously unequivocal expression... becomes ambiguous may hence be the dawning of a novel aspect of life. (Rommetveit, 1980: 145; emphasis in original)

The "dawning of a novel aspect of life" through a dialogue of difference enriches the conversation that is human culture and endows it with the creative quality that originates in and furthers openness. It is the means by which, per Rorty, new descriptions of phenomena are generated by individuals who themselves resist exhaustive self-description. It is how we enlarge our acquaintance with the unfamiliar, how we begin our knowing of that which is other, and how new ideas are given form. If the presidential conversations that constitute the empirical core of this study, and the analysis and philosophical reflections they have inspired contribute in even a small way this larger conversation, they will have been worthwhile.

Endnotes for Chapter 6

1. It is not hard to see the wisdom in Cohen and March's (1986: xvi) words in this regard—words that help to off-set Kerr's overreading of their skepticism about the nexus of leadership and control in the university:

For colleges to adapt smoothly to their external environments and internal necessities college presidents must do well the things that a qualified
chief executive is expected to do. These include a host of complicated things often dismissed as mere administration but easily recognized as important when they are not performed well: assuring that human and physical resources are matched and available when needed, that the routines by which large bureaucracies function are working well, that bills are paid and people are not left standing in the rain, that the telephone is answered, letters are read, and lawns are cut.

Distinguishing the importance of leadership per se from their skepticism about the influence of a particular person or personality, Cohen and March (1986: xvii) add: Within the range of behavior that a college president is willing to consider, it is extremely difficult for a president, or anyone else, to be confident that much arbitrary presidential control can be, or has been, exerted over the major course of events within a college.

The parallel between what Cohen and March have to say, and President E's remarks about the unlikelihood of even inept presidents doing any lasting damage is obvious and interesting.

2. The inability of the encyclopaedic perspective to address the moral issues which are central to both the genealogical and the traditionalist perspectives is convincingly demonstrated by David Hume (1960/1888) in A Treatise of Human Nature. There Hume notes that the dichotomy between "is" and "ought" precludes empirical data from yielding moral conclusions—i.e., knowing what "is" the case cannot help us to know what "ought" to be the case. The last-ditch attempt of the positivistically minded empiricist to develop moral knowledge by cataloguing and counting values ultimately can tell us little about what ought to constitute the moral life or, more importantly, what it means experientially to think, act, and live within a moral context.

3. Maclntyre's analysis of the contest between Nietzsche and Aristotle, in which he would like to be a partisan of the latter but finds himself drawn ever closer to the former, makes for an interesting comparison with Umberto Eco's (1989b) analysis of Joyce in The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce. Eco depicts Joyce as a "medievally minded" (Eco, 1989b: 6) man thoroughly engaged by the prospects of the modern:

Underneath the game of oppositions and resolutions in which the various cultural influences collide, on the deepest level, is the radical opposition between the medieval man, nostalgic for an ordered world of clear signs and the modern man, seeking a new habitat but unable to find the elusive rules and thus burning continually in the nostalgia of a lost infancy. (Eco, 1989b: 3).

Further, Eco (1989b: 7) notes,

The medieval thinker cannot conceive, explain, or manage the world without inserting it into the framework of an Order, an Order whereby, quoting Edgard de Bruyne, 'les etres s'empoient les uns dans les autres.'"

And again,
This procedure is typical of a medieval civilization which must reconstruct a world on the ruins of a pagan and Roman one, without yet having a precise vision of the new culture. This is exactly the project that Joyce proposes in destroying the form of the world given to him from traditional culture. With a medieval disposition, he examines the immense repertory of the universe reduced to language, in order to catch glimpses of new and infinite possibilities of combination." (Eco, 1989b: 9-10)

Where Joyce realizes the project of glimpsing the emergent through preexistent orders more self-consciously, we may see MacIntyre engaged in a comparable work via a similar dynamic and with a similar, although in his case, unintended, outcome.

4. The Socrates of the dialogues is an exception in that he appears to enact the role of house "ironist" for whom the only knowledge can be knowledge of ignorance. This is the Socrates of whom Alven Neiman (1991: 373) speaks in his essay Ironic Schooling: Socrates, Pragmatism and the Higher Learning:

Socrates uses irony to 'deny us our certainty by unmasking the world as an ambiguity' (Kundera, 1988). Irony becomes a means of thinking, or inquiry, in a world freed of absolutes. Irony becomes, as Alcibiades understood in the Symposium, a weapon of eros meant not only to dissolve all the ordinary rhythms of life but also to make way for humility and awe within a world where "ideal truth" remains a phantom.

This hardly seems consistent with the Socrates of the Republic who is decidedly more comfortable in spelling out how things should be done and why they must be done as he insists.

5. While not infrequent in occurrence, the mistaking of Nietzsche as a nihilist of the destructive sort is quickly corrected by even those who are critical of him. For example George Grant points out in Time as History (1974: 44), his thoroughly ambivalent appreciation of Nietzsche's genius,

he expressed the contradictions and difficulties in the thought and life of western civilization, not for the sake of turning men away from that enterprise, but so that they could overcome its difficulties and fulfil its potential heights.

Similarly, Karen L. Carr (1992: 42) in The Banalization of Nihilism, her exhaustive exegesis of a too often distorted word, notes,

While he acknowledged that "the world is not worth what we believed," he suggested that, far from having no meaning, "the world could be worth much more than we believed."

6. In his essay "Nietzsche and the Ancients," George Grant (1986: 83) quotes from Nietzsche's 1988 letter to Brandes, "After you had discovered me, it was no trick to find me; the difficulty now is to lose me."

7. Indeed, the full quotation from The Gay Science (Nietzsche, 1967/1882: 95) reads as follows,

God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we, the murderers of all murderers, comfort ourselves? What was holiest and
most powerful of all that the world has yet owned has bled to death under our knives. Who will wipe this blood off us? What water is there for us to clean ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we have to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must not we ourselves become gods simply to seem worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed; and whoever will be born after us—for the sake of this deed he will be part of a higher history than all history hitherto.

Nietzsche's rendering of the murder of God calls up the horrific hubris that resulted in the murder of Jesus re-presented in the "Grand Inquisitor" in Feodor Dostoyevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*. The murder of God is, however, both more drastic and more disconcerting as it precludes the mythos of resurrection. With God's murder, the human animal is irreversibly without access to the comforts of prescriptive moral horizons. And yet, it is this deed which ushers in the possibility of a mature moral existence in which responsibility for damnation or salvation can no longer be off-loaded onto a complicit deity. It is this assumption of moral responsibility, once deemed the exclusive privilege of the divine, to which Nietzsche alludes in his question, "Must not we ourselves become gods . . .?"

That such dire reflections and daunting prospects should occur in a book titled *The Gay Science* is yet another manifestation of Nietzsche's all-pervasive irony, even when dealing with his most profound theme: the revaluation of all values that must follow the exhaustion of metanarratives. In providing a brief rationale for his translation of *Die fröhliche Wissenschaft* as *The Gay Science* (Nietzsche parenthetically subtitled his book *la gaya scienza*, using the Italian language to distinguish his book from the more arid and pedantically carping Nordic scholarship), Walter Kaufmann (1974b: 4-7) helps us to connect his rendering with deeper themes in Nietzsche's philosophical writings and to an abiding characteristic of Nietzsche's philosophical attitude. In doing so he makes a helpful parallel to a more contemporary use of the word "gay:"

Finally, it is no accident that the homosexuals as well as Nietzsche opted for "gay" rather than "cheerful." "Gay science," unlike "cheerful science," has overtones of a light-hearted defiance of convention; it suggests Nietzsche's "immoralism" and his "revaluation of values." . . .

What Nietzsche himself wanted the title to convey was that serious thinking does not have to be stodgy, heavy, dusty, or, in one word, Teutonic . . .

Thus the title of the book has polemical overtones: it is meant to be anti-German, anti-professorial, anti-academic and goes well with the idea of "the good European" that is encountered in these pages. It is also meant to suggest "light feet," "dancing," "laughter"—and ridicule of "the spirit of gravity."

8. MacIntyre (1984: 113) parallels Nietzsche's remark and recognizes his singular importance when he says,

For it was Nietzsche's historic achievement to understand more clearly than any other philosopher . . . not only that what purported to be appeals
to objectivity were in fact expressions of subjective will, but also the nature of
the problems that this posed for moral philosophy."

MacIntyre (1984: 113) goes on, however, to argue that Nietzsche "illegitimately
generalized from the condition of moral judgment in his own day to the nature of
morality as such." Perhaps paradoxically, this is the comment that may be made about
MacIntyre's own attempt to generalize selectively from Aristotle.

9. Rorty (1989: 27-8, emphasis in original) helps explicate what Nietzsche's vision of
the moral life would necessarily exclude and what it would not:

But in abandoning the traditional notion of truth, Nietzsche did not
abandon the idea of discovering the causes of our being what we are. He
did not give up the idea that an individual might track home the blind
impress all his behavings bare. He only rejected the idea that this
tracking was a process of discovery. In his view, in achieving this sort of
self-knowledge we are not coming to know a truth which was out there (or
in here) all the time. Rather, he saw self-knowledge as self-creation. The
process of coming to know oneself, confronting one's contingency,
tracking one's causes home, is identical with the process of inventing a
new language—that is, of thinking up some new metaphors. For any
literal description of one's individuality, which is to say any use of an
inherited language-game for this purpose, will necessarily fail. One will
not have traced that idiosyncrasy home but will merely have managed to
see it as not idiosyncratic after all, as a specimen reiterating a type, a
copy or replica of something which has already been identified. To fail as
a poet—and thus, for Nietzsche, to fail as a human being—is to accept
somebody else's description of oneself, to execute a previously prepared
program, to write, at most, elegant variations on previously written poems.

That is, the human quest after Nietzsche need not deny previous metaphorical self-
descriptions; it simply is required not to succumb to them as final vocabularies that
determine the self. MacIntyre is right in seeing that the problem of self-description is
posed anew for each individual, but this ontic requirement supersedes the notion of
what we normally mean by what is good and what is a law. The Nietzschean sense of
things is rendered economically in Blake's (1966/1790-1793: 152) aphorism: "The
apple tree never asks the beech how he shall grow, nor the lion, the horse, how he
shall take his prey."

10. In developing the distinction between the "last men," "the nihilists," and "the
overman" I draw upon the typology amplified by George Grant in the fourth chapter of
his 1969 Massey Lectures on Nietzsche published initially by the CBC as the small but
excellent book Time As History. Grant's critical appreciation of Nietzsche, as earlier
quotations from him demonstrate, is exceedingly penetrating and it is truly unfortunate
that this exceptional volume, to which I owe so much, is so little known outside of
Canada, let alone within it.

11. It is interesting that strategic planning has lost much of its former lustre for no less
a modernist organizational theorist than Henry Mintzberg, the title of whose 1994 book
The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning: Reconceiving Roles for Planning, Plans, and
Planners, previously cited above, reflects his growing discomfort with both the practice and the outcomes of rationalistic approaches to organizational and management.

12. Nietzsche's presentation of the over-man or super-man, is indicative of the extreme onus he places upon the individual in his philosophical-existential project to redeem the will. As George Grant convincingly argues, the individualistic focus of Nietzsche's thought leads logically to a daunting question:

   The question is whether there can be men who transcend the alternatives of being nihilists or last men; who know that they are the creators of their own values, but bring forth from that creation in the face of chaos a joy in their willing which will make them deserving of being masters of the earth.

   Had Nietzsche's social imagination been healthier, he might have been able to avoid the reduction of experience to the individual that invited such a troubling existential overstatement and brinksmanship. This brinksmanship and overstatement are compounded by Nietzsche's unexpected representationalist conflation of his rendering of experience with the way things really are. Rorty (1989: 5), in discussing the antirepresentationalist philosophical contributions of John Dewey and Donald Davidson, catches Nietzsche, among others, in the act of substituting perspective for "reality:"

   They [Dewey and Davidson] are also almost entirely free of the temptation to suggest that their own philosophical views represent things as they are in themselves. In the past, philosophers who have tried to overcome representationalism have typically succumbed to this temptation:

   Nietzsche, Bergson, Whitehead, and Heidegger are notorious examples.

   It is ironic indeed that the arch advocate of perspectivism would be guilty of the naive realism which he viewed as a cardinal and damning philosophic error.

13. For Rorty, epistemology "mis-takes" normal or conventional discourse as a reflection of what is objectively the case. It is the reification of culturally specific practices as transhistorical truths that make epistemology an inherently problematic venture that can no longer be taken seriously:

   For epistemology is the attempt to see the patterns of justification within normal discourse as more than just such patterns. It is the attempt to see them as hooked on to something which demands moral commitment —Reality, Truth, Objectivity, Reason. To be a behaviorist in epistemology, on the contrary, is to look at the normal scientific discourse of our day bifocally, both as patterns adopted for various historical reasons and as the achievement of objective truth, where "objective truth" is no more and no less than the best idea we currently have about how to explain what is going on. (Rorty, 1980: 385)

   Rorty (1980: 385), in separating himself from the necessity that inheres in Habermas's dialectical machinery, helps us to see how we may at least partially escape the seemingly self-evident norms that drive inquiry within cultures, communities, and disciplines:

   From the point of view of epistemological behaviorism, the only truth in Habermas's claim that scientific inquiry is made possible, and limited, by
"inevitable subjective conditions" is that such inquiry is made possible by the adoption of practices of justification, and that such practices have possible alternatives. But these "subjective conditions" are in no sense "inevitable" ones discoverable by "reflection upon the logic of inquiry." They are just the facts about what a given society, or profession, or other group, takes to be good ground for assertions of a certain sort. Such disciplinary matrices are studied by the usual empirical-cum-hermeneutic methods of "cultural anthropology." From the point of view of the group in question these subjective conditions are a combination of commonsensical practical imperatives (e.g., tribal taboos, Mill's Methods) with the standard current theory about the subject. From the point of view of the historian of ideas or the anthropologist they are the empirical facts about the beliefs, desires, and practices of a certain group of human beings.

To take Rorty seriously is, then, to take knowledge-making less seriously. It is to see the conventions of administration, organization, and knowledge as artifacts of a particular epistemic perspective that attempts to corner the market on truth and to safeguard the assumptions that dictate what constitutes legitimate inquiry. The hermeneutic move—a move that brings together what may otherwise be regarded as the divergent trends within the pragmatist camp (see endnote 1, Chapter 1)—makes incipient alternative vocabularies available for the articulation of as yet unrealized beliefs, desires, and practices through which leadership and its settings may be redescribed.
Appendix A: Presidential Interview Schedule

I. Institutional Purpose and Presidential Function (Questions 1-2)

Question 1. Several recent criticisms suggest that the university is in an intellectual and philosophical malaise; that it has lost sight of its purpose.

1.1. To what extent do you think that Canadian universities share this condition?

1.2. In your view, what purpose(s) should shape Canadian universities?

1.3. As president of your university, what role do you play in defining institutional purpose?

Question 2. What do you think are the key things that Canadian universities should be doing that they are not doing now?

II. Personal Motivation, Institutional Motivation, and Expectations of Self and Employer (Question 3-5)

Question 3. What expectations, desires, and other factors led you to seek and to accept the presidency of your current institution?

Question 4. What do you think were the most important factors that led to your selection as president of your current institution?

Question 5. Given your experience as president:

5.1. Were the expectations of those who appointed you realistic?

5.2. Were your initial expectations of yourself realistic?

III. The Work of the Presidency, Successes, and Failures (Questions 6-9)

Question 6. What do you feel are the most important things that you do as president of your university both on and off campus?

Question 7. When you want to assess how well you are doing as president:

7.1. how do you go about doing it?

7.2. where do you look and to whom do you talk?

7.3. what key factors do you consider?

7.4. what measures of assessment do you use for each?

Question 8. What do you regard as your most important successes?

Question 9. What do you regard as areas of failure or disappointment?
IV. Presidential Influence (Question 10)

Question 10. Clark Kerr is associated with the assertion, "Presidents make a difference."

10.1. To what extent do you think that the President does make a difference to your university?
10.2. In what matters can and should presidents make a difference?
10.3. Speaking pragmatically, how do presidents go about making a difference in these matters?

V. Values, Conflict, and Resolution (Questions 11-13)

Question 11. How do your personal values (i.e., enduring beliefs defining that which is worth doing) influence how you conduct the presidency? (e.g., Do personal values influence how you establish institutional priorities?)

Question 12. Have you encountered situations of significance that have raised real or potential value issues and/or conflicts with other individuals or groups within the university?

Question 13. Would you tell me how you dealt with one such situation that was important for you?

VI. Personal Impact of the Presidency (Question 14)

Question 14. What are the most prominent features of the work of president that have had the greatest impact—positive and negative—upon you as an administrator and as a person?

VII. Learning and Its Costs (Questions 15-17)

Question 15. Has your understanding of the university changed over time and with experience? In what ways?

Question 16. Has experience changed your view of the presidency?

Question 17. Has your work as a university president changed you? In what ways?

IX. Summary Question (Questions 18)

Question 18. If someone you know and respect were to come to you to seek your advice on the advisability of accepting an appointment to a university presidency in an institution comparable to your own, what advice would you give?
Appendix B: Organizational Models

Model I. Rational-Structural

The president is the chief administrator in a vertical organizational structure supported by advisory bodies and committees.

Uncertainty and chance are reduced through systematic information gathering, analysis, and strategic planning. Rational management procedures are objectively applied to enhance organizational clarity and performance expectations. Means-ends chains are developed so that institutional objectives may be efficiently achieved.

The president functions as the chief executive officer and decision-maker. Delegation of tasks is based upon position and expertise.

Model II. Collegium

The president is the first among equals in a collegial environment where there is a horizontal distribution of authority.

Shared governance through formal and informal deliberation leads to a consensual decision-making process. Thoroughness of discussion may displace efficiency and informal contacts may supersede formal hierarchies in importance.

Through consultation and persuasion, the president builds a practicable institutional consensus while maintaining a respectful and co-operative environment consonant with the norms of the academic profession.

Model III. Political

The authority of the president is derived from many coexisting but actively competitive, antagonistically cooperative "constituencies."

Lobbying, strategic positioning, partisan rhetorical exchanges, deal-making, alliance forming, and periodic confrontations are common to institutional life.
The president strives to sustain a functional institutional stability and a shared sense of orderly and fair process in a turbulent and sometimes conflicted environment through coalition building, development of integrative policies, negotiation, brokerage, mediation, and occasional use of the veto.

Model IV. Atomistic-Symbolic

Presidential work takes place within a symbolically defined and "open" institutional culture which supports many semi-autonomous and loosely coupled organizational subunits.

Primarily ritual interactions among insular but functional departmental units characterize a benignly centrifugal and usually productive institution. Organizational cause-and-effect relationships are often ambiguous and sensemaking may be retrospective.

Through the interpretation of ambiguous institutional events, improvisation, subtle adjustments, selective inattention, and invention, the president seeks to achieve an encompassing sense of institutional coherence and purpose in a laissez-faire environment.

Model V. Adhocracy

The president mobilizes the institution to take advantage of emerging opportunities for new forms of teaching, research, and service through the assemblage of multidisciplinary, issue-oriented project teams.

In addition to normal teaching and research activities, the institution is viewed as a source for such temporary, interdisciplinary units. Through them, institutional expertise is applied to innovative projects often initiated in response to needs emerging outside the institution.

Through deciding which issues to address and by distributing needed resources and permissions for the organization of multidisciplinary teams that may transcend normal departmental boundaries, the president determines institutional direction and development.
Appendix C: Leadership Analogues

**Analogue 1: Politician**
The institution is viewed as a composite of distinct constituencies with particular interests and goals. Presidential authority and effectiveness are dependent upon coalition building and the development of policies which gain the cooperation and support of these groups.

**Analogue 2: Problem Solver/Analyst**
The president seeks to bring immediate problems to resolution in an environment in which stability and constancy are valued. Complex and highly charged issues are factored into subsets of more immediate and less volatile problems which can be incrementally brought to resolution.

**Analogue 3: Guide**
The president provides organizational direction in an institution consisting of several semi-autonomous and largely self-directed subunits. Decision-making gives way to interpretation and improvisation in order to allow a diversity of institutional purposes to simultaneously coexist in the service of a common, unifying goal.

**Analogue 4: Entrepreneur**
Fund-raising, recruiting talent, and attracting ideas for the expansion of existing programs and for the development of new ones are the primary presidential activities. Routine administrative tasks are entrusted to others, while the president develops new organizational contexts for innovation.

**Analogue 5: Director**
The president, as the chief executive officer in a hierarchically structured organization, manifests the authority of the governing board. Executive decision-making, presidential directives, and position-based task delegation move the institution towards the collective goals set by the board.

**Analogue 6: Mass Leader**
The president identifies with learners and others who seek institutional transformation. A broad-based notion of empowerment is advocated and an ambivalent position is taken towards traditional centers of institutional and societal authority and accepted ways of doing things.

**Analogue 7: Charismatic**
Presidential personality and presence secure the participation and commitment needed to implement institutional objectives. Externally, the president is regarded as the personification of the institution. Personal persuasiveness permits an intuitive leadership style that often supersedes normal decision-making procedures.
Analogue 8: Colleague
Authority is based upon a valuation of the primacy of teaching and research, and the professional activity of faculty members. The president recognizes the importance of sharing authority with those who have established themselves as educational leaders within the institution.

Analogue 9: Manager
Scientific management techniques are objectively and systematically applied to institutional functions. Cost effectiveness, efficiency, and maximization of limited resources are the overriding principles in developing educational programs and pragmatic strategies which can meet internal and external needs and demands.

Analogue 10: Negotiator/Mediator
Bargaining and mediation are employed to reconcile the actions of competing groups seeking to maximize their respective shares of power and resources. The president relies upon a reputation for consistency and fairness in seeking acceptable compromises in an often conflicted environment.

Analogue 11: Coach
The president develops organizational strength through the selection of personnel for key positions and through the delegation of task-oriented responsibilities. A disciplined team approach is encouraged. Support and guidance are provided to ensure that goals are reached through cooperative action.

Analogue 12: Philosopher King
A commitment to a clearly articulated set of core values forms the basis for presidential understanding, judgement, and action. The president is a constant and known presence whose value-oriented leadership and vision provides guidance for institutional governance and development.
References and Sources


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