A POETIC FOR LEADERS:
ENGAGING THE MORAL IMAGINATION IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
in the Department of Educational Administration
of the College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon

By
Don Shakotko
Fall 1997

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0-612-23964-0
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

College of Graduate Studies and Research

SUMMARY OF DISSERTATION

Submitted in partial fulfilment

of the requirements for the

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

by

DONALD WAYNE SHAKOTKO

Department of Educational Administration
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan

FALL 1997

Examinining Committee:

Dr. M.S. Mentzer

Dean/Associate Dean’s Designate, Chair
College of Graduate Studies and Research

Dr. P. Renihan

Chair of Advisory Committee
Department of Educational Administration

Dr. K. Walker

Advisor, Department of Educational Administration

Professor D. Cochrane

Department of Educational Foundations

Dr. V. Hajnal

Department of Educational Administration

Dr. L. Sackney

Department of Educational Administration

External Examiner:

Dr. M. Bottery
School of Education
University of Hull
England
A POETIC FOR LEADERS: 
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This study examined the role of imagination in educational leadership through an investigation of the creative (poietic) process employed by formal and informal leaders in two schools. The purpose of the study was to explore the ways in which school leaders engaged poietic elements in their leadership practice. The three research questions that guided the research addressed (a) what poietic elements were engaged by educational leaders, (b) how those elements were engaged, and (c) the nature of the moral discourse created by the poietic process. The conceptual framework informing the research proposed that four imaginative elements—stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony—were engaged by formal and informal leaders in school settings to create a "room" within which effective moral discourse could occur.

Two public schools were selected for comparative, exploratory case study. The researcher spent twenty days in participant observation at each school over a time period of six months; during that time, interviews were conducted with the identified formal and informal leaders in each school. The results of the study were reported in the form of episodal narratives which exemplified the engagement of the poietic elements by school leaders.

The study revealed that the four poietic elements were actively and effectively engaged by leaders in the two schools; however, there were clear differences in the ways in which these elements were engaged. Furthermore, the nature of the rooms created by these leaders was influenced by the ways in which these elements were engaged. The level of moral discourse in each room was perceived to be influenced by the propensity of the leaders to engage the poietic elements. The results indicated that the predilection of participants to engage the poietic elements was influenced by cultural and historical factors as well as by the attitudes of the school principal. The study also suggested that
effective engagement of the poietic elements involved an aesthetic-poietic reciprocity on the part of the participants in the room. The poietic elements were not effective in the absence of a manifest appreciation on the part of the other participants in the room. The importance of this reciprocity was especially evident in the exercise of irony among the participants; however, it was clearly evident in each of the four elements. The aesthetic (appreciative) roles of the school principals were perceived to be of equal importance to their poietic (creative) roles.

Several implications for the theory and practice of leadership emerged from the study. The results suggested that the inclusion of an imaginative domain in the conceptualization of leadership might enhance the level of moral discourse in schools and, therefore, provide educators with more effective ways of moving from theory to practice. Similarly, the inclusion of an artistic domain, in formal leadership preparation programs, might increase the effectiveness of leadership praxis. Finally, the author suggested that artistic leadership research might lead to a richer understanding of educational leadership.

BIOGRAPHICAL

1946 Born in Swan River, Manitoba, Canada
1970 Bachelor of Arts, University of Waterloo
1984 Bachelor of Education, University of Saskatchewan
1991 Master of Arts, Briercrest Biblical Seminary
1995 Master of Education, University of Saskatchewan

PUBLICATIONS


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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of imagination in educational leadership through an investigation of the creative (poietic) process exercised by formal and informal leaders in two schools. The purpose of the study was to explore the ways in which school leaders utilized poietic elements in their leadership practice. The three research questions that guided the research addressed (a) what poietic elements were engaged by educational leaders, (b) how those elements were engaged, and (c) the nature of the moral discourse created by the poietic process. The conceptual framework informing the research proposed that four imaginative elements—stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony—were employed by leaders to create a "room" within which effective moral discourse could occur.

Two public schools were selected for a comparative, exploratory case study. The researcher spent twenty days in participant observation at each school over a period of six months. During that time, interviews were conducted with the identified formal and informal leaders in each school. The results of the study were reported in the form of episodical narratives which exemplified the engagement of the poietic elements by school leaders.

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cultural and historical factors as well as by the attitudes of the school principal. The study also suggested that effective engagement with the poietic elements involved an aesthetic-poietic reciprocity on the part of the participants in the room. The poietic elements were not effective in the absence of a manifest appreciation on the part of the other participants in the room. The importance of this reciprocity was especially evident in the exercise of irony among the participants; however, it was clearly evident in each of the four elements. The aesthetic (appreciative) roles of the school principals were perceived to be of equal importance to their poietic (creative) roles.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Studying in the Department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan, has been a rich and rewarding experience. I had the good fortune of working with numerous colleagues and professors whose graciousness and intellectual intensity continually challenged me to "keep on climbing."

Dr. Keith Walker, my faculty advisor and guide, has been a steadfast supporter. From my first fledgling attempts at formulating questions to the final draft of this document, he has offered clarification, correction, and encouragement with gentle enthusiasm. Without fail, I came away from our encounters armed with a list of more sources to investigate and a renewed hope that the project was valuable and attainable.

Professor Don Cochrane of the Department of Educational Foundations offered his critical reasoning skills and, through unrelenting "conjecture and refutation," ensured the intellectual rigour of the project. I am grateful to him for freely sharing his wit, breadth of knowledge, and incisive editing skills.

I have been privileged to work closely with Dr. Larry Sackney and Dr. Vivian Hajnal during my time in the department. From them I learned valuable research skills, particularly the power of collaborative research. As part of a prodigiously productive research team, they offered the wisdom and resources which made the project possible. More importantly, they modelled a professional standard of excellence which inspired my academic efforts.
Dr. Murray Scharf and Dr. Patrick Renihan, both of the Department of Educational Administration, offered constructive criticism of my work from its inception. From these scholars, I have learned the value of metaphor, narrative, irony, and especially humour in academic work.

The insight and incisive critique of Dr. Mike Bottery, my external examiner, is deeply appreciated. He brought a fresh perspective to the final defense and challenged me to re-examine several crucial aspects of the work.

Finally, I wish to express gratitude to Shannon Shakotko, my muse, research partner, and compagnon de voyage. Her ability to "attend the world" is a constant source of wonder to me.
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Chapter 1

THE PROBLEM

"I don't play an instrument, I play a room." (Bob Marley)

Performing artists routinely refer to the venue in which they perform as "the room." For the artist, this metaphor implies much more than simply a physical space and the arrangement of the furniture; it suggests a clearing into which the artist invites the audience for the purpose of sharing in the process of creating a work of art. A "good room" is defined much more by the relationships that develop in that space than by the acoustics or the decor. Both the artist and the audience participate in a reciprocal aesthetic-poietic experience from which a unique and personal creation is born.

Likewise, leaders are artists participating in an ongoing interactive experience within a metaphorical "room," created by the interaction between leader and participants (Foster, 1996). The work which they create together is a "space of excellence where diverse persons are moved to reach toward the possible" (Greene, 1995, p. 184), a clearing within which participants are free to engage in moral discourse and find meaning in their common experience. As performing artists will attest, such a "room" is difficult to define and equally difficult to attain. However, that difficulty should not be seen as a deterrent; rather, it should incite those involved in the study of leadership to actively pursue ways of engaging a similar creative
process in the practice of leadership. Performing art is not merely a metaphor for leadership; in a very literal sense, leadership is art.

In this chapter, I present an introductory exploration of the thesis that leadership has an essential artistic component. In order to provide context and background to the study, I begin with a preliminary argument for the primacy of the relationship between leadership and art. This background information is followed by a more specific qualification of the purpose of the study, culminating in a concise statement of the research problem and the posing of three specific research questions. The significance of this particular research for the advancement of knowledge is explained in the next section. Finally, the definitions of terms and the distinctives of the study are clarified in the final sections of this chapter.

Background to the Study

Several contemporary scholars and practitioners have proposed a significant relationship between leadership and art (DePree, 1989, 1992; Duke, 1989; Pitcher, 1994; Vaill, 1989). These conjectures have largely focused on the artistic characteristics of leader behaviour, suggesting that both effective leaders and good artists share similar imaginative and creative qualities. The implication is that leadership is like art; that just as value is imputed to a work of art by the aesthetic experience of the spectator, so also leadership is ascribed to selected individuals by virtue of the follower’s aesthetic appreciation for the leaders behaviour.

Other contemporary leadership theorists have reacted to this "soft" approach to leadership. They would argue that, in the practice of leadership, art and the creative domain are superfluous at best, and harmful interference at worst (Maxcy & Caldas,
1991). With all due respect to this critical position, I suggest that, rather than going too far, the artistic approach to leadership only goes half way in that it focuses on the aesthetic (appreciative) domain while largely ignoring the poietic (creative) domain. What is notably absent from most of these proposals is a rigorous examination of the specific artistic tools or elements engaged by leaders in their creative endeavour.

Consideration of the relationship between leadership and art can be traced back as far as the writings of Plato and Aristotle (Shusterman, 1992). The Greeks posed the ontological question of the essence of human existence, of beingness, in terms of the relationship between praxis, doing or acting, poiesis, making or creating, and theoria, knowing (Taminiaux, 1987). Unfortunately, we have inherited from them the notion that poetics is separated from and subordinated to praxis—that art is merely an imitation of reality (Shusterman, 1992, p. 52).

Several contemporary philosophers argue for a harmonious balance between these three domains. Gilson (1965, p. 17) identified a trinity of operations—knowing, acting, and making—which define the essence of the human condition. These are intimately related and mutually dependent, yet each is associated with a specific domain of human reasoning and poses a unique ontological question. The study of knowledge (noetics) is related to the intellect and asks the question "What is true?" The study of action (ethics) is related to the will and asks the question "What is good?" The study of production (poietics) is related to the imagination and asks the question "What is beautiful?" Gilson related the three operations through rational activity suggesting that "since man's nature is to be a living creature endowed with reason, rational activity is necessarily included in every human operation as a condition of its very possibility" (p. 18).
Ideas about leadership have tended to focus on the first two of these operations, on knowing and acting, on converting *theoria* into *praxis*, while largely ignoring the *poietic* or artistic mode which trades in imagination. In *Art as Experience*, Dewey (1934) argued at length for "recovering the continuity of esthetic experience with the normal process of living" (p. 10). With Dewey and Gilson, I propose that this third domain informs the other two and furnishes the symbols and meanings which allow us to move from *theoria* to *praxis*, from knowledge to action.

Schon (1987) underscored the importance to leadership practice of this third domain; he claimed that the relationship between knowledge and practice needed to be reframed and that new questions needed to be asked: "We should start not by asking how to make better use of research-based knowledge but by asking what we can learn from a careful examination of artistry, that is the competence by which practitioners actually handle indeterminate zones of practice" (p. 13). Schon went on to suggest that we may learn about artistry as an exercise of intelligence by "carefully studying the performance of unusually competent performers" (p. 13). This study proposes that the careful observation of leaders, possessing varying levels of artistic competence, will further our knowledge of the relationship between the three domains described above.

In developing a poetic model for sociological inquiry, Brown (1977, pp. 26-27) advanced a "cognitive aesthetic," grounded in symbolic realism, which transcends the dualisms of science and art, truth and beauty, reality and symbols, explanation and interpretation. For him, both artists and scientists are *makers* "not merely as craftsmen but now in a cognitive and ontological sense" (p. 34), and what they make is "space for the act of ciphering, a surface for the enactment of transformations" (p. 35).
Similarly, leaders also are *makers* who work, not with sounds or colours, but with symbols, to create a space for moral discourse.

This study was an exploration of the ways in which leaders engage four imaginative elements in creating a public space, a *polis* (Taminiaux, 1987, p. 160) within which moral discourse can occur. The specific context within which this study took place was uniquely determined by fortuitous circumstances and careful consideration of the nature of the research question. For reasons which will be elaborated later, the case study method was deemed to be the most effective way of exploring the relatively uncharted terrain.

This exploratory case study was embedded in a larger cultural study of two rural Saskatchewan schools; the purpose of this larger explanatory study was to investigate the influences within a school's culture which enhance or restrain the institutionalization of second-order change in the school. The research team conducting the meta-study identified the principal of the school as a significant influence in the institutionalization of school improvement initiatives. Their findings supported the following implications:

> The quality of principal leadership in schools where there was successful implementation and institutionalization of school improvement and overall school effectiveness, manifested markedly different features than did those in less successful schools.

> This research gives us a basis for asserting that there are differences in leadership attributes between the principals in successful schools and those in weaker schools, and these differences may warrant the status of predictive attributes. (Hajnal, Sackney, & Walker, 1996, p. 25)

This strong leadership influence in the preliminary findings lead to the clear possibility that preliminary exploration of the poietic domain of leadership might be
satisfactorily undertaken through the study of educational leaders as they went about their daily tasks.

The study cited above provided a natural springboard for turning the poietic lens on educational leadership. The final phase of that study involved a comparative case study of two rural schools that evidenced apparent differences in their success at institutionalizing change; this final phase of the meta-study was undertaken coincidentally with the proposed investigation. The schools were identified through the results of earlier investigative stages of the meta-study whereby the success of improvement initiatives in Saskatchewan schools was ascertained (Sackney, Walker, & Hajnal, 1995). The leadership aspects of the meta-study were addressed, in part, through the poietic lens provided by this exploratory study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the ways in which school leaders engage poietic elements in their practice. To accomplish this purpose, the investigator employed a participant observation approach involving extended contact with school-based educators in the exercise of their professional responsibilities.

Since the poietic elements are intrinsically imaginative in nature, their influence was not likely to be discerned through empirical inquiry alone; rather, one would expect them to be revealed through the cultural biography of the participants in the leadership experience. Starratt (1993) advised that the study of "substantive leadership" requires the use of "organizational narratives" in place of "survey questionnaires and statistical analysis" (p. 5). For this reason, the study incorporated
an array of qualitative methods through which the researcher sought to understand "the room" created by leadership.

By including two schools in the study, the researcher was able to undertake a comparative analysis of two different rooms, each created by a unique engagement of poietic elements.

Statement of the Problem

In what ways do the professional participants of a school engage poietic elements in the practice of leadership?

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to clarify the purpose and problem statements given above and to guide the investigation:

1. What poietic elements are demonstrated or acknowledged by the professional participants in the school?

2. How are these poietic elements engaged by the participants in their leadership practice?

3. What is the nature of the "moral clearing" or "room" created by the engagement of these poietic elements?

Significance of the Study

A prevailing theme in the current dialogue on leadership is the difficulty of arbitrating conflicting values in a complex multicultural environment (Beck, 1996; Foster, 1996). Whether one defends an absolutist or a relativist value position, or finds a position somewhere in between, the problem of making moral decisions in
intractable situations is urgent. This study explored the dynamics of the moral clearing within which these value conflicts might be resolved. It was grounded in the anticipation that the engagement of poietic elements by school leaders might facilitate a space for moral discourse which would lead to resolution of these conflicts.

In The Drama of Leadership, Starratt (1993) posed a preliminary question which might equally have been posed at the outset of this study.

I kept asking myself whether leadership had to be a prisoner of such a limited number of conceptual and metaphorical frameworks. Would leadership take on fresher tones and meanings with different frameworks? Why must leadership be confined to the present language employed in the literature? This question led me to explore the works of other scholars whose metaphors about human life throw fresh light on the dynamics of leadership. (p. 17)

Starratt's exploration lead him to re-visit the idea of leadership through a dramatic framework. This investigation was an attempt to explore leadership through yet another framework, that of poietics.

Research into the poietics of leadership is at a very tentative and exploratory stage. While the concept is well grounded in the fine arts, particularly music (Nattiez, 1990), very few leadership theorists have addressed this domain in a rigorous way. Duke's (1989) aesthetic model for leadership suggested the need to understand the poietic domain; however, it stopped short of making the process explicit or recommending specific investigational methods. Deal (1995, p. 120) proposed seven symbolic strategies which leaders might employ in improving organizations. These strategies either parallel or complement the poietic elements investigated in this study. Thus, this exploration of the poietic elements contributed to our understanding of leadership through a framework which, while in its infancy, shows great promise for increasing the efficacy of leadership.
The connection between theory and practice continues to be a consuming interest of both theorists and practitioners. It was anticipated that an awareness of the ways that the poietic process informs and complements the domains of theory and practice would provide educational leaders with valuable resources for enhancing their leadership effectiveness.

Yin (1984, p. 14) stated that "the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena." This study addressed a deficiency in the research by exploring the poietic domain through two in-depth case studies. It was anticipated that this approach would be effective in furthering our understanding of an exceedingly complex social phenomenon—leadership. By identifying the poietic elements that leaders employ, observing the way in which these elements are used in creating a room, and comparing the nature of two such rooms, the researcher has equipped the practitioner with tenable means for bridging the gap between theory and practice.

Ultimately, the significance of this study will be determined by the heightened awareness of the significance of the poietic process for leadership, the increased understanding of the dynamics of the process, and the propensity of theorists and practitioners to incorporate a poietic dimension into their models of leadership.

**Definition of Terms**

The literature review in the following chapter provides a comprehensive development of the terms and concepts comprising this study; however, it will prove helpful at the outset to clarify the essential operative terms to be used.
**Aesthetics:** Aesthetics refers to the process whereby the observer interacts with a work of art. In the performing arts, the aesthetic experience acquires a more active flavour in that the performance and the observer mutually influence each other; in the case of leadership, aesthetics would include the process whereby the participants respond to and influence leadership.

**Art:** The myriad ways in which this term has been defined, render it virtually sterile in unqualified form. Following Eisner’s (1995) categorization, art will refer to both the process of bringing something of value into being and the work of value which is created. The implications are that art may be conceived much more broadly than the received view would allow (the arts have no monopoly on art), and that there is a reciprocity in art between the creative (poietic) and the appreciative (aesthetic) processes.

**Leadership:** Notwithstanding the ubiquity of, and ensuing ambiguity surrounding, the concept of leadership, it continues to have strong currency in the literature. For the purposes of this study, leadership will refer to the transactions and activities which create and sustain the moral clearing. Starratt (1993, p. 14) stated that “[a] healthy society will be populated by people exercising leadership at every level.” This expanded view of leadership, includes the behaviours of both formal and informal leaders as they interact in the poietic process.

**Moral Clearing:** The rooms which performing artists create as their works of art have a parallel in the leadership poietic. This space within which moral discourse can occur is referred to as the moral clearing. Its creation, definition, and maintenance is the subject of this study.
Moral Discourse: The moral clearing is largely defined by the ways in which language is shared by the participants. Moral discourse refers to all the communication which participants employ in the moral reasoning process.

Moral Imagination: The term "moral imagination" is frequently used in instances where the imagination is employed in the service of moral reasoning. The prevailing view (Kekes, 1991; Jacobs, 1991; Greenfield, 1988) is that moral imagination is that mental capacity which allows one to envisage possibilities and choices in terms of moral good or evil. Nussbaum (1995, p. 73) further elaborated this imaginative function: "Among the most important moral faculties is the power of imagining vividly what it is like to be each of the persons whose situation he imagines." In actuality, every interaction involving humans has a moral component, so it might be argued that the moral imagination is engaged in every social interaction.

Poetics: Derived from the Greek "to make," poetics refers to the process whereby the artist creates the work. In the specific case of the art of leadership, the work is the "room," and the poietic process involves the engagement of particular creative elements, by the participants, in order to define the boundaries of the room and to facilitate the moral discourse which occurs therein.

Poietic Elements: Artists engage media through which they create their work; similarly leadership artists create their rooms by the engagement of poietic elements. For the purposes of this study, four definitive elements--stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony--were proposed. Essentially, these elements are vehicles through which the moral imagination may be exercised.
Distinctives of the Study

Reference has previously been made to the unique character of this study. In this section, these distinctions are explicated in terms of the assumptions, delimitations, and limitations underlying the research.

Several assumptions regarding the nature of art and leadership should be made explicit in order to provide the reader with a valid basis for interpreting the results. For the purposes of this study, it was assumed that elements (attributes) of the poietic domain were identifiable and manifest in leadership practice; that the researcher, by interacting with the leaders in the case study, influenced their awareness of, and propensity to employ, poietic elements in their leadership; that informal leadership played a significant role in the poietic; and that an exploratory case study of the leadership in two schools would manifest differences in the poietics which were related to differences in leadership effectiveness.

The decision to adopt a case study approach necessarily delimited the unit of study to the two schools selected by the research team. This study was further delimited to the formal and informal leadership functions as they were manifest in the actions and discourse of the staff of the two schools. While the criteria for the selection of the schools were established in terms of successful institutionalization of school improvement initiatives, the criteria for selection of leadership were more loosely defined. Formal leadership included the principal, vice-principal, and department heads; it was anticipated that observation and interview methods would provide the researcher with sufficient definition of the informal leadership patterns to permit exploration of this dimension. Finally, the period of engagement in each
school was delimited to four weeks at each school. These investigative periods were interspersed throughout the school year in one-week blocks.

The limitations of this study were those which are commonly attributed to case study methodology in general. First, the findings of the study were "generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes" (Yin, 1984, p. 21). It is left to the reader's perspicacity to evaluate the utility of the findings for other contexts. Second, as was previously acknowledged, the researcher's personal perspective influenced the behaviour of the participants as well as the interpretation which was ascribed to the observed behaviours; therefore, it will be essential to clarify that perspective for the reader. This perspective clarification is found in chapter three. Finally, the study was limited by the relationship which developed between researcher and participants; the level of trust and co-operation which was achieved clearly determined the quality of the results.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter one of this thesis provided an introduction to the study and a statement of the problem to be explored. In chapter two, the literature relating imagination, poetics, and leadership is reviewed. The reviewer explores the role of imagination in moral reasoning, elaborates the four poietic elements that form the basis of this inquiry, and proposes a conceptual frame through which the poietic process may be investigated. Chapter three contains an explanation of and rationale for the use of exploratory case study as an investigative method. In this chapter, I propose that research is no less an art than leadership and suggest ways in which the researcher can practice artistically.
Chapter's four through seven report the results of the study accompanied by an analysis of those results. In chapters four, I begin by providing an anticipatory overview of the findings as well as a description of how the inquiry process evolved over the period of engagement. Chapters five and six report the detailed results of the inquiry, largely in narrative form. Chapter seven consists of detailed analysis in the form of responses to the three research questions guiding the inquiry.

In the final chapter, I retrospectively summarize the study, examine the conclusions which were reached, and offer a number of implications arising from those conclusions. As the following chapters reveal, leadership is an art and the practice of leadership involves the exercise of the imagination.
Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Like a long-awaited spring, the welcome signs of an artistic renaissance of sorts are making themselves felt in our world. At a time when "technopoly" (Postman, 1992) threatens to further de-moralize our society and to engulf our sensitivity to the classical arts, there is a countervailing groundswell of recognition that the salvation of the human race may well lie in a renewed encounter with the arts (Gardner, 1977).

The essence of the argument for reclaiming the arts is that creative solutions to the moral dilemmas which characterize our social world are to be found within a framework which acknowledges the imaginative domain in general and the artistic perspective in particular. There is a growing recognition that moral reasoning is fruitless in the absence of imagination (Murdoch, 1992; Johnson, 1993; Greene, 1993; Ebenreck, 1996). Unfortunately, notwithstanding the fine work of the authors just cited, attempts to understand and articulate the role which imagination and art play in the moral reasoning process are still in a formative stage. This is especially true in the area of leadership where most models continue to focus on a technical-rational approach to decision making and problem solving (Schon, 1987; Schon & Rein, 1994).

A national conference (November, 1996) assembled artists from across Canada to seek creative solutions to the dilemma surrounding Quebec's quest for sovereignty

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and the national will for a unified Canada. The implied assumption of the conference organizers was that artists had something of value to contribute to the debate; however, it was not at all clear precisely what that contribution might be. The call for "creative solutions" was met, largely, by awkward silence.

This review is designed to confront that silence. In it, I explore the relationship between imagination and moral reasoning and then develop a framework by which the imagination might be engaged in the practice of leadership. In each section of the review, a specific proposition is developed; these culminate in a synthesized model which I used as the lens for this inquiry.

I begin by situating the imagination in the moral domain through the concept of moral imagination. Next, I explore two notable moral theories (Cochrane, 1979; Rest, 1983), and argue for essential roles for the imagination in each stage or component of these theories. I maintain that these roles are elaborated through four moral capacities—attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping—all of which are essential for effective moral reasoning. Having established a critical role for imagination in moral reasoning, I then propose a framework through which leaders might engage the imagination in their praxis. I develop the metaphor of leadership as the creation of a room within which effective moral reasoning may occur. Models from the humanities and fine arts, that parallel this poietic process, are explored with a view to integrating them into a satisfactory model for a poietic of leadership. Four elements—stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony—which I claim as requisites for a poietic of leadership, are developed; and finally, a conceptual frame which situates the imagination within the poietic process, is presented.
Understanding Imagination

The imagination is probably the oldest typically human mental trait, older than discursive reason; it is probably the common source of dream, reason, religion and all true observation. It is this primitive human power that engenders the arts and is at the same time affected by its products. (Suzanne Langer, 1957)

I am compelled to begin this section with a disclaimer. Furlong (1961, p. 15) described imagination as "a dense and tangled piece of country," and I am inclined to agree. Great minds have explored this mysterious landscape with varying degrees of success. It is beyond the scope of this review to attempt a comprehensive analysis of the many ways in which the concept has been understood throughout history. Yet, it is impossible to move forward without coming to an understanding of what I take to be the fundamental attributes of this capacity. Therefore, I propose to provide an historical survey of Western philosophy's attempts to understand imagination. I acknowledge the severe limitations of this superficial approach, but alternatively, I recognize that the absence of historical context would render any contemporary explenium sterile and useless. Having established a context, I offer a review of several significant contemporary perspectives on moral imagination and suggest a synthesis of these perspectives from which to explore the role of imagination in moral reasoning.

A Brief History of Imagination

Ancient traditions acknowledged imagination as one of the fundamental powers of mankind. The Greek version traced the source of creative imagination to the theft of fire by Prometheus; the biblical account placed the origin of the creative drive (yetser) in the transgression of Adam and Eve (Kearney, 1991, p. 2). Kearney
claimed that these founding narratives of Western culture reveal several significant common features of imagination. First, the origin of humankind is coincidental with the origin of imagination. Second, imaginative capacity is ascribed only to humans; neither non-human animals nor gods possess it. Third, the biblical narrative identifies the imagination with knowledge of opposites; the human potential for good and evil is associated with imagination in both Greek and Hebrew tradition. Fourth, temporal transcendence, the capacity of the human mind to move beyond the here and now, appears in the narrative coincidentally with imagination. In Kearney’s poetic language:

Once east of Eden, imagination was free to spread its wings beyond the timeless now into the nether regions of no-longer and not-yet. And, henceforth, the creative power of imagining would be seen as inseparable from the power to transmute nature into culture . . . . Or to put it in the specific terms of rabbinical exegesis: the yetser is the freedom to prospect a future of good and evil possibilities. (p. 2)

Finally, as the early legends make plain, the concepts of will and freedom to choose are intimately related to the capacity of imagination.

Classical Greek philosophers, typified by Plato, relegated imagination to a role subservient to reason. Aristotle, while acknowledging that imagination was an aid to practical reason, nevertheless was reluctant to allow it any freedom in its own right. Latin authors, who translated the Greek phantasia as imaginatio, were no less suspicious of the worth of imagination (Ebenreck, 1996; Kearney, 1991). In general, then, imagination in the mainstream of Western philosophy has been acknowledged but censured, presumably because it “threatened the natural order of being . . . [and was considered an] unreliable, unpredictable and irreverent faculty” (Kearney, 1991, p. 3).
Modern philosophers, from Kant and Hume to the present, have struggled to create a definitive role for imagination in their framework. For Kant and the German idealists, the imagination was the function which transformed the real into the ideal. Kant distinguished two types of imaginative activity: reproductive imagination, loosely paraphrased as fantasy, is the association of mental images with sensory stimuli based on past experience; productive imagination, the creative form of imagination, is a transcendental activity which synthesizes sensory experience to make meaning. The productive imagination operates with disciplined freedom, within the bounds of rationality, to make knowledge from sensory experience (Furlong, 1961).

Hume’s scepticism regarding rational certitude led him to ascribe a pre-eminent role for the imagination in the construction of knowledge (Ebenrech, 1996). Like Kant, he distinguished two types of imagination: fantasy, or the faculty of perfect ideas, whereby the absent is made present; and belief-producer, whereby the imagination plays a role in the transformation of sense into belief (Furlong, 1961).

Both Hume and Kant acknowledged the necessity of imagination in the acquisition of knowledge; however, they differed in the relative freedom and significance ascribed to this faculty. Kant’s notion of the rational bounding of imagination has underwritten the prevailing view of moral reasoning to the present.

The Kant-Hume debate, regarding the significance of imagination, sparked the Romantic literary spirit, typified by Coleridge, which celebrated the creative aspects of imagination. He defined the "primary imagination . . . [as] . . . the living power and prime agent of all human perception, and as a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the finite I AM" (Coleridge, 1930, p. 159). Like Kant and Hume, Coleridge distinguished productive imagination from fancy; this latter capacity
he reduced to "no other than a mode of memory emancipated from the order of time and space . . . [which] must receive all its materials ready made form the law of association" (p. 160).

Coleridge's consuming passion was "unity in multeity" (Sherwood, 1937, p. 22); he believed that imagination was the unifying "soul" that formed all of reality into an intelligent whole. (Sherwood, 1937, p. 23). This position has frequently been interpreted as the granting of unrestrained license to the exercise of imagination in moral reasoning; however, Happel (1983) offered a more conservative interpretation which points to a via media through the dilemma:

Reason, as we have seen, is that teleology of the human mind toward the ideal—the striving to achieve the true in truths of partial import: it is essentially imageless. Aloof from time and space, it demands impersonation to have an effect upon human affairs. Imagination performs that mediating function. (pp. 226-27)

This view suggests that imagination and reason may be partners in a process that Schon & Rein (1994) have termed "creative rationality."

Contemporary moral philosophers wrestle with this union of seemingly contradictory concepts with varying degrees of success. While most acknowledge a role for imagination in their moral framework, this role has typically been qualified by caution and a deep suspicion that the imagination and the affective domain tends to lead thinkers away from truth (Kearney, 1991, p. 3). As a result, imagination has been banished to a sort of "ontological homelessness" (Seerveld, 1987, p. 43), from whence modern philosophers have tended to regard her with scorn, condescension, or averted gaze. Her epistemological offspring have suffered a similar fate; imaginative vehicles such as narrative, metaphor, and irony are seldom acknowledged as essential components of the moral reasoning process.
Recently, a growing number of "voices in the wilderness" have begun to acknowledge the overlooked role of imagination in critical thought, and interest in the relationship between imagination and moral reasoning is increasing. This interest has been largely directed toward the "moral imagination," a concept employed in disciplines as diverse as cultural anthropology (Beidelman, 1986; Greetz, 1983), theology (Magill, 1992), literature (Clausen, 1986), religious ethics (Guevin, 1989), environmental ethics (Ebenreck, 1996), psychology (Johnson, 1993), political philosophy (McCollough, 1991), moral philosophy (Babbitt, 1996; Benhabib, 1990; Murdoch, 1966, 1992), education (Greene, 1978), and educational leadership (Greenfield, 1988).

One of the most cogent and eloquent of these recent excursions into creative rationality was undertaken by Martha Nussbaum. In Poetic Justice, Nussbaum (1995) argued for an integral, albeit judiciously applied, role for the "literary imagination" in moral reasoning.

The literary imagination is a part of public rationality, and not the whole. I believe that it would be extremely dangerous to suggest substituting empathetic imagining for rule-governed moral reasoning, and I am not making that suggestion. In fact, I defend the literary imagination precisely because it seems to me an essential ingredient of an ethical stance that asks us to concern ourselves with the good of other people whose lives are distant from our own. Such an ethical stance will have a large place for rules and formal decision procedures. (p. xvi)

Nussbaum's approach is heartening in that she goes to great lengths to explore how this imaginative capacity might be engaged through literary works while maintaining a balanced position that integrates imagination and rationality. Her philosophical position (which has also been expounded with missionary zeal by Maxine Greene
(1978, 1994) throughout her career as an educator is the starting point for an exploration of the role of imagination in moral reasoning.

The widespread use of the expression "moral imagination" might lead one to suspect that an unique mental faculty or sense, answering to that name, may be identified in the human psyche. Perhaps, such a faculty might be nurtured, trained, and developed for the betterment of all. While this might, indeed, be a direction worthy of exploration by psychologists and sociologists, I have chosen a humbler course, holding the position that imagination is a central, and often maligned, component of reasoning; when it is employed in moral reasoning, it is identified as the "moral" imagination. In the following section, I explore the common ways in which this concept is understood.

Conceptualizing the Moral Imagination

As we have seen, the concept of imagination has always been an integral component of human personality. It has primarily been associated with the affective, emotional, creative aspect of human thinking and, consequently, has generally received short shrift in cognitive theories of human behaviour. For positivist thinkers, the attachment of "moral" to imagination, has tended to reduce moral theory to the same nonproductive level as literature, art, and music—good to stir the emotions but of no practical value. However, recent scholars in both the social and the physical sciences have come to recognise the importance which the imagination plays in all reasoning and particularly moral reasoning. Each of these perspectives on the moral imagination offers a piece to a larger puzzle. In the conclusion of this section, I offer
a synthesis of the ideas which I will carry forward and incorporate into a conceptual frame.

A cognitive approach. Johnson (1993) has suggested that the term "moral imagination" will strike most of us as oxymoronic since "we have inherited the mistaken view that morality is nothing more than a system of universal moral laws or rules that come from the essence of reason . . . [while] we have been taught to regard imagination, by contrast, as a subjective, free-flowing, creative process not governed by any rules or constrained by any rationally defined concepts" (p. 2). He argued that both of these premises are misconceived and that our moral reasoning is largely governed by various structures of imagination.

In this view, moral reasoning is impossible without the exercise of imagination for three reasons. First, the imagination provides alternative viewpoints and concepts from which to evaluate a moral position. Second, it is through the imagination that we can envision probable consequences of action. Finally, it is only by our imaginative capacity that we are able to learn from experience; the intuitive leap from cause to effect can only be made by way of the imagination (p. 3).

Moral decision making, Johnson argued, is not based on universal, categorical laws by which we can determine right behaviour in any situation; rather, it is our imaginative capacity which makes it possible "for us to discern what is important in any situation or relationship and to act wisely in light of our discernment" (p. 5). He further claimed that this imaginative capacity is empirically validated by a second generation of cognitive scientists who have largely forsaken the metaphor of "mind as computer" and embraced a much broader view of how the mind works, one which
recognises the importance of "bodily, social, and cultural dimensions of cognition" (p. 6).

Johnson identified four ways in which this new perspective from cognitive science bears on moral reasoning; each of these provides evidence for the role of imagination in the moral domain. The first of these relates to the theory of prototypes. The classical theory of categories places objects or events in groups based on specific properties which define that category. Every object or event that fits the category must meet a set of necessary and sufficient conditions in order to qualify. Birds, for example, are identified by their common features of feathers, wings, ability to fly, and so forth.

Recent evidence suggests that most categories used by people are not definable by a list of common features but by identification with prototypical members of the category. A robin for example might be a prototypical bird. Nonprototypical members of the category—for example chickens or penguins—are recognised by extension as members in spite of their differences. There is seldom a set of necessary and sufficient conditions which may be applied. Schon (1987) used a similar argument to describe artistic judgement and, indeed, the entire domain of normative judgement. Using the example of the Slovakian peasant women’s ability to recognise flaws in a shawl with neither the ability nor the need to describe the norms which have been violated, Schon suggested that “in the very act by which we recognise something, we also perceive it as ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ . . . [and] not only in artistic judgement but in all our ordinary judgements of the qualities of things, we can recognise and describe deviations from a norm very much more clearly than we can describe the norm itself” (p. 236).
In the same way, our basic moral concepts such as person, duty, and right are prototypical categories which resist classification by a set of necessary and sufficient conditions. Most of our moral problems arise in nonprototypical cases which we can, nonetheless, identify by metaphorical extension from the prototype; however, the classic theory of morality does not permit this type of extension since it requires a specific set of conditions in order to determine a course of action. The moral imagination permits an understanding of prototypical situations and the possibility of selecting a course of action even though all the conditions have not been met (Johnson, 1993, p. 189).

Secondly, cognitive linguists have discovered that our concepts derive meaning from a larger frame or context to which they belong. It is only through knowledge of the frame that we understand the concepts. The premise underlying the solutions of conundrums is based on this understanding. “The man was afraid to go home because the man with the mask was there,” is an example of a conundrum whose resolution is dependent on our understanding of the game of baseball.

The implication for moral reasoning is that there may be multiple possible framings of an event and, hence, differing moral consequences depending on the frame chosen. The abortion debate turns on the fact that the participants have adopted two different frames which permit interpretation of the "fetus" as either a person or a biological organism without personality. The course of action chosen by the participants is largely dependent on which one of the frames they choose (p. 192).

Third, our conceptual system is structured by "metaphorical mappings" from concrete to abstract domains. We understand abstract concepts by mapping concrete levels of experience onto internal image schemata; this is one of the primary uses of
metaphor. In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) provided us with ample evidence for this metaphorical mapping in abstract thinking. The metaphor of "argument as war" is one example; the entire vocabulary of debate and argument originates in this metaphor (p. 4).

Johnson (1993) stated that metaphor enters moral deliberation in three ways: first, it permits different ways of conceptualising a situation; second, it provides different ways of understanding the nature of morality by providing different metaphors for will, reason, purpose and so on; third, metaphorical extension is the vehicle which allows us to move beyond prototypical cases to the nonprototypical situations where most of morality resides (p. 10).

Finally, scholars from all disciplines generally agree that narrative is the fundamental mode of understanding by which humans make sense of their actions. Bateson (1994), Benhabib (1990), Kundera (1988), MacIntyre (1984), and Ricoeur (1984) provided strong cases for this statement from a variety of disciplines. Authors such as Guevin (1989) and Buechner (1977) cited the parables of Jesus as prime examples of the exercise of moral imagination in narrative.

The imaginative exploration of moral situations through narrative is one of the fundamental functions of the moral imagination. While some authors such as Maxcy and Caldas (1991) advocated a moral imagination devoid of literary narrative, it is difficult to understand how the moral imagination could be given full play in the absence of narrative.

The significance of Johnson’s (1993) work, for our purposes, is his claim that morality is metaphoric (imaginative) at its foundation.

Because so much of our common morality is structured by systems of metaphor, no account of morality can be adequate that fails to examine
the extent to which our conceptualization, reasoning, and language about morality involve metaphor (and other imaginative devices). (pp. 61-61)

He argued that even Kant's pure moral principles can only apply to experience by means of a metaphorical substitution for the abstract principle: "[T]hat which is supposed to be the purest rational ethics possible turns out to involve rules that can only be applied to concrete cases on the basis of metaphorical mappings! [italics in text]" (p. 72). Imaginative devices such as metaphor and narrative are the primary vehicles for applying moral principles to real life situations.

A public approach. The question of how moral imagination can be applied to decision making in the public forum was addressed by McCollough (1991) from the perspective of citizen involvement in the policy making process. He stated the problem as follows:

The view of political life as a policy-making process, with decisions made by a democratic elite employing policy analysts (experts), has two fateful consequences. First, public discussion of the ethical issues is devalued and is seen as extraneous to policy making. Ethics enter into the process only as an arbitrary function of the individual decision maker. Second, the citizen is rendered remote, powerless, alienated, apathetic, and hopeless. (p. 5)

In this view, moral reasoning evolves on two distinct levels: the ethical-principle level and the concrete-situational level. For McCollough, the first is appropriate for theologians and philosophers while the second applies to moral agents in actual decision making situations (p. 7). Against the abstract, rationalistic renderings of the former, the latter situation requires the active engagement of "narrative, imagination, character, responsibility, relationships, and forms of life" (p. 10). McCollough stressed the importance of the moral imagination in "boiler room" situations where theoria is translated into praxis:
The moral imagination may be understood as the capacity to empathise with others and to discern creative possibilities for ethical action. The moral imagination considers an issue in the light of the whole . . . . The moral imagination broadens and deepens the context of decision making to include the less tangible but most meaningful feelings, aspirations, ideals, relationships. (p. 17)

In the final analysis, McCollough argued for a communal view of policy making while vilifying the myth of individualism which pervades our culture. He saw the moral imagination primarily as a vehicle for creating a space within which public moral discourse could occur. This view is entirely consistent with my proposal that leadership involves the creation of a room for moral discourse. Unfortunately, McCullough stopped short of elaborating specific ways in which the imagination might be engaged to achieve this end. The poietic process is absent from his work.

A mediating approach. In analyzing the role of imagination in biblical narrative, Brueggeman (1978) proposed two functions—criticising and energising—of the “prophetic imagination” which may be as pertinent today as they were in the ancient past.

Brueggeman offered three methods by which these functions are fulfilled. First, through the offering of adequate symbols or metaphors, which express the horror of the present and the possibilities for “the future which none think imaginable” (p. 66), the prophet offers the hope which energises. Second, by bringing to public expression the hopes and yearnings of the people, the prophet motivates the people. Third, by speaking metaphorically about the possibilities of the future, the prophet allows the people to redefine their situations and take constructive action. Brueggeman saw prophetic imagination primarily as a vehicle of hope; I would suggest that the offering of hope to a despairing people may be the most important function of this capacity.
I have previously maintained that, from earliest accounts, imagination and freedom have been intimately related. Kekes (1991) argued for this relationship by framing the moral imagination in terms of the mental evaluation of possibilities for action. He claimed that the significance of our actions is understood in terms of the realisation of three types of possibilities; those that were available in the agent's context, those that the agent could have reasonably have expected herself to have, and those that the agent actually believed herself to have. Kekes suggested that both affective and cognitive capacities are necessary to recreate these possibilities. Like Brueggeman, Kekes distinguished a dual function for the moral imagination: a corrective (critical) function, which looks backward and guards against present error by taking into account past experience; and an exploratory (energising) function which looks forward to possibilities beyond the confines of our immediate cultural frame.

The relationship between freedom and imagination was taken up by Murdoch (1966) in her critique of Hampshire's Freedom of the Individual. She advocated a constructive active role for imagination in contrast to the passive, fantasizing role to which Hampshire apparently limits it: "[If] we admit active imagination as an important faculty it is difficult not to see this as an exercise of will. Imagining is doing, it is a sort of personal exploring" (p. 48). For Murdoch, freedom involved the ability to perceive what is real, and this perception can only be accomplished through the exercise of imagination (p. 50).

Jacobs (1991) saw in the moral imagination the opportunity to harmonise Kant's purely rational moral imperative and Hume's affective dispositions into a practical moral theory. He claimed that "both Hume and Kant err by construing
reason and affect dualistically and by restricting the traffic between them” (p. 24), and
“in the exercise of moral imagination we take conception and affect and desire to be
integrated components of our appreciation and orientation toward a situation” (p. 25).

Four specific functions are attributed to the moral imagination: a) articulating
and examining alternatives, b) weighing the implications of alternatives, c)
considering the effects of one’s other plans and interests, and d) considering their
effects on the interests and feelings of others. Implicit in this process is the notion
that a “rightly ordered moral imagination . . . [requires an] adequate conception of
others as persons” (p. 26). Jacobs postulated this recognition of personhood as the
fundamental aspect of moral imagination. This view is consistent with contemporary
moral theorists such as Cochrane (1979) and Schulte and Cochrane (1995) who
postulated respect for persons as the absolute first-order principle of moral decision
making.

In this brief review, I have examined three different perspectives of the moral
imagination. First, Johnson’s (1993) cognitive approach lends credence to the position
that morality and imagination are integrally related even though that relationship is
often disparaged. He also identifies two imaginative “devices,” metaphor and
narrative, at the heart of moral reasoning. Second, McCullough’s (1991) vision of the
moral imagination as a factor in empowering public discourse lends support to a
poietic perspective on leadership, where imaginative elements are engaged in the
creation of a room for moral discourse. Finally, proponents of a mediating view of
moral imagination provide clarification on the way in which imagination is engaged
in moving from moral judgement to moral action. Together, the three perspectives
offer a complete picture of moral imagination.
In her timely review of the role of imagination in environmental ethics, Ebenreck (1996) offered a summary of the ways in which imagination may be related to moral reasoning:

The imagination is that power which allows us to (a) creatively envision a reality different from the one in which we are immersed, and thus to formulate purposes, goals, or ideals; (b) participate in another's perspective by constructing a sense of what that perspective is; (c) creatively envision an action that embodies the compassion or respect called for by ethical principle; (d) both construct examples for ideas and articulate paradigm cases that we allow to illuminate our thought; (e) grasp or articulate in an image relationships which embody paradoxical qualities which are difficult to express in linear logic; and (f) approach the description of reality through the creative "naming" of a metaphor or story. (p. 12)

Ebenreck went on to suggest that the work of imagination is not simply limited to image production but also includes an awareness that issues in action. I take this summary as a starting point for exploring, more fully, the role of imagination in moral reasoning through the conceptual frames proposed by Cochrane (1979) and Rest (1983).

The Imagination and Moral Reasoning

In explicating the role of imagination in moral reasoning, I have chosen first to specify a particular framework and then to explore the ways in which imagination is subtly and explicitly woven through the frame. I have deliberately chosen a broad view of moral reasoning, encompassing not only moral judgment, which has long been the domain of rational moral theory, but including the precursory process of moral perception (Murdoch, 1971, 1992), as well as the subsequent components of motivation and action (Rest, 1983).
The framework I have chosen incorporates the thinking of two contemporary moral theorists, Cochrane (1979) and Rest (1983). Three issues require attention before proceeding to elaborate the frame. First, the choice of frameworks through which to explore the role of imagination is largely arbitrary. I am arguing for a significant role for imagination in the moral reasoning process; however, there are many ways in which moral reasoning may be conceived. I consider Rest's model to be sufficiently broad to encompass the multiple ways in which imagination is engaged.

Second, a careful reading of Cochrane's more recent work, as well as personal conversations with Professor Cochrane, indicate that he may have subsequently reconceptualized the principles on which his model is based—for example, possibly by extending the principle of "respect for persons" to non-human life forms (Schulte & Cochrane, 1995, pp. 47-48). Nonetheless, I believe that the principles have applicability to moral reasoning in the form that they were originally conceived; I find them particularly useful to enrich Rest's four component model of moral behaviour.

Third, it has been suggested that the imagination applied to moral reasoning has the potential for both good and evil (Jacobs, 1991). It is not difficult to conceive of instances where the imagination might be, and has in fact been, applied to moral reasoning with devastating consequences; the Nazi atrocities come immediately to mind. What is needed is some ultimate principle, some "bottom," to which the imagination may appeal in order to remain rightly ordered. Rest's four component model does not adequately address this problem; however, by superimposing Cochrane's principles on Rest's components, one arrives at a framework which precludes the use of the moral imagination as an instrument of evil.
Moral Principles and Moral Reasoning

Cochrane (1979, p. 77) described the morally autonomous agent as one who conforms to the dictates of moral reason, who is "capable of generating moral imperatives for action in day-to-day situations." He proposed four levels of moral reasoning resting on one fundamental moral principle.

The first-order principle "respect for persons is the absolute, though formal first principle of morality." The principle is formal in that its generality distances it from the realities of practical moral decision making; it is absolute in the sense that it allows no exceptions. I agree with Cochrane as to the absolute quality of the principle; and, with him, I wish to contend that its formality necessarily isolates it from the realities of moral reasoning. In fact, I would argue that Cochrane intended this principle to be much more particular than the original statement implies.

Subsequently, I will argue that this first-order principle provides the missing "bottom" to Rest's first component: perceiving and interpreting particular situations.

The second-order principles (moral rules) are "prima facie obligation-generating principles such as the commitment to maximize another's freedom, to treat all equally unless there are relevant differences, to consider the interests of persons, to seek, transmit, and promote that which is true" (p. 79). Cochrane claimed for these principles the role of explicating the meaning of the first-order principle and giving direction to our orientation to others. In practice, these principles may conflict and, therefore, some mediating influence is required to resolve these conflicts. Pure reason has traditionally been assigned this task; I would suggest that the moral imagination plays an equally important role in this mediation.
This suggestion is supported by Schulte and Cochrane (1995, p. 56) in their explication of the role of conjecture in moral reasoning. They state that "identifying options and likely consequences is the way to acquire as much control over outcomes as possible." As I demonstrate further on, this conjecturing, or envisioning alternatives and consequences, is a fundamental imaginative function in the moral reasoning process.

At the third level, one engages substantive values which derive from, and take account of, "a complex of sociological, medical, and technological facts" (Cochrane, 1979, p. 80). Issues such as capital punishment, abortion, and gun control involve the consideration of substantive values in their resolution.

Finally, at the level of action, the autonomous moral agent makes particular judgments based on the three levels of principles and values available. It is at this level that moral judgments are actualized in specific situations. This represents the final stage of moral reasoning and it is the most particular.

Cochrane’s ordered levels of moral reasoning offer a way of conceiving of moral reasoning which avoids the relativist trap. In clarifying this position, he stated that “I agree with the advocates of socialization that there is an absolute element in moral thinking, but differ with them on where it is located for I hold that it is not to be found at the level of substantive values and moral rules but at a more fundamental level which anchors the whole system” (Cochrane, 1979, p. 81). It is at this fundamental level that Rest’s model requires support.
Components of Moral Behaviour

According to Rest (1983), people fail to behave morally for four distinct reasons: they may be insensitive to the moral issues that are presented; they may be deficient in their ability to make appropriate moral judgments; they may be lacking in motivation to follow the moral course of action; or they may unable or unwilling to implement an effective action plan (Bebeau, 1993, pp. 315-316). These four reasons align with the “Four Component Model” developed by Rest, Bebeau, and Volker (1986) to describe the psychological processes involved in moral behaviour. I propose that these four components define the domain of moral reasoning and, therefore, comprise an adequate frame through which to explore the role of imagination in moral reasoning.

Rest et al. (1986, p. 3) contended that in order to be said to be “behaving morally,” an agent must have performed at least four basic psychological processes in a particular situation.

1. The person must have been able to make some sort of interpretation of the particular situation in terms of what actions were possible, who (including oneself) would be affected by each course of action, and how the interested parties would regard such effects on their welfare. I refer to this component as moral perception.

2. The person must have been able to make a judgment about which course of action was morally right (or fair or just or morally good), thus labelling one possible line of action as what a person ought (morally ought) to do in that situation. I identify this component as moral judgment.
3. The person must give priority to moral values above other personal values such that a decision is made to intend to do what is morally right. This component will be referred to as moral motivation.

4. The person must have sufficient perseverance, ego strength, and implementation skills to be able to follow through on his/her intention to behave morally, to withstand fatigue and flagging will, and to overcome obstacles. This component is called moral implementation.

Several aspects of this model require clarification before proceeding. First, the distinction between components is by no means as clear as the model implies. There is significant overlap in the features of successive components; this complicates any attempt to identify the role of imagination at any particular level. The final two components—motivation and implementation—are particularly blurred in practice. Second, there is no clear causal or temporal relationship between successive components; others have argued that moral reasoning does not require all four components and that a sequential cause-effect relationship moving from perception to judgment to motivation to action is not necessary for moral reasoning (Murdoch, 1966, 1971; Jacobs, 1991). Third, the focus in moral reasoning has generally been on component two, moral judgment; yet, it has been argued elsewhere that the first component, moral perception, is absolutely crucial to any moral reasoning process. The role of imagination in moral reasoning has been devalued because of the emphasis which moral philosophers have placed on the rationality of this second component.
An Exploratory Framework

At the risk of oversimplifying or misconstruing these conceptualizations, I propose to synthesize Cochrane’s (1979) ordered principles and Rest’s (1983) moral components into a frame which will permit an exploration of the role of imagination in moral reasoning. The similarities between and complementary features of the two models hold out hope that such a synthesis may be productive.

Rest’s component 1, moral perception, involves an ability to identify the morally significant features of a situation and to interpret the effects of various possible courses of action on the persons involved. The unanswered question at this stage is: “What criteria or principles does the agent use to identify and interpret moral significance?” Cochrane’s (1979) first-order absolute principle, respect for persons, directly addresses this question. A situation has moral significance to the extent that it involves treating others as ends rather than means. Cochrane suggested this as a formal principle which becomes particularized through application of the lower-ordered principles; yet, in elaborating on the meaning of respect for persons, he seemed to imply a very particularized understanding of the principle:

Respect for persons is not found in the world as a discernible characteristic of people, but is imposed on the world as a way of seeing them. We do not discover people are persons, we make them so. (p. 79)

I suggest that Cochrane’s first-order principle, respect for persons, complements and enhances Rest’s component 1; more importantly, it provides a “bedrock” principle which guides the way in which one employs reason and imagination in moral perception.

Component 2, moral judgment, moves the moral reasoning process ahead by addressing the question: “Now how does one decide which of these courses of action
is morally right?" This question in one form or another is pivotal to all moral philosophy. It is at this point that Kant and Hume part ways, the former opting for the rational approach, the latter taking the affective, imaginative route.

Cochrane (1979) responded to the question in terms of second-order principles which, in particular situation, may be in conflict with each other; the objective ground for mediating these conflicts is always an appeal back to the first-order principle, respect for the person. I maintain that the imagination plays a dynamic role in mediating conflicts between second-order principles. Schulte and Cochrane (1995) recognized the need for a mediating agent in resolving ethical dilemmas where principles conflict. They implied that the imagination serves such a mediating function through the envisioning of the alternatives for action and of the likely consequences of those alternatives (pp. 56-60).

Rest et al. (1986), arguing for a cognitive development approach, suggested two mediating assumptions which determine moral judgment. The first assumption is that, as people experience the social world, they develop meaning structures that organize their experience; the most important of these are the concepts of cooperation and positive social relations. The second assumption is that people have "a distinctive sense of fairness, a notion of what I owe to others and what others owe to me" (p. 10). Together, the concepts of social co-operation and justice provide the moral agent with the capacity to make moral judgments. These authors were quick to acknowledge that other concepts may be applied to moral judgments; the Christian concept of agape and the recent emphasis on caring (Gilligan, 1982) were cited as examples. Regardless of the perspective, a moral judgment has both a cognitive and
an affective aspect; I will argue, further on, that the imagination plays a significant role in this process.

Component 3, moral motivation, addresses the issue of intent to choose the moral course of action in the face of other alternatives. Why should one choose the moral alternative, especially if it involves personal sacrifice or suffering? Rest (1983) described eight major theories which offer explanations of moral motivation indicating the diversity of views on the issue. The best approach seems to be an acknowledgment that several determinants are operating at any particular time, and it is probably not possible to simply reduce motivation to one single source (Rest et al., 1986, p. 14).

Cochrane’s (1979) third level of substantive values suggested this same diversity of determinants as one approaches the point of action in the particular situation. While Cochrane made no effort to associate these values with moral motivation, nevertheless, there is a sense of the increasing ambiguity and complexity with which the moral agent must contend prior to the moment of action: “Though in the first instance we appeal to moral rules for justification, at this level we take into account a complex of sociological, medical, and technical facts” (p. 80). Pursuing Cochrane’s line of thought, I would suggest that moral motivation or intent emerges from the awareness of this complex stew of particular facts and issues; and further, that the imagination plays a crucial role in the awareness and mediation of these issues.

Component 4, implementation, involves converting moral motivation into a plan of action. As the old saying, “the road to hell is paved with good intentions,” reminds us, there is a distinction between intention and action which requires
acknowledgment. As Rest et al. (1986, p. 15) defined it, component 4 "involves figuring out the sequence of concrete actions, working around impediments and unexpected difficulties, overcoming fatigue and frustration, resisting distractions and allurements, and keeping sight of the eventual goal." In essence, implementation involves particularizing a moral judgment in the form of a concrete action; it is the culmination of the moral reasoning process.

Cochrane's (1979) fourth level, "judgments in particular cases with all their specificity" (p. 81), applies directly to this implementation component. In locating moral reasoning in relation to moral development, Cochrane employed the concept of the "morally autonomous agent" who possesses three significant capacities: first, one must know what one ought to do; second, one must have the ability to perform appropriately; and third, one must possess the psychological resources to sustain the required action (p. 83). This progression from knowledge to ability to action suggests a movement toward increasing particularity and implies that the implementation component relies on a prior resolution of the other components.

In summary, there is a variety of ways to understand moral reasoning; I have chosen a synthesis of two contemporary frames which expand the traditional view of moral reasoning beyond the confines of rational moral judgment. The two frames provide a way of proceeding from moral perception to moral action while remaining on the solid footing provided by the absolute principle of "respect for persons." The pathway, as proposed by Cochrane (1979), implies a progression from the formal to the particular resulting in action within real situations. I have argued that particularity is essential at all stages of the pathway and, furthermore, that one of the integral roles of imagination in moral reasoning is the particularizing of moral
principles in real situations. This view is substantiated by Schulte and Cochrane (1995) who propose that "it can also be useful to reason from the specific to the general--for example, by identifying the ethical obligations in a given situation and determining if they can be justified by connecting them with the higher-order principles" (p. 60). I maintain that this latter mode of reasoning requires the engagement of the imagination.

The imagination plays a distinct and integral role in each component of the moral reasoning process, a role which mediates the cognitive and affective domains and complements the rational aspects of the process. In component 1, moral perception, the role of imagination primarily involves attending and particularizing the situation. In component 2, moral judgment, the imagination is active in envisioning possibilities and consequences; here the critical aspect of imagination is evident. In component 3, moral motivation, the imagination plays a key role in formulating intent. Finally, in component 4, implementation, the impetus to act is integrally linked to hoping which, I shall argue, is an imaginative function. In the following section, I explore these four imaginative capacities, attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping.

Four Capacities of Moral Imagination

Perception, judgment, motivation, and implementation, the four components of Rest's (1983) model, provide a useful framework for investigating the nature of moral reasoning. I have suggested that the imagination provides the missing ingredient which allows us to visualize how formal principles may be particularized into action in real situations. The moral imagination enlivens each component and also points to
a via media which allows the moral agent to integrate all four components into a
meaningful whole. It is not clear, however, that these four components are necessary
or sufficient conditions for moral reasoning. Murdoch (1971), for example, claimed
that moral reasoning can occur in the absence of action. This claim was supported by
Jacobs (1991) who focused his attention on the relationship between perception and
judgment, suggesting that these are sufficient conditions for moral reasoning.

In a similar argument, Blum (1991) emphasized the essential role of moral
judgment in any moral theory. In his view, it is moral judgment—the distinct capacity
to bring principle to bear on particular situations—that is at the heart of moral
reasoning (p. 710). He argued, further, that two aspects of moral judgment lie at the
heart of the moral reasoning process: “(1) knowing how to apply rules or principles
and (2) recognizing given features of a situation as morally significant ones” (p. 711).
I have identified this second feature as moral perception; what follows is an
exploration of this important aspect of moral reasoning and the role that imagination
plays in its development.

**Attending the world.** Moral perception involves looking at the world through
special glasses. It means attending to details of a situation which have moral
significance. It means looking at the world with “generalized concentration,” paying
attention to details yet not becoming fixated on irrelevant or selfish details. Some
evidence suggests that women are more proficient at perceiving the world in this way
and hence, it is not surprising that this area has been explored more thoroughly by
contemporary female scholars (Bateson, 1994; Tronto, 1993; Gilligan, 1983; and
Murdoch, 1971). I am reminded here of the biblical accounts of Christ’s resurrection
where both men and women looked at the same “reality” and yet saw and heard
entirely different things. Peter and John, for example, saw the physical details of an empty tomb including the detail of the discarded graveclothes; Mary Magdalene, on the other hand, saw and heard angels (John 20:1-14).

It is not my intention to engage in a gender debate regarding the source of the qualities necessary for moral perception; but, rather, to point to several features of attending the world which have often been associated with women (Bateson, 1994, p. 96). Blum (1991, p. 702) cautioned that “moral perception should not be conceived of as a unified capacity, but that it involves multifarious moral and psychological processes.” I would suggest that these processes are essentially imaginative.

Attending the world in ways that allow us to perceive the moral dimensions of situations involves a way of seeing the situation on many levels at the same time. Bateson (1994) refers to this capacity as “peripheral vision,” as distinguished from focused or concentrated vision. The metaphor is apt when one considers that physical sight is often most acute at the periphery, for example we can detect objects in faint light more readily on the peripheral of our vision. Bateson stated:

[W]omen have had to learn to be attentive to multiple demands, to tolerate frequent interruptions, and to think about more than one thing at a time. This is a pattern of attention that leads to a kind of peripheral vision, which, if you limit roles to separate contexts, you may not have. Sometimes this multiplicity can be confusing and painful, but it can also become a source of insight. (p. 97)

An essential aspect of the kind of peripheral vision that Bateson was advocating is the ability to visualize how separate, apparently disparate pieces can be brought together into a meaningful whole. This visualization is an imaginative process involving metaphors and mental images:

The way we reassemble parts that have long been separated has to be invented as we go along, with an extra layer of creativity and an extra layer of learning, putting together the human rhythms of rest and effort. To compose lives of grace we need to learn an artful and
aesthetic pattern of attention . . . that turns and turns again, embracing nature in all its diversity and other persons with all their potentials. (p. 109)

The capacity to perceive the moral significance of a situation varies dramatically from person to person. Blum (1991, p. 702) cited an example to illustrate this difference. John and Joan are seated on a crowded subway train. A middle-aged woman is standing nearby holding two full shopping bags. Both John and Joan are aware of the woman, yet they perceive her in different ways; different aspects of the situation are salient for each of them. Joan is acutely aware of the woman’s discomfort while John has no sense of this aspect of the situation. Blum suggests that John and Joan are on different levels of awareness as “Joan perceives a morally relevant value at stake, while John does not. He misses something of the moral reality confronting him” (pp. 703-704).

There may be several reasons for this difference of awareness; moral callousness, self-absorption, past experience may all contribute to perceptual obtuseness. Bateson (1994, p. 101) claimed that inattention is as much a learned skill as attention. Children learn the capacity to discard or ignore insignificant physical stimuli as they develop. Mothers who make repeated threats or unenforced injunctions are teaching inattention; similarly, children “learn to maintain a secret inattention during their hours watching television, just as many adults learn to layer their attention in order to get their daily activities done” (p. 102).

Attentional laziness, as described by Blum (1991, p. 704), involves a self-absorption whose source may be human pride. Murdoch (1971, p. 52) stated that “in the moral life the enemy is the fat relentless ego.” Her thesis is that we have trouble perceiving the moral significance of a situation because our attention keeps “returning
surreptitiously to the self with consolations of self-pity, resentment, fantasy and
despair” (p. 91). Attending the world is hard work, from which our self-centered
nature instinctively shrinks.

In part, our inability to attend the world may be due to unconscious moral
inclinations which cloud or block moral perception. By way of example, Blum (1991,
p. 705) described a situation in which an administrator (Theresa) is incapable of
perceiving the moral significance of a situation with a subordinate (Julio) because it
involves physical pain. Theresa fails to respond to Julio’s requests for understanding
and accommodation because she cannot empathize with him. She unconsciously
identifies pain with weakness and is inclined to feel contempt for those who manifest
it. Blum suggested that Theresa’s ability to perceive the situation accurately might be
enhanced by increased self-knowledge through reflection “that tries to understand a
particular individual (oneself) with regard to her moral character” (p. 706).

Our unconscious pre-dispositions colour our moral perceptions and affect the
manner by which we attend to the world. The imagination plays a significant role in
the self-reflective process which brings these to cognizant levels. We attend the world
largely on an unconscious level upon which the affect plays a significant role. Blum
claimed that “perception occurs prior to deliberation and prior to taking the situation
to be one on which one needs to deliberate” (p. 707). If this is the case, then
perception depends on the agent’s prior possession of certain moral categories
through which she may construe the situation and from which she can make
inferences or interpretations. This process of construal and inference involves a high
degree of imagination. Attending the world involves not only acquiring accurate
sense data, but also making imaginative interpretations from that data.
A third example from Blum (p. 706) illustrated this role of imagination in perception. Tim, a white male, stands waiting for a cab near a black woman and her daughter. The cab passes the woman and stops near Tim, who gets in with relief. On reflection, Tim comes to believe that the cab driver deliberately passed by the black woman (construal) and imputes a racist motive to this action (inferral). Prior to deliberating on what action to take, that is prior to forming a moral judgment, Tim had to go through a perceptive process involving both construal and inference. Both of these processes require Tim to engage the imagination in his reasoning.

Attending the world provides one with the basis for making sound moral judgments. Moral perception of the external world requires receptivity, imagination, and humility. Nussbaum’s (1995, p. xvii) warning, that “society is full of refusals to imagine one another with empathy and compassion, refusals from which none of us is free,” is a stark reminder of the need for engagement of the imagination in attending to the world around us.

In any human interaction, moral perception also involves perceiving others as persons. Kant’s moral imperative to treat persons as ends rather than as means provides us with the grounding principle; however, as was previously noted, it strikes one as a rather cold impersonal injunction with little in the way of practical applicability. Here, I argue that treating others as persons requires a prior perception of others as persons and that this perception is fundamentally an imaginative process.

Cochrane (1979, p. 77) placed respect for the person at the bedrock of moral reasoning. He claimed for this principle, both an absolute and a formal character; absolute because it permits no exceptions, formal because the description of who constitutes a person is minimal. The difficulty lies in the translation of this formal
principle into actual situations where “real people” are to be treated with respect. How does a city planner perceive residents of a slum area as individuals worthy of individual respect, rather than “slum dwellers?” How does a teacher perceive students as individual children rather than a “class?” Cochrane (1979, p. 77) stated that respect involves “being positively disposed towards the other;” perceiving others as persons begins with a positive disposition toward another. This positive disposition does not imply admiration for the character or qualities of another; in fact, respect for the person is not contingent on any description of the person’s physical, mental, or social attributes. What Cochrane seemed to be saying is that we should bring to each human interaction a way of seeing (a metaphor) that allows us to perceive others as worthy of respect.

Moral perception is based on an adequate conception of others as persons; neither a cold, rational abstract category nor a fuzzy emotional response will do. Moral imagination plays a mediating role between these two extremes. Jacobs (1991, p. 23) stated that “the main reason moral imagination is so important is because of how it functions in the identification and acknowledgment of persons. It has a crucial role in taking others morally seriously, regarding them as real.” This is accomplished by attending to individuals and especially by allowing their voice to be heard. Only through hearing the personal narratives of others can one begin to truly see them as individuals worthy of respect.

Jacobs illustrated the role of imagination in perceiving others as persons by relating the biblical narrative of David and Bathsheba. In order to conceal his adulterous behaviour, David had Bathsheba’s husband sent into the heart of a fierce battle where he was slain. Nathan the prophet confronted David with this
reprehensible act by telling him a parable of an unjust and uncaring landlord.

David's response was self-righteous wrath:

David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan, "As surely as the Lord lives, the man who did this deserves to die! He must pay for that lamb four times over, because he did such a thing and had no pity." Then Nathan said to David, "You are the man!" (2 Samuel 12:5-7)

Jacobs (1991, p. 23) cited this example as a case of failed moral imagination on David's part; I propose that it serves as an example of the powerful use of imagination in narrative to provoke moral perception of another as a person. David, who had the capacity to make objective, rule-based moral decisions, was made aware of his personal failure to treat Bathsheba's husband as a person through the timely vehicle of narrative.

While this is a singular, and perhaps exceptional example, it does point to the role which imagination plays in "particularizing" a situation. Blum (1991, p. 719) placed particularity at the heart of moral perception, seeing it as the bridge between objective, principle-based morality and a practical ethic of care. The role of the imagination in mediating these two moral positions bears closer examination.

Until recently, Western moral philosophy has been dominated by what might be called an "impartialist conception of morality," traceable back to both Kantian and utilitarian thinking (Blum, 1988, p. 472). The criticisms of this objective, rational moral philosophy have already been discussed. Recently, an alternative moral perspective has begun to assert itself, one which offers another perspective, "a different voice" (Gilligan, 1982). The two positions have been characterized as a contrast between justice and caring (Blum, 1988), between universal and particular (Tronto, 1993), and between Kantian rationality and Humean affection (Jacobs, 1991; McCollough, 1991).
In each instance, a similar question emerges: "How does one apply universal, impersonal principles in particular situations?"

Several authors such as Blum (1988, 1991) and Tronto (1993) have situated the debate within the moral theories of two prominent contemporary authors, Kohlberg (representing the justice position) and Gilligan (representing the ethic of care). However, it would be unfair to dichotomize these positions since, as Blum (1988, p. 474) pointed out, "Gilligan holds that there is an appropriate place for impartiality, universal principle, and the like within morality and that a final mature morality involves a complex interaction and dialogue between the concerns of impartiality and those of personal relationship and care."

What the proponents of a morality of care seem to be advocating is an imaginative way of attending to people and situations which focuses on the situated particularity of the moral agent, on the relationships within which the moral reasoning takes place. As Blum (1988, p. 473) explained further: "For Gilligan each person is embedded within a web of ongoing relationships, and morality importantly if not exclusively consists in attention to, understanding of, and emotional responsiveness toward the individuals with whom one stands in relationship."

Bateson (1994) summed up this relationship between care, attention, and moral perception as follows.

*To attend* means to be present, sometimes with companionship, sometimes with patience. It means to take care of. Its least common meaning is to give heed to, for this meaning has been preempted by the familiar *pay attention*, which turns a gift into an economic transaction. Yet surely there is a link between presence and care. The willingness to do what needs to be done is rooted in attention to what is. The best care, whether by a parent or a physician or a teacher, is founded in observation or even contemplation. I believe that if we can learn a deeper noticing of the world around us, this will be the basis of effective concern. (p. 109)
The components of a morality of care, attending, understanding, and responding, are essentially imaginative in nature. A morality of care is not only compatible with but also dependent on the imaginations of moral agents in relationship.

**Envisioning.** The significance of imagination in component 1 (moral perception) of our framework has been developed at length. This preliminary step in moral reasoning has been largely overlooked in moral theory, possibly because it is such a highly imaginative process and therefore is seen as contrary to rational moral judgments. However, Murdoch (1971) built a strong case for the essential connection between moral perception and moral judgment. For her, it was not possible to isolate the moral judgment from the context which had already been created as a result of the prior imaginative work of attention and perception:

> If we consider what the work of attention is like, how continuously it goes on, and how imperceptibly it builds up structures of value around us, we shall not be surprised that at crucial moments of choice most of the business of choosing is already over. This does not imply that we are not free, certainly not. But it implies that the exercise of our freedom is a small piecemeal business which goes on all the time and not a grandiose leaping about unimpeded at important moments. (p. 37)

The role of imagination in moral perception cannot be easily separated from its role in moral judgments. There are, however, several additional functions of the moral imagination which directly relate to moral judgments.

In order to respond to the question "Which is the morally right course of action to follow?" the moral agent must engage in the imaginative process of envisioning. Kekes (1991) identified four types of imagination: image formation, creative problem solving, falsification of reality, and mental exploration of alternative realities. It is to this final type that Kekes ascribed a moral attribute. "It is moral,
because one central concern of the agents engaged in it is with evaluating the possibilities they envisage as good or evil” (p. 101).

Kekes went on to suggest that one may only appreciate the significance of a particular action against a background of competing possibilities. This envisioning of possibilities extends to the domains of the others involved in the situation and particularly to the consequences of possible courses of action upon the agent and the other stakeholders. Envisioning also has a temporal component in that it extends not only to future possibilities but also backward to envision possibilities from past situations. Kekes suggested that this “habitual exercise of retroactive moral imagination also enables us to articulate patterns of our preferences for certain kinds of possibilities . . . [and also] acts as a guard against present error” (p. 107). Finally, the envisioning of possibilities extends beyond one’s present culture and increases the freedom of our decisions by permitting the imagining of possibilities beyond the influences of culturally given possibilities.

Moral judgments have a rational component by which decisions are made on the basis of some established set of criteria. Unfortunately, very few real-life problems lend themselves well to a simple rational cost-benefit analysis or fit clearly into a prototypical moral schema. The imagination provides the moral agent with a wealth of particularities and possibilities which give significance to the moral choice.

Closely related to the envisioning role of imagination is its mediating capacity. Cochrane (1979) suggested that, in practice, the *prima facie* moral rules, which the agent uses to arrive at moral judgments, are often conflicting. He advised that “the rules find justification through appeals to the higher-order principles” (p. 80).
propose that this “appeal” to the higher order can only be effected through the moral imagination.

One of the oldest understandings of the function of the moral imagination is its mediating role. Magill (1992) traced this capacity through the 19th century theological speculations of J. H. Newman back to the Romantic imagination of Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The mediating imagination is characterized by the property of discernment which has both an anticipatory and an interpretive function (Magill, 1992, p. 461). In practice, conflicting second-order moral rules, which seek justification by appeal to the first-order principle of respect for person, can only be adjudicated by the work of an imagination which anticipates the application of the principle to moral rules and substantive values and envisions the potential consequences. While Schulte and Cochrane (1995) manage to avoid the terminology of imagination, preferring instead to employ more rational expressions such as “analysis of alternatives,” and “identify the options available and the likely consequences” (p. 60), they cannot escape the implication that the procedures they advocate are essentially imaginative in nature. It is difficult to conceive of a purely rational mediation of conflicting moral rules without the complementary work of the imagination particularizing and enriching the context of the judgment.

Rest et al. (1986), approaching moral judgment from a cognitive development perspective, claimed that moral agents develop concepts of how to organize cooperation and related concepts of fairness which they hold up as moral screens in making judgments:

If a subject can assimilate a particular social problem to one or another concept of cooperation and its accompanying sense of fairness, then the subject will have a basis for judging what is morally right. Indeed the
degree of fit of the situation to a general scheme is what gives the subject a sense of conviction and certainty. (p. 11)

What these authors seem to have said is that moral judgments are made by “mapping” the particulars of a situation onto an internalized “schemata,” which has been developed through experience, and assessing the “degree of fit.”

This approach to moral judgment has a degree of appeal in that it corresponds closely with the work of Lakoff (1987) and Johnson (1987, 1989, 1993). Furthermore, this approach responds in part to the criticism of Kant’s “purely rational morality” (Johnson, 1993, p. 70) to which I earlier alluded. Johnson (1989, p. 370) described “image schemata” as innate metaphors which the moral agent brings to experience as templates against which to evaluate a particular situation. Authors may disagree on how these schemata develop but all agree that it is the work of imagination to map reality onto these templates and give meaning to the situation for the agent. As Warnock (1976) explained:

> Meanings spring up around us as soon as we are conscious. The imagination is that which ascribes these meanings, which sees them in the objects before us . . . At an everyday level we must use imagination to apply concepts to things. This is the way we render the world familiar, and therefore manageable. (p. 207)

From this perspective, it can be argued that moral judgment is contingent on the work of imagination in perceiving the moral particulars of a situation and, subsequently, in mapping these particulars onto an internal image schema. Reason enters the process when the degree of fit is assessed.

I have presented three roles for imagination in the moral judgment component of moral reasoning. Whether or not one is convinced of the cogency of any particular approach, it must at least be conceded that moral judgment involves more than pure reason and that the imagination has a complementary role to play in moral judgment.
Formulating intent. As one moves to component 3 (moral motivation) and component 4 (moral implementation), several issues become apparent. First, the distinctions between components become increasingly blurred; motivation to commit to a moral course of action and the perseverance or resolve to implement the action are so closely related that it may be nonproductive to attempt to differentiate them. Second, the relative importance of affective and imaginative influences increases while the cognitive influence decreases; in short moral reasoning becomes increasingly imaginative. Third, the role of imagination in these components is increasingly difficult to differentiate. I shall treat the two components separately in an attempt to be faithful to the proposed conceptual frame; however, one should anticipate considerable overlap. It will be shown, for example, that the concept of hope figures prominently in both the third and fourth components.

Rest (1983) cited eight theories which explain the source of motivation in moral reasoning thereby demonstrating the complexity of moral motivation. Both Cochrane (1979) and Rest (1983) suggested that particularity became increasingly significant as one approached the moment of action and, hence, it was reasonable to expect that the imagination and the affective domain would play a significant role.

Rest et al. (1986) claimed that there were many connections between cognition and affect in component 3. Cochrane (1979) seemed to concur, by stating that it was at this stage that substantive values exerted an influence on the moral reasoning process. Cochrane placed this stage of moral reasoning squarely in the value domain by suggesting that a certain type of knowledge is required here which is "capable of carrying us across those wide open spaces, to be found in every ability, where no rule runs" (Oakeshott, 1967, p. 168).
One significant connection between cognition and affect is "that imagining a desired goal or outcome implies having some sort of cognitive representation of it, and desiring it implies having a positive affect toward it" (Rest et al., 1986, p. 15). These authors cited examples of situations where people were more inclined to behave morally after experiencing a positive affect. They also suggested a connection between a positive outlook (optimism) and inclination to behave morally. They postulated that one's affective disposition influenced the availability of positive or negative cognitions and, hence, influenced the propensity to act in certain ways.

In summarizing the research on moral motivation of dental students, Bebeau (1993, p. 321) found that a percentage of students with "no functional schema for certain concepts" were unable to consistently select the moral course of action—choosing self-interest over the good of the patient, for example. This observation points to the role of imagination in mapping image schemata discussed in the previous section. Perhaps, within this component, the motivation to choose a moral course of action is elicited by the imaginative mapping of situational particulars onto an internal metaphorical image schema.

It is at this point that the distinction between components 3 and 4 become blurred. Cognitive psychologists such as Stotland (1969, p. 15) would have us erase the line between motivation and action by defining motivation strictly in behavioral terms. In this view, motivation is not an affective state which energizes an agent; rather, it is an action directed toward the attainment of a goal. Stotland stated the first proposition in his "theory of hope" as follows:

**Proposition I:** An organism's motivation to achieve a goal is, in part, a positive function of its perceived probability of attaining the goal and of the perceived importance of the goal. (p. 7)
This proposition suggests that motivation is dependent on the perceived chances of achieving the goal and the perceived significance of the goal. Translated into moral choices, we may say that an autonomous moral agent will be motivated to the moral course of action if she perceives a reasonable chance of succeeding in that course of action and if she perceives the course of action to be significant.

In Proposition VI of his thesis, Stotland provided a clue as to how the agent's perceptions of success and significance were connected to motivation. In this proposition, he invoked the concept of internal "schema" which are aroused by "the organism's perceiving an event similar to a constituent concept of the schema... [and] the greater the similarity between the event and the constituent concept... the more likely is the schema to be aroused" (p. 12). While Stotland's use of the term "schema" may differ somewhat from Johnson's (1989) "image schema," the underlying premise is the same—namely, that moral reasoning is accomplished by mapping perceptions of particular situations onto internal schemata. Whether the motivation to act is a direct function of the congruence between the perceived world and the internal schemata; or, conversely, whether the arousal is related to the internal recognition of incongruity, as is the case in the metaphorical process, it must at least be acknowledged that the imagination plays an active role in the mapping process. Motivation has an imaginative component and is closely allied to the concepts of optimism and hope.

**Hoping.** Component 4 of Rest's model involves the conversion of motivation into action, the implementing of a moral plan of action. Rest et al. (1986, p. 15) listed several conditions required of the moral agent in the implementation of a moral course of action. These descriptors (perseverance, resoluteness, competence, and
character) do little to explain how the moral agent actually translates moral intent into moral action. Cochrane (1979) offered little by way of enlightenment at this stage. He offered a list of "psychological resources . . . [necessary] to sustain the required action" (p. 83); however, these, like Rest's descriptors, do not supply us with a vehicle for translating motivation into action.

Rest et al. (1986) described one possible "technique" for improving what they referred to as "self-regulated behaviour," that is the ability to persist in a positive action in the face of opposition. The technique involves using the imagination to create a positive affective state which induces cognitions related to persistence of effort (p. 16). Here again, the imagination plays a mediating role between the affective and cognitive domains; however, the connections are tenuous and the examples cited are too simplistic to strengthen the case. As an alternative perspective, I propose that the imagination may play a powerful role in sustaining moral action through the vehicle of hope.

One way of understanding the connection between hope and action is to consider the effects of despair or hopelessness on the moral agent. Stotland (1969, p. 7) confirmed what a casual observation of the human condition suggests to us—namely, that despair leads to apathy, listlessness, and inaction. Conversely, people who are hopeful demonstrate a powerful drive to persist toward the achievement of their goal. As presented in the previous section, Stotland tied hope and motivation to the arousal of internal schema which are congruent with the perceived external situation. I would suggest that it may be possible to relate hope and action to the cognitive dissonance which results from incongruity between internal schema and external reality.
The salutary influence of hope on action appears to arise not from similarity but from incongruence. Senge (1990, p. 157) referred to this incongruence between reality and one’s vision as a creative tension which moves one to act. Green (1987) and Greenfield (1988) proposed a “critical imagination” which serves the function of motivating one to moral action through awareness of incongruity. Green claimed that the imagination “allows us to speak to other members about the chasm that exists between the hopes and fair expectations of the community and the failures of our lived lives” (p. 114). In a similar vein, Greenfield suggested that the moral imagination “refers to the inclination of a person to see that the world . . . need not remain as it is—that it is possible to be otherwise and better. It is the ability to see the discrepancy between how things are and how they might be” (p. 216). Evidently, the awareness of dissonance, rather than debilitating, can be energizing if one employs the imagination to create conditions of hope.

Havel (1990, p. 181) defined hope as “a state of mind . . . [and] a dimension of the soul.” He went on to differentiate hope from joy and optimism in that hope is an active state “an ability to work for something because it is good.” Several interesting contrasts between hope and optimism can be drawn; each serves to illuminate the positive influence of hope on action. Hope is an active verb while optimism is a noun. Hope contains a cognitive and imaginative component while optimism is purely affective. Hope implies a long-term commitment to action while optimism tends to be more transitory. Hope is other-centered, involving the relationship of the agent and the community while optimism is self-centered and inward directed. Hope is voluntaristic and implies that one’s choices influence positive outcomes while optimism is deterministic and passive. Hope leads to positive action while optimism
leads to passive acceptance. In essence, then, the final stage of the moral reasoning process is intricately bound up in the concept of hope, a highly imaginative function.

In this section, I have demonstrated an integral role for the imagination in each stage of the moral reasoning process. Based on the work of Rest (1983) and Cochrane (1979), I chose a moral reasoning framework which included the four components perception, judgement, motivation, and action; imaginative capacities influence each of these components. Moral reasoning is most often practiced in what Schon (1987, p. 13) calls "the indeterminate zones of practice" where ambiguity rules and functional rationality flounders. The artistry of leadership entails the competence and willingness to engage the imagination in creating a room where creative rationality can be applied to moral reasoning in those ambiguous zones. In the following sections, I turn to an exploration of how artistic leadership shapes and maintains a room or moral clearing wherein the moral imagination can be released.

A Poietic Frame

_The most visible creators I know of are those artists whose medium is life itself—the ones who express the inexpressible without brush, hammer, clay or guitar. They neither paint nor sculpt—their medium is being. Whatever their presence touches has increased life. They see and don't have to draw. They are the artists of being alive._ (J. Stone. Cannon Beach Artist)

If, as I argued in the previous section, imagination is essential for competent moral reasoning, two further practical questions arise: 1) "How does one create the conditions favourable for the free exercise of moral imagination?" and 2) "What are the artistic elements through which the moral imagination is engaged in practical situations?" These questions, which speak directly to the ways in which theory is converted into practice, are the subject of the remainder of this exploration.
Gilson (1965) offered a beginning point for our exploration by proposing a trinity of operations—knowing, acting, and making—which define human existence. The three operations are intimately related and mutually dependent, yet each is associated with a unique domain of human reasoning and poses an unique ontological question. The study of knowledge (noetics) is related to the intellect and asks the question "What is true?" The study of action (ethics) is related to the will and asks the question "What is good?" The study of production (poietics) is related to the imagination and asks the question "What is beautiful?" Together, these three operations comprise the essence of being.

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between these domains. Gilson related them through rational activity, suggesting that "since man’s nature is to be a living creature endowed with reason, rational activity is necessarily included in every human operation as a condition of its very possibility" (p. 18). Together, the three domains complete the picture of the human as a rational being; however, each domain remains distinct. Significantly, Gilson set the domain of making apart from the domains of knowing and acting, suggesting that the latter two can subsist only in relation to the subject, while the former, which produces something distinct from the subject, is perhaps capable of subsisting independent of the maker (p. 19).

This view is consistent with Taminiaux’s (1987, p. 148) distinction between poiesis and praxis; while both are concerned with bringing something into existence, the former aims at an end distinct from the act of making, while the latter is an end unto itself. Hence, doing is not a form of making, nor is making a form of doing. Whereas Taminiaux argued from this observation that praxis rules poiesis, I would
suggest that the two operations are intimately and mutually dependent. *Praxis* is only attained through the vital operation of *poiesis*.

As Schon (1987) and others have amply demonstrated, models of leadership have tended to focus on knowing and acting, on converting *theoria* into *praxis*, while largely ignoring the more imaginative and artistic domain of making. With Gilson, I maintain that this third domain is not merely a nonessential frill or novelty, to spice up the technical-rational models of leadership; rather, it is an essential complement to the other two, quietly informing each step of the process from knowing to acting. Only through the exercise of the imagination in the poietic domain can sound moral reasoning occur.

![Diagram](image)

**Figure 1.** A trinity of being
A consideration of the parallels between ontology and architecture is helpful here. Drawing on a long tradition of art in architecture, Rybcynski (1992, pp. 284-85) claimed that building well involves three conditions, "utilitas, firmitas, and venustas." Coined by the Roman architect, Vitruvius, these three conditions have come to be known as the Vitruvian triad. The first two of these conditions—commodity and firmness—concern practical issues and correspond to the domains of ethics and noetics, respectively. The third condition—delight or beauty—"deals with aesthetics and situates architecture with the fine arts." Rybcynski claimed that the three attributes are inseparable, and that "perfection can be achieved only when a building combines all three elements of the Vitruvian triad." Architects create buildings; leaders create rooms. In both cases, a trinity of attributes, complementary and integral, are necessary.

Creating implies a product; for Gilson (1965, p. 19), this product is a work of art: "There is art only when the operation, essentially and in its very substance, does not consist in knowing or acting, but in making." Gilson called this process poietics, from the Greek verb "to make" and suggested that this process underpins the creation of an artist’s work (Nattiez, 1990, p. 13).

If leaders are artists as I am arguing, then they must necessarily engage in a poietic process which has properties similar to the poietic process of other artists; further, the traces of this poietic process should be an identifiable work of art. Before considering the specifics of the poietic process, the definition of this product (this work of leadership art) bears consideration.
The Room

Leaders are performing artists; as such, their works of art entail a significant relational dimension. The performance (the work of art) requires the active participation of others (the audience) in order to be complete. There may be a sense in which all art is participatory but I would suggest that, if a spectrum of audience participation could be envisioned, leadership as a performing art would be situated at the extreme of most participatory. At the outset, then, it must be acknowledged that the work of art that leaders create is as much dependent on the participation of others as it is on the leader's behaviour.

The work of Nattiez (1990) is helpful in understanding the relationships involved in performing art. Drawing on the earlier writing of C. S. Pierce and J. Molino in the area of semiotic analysis, Nattiez identified three dimensions (the poietic, the aesthetic, and the trace) of any symbolic production. He referred to these three dimensions as the "semiological tripartition" and offered this trinity as the basis for a theory of communication in general and art in particular (pp. 10-12).

For Nattiez, the poietic and the aesthetic are processes clearly distinguished from each other in their relationship to "the material reality of the work (its live production, its score, its printed text, etc.)—that is, the physical traces that result from the poietic process" (p. 15). Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between the three dimensions. In applying this reasoning to the art of leadership, Duke (1989, p. 353) proposed a four-component model (Figure 3) which moves from the poietic behaviour to the aesthetic experience in essentially a linear progression. Two distinctions between these models will serve to define the position I advance.
First, the direction of the arrows implies an active role for the "audience" in Nattiez' model; in fact, a case might be made for the aesthetic experience being effectively a poietic process whereby the audience "re-creates" the work from their own unique perspective. I propose that an artistic model of leadership entails consideration of the active role which the "audience" plays in the process; rather than a passive or an independently active role for the audience, the artist (leader) and the audience (followers) interact to create a common meaning from the work. The role of the artist is to create the arena (the room) within which common sensemaking and moral discourse can occur. Weick (1995, p. 4) suggested that "sensemaking [in organizations] involves placing stimuli into some kind of framework . . . . When people put stimuli into frameworks, this enables them to comprehend, understand, explain, attribute, extrapolate, and predict." The process of poetics involves the creation of just such a framework.

Figure 2. Nattiez' semiological tripartition.
Figure 3. Duke’s aesthetic leadership model.

A second distinction involves the relationship between process and product. Nattiez clearly identified the poietic and the aesthetic as dynamic processes while the work is a symbolic form which is both the result of a complex process of creation (the poietic), and “the point of departure for a complex process of reception (the esthetic process) that reconstructs a ‘message’” (p. 17). Duke’s model does not clearly distinguish process and product. He seems to be saying that the “behaviours of a leader” (poiesis) result in “acts of leading” (the work) from which the spectator derives a “leadership experience” (aesthetics) resulting in specific “effects of the experience” (p. 353). Such a model leaves little room for leader-follower interaction in the process and seems to suggest that two independent products result. Instead, I propose that the product (the work) is commonly shared among the participants in the experience. The product is created and re-created continuously by the interaction between artist and audience in the space that they share. Leadership closely resembles the ideal in
the performing arts where the artist, the work, and the audience are all involved in the creative process.

The room, which is the product of the art of leadership, is that moral clearing within which participants can engage in moral discourse for the purpose of making sound moral judgements. It is not a physical space, but rather a moral space, a framework within which people can locate their common and particular stories. If the room is a "good" room, the participants will be free to engage in sensemaking and moral discourse which is empowering and productive. If the room is a "bad" room, the possibility of meaningful interaction and moral discourse is inhibited or precluded; any failure here is a failure of imagination.

Personal conversations with an experienced performing artist confirmed the conceptualization of the room as a clearing within which interactions take place. For this artist, the work of art was conceived of as "a moment in time, an intersection of paths where people could meet to share a common experience" (S. Crowe, Personal conversation, September, 1996).

The Poietic Process

To this point in the review, I have established the crucial role which imagination plays in the moral reasoning process and I have provided a metaphor for the space in which the moral imagination can be exercised. Returning to Nattiez’ (1990) semiological tripartition, and having defined the product (the physical trace), I focus now on the poietic process itself. Several sociological and artistic models can be called into service to define this process. I have selected five which are particularly relevant to leadership as a poietic endeavour. Bakhtin’s (1981) literary chronotope
model offers insight on the poietic process from a novelist’s perspective; Brown’s (1977) cognitive aesthetics model identifies and explicates three poietic elements which may be engaged by the sociological inquirer but have parallels in any poietic enterprise; Nattiez’ (1990) semiotic analysis elaborates the details of the specific elements of the poietic model; Goffman’s (1961, 1983) interaction order provides a useful frame by which the poietic elements may be observed and interpreted in the field; and, finally, Starratt’s dramatic leadership model offers insight into a parallel artistic metaphor for leadership which has implications for this study.

**Bakhtin’s chronotope model.** Bakhtin (1981) explored the poietic process in literary fiction using the framework of chronotopes which he defined as "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" (p. 84). In literature, chronotopes are employed by the writer to create a space, a *room* if you will, within which the reader and the author can engage in a dialogue: "It . . . enters the world of the author, of the performer, and the world of the listeners and readers" (p. 252).

This literary poietic has parallels in the performing arts in that the artists in both cases employ specific devices to create an encounter, an intersection of space and time, an opening for dialogue. While the devices which Bakhtin described may be specific to the literary arts, they, nevertheless, point to a common purpose, a creative exchange between the work and the world, wherein both are enriched.

Three characteristics of Bakhtin’s chronotope model have particular implications for the development of a model for the poietic of leadership. First, Bakhtin conceived of the product of the literary process as a metaphorical clearing within which mutual interactions transpire; this conception is comparable to the
metaphorical room which is the product of the leadership poietic process. Second, Bakhtin suggested that there are several literary devices or chronotopes which the author uses to create this clearing; similarly, a poietic of leadership involves the use of a number of poietic devices to create and sustain a moral clearing or room. Finally, the chronotopes which Bakhtin ascribed to his literary poietic have direct transference to a leadership poietic.

One of the chronotopes which Bakhtin described, the ironic trinity of the rogue, the clown, and the fool (p. 158), has specific relevance to the leadership poietic. Irony, the underlying stance of the three characters which comprise this chronotope, is one of the predominant elements in the proposed model of leadership poietics. Thus, Bakhtin’s model serves the poietic of leadership well in providing a parallel model in the literary arts. Bakhtin’s conceptualization of the room as a particular intersection of space and time provides a valuable definition of the product of the leadership poietic.

Brown's cognitive aesthetics. In developing his poetic model for sociological inquiry, Brown (1977, pp. 26-27) advanced a "cognitive aesthetic," grounded in symbolic realism, which transcends the dualisms of science and art, truth and beauty, reality and symbols, explanation and interpretation. For him, both artists and scientists are makers "not merely as craftsmen but now in a cognitive and ontological sense" (p. 34), and what they make is "space for the act of ciphering, surface for the enactment of transformations" (p. 35). I maintain that leaders also are makers working, not with sounds or colours, but with symbols.

Drawing an analogy between sociology and the verbal arts, Brown identified three "literary devices," di-stancing, metaphor, and irony, which have direct
application to sociological inquiry. Each of these devices contributes to a poetic of sociology. For Brown, what is created is a symbolic framework through which understanding of the social world can be sought. The three devices which Brown claimed for his poetic serve a parallel purpose in a poietic model of leadership. I propose that di-stancing, metaphor, and irony, along with narrative, are the essential elements in the leadership poietic.

Nattiez' semiotic analysis. The essential features of Nattiez model have been presented in the introductory passages of this section (see Figure 2). His work in the poetics of music has lead to a heightened understanding of the poietic process in other artistic disciplines.

The aspect of Nattiez model, which is particularly appropriate to a leadership poietic, is his conceptualization of the relationship between the three elements poietics, aesthetics, and the trace. Aesthetics, the audience response to the work of art is more than a passive appreciation; rather, "it is the point of departure for a complex process of reception . . . that reconstructs a 'message'" (Nattiez, 1990, p. 17). In developing a poietic model of leadership, I propose that what Nattiez refers to as the aesthetic experience is actually a poietic process. The participants, by interacting with the leader in the work of art (the room), become involved in the poietic process. In effect, as Bakhtin (1981) proposed, poietics is a dialogue mutually undertaken by leader and participants within the room.

Nattiez' model may thus be expanded to include a reciprocal poietic-aesthetic interaction on the part of both the artist and the participants, as illustrated in Figure 4.
Figure 4. A poietic interaction model.

Goffman’s dramaturgical model. A further expansion of the poietic process is achieved by Goffman’s (1961, 1983) conception of social interaction as theatre. Goffman (1961, p. 7) conceives of social life as a compilation of episodes or focused interactions wherein “people effectively agree to sustain for a time a single focus of cognitive and visual attention.” These episodes have a dramatic quality to them in that each participant has a role to play in the performance and “the discovery of the script, stage directions and the strategies employed by the actors is the main objective” (Forgas, 1979, p. 99).

Goffman is considered to be a sociological micro-analyst in that he is concerned with the rules which define and make up specific social episodes. His poietic is idiosyncratic in the sense that each encounter has a pre-determined script which the actors must discover. The substance of the role is pre-determined;
however, the style, manner, and guise in which the role is performed, is open to the 
artistry of the individual actor (Goffman, 1961, p. 151). This micro-analytic approach,
while limiting the poietic process to a pre-defined field, nevertheless provides a 
valuable internal framework for examining the poietic process on a broader scale.

Goffman identified six levels of social interactions—six poietic rooms if you 
will—of increasing complexity. While he preferred to limit his analysis to the 
dramaturgy within the unique interactions at each level, I propose that the 
interactions on all six levels contribute to the greater poietic process; the room which 
is created is the product of social interactions on all six levels.

The levels of interaction comprising the "interaction order" are defined by 
Goffman (1983, p. 6) as follows:

1. Ambulatory units are self-contained vehicular entities (one or more persons) 
   organized for the purpose of participating in the flow of pedestrian life. 
   Encounters on this level are highly superficial and insignificant.

2. A contact is any occasion when an individual comes into another's response 
   presence. In a school context, contacts would include a passing encounter in 
   the hall involving eye contact and a nod, or the interaction between two 
   teachers waiting for the photocopy machine.

3. Conversational encounters occur when people come together "into a small 
   physical circle as ratified participants in a consciously shared, clearly 
   interdependent undertaking, the period of participation itself bracketed with 
   rituals of some kind" (p. 7). These interactions are characterized by some self-
   limiting purpose and at least the appearance of equal right to contribute. A
small-group discussion among teachers regarding the special needs of a student would qualify for this level of interaction.

4. **Formal meetings** have many of the same properties as conversational encounters; however, the equality of contribution is controlled by a presiding chair. Staff meetings fall within this level.

5. **Platform performances** involve activities which are set before an audience. At this level, democratic participation in the interaction is negligible.

6. **Celebratory social occasions** occur under the auspices of some commonly appreciated circumstances. This interaction level may include numerous bounded encounters at many levels sustained for indefinite periods of time.

The social occasion provides for a great richness of interaction episodes because of its loosely defined parameters.

While Goffman is concerned with the analysis of the *micro-poietic* of each encounter, I propose that a leadership poietic takes a broader analytic approach by viewing all the interactions as valid contributions to the formation of the room. In leadership, the poietic process includes casual contacts, formal encounters, and celebratory social occasions; by observing and analyzing numerous encounters over an extended time, one may come to understand the nature of the poietic process.

**Starratt's drama of leadership.** Building on the metaphor of social interaction as drama (Goffman, 1961, 1983), Starratt (1993) developed a leadership model which is a radical departure from prevailing technical-rational models. He differentiated two types of rationality which are equally necessary for effective leadership:

Functional rationality deals with structural differentiation, bureaucratic hierarchicalization and specialization . . . . Functional leadership tends to focus on mechanisms of control, coordination . . . . tasks and problems. Substantive rationality, by contrast, involves the larger sense of meaning, mission, and identity of the organization as a whole.
Substantive leadership, therefore tends to highlight the larger sense of meaning, mission and identity which motivates and guides the constituents of the society or organization. (p. 4)

Starratt suggested that the leader exercising substantive rationality is actually participating in a social drama with other actors/participants; furthermore, the drama is extemporaneous in that the participants are simultaneously acting out and creating the script as they go along. There is a continuous and concurrent definition of and participation in the social drama.

The parallels between Starratt’s dramatic model and a poietic model bear consideration. First, the definition of leadership in this model is extended to include all the contributors to the script. Similarly, I have defined leadership in such a way as to include the creative behaviours of all the participants in the room. Second, Starratt’s model implies a reciprocity between acting and creating which is similar to the reciprocal poietic-aesthetic experience within a room: “In the process of social interaction, people speak and act as they perceive the circumstances warrant such speech and action; yet, the speech and action likewise generate the context” (p. 23). Third, Starratt referred to “a variety of interpretive symbolic clues as to how to carry off one’s performance in a social setting” (p. 122). I would suggest that these symbolic clues are created and engaged in the same manner as the poietic elements are engaged in the creation of a room. Finally, Starratt suggested that inquiry into leadership must radically change in epistemology and methodology in order to study leadership from this perspective. The use of "narrative and ‘thick’ descriptions" (p. 5) provides a more comprehensive dynamic picture of leaders in action as opposed to static, quantified snap-shots. In the next chapter, I propose a similar methodology for the exploration of the poietic process.
In this section, I have examined five models which shed light on different aspects of the poietic process. Bakhtin's chronotopes are literary devices which create a metaphorical space for mutual interactions in the same way that the poietic elements create a room for moral discourse. Brown offers three poietic elements which he considers essential for sociological inquiry and which I accept as essential for the poietic process. Nattiez elaborates the poietic-aesthetic interaction and provides a framework for expanding that interaction into a reciprocal participation model. Goffman provides a convenient interaction order which guides my methodology. Finally, Starratt presents a leadership model which parallels the poietic model in its most significant aspects and, thereby, offers assurance, validity, and guidance to this present research.

The poietic process involves the creation of a work of art, a room within which sensemaking and effective moral discourse can occur. In creating this room, leaders employ their imaginations to engage several poietic elements. The preceding discussion suggested a number of these poietic elements which leaders might employ to define the boundaries of that room. In the following section, I explore four of these—stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony—and suggest how and why these four elements are necessary for the creation of an effective room.
Poietic Elements

They said, "You have a blue guitar,
You do not play things as they are."
The man replied, "Things as they are
Are changed upon the blue guitar."
(Wallace Stevens, 1954)

Stevens’ blue guitar is a metaphor for the imagination through which scientists, leaders, artists of all genres create new ways of expressing “things as they are” (Brown, 1977, p. 34). In the foregoing sections, I have proposed that leadership involves the creation of a space into which participants are invited to share in the experience of sensemaking and moral discourse. In the place of a guitar or musical voice, the leader draws on a variety of poietic elements to create this space, and to allow others to share it with her.

In his aesthetic model for leadership, Duke (1989, pp. 358-362) identified three categories of creative acts—dramatics, design, and orchestration—by which the leader as artist creates leadership. While Duke concentrated on specific leadership attributes and behaviours required of leaders in the poietic process, I propose a shifting of the focus and suggest that there are several identifiable poietic elements which the artistic leader employs in the making of leadership.

Brown (1977) proposed that sociological inquiry makes use of elements more frequently associated with the artist rather than the investigator wedded to scientific procedures. He suggested three such elements, di-stancing, metaphor, and irony, which mark at least the beginning of a cognitive aesthetic. I maintain that the poetics of leadership involve four artistic elements: stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony. As with Duke’s (1989) criteria, I make no claims of sufficiency; however, a strong case can be made for the necessity of each element in understanding the ways
in which a leader clears the space or creates the room within which moral discourse
and the making of meaning can occur. In this section, I explore the ways in which
each of these elements contributes to that process.

Stereoscopic vision. In his timely and elegant critique of contemporary art,
Gardner (1977) employed a legend from Norse mythology to lament the failure of art,
particularly fiction, to live up to its moral mandate. I employ the same legend to
point to a similar, and perhaps more critical, failure on the part of modern
philosophy:

It was said in the old days that every year Thor made a circle
around Middle-earth, beating back the enemies of order. Thor got
older every year, and the circle occupied by gods and men grew
smaller. The wisdom god, Woden, went out to the king of the trolls,
got him in an armlock, and demanded to know of him how order
might triumph over chaos.

"Give me your left eye," said the king of the trolls, "and I'll tell
you."

Without hesitation, Woden gave up his left eye. "Now tell me."
The troll said, "The secret is, Watch with both eyes!" (p. 3)

While Gardner compares the state of contemporary art to Thor's hammer
"abandoned beside a fencepost in high weeds" (p. 4), I would interpret this legend as
a condemnation of the "one-eyed" vision which seems to characterize modern thought.
The loss of Woden's left eye may symbolize an inability to perceive the world with
that essential breadth which Berggren (1962) referred to as "stereoscopic vision: the
ability to entertain two different points of view at the same time" (p. 243). In
explaining the metaphorical process, Ricoeur (1978, p. 154) employed this concept to
suggest that the meaning of a metaphor can only be comprehended if the imagination
is employed to simultaneously hold the two perspectives presented by the metaphor
in mental view. From a broader reasoning perspective, I would suggest that this
same breadth of vision is absolutely essential in understanding the significance of a moral situation.

The modern world is characterised by false dichotomies (Johnson, 1989, p. 363) which force us to think in "either-or" dualities. Renihan (1985) argued for a more open view of reality called "disciplined naiveté" which allows one to explore the middle ground between extremes and find truth in that ambiguous 'in-between' zone. This, I contend, is possible only through the exercise of both reason and imagination as complementary, and equally valid offices, a process which Schon and Rein (1994) have called "creative rationality."

Brown (1977, p. 52) suggested that a similar attitude, which he identified as aesthetic perception, is essential not only for the fine arts but also for "illuminating the nature and processes of nonartistic modes of creation." Brown is concerned mainly with the application of this concept to sociological inquiry; however, its implications for other creative disciplines cannot be ignored. In aesthetic perception or di-stancing, the "distinction between strict objectivity and strict subjectivity are put aside . . . [and] . . . both ideas and feelings become ways of knowing and expressing the world" (Brown, 1977, p. 52). In effect, di-stancing places one in an ambiguous state between apparently opposing di-poles and requires that judgement be suspended indefinitely.

The acknowledgement of such a third state, which Fulghum (1993) referred to as "maybe," opens up a world of possibilities to explore. In a whimsical discourse on the concept of indeterminacy, Madeleine L'Engle (1986, p. 204) speculated on the future of computers which operate in trinary rather than binary mode. The third condition between "on" and "off," "yes" and "no," "positive" and "negative," she called mu: "Mu means that neither 'yes' nor 'no' is a workable answer." While it is difficult
for us to conceive of a computer that could function in an indeterminate state, I 
contend that, for the largest part of our lives, this is the human condition. Schon 
(1987, p. 13) stressed the importance of leaders’ ability to function in the 
"indeterminate zones of practice." In essence, leaders must have the capacity to 
engage in creative ambiguity.

The possibility of engaging in "creative ambiguity," as a component of moral 
reasoning, is an attractive one. Davies (1982) claimed that positive moral action is 
related to a tolerance for ambiguity in several ways. First, it enhances an appreciation 
for the complexity of the variables involved in a moral judgement. A person who is 
tolerant of ambiguity will be much more willing to particularize social issues, such as 
abortion and capital punishment, and entertain alternative perspectives on them. 
Second, it "affirms that even though we cannot fully comprehend life . . . the search 
for meaning can be fruitful" (p. 650). Third, comfort with ambiguity promotes hope. 
We are not condemned to live out a deterministic existence; there are always 
alternative possibilities to consider. Fourth, "an appreciation of ambiguity leaves our 
evaluation of the other person open" (p. 652). Moral judgements are much more 
difficult and complex when the agent is tolerant of ambiguity; however, they are 
certainly more morally sound since they are based on the incongruence from a 
prototype rather than similarity with it. By focusing on similarities, we are apt to 
generalise and overlook the significant differences which particularise the decision 
making situation. Certainly, some personality types are more predisposed to tolerate 
ambiguity than others; however, Davies (p. 653) suggested that it may be possible to 
develop, or at least enhance, an appreciation for ambiguity regardless of personality 
type.
Conscious exposure to, interaction with, and reflection on ambiguous situations may increase one’s confidence in making choices under ambiguous conditions. Dialogue and role playing may also increase one’s comfort level. Perhaps one of the most significant ways of enhancing one’s tolerance is engagement with works of fiction. Davies (p. 649) cited John Steinbeck’s *East of Eden* as a prime example of a narrative fiction that provides an arena for the reader to wrestle with ambiguity and appreciate that meaning comes from just such conflict. Story-telling, as the parables of Jesus illustrate, provides opportunity for one to imaginatively engage in dissonant situations thereby increasing one’s capacity to see the world through more than one window. The movie, *Dead Man Walking*, effectively employed dramatic ambiguity to explore the issue of capital punishment. In the movie, a nun finds herself caught between her concern for a convicted murderer on death row and the agony of the parents of the victims. The director maintains a dynamic tension between the two perspectives throughout, with no attempt at resolution. In the end, the audience is left with the disquieting task reconciling or accepting the ambiguity on a personal level. The experience is unsettling, to say the least; however, it has the effect of increasing one’s tolerance for the complexity of moral issues beyond the scope of the issue addressed.

In a similar way, leaders must not only be willing to tolerate moral ambiguity in their role, but must also find ways of modelling and encouraging that tolerance in others. This notion seems to fly in the face of conventional models of assertive leadership; however, a moral arena which is intolerant of ambiguity and which discourages stereoscopic vision leaves no room for poetic moral intercourse.
Metaphor. It would not be an overstatement to claim for metaphor the pre-eminent position in imaginative moral reasoning. Following Johnson's (1993, p. 33) assertion, I propose that moral reasoning and discourse is metaphorical through and through; hence, an awareness and appreciation of the metaphor as a poietic device is essential in creating a moral arena. This argument for metaphor can be engaged on two levels: first, our most fundamental moral concepts are defined by systems of metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980); and second, we understand moral situations by way of the metaphorical mapping process (Johnson, 1993).

Received wisdom is largely antagonistic to reasoning based on metaphor. The positivist understanding of metaphor is that the concept is too cognitively indeterminate and unstable to be employed in the service of moral judgment. This thinking results from a misconception that metaphors generate an indefinite, context-dependent, and subjective meaning which is useless in practical moral reasoning. Johnson (1993) countered these claims by demonstrating that metaphors are the foundation of our moral reasoning, and that, rather than leading to error, they are the very basis of sound moral judgements.

Regarding the first claim that our moral concepts are rooted in metaphorical language, Johnson (1993, p. 36) identified three primary clusters of metaphors which we use to define our moral concepts: those concerned with actions, those concerned with obligations, and those by which we evaluate moral character.

In the action cluster, we employ metaphors which describe events as motions along paths, as in "We're getting nowhere in solving this problem—we're just plodding along." States are metaphorical locations, as in "He's in love," or "Stay out of trouble!" Difficulties are impediments to motion, as in "He's trying to get around
the regulations,” or “She just went through a divorce.” Long-term purposeful activities are journeys along a path, as in “We started out to help the homeless, but along the way we got sidetracked.”

In the obligation cluster, we encounter metaphors which conceptualize rights and duties as commercial transactions. Causal relationships are often portrayed as involving a financial exchange, as in “She was enriched by her experience,” or “He paid dearly for his mistake.” Rights and duties are conceived through a social accounting metaphor where a prisoner is required to “pay his debt to society” and we “owe allegiance to our family.” The conceptualization of moral obligation in terms of a monetary debt is perhaps the most prevalent moral metaphor in our culture.

The moral character cluster provides us with metaphors which we employ in evaluating human personhood. These metaphors largely reinforce the duality of the self by conceptualizing human nature in pairs of incompatible warring elements. Character is portrayed in terms of strength and weakness, as in “The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak,” and “You’ve got to control your passions.” Righteousness and evil are conceived of as up and down, as in “That was a low thing to do,” and “I thought you were above such an act.” The up/down, high/low metaphors have come to be associated with a mind/body dichotomy which is closely associated with purity and pollution, as in “That was a dirty trick,” and “Her motives were pure.”

These examples suggest that our language, and therefore our reasoning, is largely metaphorical. I would also submit that these metaphors affect the quality of our moral reasoning. Whether or not we are aware of the metaphors which influence our reasoning, their necessity and ubiquity serve to perpetuate the prevailing attitudes and values which enter into our moral judgments.
Johnson (1989) stated that these innate metaphors form part of our “image schemata” by which the imagination makes sense of the external world. He described an image schema as “a recurring pattern in the imaginative process by which we experience recognizable order in our understanding, cognition, and knowledge” (p. 370). Our imagination, acting as the translator, anticipates recognizable forms in reality and maps them onto our schemata.

The good news is that these schemata are not rigid; rather, they are continually in process and are re-formed as they interact with particular situations (Johnson, 1989, p. 370). This would imply that experience and awareness may act to enhance these metaphorical structures. Johnson (1993, pp. 193-195) suggested several positive outcomes resulting from an awareness of the metaphorical nature of reasoning. First, knowledge of the metaphors which we use helps us to understand ourselves. Second, this awareness aids us in the search for universals; for example, it allows us to examine moral reasoning across cultures by comparing the metaphors used by other people. Third, awareness of metaphorical reasoning is the starting point for changing or improving our moral reasoning. Finally, this knowledge helps us to understand others; by recognizing the metaphors and schemata which others use, we are able to communicate with others more effectively.

Narrative.

*Deprive children of stories and you leave them unscripted, anxious stutters in their actions as in their words.* (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 216)

Second only to the power of the metaphor is the role of narrative in engaging the imagination in moral reasoning. Johnson (1993, p. 11) claimed that narrative is a fundamental mode of understanding human action, evaluating moral character, and projecting possible solutions to moral dilemmas. His argument takes the form of four
propositions which I summarize here: (1) we are beings in process, seeking to
synthesize meaning, situated within a complex of physical, social, moral, and political
influences; (2) our culture supplies a stock of roles, scripts, metaphors, schemata
which we use to understand and reason about the world; (3) moral judgments are
made within this milieu with the aid of the imaginative tools described in (2); and (4)
narrative is a comprehensive synthesizing process which helps us organize our
identity and test scenarios in making moral choices (Johnson, 1993, pp. 165-166).

Johnson’s propositions are clearly illustrated in this short narrative which he
has called *A Hooker’s Tale*:

I was about fifteen, going on sixteen. I was sitting in a coffee
shop in the Village, and a friend of mine came by. She said, “I’ve got
a cab waiting. Hurry up. You can make fifty dollars in twenty
minutes.” Looking back, I wonder why I was so willing to run out of
the coffee shop, get in a cab, and turn a trick. It wasn’t traumatic
because my training had been in how to be a hustler anyway.

I learned it from the society around me, just as a woman.
We’re taught how to hustle, how to attract, hold a man, and give
sexual favours in return. The language that you hear all the time.
“Don’t sell yourself cheap.” “Hold out for the highest bidder.” “Is it
proper to kiss a man goodnight on the first date?” The implication is it
may not be proper on the first date, but if he takes you out to dinner
on the second date, it’s proper. If he brings you a bottle of perfume
on the third date, you should let him touch you above the waist. And
go on from there. It’s a marketplace transaction.

Somehow I managed to absorb that when I was quite young. So
it wasn’t even a moment of truth when this woman came into the
coffee shop and said, “Come on.” I was back in twenty-five minutes
and I felt no guilt. (Cited in Johnson, 1993, pp. 154-155)

This woman is explaining her story to another and in so doing is trying to understand
herself within the complexity of her particular situation. She has a clear
understanding of the ways in which cultural metaphors influence her actions and she
is attempting to justify her actions in terms of those metaphors. Johnson regarded
this narrative as typical of what each of us does continually: “We live out narratives
in our lives, we reconstruct them for our self-understanding, we explain the morality of our actions, at least partly in terms of them, and we imaginatively extend them into the future” (p. 155).

An individual’s actions can only be made sense of when they are placed within a coherent narrative. As “The Hooker’s Tale” illustrates, the woman’s decisions and subsequent actions required a context through which she and her audience could understand the action. While this example is largely a justification of past actions, it also reinforces the schema through which she will make future decisions. MacIntyre (1981) explained:

I can only answer the question “What am I to do?” if I can answer the prior question “Of what story or stories do I find myself a part?” We enter human society, that is, with one or more imputed characters—roles into which we have been drafted—and we have to learn what they are in order to be able to understand how others respond to us and how our responses to them are apt to be construed. (p. 216)

Narrative, then, situates an agent within a context and clarifies the roles and scripts within which human action can take place. We learn how to act through stories which we tell and which we share with others. As Johnson (1993, p. 172) explained:

“[W]e make our first struggling, halting attempts at rational explanation by constructing narrative unities out of our confusing experience, in response to the recurrent who, what, when, where, why, and how questions that haunt us throughout our childhood and into our adulthood.”

As I have previously established, moral reasoning can be conceptualized as a four component process, beginning with the perception of the moral significance of a situation, proceeding to an imaginative exploration of the possibilities for appropriate action in the particular situations, the formulation of an appropriate course of action, the formulation of intent to act in a moral way, and concluding with the perseverance
to carry out the moral action. I indicated earlier that imagination plays a crucial role in each of these components; I now propose that one of the primary ways that imagination is engaged at each of these levels is through the use of narrative. Whether the narrative is an internal dialogue or a verbalization shared with others, the attention, envisioning, intending, and hoping which are the imaginative components of the deliberation are all fuelled by narrative.

From Peter Pan, to The Brothers Karamazov, to The Prodigal Son, people have relied on a common stock of stories to particularize and complete their lives. Not only do we create and act out our own narrative, we also participate in a common human narrative represented by the wealth of stories we share. Shared stories, whether they be oral (as in a Garrison Keiler monologue), written (as in a John Irving novel) or visual (as in a Robin Williams movie), engage the imagination in at least three ways.

In the first instance, fictional narrative particularizes abstract concepts thereby providing a concrete frame from which to think about the concept and hopefully extend the thinking to one’s own life. On the communal level, good movies often provide a particular context to think about concepts such as forgiveness and grace (The Fisher King) or social issues (Philadelphia). On the private level, novels such as John Irving’s Cider House Rules create a powerful frame through which to examine the abortion issue. The characters and situations provide the particular images onto which our own thoughts and feelings can be mapped.

A second way in which fictional narrative engages the imagination in moral reasoning is in the presentation of alternative possibilities which we may safely explore. By playing out one possible course of action “before the mind’s eye,” the narrative allows us to explore that possibility but also to engage in “What would I
have done?” thinking. By identifying with the protagonist we are able to enter into
the moral reasoning process with her but we are also free to explore other alternatives
and imagine other endings.

Finally, fictional narrative creates a space for shared dialogue. I am a strong
advocate of public readings and shared movie experiences, largely because these
provide an immediate communal space for dialogue. If we share a narrative, then we
share a context, an arena, where productive discourse can occur. Whether or not
people agree on the position presented in the story, it nevertheless provides a
common frame within which dialogue can proceed. To read a book or watch a movie
alone is to miss out on the opportunity for expanding or affirming one’s perspective
and through shared discourse.

Narrative, then, is a primary vehicle for engaging the imagination in moral
reasoning. Not only does it enrich and expand our perspective, it also provides the
shared meeting place where people may engage in moral conversation.

Irony

_Just as philosophy begins with doubt, so also a life that may be called human begins
with irony._ (Kierkegaard, 1992)

While irony is most often understood as a rhetorical or literary device, it may also
be understood as a philosophical stance or attitude toward life. Vlastos (1987)
referred to someone who adopts such a stance as a “life-long ironist” and cited
Socrates as the exemplar (p. 88). In a similar vein, Kierkegaard (1992) proposed a
significant role for the ironist personality in the development of the world spirit as it
moves from present to future actuality (p. 260). In this section, I consider several
characteristics of this ironist position which contribute to the creation of a moral
arena.
Buechner (1990) developed a character in his novel *The Book of Bebb* which typifies the role of ironist as facilitator of wisdom. John Turtle, the "Joking Cousin," plays a unique and vital role in the culture of a small Indian band in the American Southwest. We take up the story in the midst of a solemn funeral ceremony for the highly respected and recently deceased chief of the tribe:

"I am the resurrection and the life," Bebb said from the pulpit pale as death, and John Turtle stood behind him holding two fingers up over Bebb's head like rabbit ears. When Bebb was winding up his eulogy of Herman Redpath by giving out the details of the will—explaining how even from the grave Herman Redpath would continue to finance the ranch indefinitely and everyone was going to have his share including Jesus—John Turtle picked his nose on the chancel steps. At several points in the service he even tried to get Bebb to enter into dialogue with him.

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," Bebb read from the lectern, his face glistening with perspiration, and "I know what you want right enough," John Turtle said from the foot of the casket.

Bebb said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters," and John Turtle said, "I know a girl what lives on a hill. If she won't do it her sister will." You have to hand it to Bebb. He never batted an eye.

Unlike the small boy in the orange life preserver, nobody came up to snatch the Joking Cousin away when just after the benediction he walked over and either took or pretended to take a leak into Herman Redpath's open coffin. (p. 150)

This peculiar narrative aptly illustrates the role of the ironist as fool or deceiver.

While the ironist in this case is as "subtle as a chainsaw," he, nevertheless, serves a purpose much more profound than simply providing comic relief at a sombre occasion. The incongruity of the ironist's behaviour and his opposition to the solemnity of the circumstances seems to be pointing to some transcendent truth beyond. The fact that his role was accepted as a vital part of the tribe's culture indicates that something more profound than crude humour was taking place. This "something" is the essence of irony, an indirect pointing toward deeper understanding.
while allowing that understanding to reveal itself to the audience in an intensely personal and subjective fashion.

It is this dramatic tension between two positions, the "clash of the painful with the comic" (Duke, 1985, p. 17), that moves the observer beyond either position to a deeper understanding. Knox (1961, p. 4) attributed an analogous interpretation to Aristotle's "mean of Truth" created in the tension between the eiron and the alazon. The ironist's role is to create the tension between ignorance and presumed wisdom, between comedy and tragedy, between perception and reality that will free the observer to move to a deeper, richer level of understanding.

The ironist as fool or clown invites us to explore boundaries, particularly the boundary between order and chaos. Two Charlie Chaplin movies, Limelight (1952) and A Dog's Life (1918), illustrate the ambiguity and discomfort which we experience in the presence of chaos. In the former, Chaplin and Buster Keaton are music-hall clowns performing a skit; as the performers doggedly pursue their task, chaos erupts around them. In analyzing the skit, Willeford (1969, p. 108) explained that "the fool breaks down the boundary between order and chaos, but he also violates our assumption that the boundary was where we thought it was and that it had the character we thought it had: that of affirming whatever we have taken for granted and in that way protecting us from the dark unknown." Chaplin plays with this relationship again in A Dog's Life where the boundary is a fence which he uses to avoid the forces of law and order. In this breaking down of the boundary, the fool holds the social world open to values which transcend it and points to the potential for a new higher order which embraces both the order and chaos defined by our social world. Parallels between the truth conveyed by the ironist/fool and recent
advances in chaos theory (Gleick, 1987) are striking. Just as the ironist challenges us to re-examine the relationship between order and chaos in the social world, so, too, does the chaologist challenge the received view of the relationship between order and chaos in the physical world.

The ironist's mission is to stand in perpetual opposition to the presumed wisdom of her age in order to create the incongruity necessary for liberation or enhanced perception. The difference between the ironist and the conventional critic is the way in which the ironist performs this role. Rather than adopting the condemnatory stance of the prophet, the ironist plays the fool, the joking cousin, the fox, and in so doing frees the object to become the subject in choosing its own pathway toward a higher level of understanding.

The ironist as jester, trickster, or holy fool can be found in virtually every culture. Among some North American Aboriginals, he is known as Coyote; in Buddhism, we find Pu'tai, a wandering monk who carries a bag of trash on his back; Islam has had numerous holy Sufi clowns; St. Francis of Assisi took very literally St. Paul's injunction to be "fools for Christ" (Hays, 1993, p. 24).

Bakhtin (1981, p. 158) illuminated the roles of three archetypical literary figures, the rogue, the clown, and the fool, who play a similar significant role in the literature of all cultures. The novelist employs these three figures to expose the conventional and all that is vulgar and falsely stereotyped in human relationships. Bakhtin grants these figures certain rights in the novel:

The right not to understand, the right to confuse, to tease, to hyperbolize life; the right to parody others while talking, the right to not be taken literally, not "to be oneself"; the right to live a life in the chronotope of the entr'acte, the chronotope of theatrical space, the right to act life as a comedy and to treat others as actors, the right to rip off masks, the right to rage at others with a primeval (almost cultic) rage—and finally, the right to betray to the public a
personal life, down to its most private and most prurient little secrets. (p. 163)

This role is similar to that of the court jester whose function was to remind the king to laugh at himself, "reminding the king of his follies, being his security guard against the loss of his humanity to the thieves of pride and power" (Hays, 1993, p. 25).

The jester employed irony to create a dynamic tension between wisdom and folly, thereby extending moral reasoning beyond the narrow confines of tradition and rationality. In a similar way, irony may be employed to broaden and redefine the boundaries of the moral arena. While the traditional jester's role may not be relevant in our culture, a corresponding, albeit more subtle, role may be essential in facilitating moral reasoning in contemporary organizations.

In this section, I have proposed four poietic elements through which leaders might engage the imagination in the creation of a room in which sensemaking and moral discourse can occur. While these may not be a definitive compilation, the evidence suggests that they are necessary if not sufficient elements of a leadership poietic. The way that these elements are employed by participants in the room will determine the quality of the moral reasoning that transpires there.

A Conceptual Frame

In this review, I have argued at length for a reconsideration of the artistic, imaginative domain as a vital component of moral reasoning and, therefore, of leadership. First, I have demonstrated that the imagination is essential to moral reasoning, which lies at the heart of leadership. Second, I have presented a poietic model of leadership through which a room or moral clearing can be created within which moral reasoning can occur. I have suggested that the product (the room) and
the process (poiesis) are dependent on the imagination for their effective deployment.

Finally, I have presented four poietic elements, all imaginative in nature, which leaders engage in the poietic process. Figure 5 provides a visual illustration of the relationship between the components I have defined.

As the model illustrates, both leaders and participants are involved in a reciprocal poietic-aesthetic process whereby they create a room for moral discourse, and are in turn influenced and guided by what happens in that room. Leadership is not merely a legitimately authorized activity; rather, it is shared by both the formal leaders and the participants in the room. The poietic and aesthetic processes are equally engaged by both leaders and participants. The poietic elements are only efficacious to the extent that they are appreciated by all participants.

The Leadership Room

Figure 5. A conceptual frame for the poietic process.
Furthermore, the particular imaginative elements which are employed to define the room are also the instruments which participants within the room employ to engage in moral discourse. Each of the four components of moral reasoning—attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping—are dependent on imaginative elements for their fulfilment; effective praxis, the end of the moral reasoning process, is not possible without the informing work of poiesis.

At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that this review might confront the awkward silence surrounding the role of creativity, imagination, and art in public moral discourse. Through a survey of the literature which addresses this silence, I have presented the reader with lenses through which to examine the relationship between imagination and moral reasoning. The contention that the creative, artistic domain plays an essential role in leadership practice in general, and in moral reasoning in particular suggests that observation of the behaviour of formal and informal leaders in school settings might provide valuable insight into how this poietic domain informs leadership praxis. In the following chapter, I discuss the specific strategies that this research requires.
Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In keeping with the artistic spirit of this study, it seemed appropriate to
approach the methodology from an artist's perspective. Several models of sociological
inquiry are commensurate with this approach (Atkinson, 1990; Brown, 1977; Eisner,
1981, 1995); however, one of the most comprehensive treatments can be found in
Wolcott's (1995) *The Art of Fieldwork*. This work not only reviewed the contributions
of many contemporary practitioners of this approach, but also explored, in great
depth, the many parallels between doing art and doing ethnographic research. In the
end, the author stopped just short of drawing a homological relationship between
artistry and ethnography, preferring instead to take the less controversial route of
analogizing fieldwork as art (p. 20). While I would prefer to make a case for relating
fieldwork and art in a more literal sense, I was content, nevertheless, to expropriate
Wolcott's model for my own research since, when it comes to the actual practice, the
distinction essentially disappears.

Wolcott created a fieldwork model within which scientific rigour and artistry
are complementary components; this approach effectively dispenses with the common
criticism that artful inquiry tends to be too "soft." He stated:

I do not argue on behalf of a 'soft' or 'fuzzy' approach to fieldwork,
only against a fieldwork in which there is no allowance for fuzziness or
ambiguity. I do argue on behalf of an approach that keeps humans
visibly present, researcher as well as the researched. (p. 15)
It was that very spirit that I sought to bring to my research—rigorous, systematic inquiry conducted through an artist’s eye.

How that aspiration translated into methodology, forms the major focus of this chapter. In the following sections, I discuss the selection of a specific research methodology, the setting and context of the study, the particular strategies involved in the research methodology, and the issues arising around trustworthiness of ethnographic research.

Research Design

The selection of a specific research model was determined by the nature of the research problem, the researcher’s perceived extent of control over the inquiry, and the nature of the phenomena under investigation. The problem statement and research questions, as developed in chapter one, provided the guiding rationale for the choice of a case study approach for this inquiry.

Essentially, the problem posed by the researcher was to explore the ways in which the professional participants of a school engage poietic elements in the practice of leadership. Three specific research questions were formulated to guide the exploration. These questions addressed the identification of the specific poietic elements engaged by practitioners, the manner in which these elements were employed, and the nature of the “rooms” created by the poietic process.

Yin (1984, p. 17) has suggested that the case study is the most appropriate strategy for investigating research problems which are framed primarily as "how" questions, which do not require control over behavioral events, and which focus on contemporary events. The first of Yin’s criteria is partially satisfied, and the second
two are completely satisfied by the present research problem; therefore, the case study was selected as the appropriate strategy.

Several other factors narrowed the initial choice to an exploratory, comparative case study. First, poietics, the focus of this investigation, is a relatively novel concept to the study of leadership. To the best of my knowledge, no prior studies have investigated the relationship between poietics and leadership. For this reason, the research is very much an exploration of relatively uncharted terrain. As I indicated in chapter two, Starratt (1993) presented a model of leadership containing an artistic domain similar to the poietic domain of leadership which I proposed to explore. One of his claims was that researchers who plan to explore the "substantive" or symbolic domain of leadership should rely on a methodology which is dynamic and employs "narrative and 'thick' descriptions" (p. 5). I concluded that the most appropriate methodology to achieve these criteria was an exploratory case study.

Second, in reflecting on the third research question, it seemed appropriate to select two schools—two different rooms—to explore. It was my belief that a broader and more complete picture of the nature of "the room" would be achieved if I could set two rooms side by side and look at their differences and similarities in reference to the way that the poietic elements were engaged in each setting.

Finally, a host of external influences fortuitously came together in time and space to facilitate access to the schools, research funding, and research support. The larger research project, of which this study was a subset, had already been set in motion; thus all the conditions were favourable to undertake the two inquiries concurrently.
To summarize, this study was an exploration of the poietic (creative) domain of leadership; a domain that holds great promise for understanding the ways that imagination influences leadership in schools. The type of study which lent itself most adequately to such an exploration was a case study, which focused on "the meanings and experiences of the people who function in the cultural web one studies" (Eisner, 1981, p. 6).

The Setting and Context of the Study

This exploratory case study was embedded in a larger explanatory case study designed to examine the cultural influences contributing to the institutionalization of change in public schools. The primary researchers of the larger study had previously identified leadership as a vital factor in effecting positive change and improvement in Saskatchewan schools (Hajnal, et al., 1996). Therefore, this larger study provided a convenient and fitting vehicle for the exploration of the poietic domain of leadership within the larger context of a school’s culture.

Site Selection

Because of the exploratory nature of the study, the criteria for site selection were minimal; all that was required was two schools whose professional participants would grant approval to the inquiry. The two sites selected were not chosen for their demographic similarity; in fact, they differed in many significant ways. One important difference was in their responses to the school improvement initiatives which had been attempted over the past several years.
Site selection was based on the criteria derived from the results of earlier phases of the meta-study wherein three levels of institutionalization of change were identified. The schools selected came from each of the two extreme levels; that is one school was selected from the successful institutionalization group while the other was selected from the unsuccessful institutionalization group. From the perspective of the meta-study, this approach allowed for a comparative study of two extreme cases and promised to yield valuable insight into the cultural influences on the institutionalization of change. From the perspective of this study, it offered the opportunity to explore the poietic characteristics of two distinctive leadership situations.

Unit of Study

Merriam (1988, p. xiv) defined a case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a program, an institution, a person, a process, or a social unit." While the study was broadly bounded by the organizational structure of the two schools, its practical limits were both narrower and more ambiguous.

The unit of study was the leadership phenomena which occurred within the organizational context. This encompassed not only the activities and behaviours of the formal leaders (principals and vice-principals), but also those of the informal leaders who contributed to the creation of the room. It was this latter aspect of the leadership phenomena which rendered the boundaries ambiguous for, while formal leaders are identified by organizationally defined roles, informal leaders are manifest only through their interactions with other members of the organization. It was
anticipated that informal leadership roles would be transient in that they would be
taken up and discarded by various members of the group according to the demands
of each situation. Nevertheless, I expected to identify several informal leaders who
distinguished themselves in terms of their engagement of poietic elements in creating
the room. The results of the study indicated that the leadership boundary was much
less ambiguous than expected.

One way of clarifying the boundary was to survey the organizational members
as to who they perceived the informal leaders to be (Appendix C). From these
surveys, a leadership distribution pattern was constructed which alerted the
researcher to attend to the behaviours of the perceived leaders. While the leadership
role was shared by several informal leaders in each school, these leaders were widely
acknowledged by other participants.

A second way of delimiting the participants was through observation of the
social interactions in which the participants engaged. Three levels of interaction
(Goffman, 1983) were particularly helpful in identifying informal leaders: (a)
conversational encounters, especially in staff rooms, clearly manifested the leadership
of certain participants; (b) interactions in formal meetings provided confirmation of
the leadership of these same participants; and (c) the manner in which participants
interacted at celebratory social occasions such as parties and "choir practices" aided in
the delimiting of informal leaders.

In most cases, our observations confirmed the perceptions of the participants
surveyed. Examples of the field notes deriving from these observations are attached
in Appendix D. However, since the focus of the study was on the leadership
behaviours of the entire participant group, we attended to the engagement of the
poietic elements by all the participants. The aesthetic response to the poietic process on the part of all participants became an important feature of our observations.

The Researcher

One of the primary roles which the researcher adopts in a case study is that of participant observer (Wolcott, 1995, p. 90). The artistry and skill of this strategy will be discussed further in the section on research methodology; however, it seems appropriate here to acknowledge that participant observation implies that the researcher, by virtue of his history and humanity, brings a certain bias to the inquiry. While this bias has most often been perceived negatively as an obstacle to objective research, Wolcott offered a more realistic perspective.

He considered bias to be an inevitable part of the research role and recommended that the researcher welcome it as a way of giving meaning and focus to the study. Bias can be harmful (prejudice) if it dominates the researcher’s horizon and exerts undue influence on the interpretations drawn; alternatively, it may be acknowledged and used as a guide to stimulate inquiry. Wolcott (1995) summarized this position as follows:

Good bias not only helps us get our work done; by lending focus, it is essential to the performance of any research. In the total absence of bias a researcher would be unable even to leave the office to set off in the direction of a potential research site. Bad bias, then, is a matter of excess, like bad air crowding out good. In the case of qualitative research, bias becomes excessive to whatever extent it exerts undue influence on the consequences of inquiry. In the extreme, conclusions may be foreordained without investigations of any kind... Bias should stimulate inquiry without interfering in the investigation. That surely requires art. The critical step is to understand that bias itself is not the problem. One’s purposes and assumptions need to be made explicit and used judiciously to give meaning and focus to a study. (p. 165)
The historicity of the researcher becomes indispensable at the interpretation stage of research when the investigator is attempting to make meaning from the observations. Drawing on Gadamer’s *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, Linge (1976) maintained that this historical grounding of the interpreter is essential to the hermeneutical process.

Gadamer takes the knower’s boundness to his present horizons and the temporal gulf separating him from his object to be the productive ground of all understanding rather than negative factors or impediments to be overcome . . . . [P]rejudices, in the literal sense of the word, constitute the initial directedness of our whole ability to experience. Prejudices are the biases of our openness to the world. (p. xiv)

With these exhortations in mind, I propose to explicate some of the biases which I brought to the study. Doubtless, the astute reader will discern many others simply by attending to the subtle cues inherent in the writing; however, this disclosure is valuable to both the reader and the researcher as a reality check at each stage of the investigation.

I am a career educator, passionately committed to the democratic ideal of public, universal, equitable education. Forty-two of my fifty years on this planet have been dedicated to learning, teaching, and administering within educational settings. In those years, I have experienced and helped to define a multitude of rooms, some of which hummed with creative energy and others which were stagnant and stale.

I make no claims of personal artistry in the narrow sense of the term, although it is something to which I aspire wholeheartedly. In the poietic sense, I believe that all people are artists of life and that they are most fully artists when they are participating together in activities which bring common meaning to their lives. It is here that the horizons of art and leadership merge.
Reflection on imagination, creativity, artistic endeavour, and their relationship to morality, have been a major preoccupation of my life. With Gilson,(1965), I view these concepts as constituting a poietic domain which is integral to human wholeness. Rather than an indulgent luxury in our moral reasoning, I hold the artistic perspective to be essential in every phase of the reasoning process. Imagination makes each of us human.

These are the conscious biases which I brought to the study. At the outset, they motivated me to "leave the office to set off in the direction of a potential research site," and throughout the study, they continued to provide guidance and openness to the world which I explored.

Research Methodology

It is difficult to conceive of fieldwork as art when one begins to consider specific strategies or methods of data collection. For the researcher, the term "methodology" carries with it connotations more closely associated with craftsmanship than with artistry. It would be foolish to deny that good fieldwork is a craft that involves a very specific set of skills; yet, Wolcott (1995) would argue that there is also an artistic element involved.

To me the essence of fieldwork is revealed in the intent behind it, rather than by the label itself . . . . [F]ieldwork is a form of inquiry in which one is immersed personally in the ongoing social activities of some individual or group for the purpose of research. Fieldwork is characterized by personal involvement to achieve some level of understanding that will be shared with others. (p. 66)

The personal involvement and the achievement of understanding both demand a high degree of artistry. Fieldwork is both a craft and an art; together the two dimensions provide a balanced study.
The Craft

Yin (1984, pp. 79-89) identified six sources of data in case study research and suggested techniques for gathering data from each source. These are documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation, and physical artifacts; all six of these sources were utilized in this study.

1. The documentation consisted of the written communication of the school such as letters, memos, agendas, minutes, reports, policies, procedures, and formal studies. The primary use of documents was to corroborate and augment information from other sources (Yin, 1984, p. 80); however, they also served as a preliminary introduction to and overview of the school’s culture, and alerted the researchers to subtle relationships and current events that influenced the leadership dynamics in the school.

2. Archival records provided a more indirect source of information about the school. Such items as organizational charts, maps, records, statistical data, and inventory lists provided important demographic and contextual data that was difficult to obtain through observation or interview. For example, both rural communities studied had compiled a written history of the community which provided valuable insight into the development of education and the community values and norms which influence the school.

3. Interviews were one of the most important sources of data in this study. The interview may take a variety of forms depending on the needs of the researcher and the nature of the case study. This exploratory case study required a semi-structured or open-ended format which provided enough latitude so that "the investigator may . . . ask the respondent to propose his or
her own insights into certain occurrences and may use such propositions as the basis for further inquiry" (Yin, 1984, p. 83). The interview questions provided in Appendix A served as a guide for exploration.

Not all participants were interviewed. Interview candidates were selected using the following criteria: all formal leaders, the informal leaders identified through the staff survey (Appendix C), other informal leaders identified through participant observation, and any other participants expressing a desire were interviewed. Taped and transcribed interviews were undertaken for the formal leaders and other widely acknowledged informal leaders; Appendix E provides an example of a transcript from one such interview. Intensive manual note-taking provided the data for the other interviews.

4. Direct observation provided information about the physical conditions within which social interactions occurred. In the two schools, direct observation included layout of the workspace, condition of the facility, seating arrangements in group interactions, hallway activities, and traffic flows. These physical conditions were an important part of each room.

5. In participant observation, the researcher discards all pretense of objectivity and becomes a participant in the social activities of the group being studied. Yin (1984) pointed to several problems inherent in this strategy; these largely centre on the potential biases introduced by the researcher’s participation (p. 87). The need for artistry was most urgent in this strategy; since participant observation held the greatest potential for gathering meaningful data as well as
for threatening the credibility of the entire study, it will be discussed at length under the art of fieldwork in the following section.

6. Physical artifacts offered important clues as to what was valued by the participants. Trophy walls, awards, computers, library resources, works of art, murals, mottos, and mascots, all signal school values. As we discovered in the study, physical artifacts, when used as part of a symbolic act, can become powerful metaphors for enhancing moral discourse.

All six of these sources of data were used to create a balanced picture of the room and the social transactions which transpired within it. The interview and participant observation were used most extensively as sources for the narratives which comprise the following chapters.

The Art

A case might readily be made for an artistic dimension in each of the strategies described above; however, the most obvious need for an artful approach to fieldwork was found in the activities related to participant observation and to the interview process.

Participant observation. As Wolcott (1995, p. 240) stated: “Fieldwork beckons, even dares, you to become part of what you study. That is the difference between observation and participant observation.” In this study, I took the position that all the data gathering undertaken had an element of participation associated with it.

By far the greatest part of the data collection involved the observation of social interactions; here, the participatory aspect of observation became even more apparent. As indicated in chapter two, Goffman’s (1983) levels of interaction order were used as
the framework for observing the face-to-face interactions which occurred within the school. Observation at each of these levels (ambulatory units, contacts, conversational encounters, formal meetings, platform performances, and celebratory social occasions) implied an element of participation on the part of the researcher.

At least four researcher attributes were necessary for artful participant observation; together, they defined what Wolcott (1995, pp. 91-95) referred to as the art of "being there." First, the researcher established and maintained rapport with the participants in a variety of complex settings (p. 91). The ability to participate in these settings without imposing one's own prejudices on the interaction required tact, humility, empathy, and above all trust "without which one could hardly get on with the business at hand; one could hardly have any business at hand" (Goffman, 1983, p. 6).

Second, the researcher needed the attribute of reciprocity, the art of giving and receiving gifts. Wolcott (1995, p. 91) maintained that "fieldwork entails a subtle kind of exchange, one that often involves gifting across cultural boundaries where exchange rates may be ambiguous or one wonders what to offer in exchange for intangibles such as hospitality or a personal life history." Access to the site, invitation to participate in interactions, the provision of information, all were gifts bestowed upon the researcher by the participants. The gracious reception of these gifts involved a reciprocal returning of gifts to the participants. Creative reciprocity turned out to be as simple as grateful acknowledgement of gifts received or as complex as a willingness to become more fully involved in the life of the school. The art of reciprocal gift giving required an awareness of and sensitivity to the needs of the situation.
Third, artful participant observation required a tolerance for ambiguity. It was impossible to anticipate or prepare for all the vagaries of fieldwork; the complex meanings of social interactions were revealed only when the researcher was prepared to suspend judgement and think before speaking. As discussed in chapter two, a tolerance for ambiguity may come more easily to some people than to others, but it is possible and indeed essential to cultivate such a tolerance, if one is to engage fully in participant observation.

Finally, personal determination and self-confidence were essential for successful participant observation. Sudden immersion in a strange social group created a vague uneasiness and ambivalence; one was no longer sure of the rules of the game. At its best, this can result in initial awkwardness and minor social gaffes; at its worst, it can lead to a type of social paralysis which precludes any meaningful participation in the group. The attributes necessary to overcome the trauma of culture shock were poise, acumen and self-confidence to adapt in the face of uncertainty.

The interview. In describing the interview as a research technique, Kvale (1996) provided two metaphors which help define the inquiry approach taken in this study. "In the miner metaphor, knowledge is understood as buried metal and the interviewer is a miner who unearths the valuable metal . . . the knowledge is waiting in the subjects' interior to be uncovered, uncontaminated by the miner" (p. 3). In the traveller metaphor, the researcher is a traveller on a journey, purposefully wandering over the landscape exploring the domains of the country with or without the aid of maps. The tales which are told by the local inhabitants are "remolded into new narratives, which are convincing in their aesthetic form and are validated through their impact upon the listeners" (p. 4).
The traveller metaphor is a useful way of understanding the art of interviewing. In this study, I was exploring uncharted terrain. One of the best ways of finding out about new country is to stop at the pub and ask local residents for their perceptions. The artfulness with which those questions are posed determines the quality of the answers.

The four attributes of artful participant observation applied equally to the art of interviewing. In fact it might be argued, as some researchers do that interviewing is a subset of participant observation. Wolcott (1995, p. 102) distinguished between the two suggesting that interviewing is more active and intrusive than participant observation. From the perspective of the researcher, artful interviewing was seen as the giving and receiving of gifts. Two additional attributes, interlocution and creative listening, were essential to this process.

Interlocution, the art of asking questions, involved knowing how to request the gift of information from the interviewee. Not only was the researcher requesting a gift, he was specifying the nature of the gift. Therefore, it was essential to allow the gift-giver not only to choose the scope and dimensions of the gift, but also to proffer further unsolicited gifts. Artful interlocution left the door open to surprise and serendipity.

Creative listening involved not only the gracious acceptance of information gifts but also the creation of a welcoming environment in which the gifts might be offered. Creative listening necessitated an active engagement with the interviewee involving the reciprocal giving of gifts of gratitude, acknowledgement, attention, encouragement, and affirmation.
Case study research is both an art and a craft. The methodological design of this study incorporated both dimensions. As an engaged researcher, the continuous challenge was to maintain a balance between the two so that the data collected and interpretations derived would be trustworthy.

Textual Construction of Reality

The exploratory nature of this study precluded the prior conceptualization of anticipated outcomes. Wolcott (1995, p. 177) maintained that a distinguishing feature of qualitative research is that it is designed in the making and, hence, is an ongoing process which constantly evolves as the study unfolds. While this approach is the ideal, it was nevertheless necessary to begin from some point of reference. In the following chapter, I describe the development of the inquiry as it was experienced by the researchers; however, at the outset, the inquiry was conceived in such a way that the reporting of results and interpretation of the data would be undertaken through the use of narrative.

While Goffman’s (1983) interaction order, as described in chapter two, provided the preliminary framework for observation, I chose to identify critical interactions from a variety of "micro-rooms." Goffman’s micro analysis tends to treat each encounter as an independent episode with unique characteristics (Forgas, 1979, p. 102); however, I adopted an intermediate perspective between micro- and macro-analysis. The critical episodes selected for analysis were used to supplement an overall picture of the poetics of leadership within the school. Each episode was a piece of a larger picture which described the room within the school. The number and complexity of interactions observed over the course of the inquiry necessitated the
careful selection and recording of interactions that would prove useful in responding to the research questions posed. In the next chapter, I discuss in more detail the manner by which these interactions were selected as the inquiry unfolded.

Analysis of the data was largely accomplished by attending to the specific poietic elements present in the critical encounters and interpreting the ways in which these elements contributed to the moral discourse within the room. The macro-room was a mosaic of the many micro-rooms within which leadership poetics were manifest.

The final stage of the research project involved the reporting of the outcomes “whereby the ethnographer constructs versions of social reality, and persuades his or her reader of the authenticity, plausibility and significance of representations of social scenes or settings” (Atkinson, 1990, p. 57). Since, as Atkinson further observed, the authority of the account is largely determined by the persuasive force of the text, it was essential that the researcher employ language in an artistic, authentic, and convincing manner. One of the most appropriate modes for such an undertaking is traditional narrative.

This study employed a narrative style of reporting. The rhetorical device known as hypotyposis was employed to establish a “narrative contract” (Atkinson, 1990, p. 71) between the reader, the writer, and the text. Atkinson defined this narrative style as:

[T]he use of a highly graphic passage of descriptive writing, which portrays a scene or action in a vivid and arresting manner. It is used to conjure up the setting and its actors, and to “place” the implied reader as a first-hand witness. (p. 71)

In essence, the writer used narrative to create a metaphorical room within which a dialogue between the reader and the text could occur. To be faithful to the poietic
process, the four elements which defined a leadership room, perspective, narrative, metaphor, and irony, were engaged as much as possible in the reporting of the results. Casey (1995, p. 214) stated that "the new narrative research documents the creative ability of ordinary people to construct 'free spaces' in an aesthetically, ethically, and politically bankrupt world." In the following chapters of this dissertation, I attempt to employ the poetic process to create such a free space for dialogue between the reader and the story.

**Writing with Multiple "I's"**

Inquiry occurs at multiple levels, frequently involving participants in different roles at each level; this can often lead to confusion of person when narrative is employed in the reporting of results. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) recognized and confronted this problem through the concept of multiple "I's."

The "I" can speak as researcher, teacher, man or woman, commentator, research participant, narrative critic, and as theory builder. Yet in living the narrative inquiry process, we are one person. We are also one in the writing. However, in the writing of narrative, it becomes important to sort out whose voice is the dominant one when we write "I". (p. 9)

In this study, the problem of multiple "I's" was compounded by two other extenuating factors. The multiple "I" role was shared, not only by the researcher and the participants, but also by a team of research consultants involved with the study and a research colleague. Because of the intense collaboration involved in the research, it became difficult to construct narrative in the first person singular that would do justice to the experiences being described.

The compromise solution involved constructing the narrative in the third person as much as possible. While this had the effect of mitigating the immediacy of
the experience, it nevertheless gave the researcher a place to stand, a place from which to observe and analyze. The first person singular was reserved exclusively for this writer's involvement in the actual experiences as well as in the analysis and interpretation of results. In some cases, the narrative was facilitated by the use of the first-person plural to signify the involvement of a research colleague who became, not only an extension of my senses in the research, but also an invaluable participant in the inquiry, and, therefore, a reliable interpreter of the experiences.

**Trustworthiness**

Following the model established by Guba (1981) and Guba and Lincoln (1985), four fundamental categories—truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality—determine the trustworthiness of any inquiry. In naturalistic inquiry, these categories are addressed by considering criteria within the respective domains of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

**Credibility**

In naturalistic inquiry, establishing truth value involves testing the credibility of the observations and interpretations with the various sources from which data were drawn. In this study, credibility was established through several strategies.

1. The researcher undertook prolonged engagement at the site in order to overcome possible distortions and idiosyncrasies arising from short duration observation. The researcher spent twenty days at each site in five-day blocks of participant observation. These observation blocks were interspersed between the two schools, extending over a time period of six months. In order
to encompass the range of interactions which occurred in the school, early morning, evening, and weekend observations were undertaken. The researcher sought to participate in every aspect of the professional life of the participants.

2. Peer debriefing with co-researchers involved in the meta-study was a vital component of the process. The primary research was undertaken by a two-person team; this strategy provided for continuous peer de-briefing. Periodic meetings with members of the larger research team, including the writer's adviser, provided additional opportunities for testing insights and interpretations developed in the field.

3. The multiple sources of data described above ensured that adequate triangulation of data was achieved. Documentation, interview, observation, and artifacts were used to verify all interpretations.

4. Member checking—that is, the testing of observations and interpretations with the source groups—was employed at each stage of the study. Informal conversations throughout the course of the study provided a continuous member checking procedure; in addition, all participants in the formal interview process were given opportunity to reflect on and respond to their transcribed interviews.

Transferability

The exploratory nature of this study precluded any claims of generalization or transferability to other contexts. The researcher aspired to a richness of observation and thickness of description that would allow the readers to formulate their own
interpretations and make personal judgements regarding transferability to other contexts with which they are familiar.

Dependability

To ensure that the observations and interpretations met the criterion of dependability, the researcher created an extensive audit trail which would allow independent observers to confirm the processes by which data were collected and analysis was undertaken. This audit trail included field and interview notes, written reflections of participants, interview transcripts, log books, artifacts, documents, survey data, analysis notes, and weekly summary reports.

Confirmability

The issues surrounding objectivity and bias have been discussed in a previous section. The accountability necessary to keep biases and assumptions in check came from three sources. First, I practised "intentional revelation" (Guba, 1981, p. 87) with the participants in the study. This involved the disclosure of the epistemological assumptions underlying the study and the solicitation of feedback from the participants whenever possible. Second, my research colleague acted as a continual foil or ironist to restrain the intrusion of personal biases in the study. Third, my faculty adviser and the other members of the larger research team acted as a confirmability audit board at periodic intervals in the project.
Summary

In this chapter I have developed a research strategy for exploring the poietic domain of educational leadership. I chose a case study methodology based on Yin’s (1984) model. Adopting the view held by Brown (1977), Eisner (1981, 1995), and Wolcott (1995), that art plays an integral complementary role to science in sociological inquiry, I explored ways to put that proposition into practice in an exploratory case study of the leadership dynamics in two schools. To counter contentions that an artistic approach is too "soft" to have validity, I have presented strategies which ensured the trustworthiness of the study. In the following chapters, I present the results of the inquiry largely in narrative form and conclude with an analysis of the results and a consideration of the implications of the research.
Chapter Four
TWO ROOMS

Two schools—two rooms created by the poetics of leadership—constituted the research field. Appropriately, the schools were both located in close proximity to bodies of water with properties that symbolized the dynamics of the rooms. Based on this convenient circumstance, I chose to call the two schools Riverside and Lakeview; the significance of these choices will become apparent as the context of each room is developed.

The next four chapters recount and analyze the results of the exploration. Because this was an adventure in unmapped territory, the exploratory metaphor was used to frame these chapters. In this chapter, I begin by providing a broad overview of the findings as well as an account of the unfolding inquiry; in chapters five and six, I employ narrative extensively to report the findings from each of the two schools; in chapter seven, I provide an analysis of the findings by way of a response to each of the three research questions. To elaborate the "explorer" metaphor, I begin by offering the readers an "armchair version" of the excursion with sufficient detail to encourage readers to visit these rooms themselves and to prepare them for the journey. I proceed to present a narrative account of the two rooms with sufficient colour to "place the implied reader as a first-hand witness" (Atkinson, 1990, p. 71) to the
interactions within the rooms. Finally, I offer a de-briefing analysis of our experiences, once again from a distance which allows for comparison and reflection.

In chapter one I indicated that the purpose of the study was to explore the poietic domain of leadership in order to ascertain the elements which leaders engage, how these elements are engaged, and what the nature of the room might be. In the literature review, I developed a conceptual frame comprised of four poietic elements—stereoscopic vision, narrative, metaphor, and irony—that contribute to the creation of a room wherein moral discourse could occur. From the conceptual frame, it was anticipated that, to varying degrees, all the participants in the room would be involved in an ongoing poietic-aesthetic process. The general research findings are summarized in the following section.

The Broad Picture

The seven outcomes discussed below provide a synopsis of the results of the inquiry. They are explored in more detail in subsequent chapters; I anticipate that their introduction here will guide the readers as they encounter the two rooms personally.

First, our experiences in the schools indicated that the four poietic elements were, indeed, flourishing in both rooms and that the ways in which these elements were engaged influenced the type of room which was created. The willingness of educators to engage stereoscopic vision, the stories told, the metaphors employed, and the propensity toward irony of the participants all contributed to the creation of the room and influenced the moral discourse therein.
Second, it quickly became apparent that the two rooms had distinctive qualities which might be attributable to the ways in which the poietic elements were engaged. The Riverside room was characterized by a sense of spaciousness and freedom. The windows and doors of the room seemed open to the wind. Several of the teachers spoke metaphorically of the "space" which the principal gave them to practice their profession. The discourse in the staff room, the manner in which teachers interacted with the students and each other, and the formal decision making processes, all conveyed a subtle message of "freedom to do your own thing within the limits of a common mission."

By contrast, the Lakeview room seemed much more claustrophobic and restrained. One was left with the impression that the doors, rather than being channels of interaction with the larger environment, were protection from outside threats. The poietic elements were in evidence but were engaged for different purposes and with different outcomes. For example, the ironic spirit which pushes boundaries of discourse outward, was largely lacking; instead, irony, in the form of mild sarcasm or self-deprecation, was more often used in staff room dialogue to lighten the mood or create staff unity. In Lakeview, a core group of participants knew each other so well, that the level of discourse was very subtle. The visitor to the staff room would be hard pressed to enter into the dialogue at a meaningful level. This subtlety of discourse affected the ways in which the poietic elements were engaged.

Third, the study was vastly enriched by the presence of another poietic dimension best described as the "rooms within a room." The poietic process was effectively achieved through the interactions which occurred within a number of
specific settings or micro-rooms. For example, the staff rooms were unique micro-
rooms within which participants repeatedly engaged specific poietic elements. What
happened in the staff room contributed to the character of the macro-room. This was
consistent with Goffman’s (1983) proposition that the interaction order consists of
“forms of face-to-face life worn smooth by constant repetition on the part of
participants . . . [and that] . . . a critical feature of face-to-face gatherings is that in
them and them alone we can fit a shape and dramatic form to matters that aren’t
otherwise palpable to the senses” (p. 9).

Goffman’s critics (Forgas, 1979) have suggested that his inquiry focused on
face-to-face encounters at the micro level while ignoring the macro-level of social
interaction. It became clear, as this study progressed, that these micro-episodes
effectively built a macro-room and that these micro-episodes were shaped by the
poietic process within very specific types of contexts. The concept of “rooms within a
room” implies a blended micro-macro approach to inquiry wherein a macro-room (the
school) is created through the interactions which occur within a number of definable
micro-rooms. The micro-rooms identified in this study were hallways, staff rooms,
class rooms, offices, social rooms (out-of-school social gatherings), and meeting rooms.
In each type of room, the poietic elements were evidenced to varying degrees as they
created a clearing for moral discourse.

Fourth, we came to understand that it is in the repetition of micro-encounters
that the macro-room is built and reinforced. The most obvious formal forum for
moral discourse in the school was the staff meeting. Our experience in staff meetings
suggested that the characteristics of the meeting room were largely shaped by the
myriad micro-encounters that participants had experienced in other rooms within the school. Two examples will illustrate this overlapping of influence.

The stories told in the staff room, while not repeated in the meeting room, nevertheless provided a common understanding for all participants as they made decisions and engaged in moral discourse. The hunger for stories which provide common understanding was especially evident in the newcomers to the staff who frequently requested and encouraged the telling of stories by the veterans. This subtle influence of stories on decision making was especially evident in Lakeview, where the core group had built up a vast repertoire of shared narratives (some of them very painful), so deeply embedded in their collective memory that they coloured their decisions on an almost unconscious level.

The irony established through discourse and action in other rooms influenced the discourse in the meeting room. Two acknowledged ironists at Riverside sat together at staff meetings and, through their behaviour and their reputation, exerted a subtle but powerful influence on the meeting. Because they had established themselves as ironists in other rooms, the participants in the meeting room came to anticipate the ironic perspective in their deliberations.

Fifth, it became apparent that the poietic devices attained significance differently in the various micro-rooms explored. The staff room was a natural forum for the engagement of irony between the staff members. Each staff had at least one identified, and self-acknowledged, ironist. The ironist position held by this participant was widely acknowledged and largely appreciated by the others. Staff room discourse frequently involved dialogue between this ironist and other members of the
staff. The uses to which this ironic dialogue was put in the poietic process will be explored in subsequent chapters.

Stereoscopic vision was a dominant characteristic of classroom dialogue in at least one classroom, but was most widely engaged in the moral discourse that preceded formal decision making. The principal at Riverside was particularly adept at engaging this poietic element; his willingness to initiate stereoscopic discourse clearly contributed to the openness which characterized the Riverside room.

Narrative was most evident in staff rooms and social settings where staff felt relaxed and freed from the restraints of their professional role. The stories, jokes, and anecdotes related in these rooms had a significant carry-over effect in other settings and contributed to the common understandings necessary for moral discourse. Woods (1984, p. 190) suggested that staff room humour serves the joint purposes of neutralizing the alienating effect of institutionalization and synchronizing the public and private spheres. We found that the telling and re-telling of humorous stories and anecdotes served these purposes in the staff room and in informal settings such as staff parties. Furthermore, these stories created a common framework within which moral discourse was facilitated.

In a different approach to the role of narrative in social settings, Witten (1993, p. 105) stated that narrative is a powerful instrument of social control in that it may be used to provide models of correct behaviour and to impart values that affect problem definition. The power of narrative was difficult to comprehend or assess; however, the obvious relish with which narrative was employed and the hunger for narrative which newcomers to the room demonstrated, suggested that it played a pervasive role in the creation and maintenance of the room.
Metaphor, in all its forms, was widely engaged in both of the rooms. Three distinct metaphorical types were engaged by the participants. First, linguistic metaphors, were ubiquitous and served the commonly acknowledged purpose of expanding the meaning and understanding of a concept; furthermore, and consistent with Schon’s (1979) theory, these metaphors were often generative in that they served as springboards for re-framing moral dilemmas in ways that allowed for more satisfactory solutions.

Guiding metaphors exerted a subtle but nonetheless powerful influence on the shaping of rooms. Many of the participants articulated a leadership metaphor which guided their moral reasoning and decision making. These metaphors or ways of seeing not only guided the behaviour of the leaders but also created consistent expectations on the part of the other participants of the leaders behaviour. Several of these metaphors will be elaborated in the subsequent narratives.

A final metaphorical type, the symbolic act, emerged as the study progressed. We found that limiting the definition of metaphor to ”a language form that helps us see one thing in terms of another” (Deal, 1995, p. 120), excluded a very powerful metaphorical device which leaders employed to help other participants ”see one thing in terms of another.” Gibbs (1994, p. 184) drawing on examples from the cinema argued for a broader definition of metaphor. He maintained that ”very ordinary real-world scenes can convey very powerful metaphorical messages” (p. 185). Morgan (1993, p. 277) supported this position by claiming that ”metaphor is not just a literary or linguistic device for embellishing or decorating discourse. It’s [sic] a primal means through which we forge our relationships with the world.”
Similarly, we adopted the position that, like verbal metaphors, symbolic acts may "present one idea in terms of another that belongs to a different domain of experience" (Gibbs, 1994, p. 185). As the subsequent chapters illustrate, this metaphoric vehicle was engaged frequently and effectively by several of the participants in both rooms.

Sixth, the poietic-aesthetic experience was clearly manifest as a seamless unity, mutually shared by participants and leaders alike. Deal (1995, p. 119) described leadership as the moral energy that organizations need to "create, revive, revise, or transform the myths that provide collective spirit and vitality." He further suggested that this "moral mantle can be assumed by anyone who emerges as an archivist, symbol, choreographer, or poet." This perspective on leadership suggested that both formal leaders and participants were artists engaging in an aesthetic-poietic experience. The conceptualization of leadership was, thereby, expanded to encompass all participants who engaged in creating a collective moral spirit. This broad conceptualization of leadership became our frame of reference as we explored the ways in which the poietic elements were engaged.

Virtually every participant demonstrated at least some propensity toward both the aesthetic and the poietic process. The formal leaders sometimes displayed a propensity toward engaging one or more of these elements (poietic activity), but were just as often actively encouraging and promoting these elements in others (aesthetic activity). Informal leaders frequently assumed the role of ironist, chief narrator, metaphor-maker, or maintainer of stereoscopic vision; generally, these participants were quick to recognize which of these elements was their forte, and also to
appreciate the exercise of poietic elements by their colleagues. This reciprocity influenced the openness of the discourse in the two rooms.

Finally, the study indicated that two specific micro-rooms had a profound effect on the nature of the macro-rooms. These were the staff room and the meeting room; together, these two rooms wielded the greatest influence on the decision making processes, the nature of the moral discourse, and the social climate of the school.

Schwartzman (1989, p. 4) claimed that "whereas meetings appear to be everywhere, they are almost nowhere in the research literature . . . . [T]his is so because meetings are so basic and pervasive a part of social life . . . that their significance . . . has not been recognized." We spent a great deal of time observing the engagement of poietic elements in meetings and were fascinated by the complex and subtle interactions that were woven in and around the discourse. Meetings provided much more than a public forum for decision making; they also provide a format for interpreting and constructing meaning from events, largely by the use of stories before, during, and subsequent to the meeting (Schwartzman, 1989, pp. 244-46). Our observations suggested that all the poietic elements were engaged in the actual meeting but the use of stories was more limited to the period before and after the meeting itself.

In the two schools we studied, the staff room was the most widely used micro-room for social interaction. Woods (1984, p. 191) referred to it as the teachers’ "collective private area," implying that it serves both as a retreat from the pressures of the profession and a forum for coming together to share social life. We discovered differences in the physical layout of the staff rooms, the kinds of discourse that
prevailed, and the manner in which the poietic elements were engaged. It also became evident that the interactions that transpired in this room influenced the macro-room to a large extent.

These seven summary observations were presented at the outset in order to assist the reader in interpreting the results presented in the subsequent chapters. Similarly, the ensuing description of the distinct way the inquiry evolved, is offered to enrich the readers interpretations of the narrative to follow.

The Unfolding Inquiry

*To proceed beyond the limitations of a given level of knowledge, the researcher, as a rule, has to break down methodological taboos which condemn as "unscientific" or "illogical" the very methods or concepts which later on prove to be basic for the next major progress.* (Lewin, 1949, p. 275)

While I certainly do not presume to suggest that this research broke down any "methodological taboos," it at least pushed the boundaries of conventional research and, in the process, clarified our understanding of participant observation.

From the outset, it was assumed that our peculiar involvement in the professional lives of the participants affected the behaviours that we recorded as results of the study, and that the way in which the study evolved was determined by our response to the behaviours we observed. The study became a sort of symbiotic relationship in the sense that the researcher influenced the behaviours and the behaviours influenced the research design. This is not to imply that the research evolved into an action research project; rather, it is a frank recognition of the interdependence of researcher, participants, and methodology. Because of this recognition, I have chosen to describe the evolution of our research experiences at the
outset, trusting that this description will enhance the conceptual frame within which
the reader may find meaning in the ensuing narrative.

"The art of conceptualizing," according to Wolcott (1995, p. 178), "refers to how
fieldworkers put together—how they 'compose'—studies in the absence of tight formal
designs." Wolcott's context for this statement is the understanding that fieldwork
design is "an ongoing process rather than a fait accompli" (p. 177). These statements
lend credence to the way in which this study progressed. Rather than doggedly
pursuing a pre-determined path, we frequently found ourselves adjusting course,
backtracking, modifying methodology and creating new observation strategies as the
situation dictated. While holding fast to the research problem with one hand, we
found ourselves often groping in the dark with the other in an attempt to find the
way forward. The study evolved over the months spent in the field and over the
subsequent months spent in analysing and reporting the results. In this section, I
describe three ways in which the study evolved; I do this not only to anticipate
methodological concerns on the part of the astute reader, but also to enrich the
context within which the reader will interact with the narrative in subsequent
chapters.

The establishment of mutual trust was one of the first characteristics of the
inquiry to unfold. Our presence in the schools initially caused some distress and
concern on the part of some of the participants. The Lakeview staff had undergone
some very traumatic experiences as the result of questionable leadership practices in
their jurisdiction. As a result, some were not favourably disposed to the intrusion of
external observers. There were also several teachers at Riverside who required an
adjustment period to observe us and come to the point of trusting us with the details of their professional lives.

From the outset, we were committed to an integrated approach to inquiry in which both the "participant" and the "observer" components were openly, equally, and actively embraced. In order to accomplish this, it was essential to establish a high level of trust and good-will between the staff of the school and ourselves. A large part of this was achieved by a commitment to honesty and openness with respect to our purpose, methodology, and treatment of the data. Within the limits of confidentiality, participants were offered as much information as they wished regarding the inquiry. In addition, we took every opportunity to become involved with the lives of the staff. The acceptance with which we were received extended not only to the staff room and classroom but also to living rooms and informal social gatherings.

A second way in which the study evolved was in our participation in the poietic process. Our involvement with the daily discourse of the participants in the staff room and other rooms inevitably resulted in a heightened awareness of the poietic elements which we were observing. By challenging the participants to consider the artistry of what they were doing and especially to identify the poietic elements which they personally engaged, we found that the tone of the moral discourse in the rooms was altered. For example, the identification of ironists in the school lead to an increased engagement in ironic discourse in several ensuing situations. Furthermore, when participants were asked to identify and articulate their guiding metaphors, there was a tendency to engage in discourse from that perspective in future interactions.
These are but two examples of the influence of heightened awareness of poietic elements on the creation of specific rooms. As the study progressed and participants became more aware of and comfortable with its features, there was an increased willingness to engage poietic elements in the routine interactions of the participants.

Finally, and I believe most significantly, the selection and development of the narrative evolved over the course of the study. The sheer volume of the data obtained from two months of observation in the schools precluded any hope of presenting a comprehensive narrative of our experience. Therefore, it became necessary to select episodes and incidents that the researcher deemed vital to the developing narrative. This selection process was not something that merely happened at the conclusion of the field research stage of the inquiry; rather, it involved a cyclical process of observation, reflection, evaluation, selection and attention. The criteria for selection and the focus of attention were continually shifting as the inquiry unfolded. However, the original conceptual frame was maintained as a constant in the evaluation.

An example may help to clarify the process. The principal at Riverside had a habit of standing in the middle of the main lobby, directly in the primary traffic lane of the school. At first glance, this behaviour did not seem relevant to our study and so we ignored it; however, it soon became apparent that Andy's peculiar behaviour had a profound influence on both staff and students perceptions of the room. Reflection on and evaluation of his behaviour lead us to reconceptualize "metaphor" much more broadly and begin attending to similar symbolic behaviours of other participants. The inquiry process had evolved in a way that could not be anticipated and, in so doing, it was vastly enriched.
A satisfactory response to the criticism of arbitrariness of data selection might take the following form. The researcher entered the field armed with three critical resources: (a) a solid grounding in the literature, (b) an open mind, and (c) a commitment to the research problem as it was conceptualized. The possible directions in which the research could evolve were limited by the boundaries inherent in these three resources. An independent researcher armed with the same research problem but different resources in categories (a) and (b), would likely create a narrative bearing little resemblance to mine; however, this in no way invalidates the trustworthiness of either narrative. To identify selection criteria prior to entering the field would be to disavow the exploratory spirit of the inquiry.

In this chapter, I have provided a summary of the results of the inquiry in order to prepare the reader for a more thorough analysis and interpretation in the subsequent chapters. Furthermore, I have attempted to explain the nature of our methodology as it unfolded over the several months when we participated in the lives of the educators of two schools. I expect that this anticipatory set will provide sufficient context to make the ensuing narrative meaningful to the reader.

The nature of exploratory case study research lends itself well to the use of narrative as a vehicle for reporting the results. The stories comprising the next two chapters are meant to breath life into the ways in which leaders practice their own kind of artistry and to allow the reader "free space" to interact with the stories and make interpretations that are personally satisfying. Interspersed among the stories, I have included my analysis and interpretation of their meanings.
In a fine essay entitled *Making Music Together*, Alfred Schutz (1976) eloquently described the relationship between the composer of a musical work and the "beholder:"

Although separated by hundreds of years, the latter participates with quasi simultaneity in the former’s stream of consciousness by performing with him step by step the ongoing articulation of his musical thought. The beholder, thus, is united with the composer by a time dimension common to both, which is nothing other than a derived form of the vivid present shared by the partners in a genuine face-to-face relation such as prevails between speaker and listener. (pp. 171-172)

Similarly, if I have succeeded as an artistic researcher and narrator, these stories will open up a room within which the reader may engage in meaningful dialogue with the performers whom I describe.
Chapter Five
RIVERSIDE

The mighty river is a tangible presence at Riverside. The location of the
townsite, the trade and commerce which developed in the area, and the robust,
pioneer spirit of the citizens of the town have been shaped by the river’s presence.
Evidence of its significance to the citizens is apparent regardless of the direction from
which one approaches the town. The most dramatic approach, from the west,
requires the negotiation of a precarious one-lane bridge high above the river. Stories
of how people dealt with river crossing before the building of this first permanent, all-
weather access to the outside world are an important part of the town’s history.

Heraclitus’ proclamation, that one cannot step into the same river twice, has
obviously been adopted as the guiding metaphor for the community and the school.
An adventurous frontier spirit, a propensity toward risk-taking, and an openness to
change characterize the civic and commercial enterprise of the town. In its early
years, the town fathers found it expedient to move the entire site to a more suitable
location nearer the river. This significant piece of local history is nurtured and
celebrated by the present-day citizens.

The school, demonstrating a similar frontier spirit, exudes an air of ordered
chaos. Opening the front door is like lifting the lid on an active beehive; somehow
things seem a lot less “ordered” than schools should be.
We stand a moment by the wall and let the living energy of several hundred students and teachers, en route to fifth period classes, wash over us. In an attempt to give structure to the chaos, we instinctively look for an individual to stabilize us in this white-water rush and swirl. A teacher, we later identify as Cam, hustles by; he is wearing scuffed white cross-trainers that look like they’ve seen a lot of road. The incongruity of old sneakers with neatly tailored jacket and slacks is intensified by his bolotie, which is not a tie at all but an audio patch cord. Like the Mad Hatter, Cam disappears, muttering, down a hallway with three intense looking students in tow. Several reliable looking adults are moving purposefully through the melee and we do an eddy turn and swing into their wake.

Happily, their destination is the same as ours, the main office. Andy, the principal, stands behind the counter dispensing late slips and affable quips to the ten students jostling in the holding area. Andy is a substantial human being dressed rather casually in a comfortable sweater pulled over an open white shirt.

Behind Andy, and down a short hallway, Perry, the vice-principal, is bustling around his crowded office preparing for a discipline committee meeting scheduled for three-thirty.

When the rush dies down, Andy gives us a grand tour of the school complete with a running dialogue of the history, plans for the future, and anecdotes about staff and current happenings. Andy is a connoisseur of the metaphor and his discourse is liberally spiced with colourful imagery. He is proud of the room he and the staff have created; nothing around him escapes attention. Just west of the main office, a wide stairway leads to the Division III wing on the second floor. The space under the stairs is filled with a model landscape consisting of a wide winding river over which
perhaps fifteen bridges of various composition and structure are arranged. Ross, the
grade eight science teacher, uses this space to display his students' science projects.

"Watch that gum on the handrail," Andy warns us; three steps ahead, he is
stooping to pick up a discarded candy wrapper on the stairs. As we enter the upper
hallway, a student abruptly turns away from a doorway through which he has been
apparently gesturing to a friend within. "Where are you supposed to be?" Andy asks
with a paternal hand on the boy's shoulder. A mumbled response and the boy is
herded back to his classroom. The division III wing is a particular source of pride for
the principal. "There's a pretty dynamic crew up here," he says.

When division III students were first introduced to Riverside in the early
1980s, Andy was appointed vice-principal responsible for the program. He retains a
great fondness for the unique sub-culture which has developed in this area. The
dynamics of this group of teachers has changed dramatically in the past five years.
Over that time, about 50 percent of Riverside's total teaching staff of 35 has changed.
Many of the new, younger teachers have replaced retiring teachers in Division III.
They have brought with them an optimism and creativity which makes this sub-
culture an acknowledged source of energy for the school.

Busy noise, laughter, music, and a great deal of movement assail our senses as
we enter the computer room located mid-way down the Division III hallway. Buck,
smiling widely, greets us and makes introductory small talk while simultaneously co-
ordinating the activities of 20 or so students who all appear to be engaged in a
different task or project. The room is humming loudly; the apparent chaos belies an
eagerness and sense of purpose on the part of both students and teacher. As we
leave, Buck invites us back "any time" and we promise to accept that invitation.
After a quick tour of quiet Division IV hallways, we find ourselves at the back of the school in the "tech-voc" wing. Will, the auto mechanics teacher, and several students are peering intently into the engine compartment of a battered compact car belonging to one of the students. Will explains that much of the work done in this class involves students working on their own vehicles. Andy greets his smudged daughter, one of Will's students, and in a quiet aside, tells us that this is one of her favourite classes.

The technical-vocational teachers have fashioned a small staff-room for themselves in what appears to be a former storage room. Four stained, mustard coloured seats from an old passenger plane are the dominant furniture. At the entrance to the metal shop, we pause before a large glass display case. Velvet-lined shelves hold numerous beautifully machined pieces as well as a written tribute to a former teacher whose passion for excellence in the technical arts has strongly influenced the present staff and furnished the grist for numerous stories that these teachers use to define their unique sub-culture.

On our way back to the main hallway, we pass through a bustling group of workmen who are in the process of creating administrative and classroom space for the community college. Declining enrolments have affected the technical-vocational program and the staff has been reduced through attrition to three members. The resulting increase in vacant space in the school has afforded the opportunity for opening up a large section of the facility to the local community college. Andy has been instrumental in co-ordinating this additional post-secondary program with the operation of the existing high school program. Notwithstanding the potential problems associated with integrating adult students into the facility and the objections
of some of his staff who fear the possible negative influence on their younger students, he remains optimistic about the future benefits of this venture.

The resource centre and adjoining CAL (computer assisted learning) lab are on our path back to the "front" of the school. The squeak of sneakers on hardwood and a shrill whistle signal the presence of the gymnasium across the hall. Adjacent to the gymnasium, we finally discover the wonderland into which Cam had disappeared an hour earlier. The room is larger and much busier than the average classroom. A practice stage occupies a prominent location at the front. Electrical wiring, miscellaneous sound and lighting equipment, and assorted costumes overflow from the adjoining storage room and fill the back corner. Cam is seated on a table (there are no desks) in the midst of perhaps a dozen senior students expounding passionately on Shakespeare. He is still sporting his electric tie. A smaller group of students are engrossed in creating a false brick fireplace for a future drama production. Andy looks in, smiles, and we move on.

A short staff meeting has been scheduled in the staff room for immediately after school. The purpose is to introduce us to the staff and to decide on the particulars of two imminent social functions. Woods (1984, p. 191) referred to the staff room as "the teachers private collective area." The main staff room at Riverside certainly lends itself to both privacy and collectivity. The two entry ways are equipped with air-locks of sorts; small anterooms, where teachers hang their coats and store their winter boots, buffer the main room from noise and intrusion. The furniture in the room is arranged in comfortable groupings conducive to small group talk. There are no work tables or preparation areas. The lights are low and incandescent. This is obviously a room designed for social interaction.
While we wait for the staff to assemble, we take time to reflect on what we have already learned of the particularities of Riverside. Originally built as a composite high school for grades 10 to 12 in late 1960s when education was booming in the province, the school has undergone radical changes as enrolments declined and resources became scarce. The addition of division III students in the 1980s was a milestone in the school’s history. The teachers and students succeeded in bringing much of their culture with them and have since established a well-defined and positive subculture in the school. Andy recalls a good deal of initial conflict as the norms and values of the two schools became integrated.

Staff demographics have also changed significantly over the years. In addition to class room teachers, there are an ever increasing number of support staff assisting the teachers in meeting the needs of disadvantaged students. The school is at the forefront in forming co-operative alliances with other government agencies that provide services to the students. A social work student is currently doing an internship in the school and also teaching half-time. Largely due to her efforts, a "teen parent" program is being implemented this year.

At the heart of the staff, there are perhaps fifteen veterans who are either natives of the community or are solidly rooted, having taught here for a decade or more. Each year, more of these veterans retire and they are mourned by those that remain. "The family is breaking up," sighs Thor. Many of these veterans have uncommon influence over the poietic process in the school; however, a few newcomers have managed to assume leadership roles in staff interactions.

The staff is generally appreciative of the leadership efforts of these newcomers. For example, Education Week activities were organized by some of these younger
teachers for the first time this year. Two weeks later, Ross and Thor were still talking about the "great new ideas and creative energy" which these "young teachers had brought to the program."

However, Thor maintained that even though they had abundant energy and creative ideas, they would not make good teachers because they were lacking in commitment to the profession. His concluding comment was "I'd be surprised if they were doing this in five years." Ryan, a first-year teacher on temporary assignment for a few months echoed Thor's cynicism. "The way things are going, I don't know if I'd like to be here in 30 years." The consensus is that, notwithstanding the issue of commitment, these teachers are certainly having a positive influence on the climate of the school.

The staff meeting is short and focused. The staff precipitate into familiar clusters and indulge in preliminary good-natured banter. Will makes the mistake of settling into the large easy chair vacated by Walt who was called to the door. A rapid and vocal exchange of positions occurs when Walt returns.

Andy stands near the phone and conducts the meeting with quiet authority. Decisions on the particulars of the social events are handled by show of hands. The staff appears comfortable with their role in the decision making process. We are warmly welcomed to the school and invited to attend the first "official" social of the year at Perry's house on Friday evening. Andy adjourns the meeting with a casual "That's it," and the room becomes a staff room once again.

Such is the nature of the Riverside room, a room continually created by innumerable face-to-face interactions within many micro-rooms. We now turn our attention to the narration of selected interactions within these rooms. Because of the
extended time we spent participating and observing in these rooms, the accumulated observations are overwhelming. Rather than trying to include all the interactions observed, I have chosen to select stories which most clearly illustrate the engagement of poietic elements and the manner in which the poietic process in micro-rooms contributes to the nature of the macro-room.

Hallways

Andy uses his substantial physique as an eloquent symbolic metaphor for his solid, consistent leadership style. Before school, after school, and at every break in between, he stands like a boulder in the middle of a raging river. His stability offers comfort and assurance to the students flowing and frothing around him. The teachers watch this and are themselves assured that there is stability in the school. Stephanie, a second-year teacher perceived Andy's presence to be a powerful message to both faculty and students regarding his expectations of order and mutual respect.

His choice location is in the middle of the main lobby where all the streams of students intersect and converge. Nothing and no one escapes his attention. I often choose to stand beside him; in the eddy he creates, I can observe and interact in relative safety.

A very lost looking girl slips by, tossed about like a twig on the shoulders of a mighty stream. Before she is swept away down the division IV hallway, Andy calls her name and steers her to a quiet corner. I discover later that this is her first morning in the school and that she had no idea how to find her classes.

A tiny grade seven student charges up, panting. "Did my mother drop off my lunch?" she inquires anxiously. "Not with me she didn't," Andy replies calmly, "or I'd
have ate it.” All the while, he is signing late slips proffered by students of all sizes.

The hallway is indeed a room created by the symbolic presence of Andy.

Figure 6. Field diagram of Andy in mid-stream.

Up the stairs in the division III hallway, things are only slightly quieter. The staff here have created what might be best described as a community police station. At each break, anywhere from two to five teachers lounge against the railing in the
middle of the hall. They have been doing this so long, the finish is worn off the rail for a length of two metres.

Mostly, the teachers simply chat amongst themselves and make comments to the students passing by, but they are a presence, a powerful symbol of care and security. The students know that they can come here for affirmation, emotional security, information, and physical protection from intruding bullies.

This morning, Ross is the only one out there. Ross is a former "phys ed" teacher who walks with the rolling shouldered gait of a wrestler. He informs me that hockey was his passion as a youth and that he played for the Huskies while in university. I join him on the rail and we make small talk about the significance of the many photographs lining the walls of the hallway. Ross brought most of them over from the old division III school when they moved over. He thinks "it's good for the kids to see a bit of their history, especially me when I had hair, and there's Scott when he attended school. The kids like to see that."


As with Andy’s symbolic presence in the main hallway, the division III teachers have clearly created a room in their hallway which conveys a message of security and caring. By their presence and interaction with the students, they not only create space for the students to practice moral conduct, they also reinforce a
common understanding amongst themselves of their moral purpose in the school.

Andy’s admiration of their work is a reflection of the room which they have created together.

**Staff Rooms**

It is eight-fifteen on a frigid November Friday, but the coffee is already on. Scott is the first to arrive with his bundled-up daughter in tow. She stays with him until it is time for her to go down the hill to the elementary school a few blocks away. Scott is in his mid-thirties, a native of Riverside who returned a few years ago to teach in division III. Everything about Scott is warm, from his smile to the way he encourages his students to respect themselves and each other. This morning, he is worried about the slight fever his daughter has and, as other teachers straggle in, they smile at his fatherly ministrations.

Scott’s metaphor for any social group is “family.” His classroom is simply a large family where mutual respect and care are the guiding norms. He has a standing offer to his students: when parents visit the classroom (not an uncommon event), he buys cokes for the students who overcome their bashfulness and give their Mom or Dad a hug in public.

Scott brings the same metaphor to the staff room where his interactions with his colleagues are consistently family oriented. When he is around, the discourse always has a caring tone and the students are perceived as members of an extended family, a welcome counterpoint to the cynicism of some of the veteran staff.

Lunch-time in the staff room is a time to relax and break bread together. The school cafeteria provides hot lunches at reasonable rates and the staff frequently take
advantage of this service, bringing their trays back to the staff room and eating together.

Figure 7. Field diagram of Riverside staff room
Jack has had a frustrating morning trying to provide meaningful educational experiences for some modified students in his class. After a prolonged diatribe on the subject, he sighs deeply "November, 2000 . . ."

Thor (innocently): "Is that when you retire? Paul, when do you retire?"

Paul: "Two thousand and three and I'm free!"

Thor (smiling): "Oh yeah? Two thousand and one and I'm done!"

Jack (rising and walking across the room to the mail boxes): "Ought ought zero, and I'm the hero!"

The talk turns to conjectures of what one would do on retirement. Thor relates a story of a number of former teachers who planned, on retirement, to sneak in and urinate on the principal's desk. It is not clear whether this plan was actually executed but the idea is roundly appreciated by the group. Other similar stories of chemical concoctions resembling urine being poured on principals' desks are related, but the topic eventually loses its appeal.

It seems that, in keeping with Wood's (1984) analysis of staff-room humour, these stories serve the purpose of neutralizing the helplessness and frustration of institutionalization. Furthermore, when related in the presence of new staff, they reinforce values and expectations of the formal relationships within the school.

Since Halloween has only recently passed, several stories of former memorable Halloweens emerge. Thor recounts a widely shared story of a former Halloween:

We're all sitting around at home having a few drinks when the doorbell rings. In comes an ape making all sorts of ape noises. He's pinching people, sitting on laps, carrying on . . . . All I can say is it's a good thing we didn't say anything bad because it turned out to be Bob Amundson (one of the central-office administrators).
Another "administrator" story which the staff seems to relish is the story of a former principal's confrontation with a mob of Halloween pranksters and the subsequent court case which involved such acrimony between the principal and the community that the principal eventually moved out of town. While dissimilar in most respects, these stories nevertheless are both cathartic and consolidating. They serve to define role relationships and parameters for discourse in other forums and are an especially effective method of influencing social control, especially when told to neophytes (Witten, 1993).

Woods (1984, p. 192) claimed that much staff-room humour takes the form of mocking, embarrassment, or compromise of senior personnel, often by "subversive ironies," and that these stories frequently call for the levelling or equalizing of staff. The ironic flavour of the stories above certainly seems to serve the purposes identified. Thor, like all good storytellers, is an artist engaging in a poietic process of creating and maintaining the boundaries of moral discourse.

The mood in the staff room after school is jocular. The confluence of payday and Friday has a therapeutic effect on all the staff. The teachers with no children of their own to care for are relaxing with a coffee. Scott and several other mid-career teachers have departed to care for family. The remaining group consists of very young teachers with no family and older veterans whose family have long since left the nest. The lines are quite subtly and casually drawn; the younger teachers (mostly women) are on their customary couch near the door. Jack and a few other veterans are lounging in the "old boys" corner.

It seems that Jack still has not recovered from the morning's frustration; now he takes a different approach, pretending dramatically to be a caring and
understanding teacher. The younger teachers rise to the bait and soon the irony hangs in the room like the smoke in the lounge of the Royal Hotel. The discourse remains amicable but the quips are caustic and creative. The conversation is largely focused on Jack’s cynical stance toward the “warm-fuzzy” direction which teaching has taken. The irony of Jack pretending to be caring is too much for the younger teachers and they roar with laughter, each trying to outdo the next in eliciting a sweet response from Jack. Finally, Jack can take it no longer, he breaks into a sheepish grin and then almost immediately assumes his customary role of curmudgeon.

Jack’s behaviour is paradoxical; he is a walking contradiction. On the one hand, he cares deeply for the students and sincerely wants them to succeed; on the other hand, he struggles with the lack of respect and self-motivation demonstrated by some students. A lifelong ironist, he recalls an incident in early childhood when he ran out into the street and was struck by a passing taxi cab. He insisted to his horrified mother that it was he who had hit the cab. Jack is a “tired ironist;” the years of maintaining an ironic position have taken their inevitable toll. “It can be a burden or a joy,” he philosophizes, “sometimes, I think the administration would like me to go away.”

There is a fine line between irony and cynicism and Jack struggles constantly with that tension. Like Lavache in Shakespeare’s *All’s Well That Ends Well*, “the wry smile” sometimes turns into a “leer” (Goldsmith, 1963). Nevertheless, he serves a valuable role in the creation of the room; the staff largely appreciate his irony and have come to expect the counter-position from him in their moral deliberations.
Class Rooms

Buck’s kingdom is the computer room. Situated incongruously in cramped, steamy quarters halfway down the division III hallway, he presides over a boisterous collection of assigned students as well as any drifters and homeless students who “have no other place to be.” His guiding metaphor is “open for business” and he practices it with a passion.

In Deal and Kennedy’s (1982) terms, he is an outlaw; we perceived him to be the consummate ironist. Over the years, he has managed to maintain a healthy optimism which he attributes largely to spending so much time with young people. His irony has evolved into a subtle symbolic art form which he practices in deed rather than word. Walking into his room, one is immediately struck with the incongruity of the climate. The traditional image of students sitting quietly in rows, each working on their own computer does not apply here. Students move freely about the room asking questions, getting help from each other, going to the fridge at the back for a coke (Beverages in a computer room?? This is unheard of!!). Buck uses the proceeds from sales to buy more technology. Their flat-bed scanner was purchased in this way.

Buck balances on a broken-down revolving bar stool, attired in a well-worn, sleeveless bush jacket bulging with a cellular phone, floppy disks, and an assortment of random electrical tools. His smile is wide and ready. Students come to him freely from all parts of the room to have their work checked or receive the next assignment. Blue candy whales are the reward for extraordinary effort.

Two senior students walk in unannounced with a note from the resource centre requesting permission to get some information from the Internet. Buck keeps
careful records of who comes and goes because administration requires it, but he
welcomes everyone. If he had his way, there would be no "red tape," because it
simply interferes with learning. Buck gives students access to their marks and allows
them to enter their own grades. This level of trust is typical of the way he treats his
students. In turn, they respond with an uncommon maturity and respect.

This way of operating is absolutely contrary to standard class room procedure
at Riverside, but Buck is determined to push the boundaries of acceptable
methodology because he is passionately committed to self-motivated learning. The
staff watch him from a distance, largely without comment. Buck comes to the staff
room only to get his mail. For the rest of his day, he is immersed in the activity of
his room. When he does take a break, he visits with the maintenance staff in their
small coffee room; they ask him to check the bathrooms periodically for graffiti.

Buck's great contribution to the Riverside room is the continual pushing of
boundaries. More than any other staff member, he fulfills the ironist role. He presents
a constant challenge to the staff to see things from a different perspective. Dispelling
myths is his forte and he does it with aplomb; not by his talk but by his actions. For
example, he discounts the myth of moral decline in students. When an off colour
message between two students is intercepted on the network, Buck publicizes it and
uses it as an effective teaching moment. The response of the students confirms his
belief in their moral maturity. By these and other unorthodox strategies, Buck creates
a room which stands within the larger room as a challenge to look at issues with a
broader lens.

Unlike Buck who limits his poietic influence to his classroom, Cam's creative
domain is the entire school. He avoids the staff room almost as diligently as Buck,
but his influence throughout the school is profound. Many of the staff, including Buck, identify Cam as the most significant informal leader in the school. Cam is a walking metaphor of creative teaching. His energy, openness to change, willingness to help others, and capacity for work are legendary. His dress and bustling demeanour aptly signify these qualities.

Home base for Cam’s classes is a large "wonderland" room adjacent to the gymnasium and auditorium. From this central studio, he sends students on creative learning adventures throughout the school. It is not uncommon to find small clusters of his students scattered about the school, engaged in everything from creating video to doing computer research to building elaborate props for an upcoming drama performance. No room, from the carpentry shop to the resource centre, is safe from these intrusions, often to the chagrin of teachers who are trying to manage their own learning experiences within these areas. Like Buck, Cam welcomes the homeless students into his world and generally has a constructive task for them to perform.

We are fortunate enough to be in the school when Cam’s students are preparing for a musical revue of Andrew Lloyd Weber’s work, an ambitious undertaking against which he has been cautioned by some of his colleagues. Cam is harried but not discouraged. For days prior to the event, the school has been turned upside down as students and staff assemble the extravagant props, music, lighting, and the special effects. Now, it is the day of the dress rehearsal and the auditorium is awash in students, equipment, and the odd curious researcher.

There is no sign of Cam, but his presence is tangible nonetheless. The musicians and performers seem to be following some sort of unwritten script or agenda. Sporadically, order emerges from the chaos; with no apparent direction, the
lights go down, a group of grade eight girls take the stage, and launch into a trial run of one of the numbers from *Cats*. Suddenly, the rear doors burst open and Cam storms into the room shouting "Who’s got the monkey? We need the monkey!" The performers cease temporarily and wait. Cam tours the room interrogating likely culprits; he gives a few random commands to the technical crew and disappears behind the curtain. The rehearsal continues. The sound man beside me explains that the stuffed monkey is a prop for one of the songs from *Evita*; apparently, it has gone missing. That evening the first performance goes off with only minor mishaps.

Cam’s poetic element of choice is the metaphor. Because he is a man of action, his metaphors tend most often to be symbolic acts. We enjoyed an hour (that was all the time he could spare) with his wife and him over dinner one evening. Here, where he was compelled to remain relatively still, the linguistic metaphors emerged. Not surprisingly, his guiding metaphor for social interaction is a "mosaic." His vision is to promote holistic education totally integrated into the community. His eyes blaze as he speaks of a new "project" wherein students would be sent out to interview senior citizens and other community members with a certain discipline as their context. They would then use this data as the basis for a huge multi-media production including music, drama, dance, and video.

The two class rooms described above illustrate some of the ways in which poetic elements are engaged by teachers as they go about the business of teaching. Both examples illustrate a different aspect of the artistry of leadership. While Buck chooses to adopt an ironic, "outlaw" approach to expanding the boundaries of the room, Cam uses symbolic action to signify his "mosaic" metaphor. While both men choose to operate largely outside the confines of traditional teaching roles, they,
nevertheless, have a profound effect on the moral discourse that occurs in other micro-rooms at Riverside.

Offices

Monday morning is Andy’s time for administration, and I am his shadow for this morning. We have also tentatively agreed to set aside a half-hour for a formal interview but the way things are starting out the chances are slim. Schedules are arranged so that one of the three members of the administration team is always available in the office. This works well in theory but rarely in practice.

Today, Andy is alone for the day, and he will have to make do. The administrators have a very consistent philosophy of leadership. Borrowing an expression from Lindblom (1959), Perry describes it as "muddling through," or "just managing." Andy expresses a similar sentiment as follows: "I would like to say things are perfect. Well it doesn’t work perfect—it’s good enough . . ." Muddling through on this particular morning involves a meeting with several staff to prepare for an upcoming division-wide strategic planning session, meeting with the maintenance staff regarding the integration of the community college, handling several student discipline cases, meeting with the counselling staff, and processing a copious amount of paper.

Andy’s office is surprisingly austere for one so facile with metaphor. Between tasks, he elaborates on his philosophy of leadership and the guiding metaphors he engages as principal of the school. For him, everything comes back to water. Here is his description of the culture of the school:

I guess if you want to make a comparison probably its like a droplet of water and all the little molecules bouncing off each other. You’ve got
students, you’ve got staff, you’ve got principals, you’ve got counsellors, you’ve got janitors, you’ve got outside agencies and they are all interrelated; and sometimes in the organization, it is kind of cooler so that you don’t bounce off of each other as much. Other times when the heat is turned up well everybody is kind of gyrating, just like right now with this play going on [referring to the Weber Musical Revue] you can tell there is a lot of interaction.

Warming to the theme, he explains how his role fits into a metaphor of the school as a river:

[T]he role I see is to keep moving in a direction not too far out to the left or not too far out to the right but try to steer down the centre of the channel so to speak .... I kind of see my role as to bring the issues back in stream, on board, and get flowing again.

The notion of the school as a flowing river and the principal as the channeler of the current emerged again in our discussion as he spoke of providing enough space for the ironists and extreme thinkers to flourish while still keeping them in the main channel. This astute position perfectly illustrates the mutual poietic-aesthetic role which the leaders at Riverside assume in the creation of the room. For Andy, his role is as much an aesthetic one as it is poietic; he not only helps to create the room through his metaphors, he also allows others to define the boundaries of the room through their own poietic activity:

[In our school, I can’t be the leader for everything. There is no way that I can be the leader for the drama that is going on, for the basketball that is going on, or functionally integrated students, I wouldn’t have a hope .... But I can certainly have an appreciation for it and a sense for it, and not really lead it but kind of guide it, and help it and nurture it and kind of focus it and make sure that there’s growth and positiveness.

This aesthetic appreciation for the artistry of the staff was articulated by Perry as well. From his perspective, the ironists, whom he was quick to identify, served an invaluable role in expanding the boundaries of the room.
There's an art to what we do and I guess anything we do we need to push the boundaries of creativity . . . and we have to be thrown the curves because, if no one ever came in here and threw us a curve ball, the boundaries would never expand outwards. We need the ironists because they help us to view the world differently.

Perry and Andy consistently demonstrate a common philosophy of leadership, characterized by a caring for students and a willingness to try and understand the particular needs of each one. To them, removing a student from school is an absolute last resort. They see the permanent loss of a student as a failure of imagination and caring on their part. In the narrative on social rooms, I explore the ways in which Andy reinforces this approach with the administrators. The way in which it is practised in the school involves the engagement of stereoscopic vision.

In addition to their facility with metaphor, and their appreciation for the ironists in their midst, both Perry and Andy placed a high value on the engagement of stereoscopic vision in their roles. For Perry, this meant always trying to see the spectrum between the extreme positions.

We have a policy book two inches thick . . . but we follow it or not depending on the way the wind’s blowing and the way the situation requires something. I would say very much operating in the shades of grey . . . when you work in ambiguity you don’t always please everybody and yet everybody has a story to tell.

Andy also articulates a high tolerance for ambiguity and a willingness to view issues from a broad perspective.

Some things are pretty black and white. If you get caught smoking on the school grounds, you do this . . . but when it comes to prejudice or children acting out and they’ve got problems at home and they’ve got personal problems, they’ve got problems with the law, you have to take many different factors into consideration. So I guess if you like to rule more authoritarian, it’s more easy to rule black and white because this is the problem, this is the solution. But, if you are able to put up with more ambiguity, then you are able to say, this is the problem, these are the many factors involved with it, these are the range of solutions we can try.
Maintaining such a position is not without its dangers. The other participants in the moral discourse often have a tendency to gravitate to the extreme positions, and in these cases the role of leadership is to keep the room as wide as possible by not only engaging in stereoscopic vision but also in actively promoting a tolerance for ambiguity among the participants.

The engagement of stereoscopic vision is most evident in situations where a teacher brings a student to the office for discipline. The administrator is often caught in a very real dilemma. The teacher, understandably, expects support and immediate action; yet, the emotion of the situation tends to exclude any consideration of other perspectives. Andy explains his philosophy in dealing with such situations.

I guess when there is a problem that comes up, if a person comes in you have to look at where they are at that moment. People are quick to put kids down but I’ve seen so many kids that have problems and situations that are holding them back, and as they went through the system ... they’ve changed, they’ve come around. You can’t always not have faith in them, you’ve got to give them some chances. These are adolescents we’re working with. It is not just bang, you’re done, it’s over. It’s a process, you have to work a process with them . . . . You’ve got to give these guys some chances and alternatives and some options.

The morning passes much more quickly than either of us would have liked.

When I leave, Andy is back at his familiar station behind the office counter talking to students and "working his process."

Social Rooms

Social interactions outside the school are clearly a significant part of room creation at Riverside. Two social settings in which we participated will illustrate the ways in which poietic elements were engaged by the staff to create the room.
Friday afternoon choir practices are a common cathartic process for teachers throughout the province; Riverside teachers are no exception. Thor reminisces about the old days when virtually the entire staff would meet at the Royal Hotel for a few hours Friday after school to unwind and rehash the week. The gathering was so common that there was a table reserved for them on these occasions. Those days are gone, but a strong contingent of teachers still continue the tradition by meeting at the Meadows, a slightly more "respectable" establishment, on a regular basis.

We stumble on this cabal by accident on Friday after school when we drop by in search of a good supper after our first week at Riverside. Six veteran teachers, all males, are gathered this afternoon. They greet us as we enter and offer us a place at their table. Jack immediately informs us of the customary practice of each newcomer buying a round for the table and we laughingly concede. The conversation is of sports, student behaviour, and the changing pressures on the teaching profession.

The discourse is largely stories and personal anecdotes. A topic is introduced, personal anecdotes which support or repudiate the point are proffered from several quarters and, before any resolution is achieved, the conversation has moved to another topic.

The mood is congenial; one gets the sense that the positions held by each participant are well known by all and the chief purpose of the discourse is to consolidate those positions. Andre raises the issue of political correctness and gender bias. Being the French teacher, he offers an interesting perspective on gender-biased language and political correctness in French culture. The theme shifts slightly when Cam arrives with his wife Bonnie; we explore the changing relationships between husbands and wives in the postmodern world.
Our observations at this and other similar sessions suggested that narrative is
the most widely engaged poietic element in such rooms. The discourse has a very
substantial moral component and the narrative is used not only to affirm one’s moral
position on issues relating to teaching but also to provide a context within which real
dialogue can occur. None of the participants demonstrated a shift in their position
regarding the issues discussed, even though at times the discourse became intense;
nevertheless, there was always a willingness to consider the validity of the other
positions maintained. One was left with the impression that these friends appreciated
each other as much for their difference as their similarity, and that in moral decision
making situations within the school, they would have a solid base from which to
reason.

A further unacknowledged purpose of social narrative was that of sharing
information regarding students or colleagues which would aid in future decision
making. The participants largely avoided gossip regarding absent colleagues, yet
their stories illustrated the variety of ways that colleagues treated particular students
and provided clues as to their views on what should be done to deal effectively with
these students.

Finally, one cannot overlook the very real value of humour in these narratives
(many of them had a decidedly humorous aspect). The comraderie of these meetings
and the sharing of humorous stories very clearly counteracts the alienation,
frustration, and feelings of helplessness experienced by teachers in the “daily-ness” of
their work.

The value of narrative as a socialization vehicle and as a method of conveying
sacred values was best illustrated at a more private gathering at Perry’s house one
evening following a school-board meeting. The principal and vice-principals are routinely requested to attend these meetings for a cameo appearance at which they provide the board with a summary of the school’s activities, advise the board of future events, and sometimes request counsel or a ruling on specific issues.

I was permitted to attend the meeting with the Riverside administrators (Andy, Perry, and Chris) and, as was their custom on these occasions, they adjourned to a private home to de-brief and socialize for an hour or two. On this particular evening, Perry’s parents were visiting and, since his mother was a former teacher, we soon found ourselves in conversation about former colleagues and former times when teaching was different. It is at times like these that Andy engages most eloquently in narrative. At school, he tends to rely more on symbolic acts to define the room; however, in relaxed settings, his story-telling ability shines through.

The stories are not consciously structured to convey moral messages, yet they have a profound effect on the listeners in the room. They are reminders of who we are as a school, what is important about what we do, and how we should treat each other and the students. The stories tonight are of lost causes and hopeless cases who have passed through the school and somehow been touched by the caring they experienced there. For the two vice principals who are relative newcomers to the school (6 years and 10 years at Riverside), these stories convey a very clear message of Andy’s vision and of his expectations for the way students should be treated:

Jordan was a thin bedraggled boy who continually hung around me whenever I stood out in the hallway. He never said much but he was always there. His family was very poor and I think Jordan lived in a granary behind the house. One morning, he came into the school, never said anything, just threw up right in front of me and passed out. He had nothing in him but some Tang and mucous. He probably hadn’t eaten for three days. When Jordan recovered, I fixed it up for
him to eat in the cafeteria on a regular basis just to make sure he got something every day.

There is no sense of self-aggrandizement or melodrama in Andy’s story although he freely displays his feelings as he recalls these experiences. Rather, they seem more to be an apologetic or rationale for the type of leadership which Andy expects to see displayed at Riverside:

At eight-thirty one Monday morning, a woman showed up at my office door with two kids in tow. "My husband just kicked me out. I'm from a farm thirty miles from here. We spent the night in the hotel. I have no money and no place to stay but I want to get my kids enrolled in school." I fixed the kids up with books and got them going; then I got in touch with social services and got the woman some help. We never talked about it again, but I took a special interest in those kids. The boy got into the shop program and is working as a mechanic now. We had a little trouble with the girl but she turned out OK too. I see that woman from time to time and even though we don’t talk about it, it’s like we have an understanding between us. It was very good to watch those kids grow each year and see them do good.

This theme of meeting the individual needs of the students resonates strongly with all three administrators and is reflected in the way they conduct themselves in their roles. The stories told in these intimate social groups are gentle reminders of the "how" and "why" of caring leadership.

According to Witten (1993, p. 109), one of the important roles of narrative is to "unobtrusively and persuasively communicate core organizational values." Through the engagement of narrative, Andy unconsciously transmits to the staff the importance of caring for the needs of individual students and the long term benefits of caring in the lives of the students. He is an artist painting pictures of what is valued and how to go about acting on those values.
Meeting Rooms

Formal meetings would seem to be the most obvious forum for moral discourse and hence, should represent the culmination of all the poiesis that occurs in the other rooms of the school. Our observations suggested that the participants bring all their poietic experiences from the many micro-rooms to a common table in the meeting room. All the subtle ironic nuances, the multitude of shared stories, the guiding metaphors, honed and polished in other rooms, give shape to the discourse that occurs in this room.

From a research methodology perspective, we limited ourselves to a passive observation role in the meeting rooms. It would have been presumptuous on our part to participate directly in what was considered to be a sacred right of the school staff. Because formal meetings represent the ultimate collective decision making vehicle of the school, we had no right to participate.

Because of the more formal nature of the interactions in this room, the presence of the poietic elements is not as apparent as in other rooms. This is not to say that meeting rooms are inimical to poiesis; rather, the poietic elements are much more subtly present here.

For example, engaging in prolonged narrative is seen as faux pas in a staff meeting; however, all the stories resident in the collective consciousness of the group are available as the background to the discourse at hand. When participants come to the table to make a decision, they bring with them a vast repertoire of common stories about their colleagues, the administrators, and former situations where similar circumstances prevailed. Their moral reasoning is, therefore, particularized by the collective narrative which they share. As “outside observers,” we often found it
difficult to make sense of the reasoning as it progressed because, we lacked this history.

Figure 8. Field diagram of Riverside meeting room.

In situations where it was obviously lacking, the participants perceived a need to create meaningful narrative before decisions were made. A meeting at which the
school administrators were called on to hammer out a policy on smoking on school property perfectly illustrates this point. A preliminary policy had been created by the director and then the administrator’s group was asked to provide feedback on it. Immediately, the participants began to particularize the policy by imagining scenarios where it might apply and recounting past experiences where it would be unworkable. One participant described his role as umpire of adult baseball games on school property and, in so doing, was able to convey the difficulty with asking adults not to smoke on school property.

Stereoscopic vision is arguably the most prominent poietic element engaged in the meeting room. One would expect that this willingness to tolerate ambiguity and to consider a wide spectrum of opinions and perceptions would necessarily fall to the chairperson of the meeting. In fact, Andy consistently exercised this quality in the Riverside staff meetings.

The meetings are held in the resource centre since that was the only private room large enough to comfortably seat 35 participants in a more or less circular arrangement. I believe that this size of staff was about the maximum number that could be reasonably accommodated in this way. Andy is seated at the middle of the long side of a rectangular arrangement; near him on his left is Perry, his vice-principal. On his right, but perhaps three seats away, sit Buck and Cam side-by-side. They are situated in such a way that Andy cannot see them unless he leans forward and cranes his neck to see around the two staff members between them. Neither shows any interest in the proceedings; both have large notebooks open before them and are apparently working on other projects.
Andy introduces each item on the agenda, provides the necessary context, and then allows a good deal of free discussion. Whenever he perceives that the staff is moving too quickly to resolution or that a perspective is being intentionally marginalized, he interjects a comment which once more opens the dialogue. At the same time, he is sensitive to imposing his views on the room; he is equally sensitive to the other participants who have a tendency to dominate the discourse. His willingness to tolerate ambiguity and to promote that tolerance in the discourse is recognized by the staff. While some feel frustrated with this prolonged state of indecision, most would agree that such a position provides for more reliable and satisfying decision-making.

Buck and Cam pay little attention to this process, yet the other participants seem aware of their influence. Cam interjects briefly when the discussion turns to the provision of resources for the literature program. His comment is almost the direct antithesis of what seemed to be the commonly-held view. The conversation stutters to a halt and eventually the discussion is tabled for another meeting. Similarly, Buck arouses briefly when the question of computer software purchases arises. He offers a few brief suggestions and returns to his notebook. The way in which other participants attend to their words suggest that these men exert a significant, albeit subtle, influence on the proceedings.

As the preceding narrative illustrates, the ironist’s role in meetings seems to be extremely subdued. Nevertheless, Andy seems to rely on Buck and Cam to provide the alternative point of view which broadens the discourse; failing that, he assumes that role himself.
Since moral discourse is more formalized in meetings, the poietic elements are engaged in a much more subtle manner in these rooms. Narrative is used sparingly to situate the discourse in a context when the participants lack this common context. Furthermore, apparently narratives created in other rooms provide the common context for discourse among participants who know each other well.

Irony is encouraged by the chairperson and occasionally by other leaders in the group in order to create a climate of ambiguity and openness, thereby extending the discourse. In other situations where it appears that the discussion is being dominated by a particular perspective, or where the participants are moving quickly to resolution without considering other perspectives, the chairperson, engages stereoscopic vision and attempts to interject a counter-perspective into the discourse.

Summary

In this chapter, I have presented a mosaic of the Riverside room. By selecting vignettes which illustrate the unique poiesis in several micro-rooms, I have attempted to show the poietic elements which leaders engage in creating these rooms. The narratives are not seamless, nor are they tightly connected. However, together they provide a picture of the room created by the poietic-aesthetic involvement of all the participants.

Andy is the formal leader of this school; yet, each of the participants mentioned in these narratives are also leaders. They lead, both by engaging poietic elements, and also by promoting and appreciating those elements in other participants in the room. Together, they continuously create a work of art, a room where moral discourse can flourish and where sound moral reasoning and decision making is practised.
In the following chapter, I explore the creation of Lakeview, a room very
different from Riverside, yet created by the engagement of the same poietic elements
employed by the Riverside artists.
Chapter Six
LAKEVIEW

A large, well-developed prairie lake dominates the landscape near the village of Lakeview. While the lake is not visible from the village itself, its presence, nevertheless, influences the culture of the community and the school. At the risk of exploiting an obvious metaphor, I would suggest that, just as the culture of Riverview reflects its location near a river, so to the culture of Lakeview is animated by its proximity to the lake. This is a traditional farming community, stable and well-established; the citizens take pride in their heritage and in their children. Unlike many other communities along this stretch of highway, it seems to be doggedly holding its own against the destructive forces of declining rural population and economic reversal.

Turning off the highway onto Main Street at Brodan’s Highway Service and Confectionary, one is immediately confronted with the two structures which define the heart of the community; the school and the rink stand on either side of a large playground. Main Street is only four blocks long but it channels all the trade and commerce of the village. The buildings communicate a solid permanence, suggesting that change is not readily countenanced in the community. Main Street terminates at the railway track along which stand the former train station (now a local museum) and the community’s lone grain elevator.
The streets and homes that comprise the residential area of the village are old but well cared for. At the north end of town, a new subdivision has arisen; one of the streets is known as "teacher row." As is customary in prairie communities, everyone waves as they meet you.

We check in at the local hotel, an imposing three-storey structure complete with the requisite restaurant and pub. The three men having coffee eye us with friendly curiosity and, when informed of our mission, welcome us to town. The school is an easy five-minute walk back up Main Street affording an excellent opportunity to sample the spirit of the community.

Lakeview school is a sprawling one-story brick structure facing north as if to challenge the winter winds that sweep this country. Originally designed as a high school, it was expanded in 1985 when the high school and elementary school were amalgamated. A sagging sign inside the doorway half-heartedly invites all visitors to report to the main office, located immediately inside the entrance.

Two teachers are standing in earnest conversation in the centre of the lobby. They greet us warmly and introduce themselves as Garth, the vice-principal, and Eric, a division III teacher. Apparently our arrival was anticipated; they know our names and Garth, at least, seems genuinely happy to see us. As we are talking, a third teacher, clad in T-shirt, wind pants, and cross-trainers joins us, still slightly out of breath from a "phys ed" class. He introduces himself as Mac, the school principal, and offers to give us a tour of the school before classes end for the day.

We begin at the office where Mac introduces us to the school secretary, Louise or "Sarge," as she is fondly called by the staff. Louise is much too busy for small talk; she is muttering mild epithets in the direction of her computer screen. Apparently,
the school is implementing a computerized office manager program which is causing her no end of grief.

The smell of coffee and sounds of animated student conversation, accompanied by the mechanical ringing of a pin-ball machine, emanate from the room next door. Mac is proud of this room. Last year, in an attempt to more fully integrate the high school and elementary staffs, the high school staff room was converted into a student lounge and the two groups located their "private collective" space in the elementary staff room. As we discover, this move was not without its difficulties and stresses; however, the provision of a student lounge is generally conceded to have been a good move. Senior students on spares are free to use this room as long as they keep it clean and abide by a few basic rules of consideration and decorum. The room is furnished with several tables and chairs, a sink, a microwave, a coffee maker, and an old mechanical pin ball machine which appears to get a lot of use. Because of its proximity to the office, Mac has had little difficulty supervising the room and, in fact, welcomes the presence of the senior students within his immediate sphere. Mac introduces us to Jade, the SRC president, who presents him with a paper party hat which he wears jauntily for the rest of our tour.

The older, front portion of the school houses division III and IV students. All the high-school classrooms, including labs and gymnasium are accessed from one long hallway extending perhaps 50 metres down the length of the building. With the exception of prominent trophy cases in the lobby, and a large student recognition board displaying the pictures of several students, the hallway is rather drab and silent. All the classroom doors are closed and the teachers visible within seem engaged in traditional instruction.
Midway down this hallway, Mac leads us down a secondary hallway; passing the staff room, we move on into the more recently-constructed elementary wing of the school. With our eyes closed, we would be able to recognize the difference. The sounds, smells, and level of activity in the elementary school are radically different from those of the high school.

Sarah, a senior student on a spare, is seated at an upright piano in the middle of the hallway playing a contemporary Christmas carol. The familiar aroma of stale peanut butter sandwiches blends with the omnipotent fragrance of rubber boots and wet wool socks. The grade one class is lined up along the wall waiting to return to their room after a session in the resource centre. They hail us exuberantly. Mac is greeted with special respect; he is their science teacher and they take every opportunity to acknowledge that unprecedented privilege.

In addition to the piano, the hallway is home to a micro-wave, an electric urn for lunch soup, a large wooden lost-and-found box on wheels, and a cart holding a portable TV and VCR. The walls are bright with motivational posters and a variety of student-generated artistic creations. House league banners, mascots, slogans, and score sheets are prominently displayed.

A bell rings and Sarge’s voice comes over the intercom instructing the high school students to go to the gym for a brief assembly. Mac invites us to accompany him since he will be addressing the students. The students settle on the gym floor in distinct clusters. A group of grade twelve boys sit at the back and cause enough commotion to draw the attention of Graham, the senior science teacher who goes over to settle them down.
The assembly is essentially a pep rally to send off a girls volleyball team going to a tournament that weekend. Pep rallies are a novel attempt to raise school spirit at Lakeview, and the students are still learning how to respond but there seems to be a willingness among most of the students to participate. Mac begins by giving recognition awards to several students. He expresses a sincere appreciation for their efforts and the students accept gracefully. Jade takes the mike and displays great maturity in introducing the teams and explaining the context of the rally. The students listen attentively but there is very little overt enthusiasm. Garth then organizes the participating athletes into their respective teams and the student body sends them out with rhythmic clapping.

The dismissal bell rings and we prepare to meet the staff for the first time. Mac fills in the information gaps in our knowledge of the Lakeview context as we make our way to the resource centre for the meeting.

Unlike Andy, who was a native of Riverside and had taught his entire career there, Mac moved to Lakeview only two-and-a-half years ago. Prior to that, he served as administrator in a smaller school for several years. The staff here were very open to Mac's leadership since the previous principal had practised a particularly autocratic style of leadership. As one teacher explained the difference: it was a move from "do as I say not as I do," to "leading by example."

The 24 teachers and four support staff are quite evenly distributed in terms of their tenure at Lakeview. There exists a cohort of older veterans who have taught their entire career at Lakeview and are a permanent part of the community. Doug puts his relationship to the community in context for us: "I've lived here longer than in the town I grew up in." A second group of mid-career teachers have made their
homes at Lakeview, and all signs indicate that they will remain here indefinitely. A third group of teachers are relatively new to Lakeview having transferred within the past three years, as the result of a traumatic upheaval in the central office of the division. Finally, there are several early career teachers who have voluntarily chosen to teach at Lakeview; while their services are very much appreciated, their power base in decision-making is noticeably restricted. One participant compared the distribution of informal power on staff to the distribution of wealth in society. There were a few magnanimous millionaires on staff who doled out their resources at will, a number of middle-class teachers who enjoyed a good share of the power resource, and then there were a few poor souls who were living well below the poverty line in terms of their ownership of power.

The aforementioned upheaval at central office has had serious repercussions throughout the division. Classroom teachers, who were ultimately the helpless victims of this tempest, became understandably "gun shy" regarding any intrusion into their professional lives. Consequently, our reception in the school was characterized by a certain trepidation and mistrust. Several factors eventually facilitated the establishment of a climate of trust and openness. First, the strength of character of individual staff members permitted us to develop trusting relationships early on. Second, our prior acquaintance with two of the staff members predisposed them to trust our integrity. Third, our absolute commitment to non-obtrusive, caring research was acknowledged and accepted by the participants. As a result, the apprehension and caution demonstrated by the staff at that first meeting was dispelled within the first few days.
Hallways

Nowhere was the difference in culture between the elementary and high school more obvious than in the respective hallways. Several years ago, the doors and trim in the high school hallway were scheduled for repainting. Dorothy, who was then teaching in the high school, suggested the use of school colours to brighten up the hallway; however when the paint arrived, it was a conservative brown. Change in the high school hallways involved moving from black to brown doors. This apparent reluctance to change seems to characterize the high school wing of the school. Everything about this hallway is designed to convey a message that serious learning is expected here and frivolity will not be tolerated. Ardis described the characteristic high school teaching style: "We chose the specialized high school subjects because of our wants and needs . . . . I don’t want 32 kids clutching and grabbing at me. I don’t want ‘hands-on.’ I prefer to put up the fence and let you look in on special occasions."

The institutional dreariness of the hallway reflects a culture which is not friendly to the arts. Heather and Sarah, senior students at Lakeview, suggested that the one thing they would like to see changed about the school was an increased attention to the arts, both in formal classes and in the general climate of the school.

In direct contrast to the climate in the high-school halls, the elementary halls are filled with signs of life. Colour, sound, and the smells of children flood one’s senses. Walking the two hallways, one is almost left with the impression that there are two opposing forces vying for control of the school.

The hallway connecting the high school and the elementary school constitutes a sort of de-militarized zone (DMZ) maintained by the presence of the staff room at
its mid-point. Across from the staff room is a special education room utilized by both elementary and high school students and the junior science lab which Eric uses as a grade eight home room. It is here that the line between the two hallways is drawn. While Eric is considered a high school teacher, his location and his character predispose him to the roles of peace-keeper and builder of bridges. His room is a safe haven for students of all ages, he is a willing and rewarding resource for the elementary teachers, especially in the sciences, and he models collaboration to both the teachers and the students.

Figure 9. Field diagram of Lakeview hallways.
Around the corner from Eric, in the elementary hallway, stands a row of chairs affectionately dubbed "death row." Carla and Michelle sometimes encourage students to remove themselves from class in order to work here in a more personalized environment. At lunch hour and recess, these chairs provide a space for elementary students to engage in dialogue. Carla is one of the few teachers who routinely crosses the boundary between the two cultures in order to teach the grade sevens. This action has made it easier for the grade seven students to maintain ties with the elementary school. Because Carla is respected by both cultures, she is able to take small steps in bringing them together. Yet, even given the confidence and artistry with which Carla conducts her professional activities, she finds this a very difficult task: "There hasn't been an effective bridge built. It is not a bridge, it is sort of like stepping over a—not a canyon—but man it's close . . . . It is almost like walking in two separate time zones."

Carla's comments reflect the common perception of hallways at Lakeview; they represent the protected domain of two distinct cultures. Hallways can either separate participants or unify them; like lines and boundaries, they can either confine or liberate. The participants at Lakeview come down on one side or the other of this dichotomy. In conversation, several of the staff members spoke of lines as confining and separating. Comments such as "I let them know when they've crossed the line," "People on staff have drawn their lines," and "The cut off line is grade six, they move physically to the other side in grade 7," reflect this perspective.

On the other hand, a small number of participants have attempted to view hallways and lines as inclusive and liberating. These have been able to find creative ways of bringing the two cultures together in constructive dialogue.
Staff Rooms

No Interruptions
Please!
Between
12 - 12:30
Unless an
Emergency

The sign on the staff room door conveys a message to students and visitors alike regarding the teachers' desire for a private space in the school. It is probably a carry over from former days when the staff room was the sole domain of elementary teachers needing a small reprieve in the middle of their day from the constant demands of their young charges. Times have changed but the sign remains.

Between the ringing of the phone, the almost incessant knocking on the door, and the comings and goings of teachers between the staff room and the adjoining photocopy room, the staff room is now a busy and active place. "What was once a sanctuary has now become quite noisy and busy," Michelle laments.

The phone is on its seventh ring when Daniel walks in the door. The three elementary teachers seated at the huge table which dominates the room have been studiously ignoring its intrusion. Daniel promptly picks it up, speaks briefly, and hangs up. The staff room and office phone are on the same line so whenever the office is empty, it is up to the staff to take the call. Apparently, the elementary teachers do not feel the same obligation to this duty that Daniel does. He is one of three veterans on staff who started their careers in this very school almost thirty years ago. By virtue of his experience and his acknowledged role of "priest of the culture,"
Daniel has a hand in virtually everything that goes on in the school. His pet peeve is the coffee machine; he is responsible for maintaining the supply of coffee for the staff but the staff also seem to have extended that responsibility to ensuring that there is always a fresh pot on. Daniel fumes every time he comes in and the pot is empty, but no one ever knows who took the last cup.

It is the small things like answering the phone and making the coffee that seem to indicate that the integration of the elementary and high-school staffs is still very much "in process." The layout of the room also symbolizes the gulf which continues to separate them. The room is dominated by two large work tables butted against each other leaving virtually no room for movement in the room and clearly inhibiting any large group discourse in the room. Ardis, a veteran teacher, describes it as "a room made up of barriers." Elementary teachers make the most use of the tables for marking, lesson preparation, and for eating their lunch. Crowded into the remaining space are several hardback chairs and a semicircular couch which is the exclusive domain of the high school teachers.

The integration of the staff has been a painful process which is obviously not yet complete. People bump into each other in their efforts to navigate the limited space. The two staffs have negotiated an uneasy truce which at times is stretched to its limits. The room was simply not designed for this number of people but the participants have gone to remarkable lengths to accommodate each other. A common meeting space has been created by the inclusion of a small round table near the coffee machine. This space is utilized by both groups but is frequently occupied by Carla, Eric, and Doug, three teachers who seem to feel comfortable in both cultures.
Several "leaders" facilitate the tenuous connections between the high school and elementary staffs. Graham, a high school teacher married to Michelle, one of the elementary teachers, treads softly in the de-militarized zone (DMZ) between the two groups. By offering his expertise in computers to the elementary teachers, he creates a small acre of common ground within which the two groups can come together. He eats lunch with his wife at "the table" and then joins his high school colleagues in a game of Risk at a decrepit card table on the periphery of the room.

Figure 10. Field diagram of Lakeview staff room.
Because of the physical distribution of elementary and high school teachers, discourse in the room is very localized. Graham, John, and Woody stop their Risk game to discuss the chemical properties of water; their language is loud and technical, seemingly designed to convey a message of superior knowledge to the elementary teachers at the table. The elementary teachers are nonplussed; they continue their discussion of the One Hundred Day celebration as though they were alone in the room.

The territorial disputes in the staff room during the first year of integration are legendary. Garth recounts early attempts at conciliation:

The tables in the middle were always there and they'd have books spread out all over the place. And what we found is they got in here at 12 and we would come in at 12:15 and . . . we had no place to sit and eat . . . [O]ne day at 3:30 we moved all the tables different in the staff room. It didn't go over very well . . . It was a big discussion at a staff meeting one day and so we moved them back; but that contributed to an open conversation in the staff room [my italics] . . . we looked at some alternatives, moving in some round tables and that kind of stuff . . . That broke the ice a little more.

It seems that throughout this time, the dialogue between the staffs was largely facilitated by small symbolic acts which served to open the space for discourse. While the participants have largely moved beyond these early territorial disputes, they still struggle with the obvious differences that hinder open discourse.

Eric and Carla are two teachers who seem willing to make the effort to bridge the gap. Both are middle-years teachers who came to Lakeview at the same time and have developed a rapport with each other and with key individuals on both staffs. Eric, while identifying mainly with the high-school staff, offers himself as a willing target for much of the humour in the staff room.
During Spirit Week, he wears his "babe magnet" in the staff room. The "babe magnet" is an antiquated felt cap with large ear flaps and an upturned beak, to which Eric solemnly attributes his phenomenal attractiveness to the women. Good natured jibes about his expanding mid-section, delivered by Ardis and heartily endorsed by Jo and Dorothy, quickly dispel any doubt about the irony of Eric's outlandish claims. Eric's antics illustrate yet another valuable role of staff room humour, that of uniting a divided staff. Because of his credibility as a teacher, and his gracious response to humour directed at him, he provides a space for common interaction between the staffs.

Carla, takes a different approach to bridging the gap. Whereas Eric offers himself as a symbolic bridge, Carla essentially offers her expertise to all the participants and attempts to achieve integration through the student body rather than the faculty. Last year, her home room was the grade six class (the extreme edge of the elementary school); this year, she has bridged the gap by moving up to teach these same students mathematics and language arts in grade seven (the high school edge of the divide). At the same time, Ralph, the high school art teacher, has taken on some teaching responsibilities in grade six. This move, initiated by Carla, has disconcerted some of the high school teachers who resent this intrusion on their territory; however, Carla is probably the one person on staff who has the credibility to achieve it.

The struggles of the staff to create a room where open discourse can occur has been a fascinating study of the poietic process. Carla's symbolic acts and Eric's ironic humour typify two important elements engaged by the staff in creating this room.
Several participants identified one final poetic element, stereoscopic vision, as a positive by-product of the cultural differences in the staff room.

John saw the division between staffs as a positive aspect of the room. From his perspective, the differences between the two groups is a positive catalyst for change: "There are fundamental differences between the elementary and high school contexts which cannot and should not be reconciled; the two contrasting views cause us to have the wider perspective necessary for change and growth to happen... I learned that from talking to my wife. She always offers the alternative perspective." This appreciation for the importance of stereoscopic vision was echoed by other staff members, who felt that the differences in culture were positive and energizing factors which widened the discourse within the room.

Notwithstanding this optimistic perspective shared by a few of the participants, the division in the staff room remains a source of tension and tends to restrict rather than enhance the discourse. In spite of the noble efforts of several participants, each teacher ultimately comes down on one side of the line or the other. Michelle and Graham find that their professional differences are difficult to overcome in spite of their personal intimacy. In the end, when decisions involving conflicting interests need to be made, the discourse tends to polarize.

Class Rooms

Several of her colleagues identified Carla as an artistic leader and her classroom certainly confirms this assessment. Carla does not teach so much as challenge her students to think and learn. This invitational approach to learning is applied equally to her collegial relationships with the staff. Carla serves on the
committee which negotiates teacher-welfare conditions with the division board. She has been instrumental in introducing an interest-based model into the negotiation process which provides for a collaborative rather than a confrontational approach to reaching agreement. A committed lifelong learner, she is pursuing a Master’s degree in education and has developed and piloted several new curricula during her time at Lakeview.

Nothing about Carla is conventional; as Mac admits "she has a number of things that she does that tend to cause a few grey hairs but I don’t know if I would want it any other way.” Her classroom rules, developed through dialogue with her students, are simple:

- Don’t open anyone’s combination unless you’re told to.
- Share.
- Respect other people.
- No snooping.
- Sit quietly while other people are talking.
- Don’t go into other people’s desks.
- Don’t fight.
- No destruction of school property.
- Don’t run in the classroom/hall.
- No bad language.
- Smile.

In her relationships with her students, Carla values joy above all else. She recalls one of her first teaching assignments with a kindergarten class when she was in her early twenties:

I taught half time to twelve little individuals and the joy of that still stays with me. The joy of going home every single day and laughing, not at them, but we laughed a lot together, and we laughed daily, and we laughed about our creative attempts to make things work, and they invariably didn’t work, but we laughed.

The room Carla creates at Lakeview is characterized by this same joy; there is an openness and a sense of wonder that makes the learning process always fresh and
new. Seated in a rickety lawn chair at the back of the room, she reads a chapter from Halvorson's *Cowboys Don't Cry*. The students listen intently. Their assignment for the day is to synthesize the ideas from Kipling's poem "If" and suggest ways in which they might apply to the conflicts experienced by the protagonists in Halvorson's novel. The task seems daunting even for a university class, yet Carla's students attack it with zest and prove very adept at this level of analytical thinking. In the ensuing discourse, they demonstrate a maturity far beyond that expected of a grade six student. Carla explains her poietic process as follows:

[It is important for me to make sure my kids feel a sense of "This is who I am. This is what I need. This is what I want to know." And it's okay—the atmosphere here—to do that in. It is coming from the heart and soul, and there is a passion for learning. I try to make learning appear natural and cool. It is very important to be cool at this age and knowing is just as good as being able to do something so let's know lots; and let's take what we know and spread it out and play with it and move it around and apply it elsewhere. Let's take it into real life and let's take it out of real life and put it into the imaginative realm. [Let's] play with it there, smear it around a bit and then go back to the curriculum and wonder, "What have you done?"

For Carla, knowledge is never a static product; rather, it is a living, changing process. Because of this attitude, the level of discourse attained in her classes is astounding.

Carla engages all the poietic elements in the creation of her room. She also encourages her students to practice these same elements. There is a continual poietic-aesthetic reciprocity between students and teacher. "Oh, copious reader!" she exclaims to a student who sheepishly confesses his recent lapse in completing the assigned readings. To a student who facetiously demands her undivided attention, she retorts: "Oh, right, because you are so neglected." Her discourse with the students is tinged with an easy irony which keeps the students continually questioning her statements: "Is there a joke here that I'm missing? Is she serious or is she saying something else?"
She spoke at length about her use of irony one afternoon when she had time to reflect on what was happening in her classroom. For her, reciprocal ironic dialogue is an essential way of engaging students in common discourse. Two important pre-requisites to the use of irony are mutual respect and the creation of a “safe environment” where students feel free to question and disagree. She illustrates with a negative and a positive example.

I had one boy come up to me and say, “I didn’t understand what you said but I didn’t like it.” And so the connotation—even though I meant it in one way and he took it in another—[was that] he felt safe enough to come and ask about it. So I tried to explain it to him and [finally] I said, “You know, I’m going to back off on this one and apologize because I don’t want you to stop trusting me.” And he felt all right about that.

[The humour/irony needs to be developed and we do that just by constant intercourse back and forth, back and forth. And the kids who are more prone to be like that naturally, [but] maybe don’t know about it, blossom too as a result. The one fellow in 7A, Nicholas, he is just smack full of irony . . . and I have seen such marvellous growth about him as an individual . . . and so I think the irony and the use of humour, in a refined sense, not in a stupid sense, is important with these kids.

These examples illustrate Carla’s creative use of irony and also her willingness to encourage it in others. As a classroom leader, she effectively models both the poietic and the aesthetic aspect of creating a room. Her students reciprocate by engaging in both processes with her.

Carla not only employs stereoscopic vision and irony effectively in her classroom, she also engages narrative as a poietic device. Her students are frequently called upon to particularize the moral issues presented in class by constructing personal narratives and sharing these with the class. For the student, there is a great risk involved in this, yet such is the level of trust and respect among the participants that even the most intimate of narratives are received with grace and compassion.
When it comes to metaphor, Carla’s poetic talents truly shine. She is the master of the symbolic act. For example, she keeps a sterling silver platter in her room, reserved specifically for the ceremonial presentation of papers or assignments which have been exceptionally well done. On those rare occasions, Carla places the work on the platter and, in a solemn ceremony, presents it to its creator amidst applause from the rest of the class.

The nature of Carla’s room is best described in her own words as she had opportunity to reflect on her guiding metaphor for education. It is worth noting that this perspective applies not only to what she does in the classroom, but equally to the way she goes about artistically engaging in room creation in every aspect of her professional life. The Lakeview room is truly enriched by the influence of this teacher:

The metaphor of learning, and knowledge, and education—I sat down and thought about it for a long time, and it’s amazing that after 15 years of teaching I’m just thinking about it now. It has always been there, and thank you for getting me to try and formalize it and verbalize it. I see it as a dance in many different ways. There is a dance with a single partner, and a group dance, and various leaders. You lead sometimes, and then the other person leads, and then there are the beautiful little wallflowers sitting there that, when instilled with enough confidence in themselves, will come to join the dance, and then you sit this one out and you watch the dance. It’s not a dance on a dance floor—the floor is moving, it’s not a static floor. Sometimes the steps can be seen and you follow those steps—1-2-3, 1-2-3. And after those steps have been mastered, then it’s almost like a whirling dervish had come in and taken over for a while and it’s never really ending . . . . And sometimes you dance to another person’s tune, then there are those who dance to their own tune, and the joy they can bring to that classroom is beyond description . . . . There are so many different kinds of dancing and I see it closely related to learning. I don’t know that it fits in the department standards somehow.

Secretan (1990, p. 140) explored the metaphor of leadership as a dance. He recounted the image invoked by Phil Jackson, coach of the Chicago Bulls, who
described the competition of a basketball game as a dance between each player and
the other nine players on the floor. They are not opponents or teammates, they are
partners in a dance. This perspective on competition is similar to the wonderful
metaphor developed by Carla and quite aptly characterizes her contribution to the
Lakeview room.

The grade one class at Lakeview is an exuberant endearing group. Eric, who
is unaccustomed to the high level of activity characteristic of this group, came away
from a brief encounter wiping his brow and exclaiming, "Molly, I don’t know how
you do it all day. They suck the life out of you." Molly is unperturbed; she somehow
manages to maintain her poise in the midst of the tumult.

Today is a special day for the grade ones and they are prepared. All the
students are attired in their Sunday best and they are busy rehearsing their stories
because today is the long-awaited One Hundred Day Celebration. Each year on
exactly the 100th day of school, the grade one class is given the opportunity to
demonstrate their newly-learned reading skills before the assembled group of moms
and dads.

All morning the excitement mounts; the children are nervous but eager to
perform. All the elementary teachers offer help in setting up the library, preparing
the coffee and dainties, welcoming parents, and getting the video camera ready. The
parents arrive promptly at two and the children make their entrance. Each student is
carrying their favourite story book; in turn, they take their place before the parents
and read their story.

Through the use of a simple symbolic act, Molly has succeeded in expanding
the dimensions of the Lakeview room. The celebration sends a powerful message to
the students, the community, and most importantly to the staff, regarding the value of
the educational process in grade one. It is more than simply a celebration of successful
completion of the first half year of “real school,” it is a metaphor for quality education.
Each halting or brazen attempt to read publicly is an affirmation of the entire
educational process. These students are saying “Look what we can accomplish when
we are given a chance.”

Offices

Mac’s office is airless and cluttered. His desk is piled high with paper work
needing attention. “I hate being in here,” he grumbles, “I would much rather be out
in the halls.” Above his desk hangs a large sign: God knows where you are!!! Does your
secretary?? “Louise gave me that after my first year here,” he says sheepishly. “That
first year, I had 100% administration time, but I was never in my office. I was in
teachers’ classrooms or in the hallways with the kids. I did all my ‘admin’ work at
night. Louise was going nuts because she could never find me.”

It is my morning to shadow Mac, and we are sitting in his office going over
his morning schedule. His door is open and while his office is not directly accessible
to the hallway, anyone entering the office must pass his open door. He recalls the
significance that open door had for the staff his first year at Lakeview. The teachers
were accustomed to a closed and secretive administrative structure and when one
veteran first came upon Mac’s open door he remarked in amazement, “It’s been ten
years since I saw that door open.”

The significance of that symbolic act leads naturally to a consideration of the
role which metaphor plays in the creation of the room at Lakeview. Mac and Garth,
the vice-principal, have used a multitude of these metaphors to define the room.

When Mac accepted the position at Lakeview three years prior, he arranged to move his house from his former posting and set it on a foundation in his new community. This gesture sent very positive signals to the community regarding his commitment to Lakeview. In order to communicate his desire for a unified staff, he arranged for the elementary and high school staffs to begin sharing a common staff room in his first year as principal. In his second year at Lakeview, he chose to teach science to the grade one class even though he had not taught elementary students before. He did this not only to demonstrate his desire to bridge the elementary-high school gap but also to provide elementary teachers with a small amount of preparation time each week. The opening of the former high-school staff room as a student lounge also communicated his strong commitment to meeting student needs.

Mac explains his creative use of metaphor as follows. "The main goal initially was to say, 'This is me, this is my style, this is what I am going to do with you.'" By the judicious engagement of these symbolic acts, he was able to communicate not only what his philosophy was, but also what expectations he had for staff unity and the care of students. His open door and willingness to be involved with staff and students created a room in the school where discourse could be free and trust could flourish.

Mac has a number of linguistic metaphors which guide his actions and allow him to give definition to his leadership. He believes that at times his role takes on the characteristics of "fireman" and "mediator;" however, he is most passionate about the metaphor which most accurately defines his leadership:

I almost see myself as being a lighthouse; the idea being that a lighthouse is something there to show you the way. Not really to show
you the way—what a lighthouse will do, it will indicate to you that there might be some danger here, or that you are getting too close, or that there is another way to do it, or be careful. But yet it doesn’t take you through, it doesn’t drive your ship. It doesn’t point out exactly what the pitfalls are but it is there as a beacon to say “Hey, I am here to help you.”

This metaphor is entirely consistent with Mac’s approach to leadership in both formal and informal contexts. He believes strongly in leading by example as his symbolic acts indicate; however, he also believes that his role is not to coerce or handhold staff or students, but rather to empower and liberate them. As we found in the meeting room, this metaphor guides the way in which he approaches decision making.

In reflecting on his style of leadership, Carla confirmed Mac’s metaphor perfectly:

With Mac being the kind of person that he is . . . in a sort of incidental way, he will pass that on to other people, and I’ve grown as a result of that. I felt more repressed under the last person . . . Mac has brought about a sense of growth in myself and so “Change? Yes, bring it on! I will give you some feedback on it, or provide what is necessary so that you can either change it, or I will help you.”

Fittingly, Mac uses an ocean metaphor for the kind of room he wishes to create for the students. I want the school to be a “safe haven for kids,” he maintains. “I firmly support the students. I understand the students have responsibilities but my style and my personal approach to leadership is that ‘no students—no teachers’ . . . we need to do the best we can for our students.”

This personal philosophy of leadership is strikingly similar to that of Andy at Riverside; and, not surprisingly, it raises the same difficulties. By maintaining a broader perspective and refusing to take sides in student-teacher conflicts, he has left himself open to charges of favouritism from both sides. Nevertheless, Mac maintains
that his role is to consider both points of view in order to help the participants get
past their confrontational positions: "I take a look at it from a different perspective; as
an outsider looking in you can see the whole picture, whereas sometimes in a teacher-
student situation neither one of them see the whole picture."

This willingness to engage in stereoscopic vision has had limited impact on his
efforts to unify the elementary and high school staffs. While Mac concedes that it
may never be possible or even desirable to achieve complete integration, he
nevertheless perceived that his "first mission was to bring them together." He
gestures widely, "I have been here for two and a half years and I have brought them
from fifty miles apart to eighteen miles apart if I can put it that way." When queried
as to how he was accomplishing this unification, Mac uses another metaphor to
explain his approach:

The biggest thing . . . is you have to get the high school staff to know
what is going on with the elementary staff; and you need to get the
elementary staff to know what is going on with the high school staff. It
is like living in a duplex. You hear what is going on in the room
beside you and you speculate what is going on in the room beside you
but you don't actually know until you get into that side of the duplex.
So how does teacher A know what teacher B is doing unless they ask,
dialogue, or unless they visit, or unless they do activities together.

Mac put his theory into practice by engaging the staff in a number of symbolic
activities wherein they could begin to experience and share in each others professional
lives. The most successful of these was the Winter Carnival at which elementary and
high-school teachers had to share in both planning and implementing student
activities:

[The comments afterward were so positive because the high school
teacher [worked] side by side with an elementary teacher, organizing,
or supervising, or participating. They say, "maybe they are human.
Maybe things do go on that are the same," and that was a big part of it.
Just bringing them together.]
This same approach was Mac's general *modus operandi* in several other contexts, especially in group decision making situations. Rather than forcing a decision between two polar positions, his preferred style was to leave the discourse open until he perceived the mounting tension or discomfort had reached an unacceptable level and then abruptly terminate the debate. As we discovered, in formal decision making contexts such as staff meetings, this approach was not without its difficulties.

Garth's office is separated from Mac's by a common work space presided over by Sarge. Like Mac, Garth is a strong believer in the value of symbolic acts. His guiding metaphor is "workhorse," and he takes every opportunity to convey this message to the staff. Garth is a veteran of Lakeview. He came here as a young rookie, married, raised a family, and plans on finishing his career here. Mac and Garth complement each other very well; where Mac is laid back and unflappable, Garth is diligent and intense. They both agree on the importance of leading by example. For Garth, this means being the first to arrive, the last to leave, and the busiest in between. He handles a multitude of concurrent administrative tasks while still managing to attend closely to the needs of the staff. Not given to linguistic eloquence, he nevertheless contributes to the room through his consistent example of hard work and attention to the needs of the staff.

Garth's personal poiesis consists largely in symbolic acts. He directs these acts toward the integration of the elementary and high-school staffs, a mission of high priority to him. He overheard the elementary teachers recently lamenting the lack of sliding saucers available for their students at recess. The next day, when the teachers arrived, they found a stack of new saucers waiting for them at the doorway. "That's the way I like to operate," says Garth, "that's the way I want the kids to be. I want
them to do their assignments, and get it done, and get it done right now, and so why not me? It's the model"

This is Garth's first year as administrator and he is enjoying himself immensely. When Mac was faced with choosing a new vice-principal at the start of this year, his top priority was selecting someone who would complement his style. The entire staff agrees that Garth was the right choice; together, these two administrators have contributed to the creation of a room which, while not unified, is student-centred and open to change. The large poster in the main office just outside Mac's open door sends a clear message to students and teachers alike regarding the importance that the administrators place on willingness to change.

_In times of change
it is the learners
who will inherit the earth.
While the learned
will find themselves beautifully equipped
for a world that no longer exists._

_Social Rooms_

The common social lives of teachers are governed by a number of factors outside the professional domain. Daniel, Ardis, and Garth speak with fondness of their early years in the profession when the school was the centre of their social activity: "We would be here to all hours of the night, playing cards and having fun together. We just liked being together."

Over the years, as other divergent interests intruded, that social sphere expanded to include the community until now the teachers have found that their social interactions have been more formalized. While they still engage in the odd
“choir practice” on Friday after school, those spontaneous, informal gatherings are less common and not so well attended.

The Christmas party is one social activity which still seems to be widely enjoyed by the staff. A major breakthrough was achieved a few years ago when the elementary and high-school staffs began participating in a common Christmas party. This year, it consists of a shared dinner at the local hotel followed by an evening of games and dancing at a nearby hall.

We are warmly welcomed as part of the group; in keeping with the spirit of the season, the conversation around dinner is warm and convivial. In their early days here, both Doug and Garth played competitive hockey for the local senior team; Doug takes great pride in pointing out their pictures (when we still had hair) hanging on the wall of the hotel. Stories of their hockey exploits, both daring and dastardly, are shared freely.

When we adjourn to the hall for the social, a familiar division of activity occurs. Everyone has brought favourite board games to play. Several of the male teachers from the high school, including Mac, engage in a noisy penny ante dice game at one end of the room. Eric joins a group of female teachers at the other end of the room in a slightly quieter game of Trivial Pursuit. A few couples engage in quiet conversation at a table in-between. The mood is festive and relaxed. Soon the dancing and gift exchange will begin. It is a typical Saskatchewan Christmas party.

Strangely, Monday morning at school there is no discussion of the previous Friday’s celebration. Perhaps in deference to the staff who chose not to attend, the staff room conversation steers clear of the party. From our perspective, social rooms
at Lakeview did not contribute positively to the macro room. The personal lives of teachers seem more clearly separated from their room than was the case at Riverside.

Meeting Rooms

Seating arrangements at staff meetings offer valuable insight into the dynamics of the meeting room. Several rectangular tables are arranged into a large U-shaped configuration. Mac is not seated at these tables; rather, he chooses to chair the meeting from a smaller circular table which he shares with Garth at one end of "U" arrangement.

Figure 11. Field diagram of Lakeview meeting room.
Staff meetings are held in the Resource Centre because this room is the only space large enough to accommodate the 30 participants. It also offers a relatively neutral environment.

We arrive early and take seats at a small round table off to the side of the main seating arrangement. As they arrive, the participants select positions around the table to which they have obviously staked prior claim. A group of elementary teachers tend to cluster along the side nearest to Mac and immediately to his right. Sitting almost directly opposite Mac are several veteran high school teachers who are acknowledged informal leaders on staff. The diverging field of influence extending from Mac and Garth to the far corner of the table might be called the "power zone," since most of the discourse and interaction passes through this zone. We perceived a declining field of influence outside this power zone with a group of disempowered teachers sitting at either end of the table.

Carla's presence was sporadic; her physical and emotional involvement were dictated by the topic under discussion. Daniel, Eric, Elise, and Ardis manifested a high degree of involvement; their strategic location within the power zone facilitated their engagement with Mac and Garth. A good deal of subtle communication passed through the group from these leaders. Because these teachers have worked together for so long, they have assumed roles which are well understood and mutually acknowledged.

Ardis likened this level of communication to "that look that passes between husband and wife" in a public forum where verbal communication would be indiscreet. She also offered an incisive analysis of the five levels of discourse that occurred at Lakeview staff meetings. The first level is that of direct information;
participants are informed of significant activities, events, and expectations that affect them.

The second level is the who will do it? stage. Here Mac solicits volunteers to do essential school tasks such as helping organize spirit-week activities. Most of the activities requiring volunteers are annual events which certain teachers have traditionally handled so this stage is quickly disposed of.

The third level is the discussion stage. This activity is the most time consuming and, hence, most frustrating for the elementary teachers since much of the discussion involves issues with which they are not directly concerned. At one point during a particularly lengthy and irrelevant (from her perspective) discussion, Dorothy cried out in exasperation, "Let's just make a decision and get on with it!" This outburst seemed to have no impact on the proceedings as the rest of the group continued on as if nothing had been said.

However, the discussion stage is the most significant stage in the moral discourse since it is here that the greatest opportunity to engage poetic elements is afforded. Unfortunately, very little poetic engagement was observed at this stage. The veteran staff tend to avoid narrative and metaphor, relying instead on their informal authority to influence the discourse with a few well-chosen words. Woody and John engage in narrative to particularize the discourse surrounding smoking on school property but its impact is limited. Eric relies heavily on ironic humour to help define the boundaries of the discourse. Seated at the centre of the power zone, he scatters gratuitous, and sometimes questionable witticisms in all directions; these have the effect of reducing the tension when discourse becomes heated and keeping the participants from taking too much for granted. Mac's attempts at encouraging
stereoscopic vision are limited by his tolerance for dissonance among the staff. When he perceives a certain level of discomfort or stress among the participants, he brings the discourse to an abrupt halt.

The issue of students smoking on school property during school hours is raised during one such discussion period. This is an issue which is emotionally charged and has apparently a long history with the staff. Mac, being a smoker himself, has difficulty maintaining perspective on this issue and soon finds himself in a "them-against-me" position. The discussion ends unsatisfactorily with Mac challenging the staff to write up a policy that they think might be workable.

The fourth level is the group decision making stage. Very few items ever reach this stage; in fact, we did not observe any formal democratic decision making in the three meetings attended. Once again, this is a source of frustration to the teachers who feel disempowered at the informal decision making level where most decisions are made.

Jo engaged in a bit of humorous dramatic irony at one such meeting to point out the peculiarities of the decision making process. Just days previous, we had been talking about the decision making processes in the school and Jo had done some reflecting on her frustration with it. Her opportunity to make a statement came in the next staff meeting. The staff were engaged in discussion regarding the viability of a Winter Carnival. After several minutes of debate, Jo—with a wicked gleam in her eye—raised her hand, and said calmly, "I make a motion that we not have a Winter Carnival this year." The group fell silent for a moment, not knowing quite how to proceed once a formal motion had been made, then lapsed back into their discussion as though nothing had been said. In a short time, Mac terminated the discussion with
his customary, "Think about it and get back to me." Jo smiled and let the matter drop.

The fifth level is the unilateral administrative decision making stage. The administrators and the staff have a deep and abiding commitment to the ultimate authority of the principal; consequently, they freely accept such statements as "These are my expectations," and "You are expected to do this," from the administrators.

Both unilateral and consensual decision making are largely absent from the meeting room. Most discussions are terminated by Mac with his "Think about it and get back to me." Many of the veteran staff are comfortable with this approach because they know that the decision will be made informally in the time before the next meeting and that they will have had significant input into it.

The meeting room at Lakeview was not conducive to moral discourse because final resolution was rarely achieved. On the surface, Mac apparently encouraged stereoscopic vision by avoiding the actual decision making step; however, it became apparent that this lack of formal decision making in meetings merely provided an avenue for the exercise of informal influence outside of the meeting. Furthermore, Mac’s selective control over the limits of discourse created a high degree of dissonance and frustration for the participants who perceived themselves to be disempowered in the informal decision making process.

Summary

In this chapter, I have attempted to create a picture of the Lakeview room by the use of selected illustrative narrative from several micro-rooms within. Those stories which best portrayed the nature of the macro-room were chosen.
The Lakeview room was perceived to be less open to moral discourse because of a disinclination, on the part of several leaders to fully engage the imaginative, poietic elements in their leadership. While several of the leaders in the school were engaging poietic elements in an attempt to create space in the room, their efforts did not appear to be widely acknowledged or appreciated. All the poietic elements were present to some degree in the Lakeview room, yet the poietic-aesthetic reciprocity which is fundamental to room creation seemed lacking in the macro-room. Individual poietic efforts were amply evidenced in a variety of micro-rooms but, in the absence of the mutual aesthetic response on the part of other participants, they were often ineffective. The result was a macro-room which might best be described as claustraphobic in terms of the space created for moral discourse.

In the next chapter of this dissertation, I return to the three research questions guiding the study and, using the narrative created in the previous chapters, offer a detailed analysis of the poietic elements engaged by school leaders as well as a comparatory explenun for the distinctive nature of the two rooms created through the poietic process.
Chapter Seven

ROOMS WITH A VIEW

In the previous three chapters, you, the reader, and I, the investigator, have wandered together in a strange land; however, the wandering has not been aimless. We have been consciously attending to the ways in which leaders in two schools create rooms, and then we have lived with the participants in those two rooms. In this chapter, I propose to step back again to the mountains on the borderland and take a backward look at the country from a critical distance.

This process of di-stancing is recommended by Brown (1983) as a primary investigative tool for sociological inquiry. I employ it here as a way of responding to the three questions within which this inquiry is framed.

Our purpose was to explore the ways in which school leaders engage poietic elements in their practice. The conceptual frame developed for this purpose (Figure 5) suggested that the engagement of specific poietic elements would create a room within which effective moral discourse could occur. Stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony were proposed as necessary but not necessarily sufficient conditions for the creation of a good room.

This metaphorical room was compared to the room which performing artists speak of when assessing the experience of a live performance. The parallels between the two types of rooms suggests that leadership involved not only a poietic (creative)
process but also an aesthetic (appreciative) process, that leadership could not be effective unless it was acknowledged and responded to by the other participants in the room. Further, the concept of leadership was extended to include an active role for participants in the room other than the formal leader. Anyone participating in the room either poetically or aesthetically was involved in the leadership.

Finally, the poietic elements were not merely instrumental in creating the room but were also essential to the imaginative facilitation of the moral discourse that occurred within. Four capacities of moral imagination—attending, envisioning, formulating intent, and hoping—were essential to the moral reasoning process. Each of these capacities involved the engagement of the poietic elements.

Essentially, the conceptual frame provided a way of understanding the nature of the relationship between leadership and art. It represents a synthesis of ideas drawn from a variety of disciplines and to the best of my knowledge is untried in the form presented here. Three research questions were developed to direct the exploration of this frame. They are as follows:

1. What poietic elements are demonstrated or acknowledged by the professional participants in the school?

2. How are these poietic elements engaged by the participants in their leadership practice?

3. What is the nature of the "moral clearing" or "room" created by the engagement of these poietic elements?

Ultimately, the question to be answered is: How does the poietic perspective further our understanding of leadership? In this chapter, I propose to frame a response to this question by analyzing the outcomes of the exploration in terms of the three guiding research questions.
Question One

What poietic elements are demonstrated or acknowledged by the professional participants in the school?

The quick answer to this question is that all four of the poietic elements were demonstrated by the professional participants in the schools; however, the acknowledgement of the elements was not widely manifest on the part of the participants. In many cases, the participants in the room had internalized these elements to the extent that they were not aware of their presence. Therefore, one of the important outcomes of this study was that the participants became more fully aware of their engagement with these elements; this awareness lead to an increased propensity to participate in both the poietic (creative) and aesthetic (appreciative) aspects of room creation.

Buck, the major ironist at Riverside, was acutely aware of his unique role in the school; however, his understanding of the impact of his ironic stance on the room was limited. He only knew that he was doing things differently, that he was creating a different environment than were the other teachers.

When we framed Buck's behaviour in terms of room creation and gave him opportunity to reflect on and articulate his understanding of what he was doing, he was able to clarify his role quite well. He used the metaphor of a house he once owned which did not have the right "feel" no matter how he tried to change it. His conclusion was that his classroom was like a house which he had the artistic freedom to modify and renovate until it provided the right "feel," the right conditions, for his students.
However, Buck's poietic was only effective to the degree that his students, the administration, and the other teachers participated aesthetically in the process. Without Andy's willingness to allow Buck to engage in free irony, the poietic process would inevitably fail.

This mutual reciprocity between poietics and aesthetics was observed wherever the poietic elements were present. The aesthetic acknowledgement of the poietic process was a crucial aspect of the effectiveness of each of the elements. The exercise of stereoscopic vision is a good example of the importance of this reciprocity. In Riverside, Andy engaged stereoscopic vision in virtually every decision making situation we observed. The other participants in the room came to expect this of him and, while they had no name for what they expected, they nevertheless recognized the importance of Andy's engagement with this element.

The participants at Lakeview had no such vehicle for the broadening of their perspective. Without the infusion of stereoscopic vision, discourse had a natural tendency to narrow and eventually choke itself off. Therefore, the meeting room at Lakeview was particularly claustrophobic; the participants suffered from the absence of stereoscopic vision. In the meeting room where formal decision making was called for, the absence of stereoscopic vision often resulted in aimless or prematurely terminated discourse.

All four of the poietic elements were demonstrated in the two macro-rooms; the acknowledgement of these elements was more difficult to assess but we found that an awareness and appreciation of them was important to their effective engagement. However, the four elements were definitely not uniformly manifest
within the micro-rooms identified; nor were they evenly distributed between the two macro-rooms. Both of these observations warrant further elaboration.

**Poietic Elements in Micro-rooms**

Each of the micro-rooms, was created through a unique exercise of the poietic elements; in some cases, rooms, which we perceived as antagonistic to moral discourse, resulted from an obvious lack of certain poietic elements. Goffman (1983) conceptualizes social interaction as micro-drama occurring on a number of levels. On each level, the "actor" not only reacts to a pre-determined "script," but also has bounded freedom to create the script as the drama is being acted out. Similarly, we observed that the participants in various micro-rooms were not only reacting to the unfolding performance (aesthetics) but were also creating the performance as it unfolded (poetics).

Hallways provided opportunities for the engagement of poietic elements in interactions between all participants in the school. Because these interactions are often casual and of short duration, the level of moral discourse is less formal and the exercise of certain elements is inhibited. For example, irony does not lend itself well to hallway interactions since the level of discourse is generally too casual for appropriate use of irony. The engagement of irony is most effective in situations where the participants are relatively intimate and the opportunity for misunderstanding is thereby reduced. Narrative is virtually precluded since extended attention to a story is difficult in such a setting. Similarly, stereoscopic vision, was seldom observed. The pre-dominant element observed in hallways was the metaphor type which we identified as the symbolic act.
Leaders tended to use hallways to portray a tone of caring professionalism through symbolic acts; Andy's presence in the hallways, Riverside's division III "community police station," Lakeview's attention to the needs of elementary students (micro-wave, piano, accessible lost-and-found), and the provision of a student lounge for senior students are examples of the positive engagement of symbolic acts. On the other hand, the senior hallways in both schools were not good rooms; both the physical and the emotional climate in these halls precluded any effective interaction. They seemed hostile rooms where discourse would be very difficult to achieve. In fact, even the students tended to avoid the hallways, choosing to use them merely as access to more acceptable interactive spaces.

Staff rooms provided ample opportunity for the engagement of all four of the elements; however, narrative and irony were the predominant vehicles employed in this room. Both of these elements were used largely within a humorous context for several definite purposes. In response to question two below, I discuss these purposes; however, the poietic-aesthetic reciprocity necessary for effective exercise of these elements was nowhere more evident than in staff room encounters involving narrative and irony.

Participants in the staff room never tired of swapping stories, nor did the irony abate even under the most adverse of circumstances (although the moral quality of the discourse did, at times, sink to very low levels). As I mentioned previously, younger participants demonstrated a hunger for grounding narratives; however, they showed no reluctance to engage their "seniors" in ironic discourse. Irony was often used in the staff room to distinguish the values of younger and older participants.
Our involvement in class rooms was limited to relatively few encounters and, thus, the observations offered here are more qualified. In the encounters we did experience, the principal elements observed were irony and stereoscopic vision. Buck’s ironic approach to instruction in the computer lab had repercussions far beyond the doors of his room; similarly, Carla’s emphasis on stereoscopic vision in her discourse with students created an atmosphere of openness and divergent thinking that extended to the staff room, the hallways, and the meeting room. Wherever Carla went, she carried that same perspective with her.

In the offices, formal leaders often demonstrated a propensity to engage symbolic acts in their work. Because of their greater influence on the school, their symbolic acts were often more visible and more widely appreciated by other participants. Garth’s purchase of snow sliders for the elementary school and Mac’s relocation of his house had greater impact because they were exercised by formal leaders. Similarly, narrative was used effectively by several formal leaders. Because of their perceived authority, narrative initiated by these leaders was granted a high degree of aesthetic value by other participants. Andy, in particular, was adept at employing narrative. While irony was not manifest directly by formal leaders, at least some of them demonstrated an aesthetic appreciation for this element which facilitated its engagement by other participants in other rooms.

As in the staff rooms, the social rooms provided opportunities for narrative and irony to flourish. In relaxed, informal environments these two elements are more apt to emerge. Even in social settings completely removed from the school, participants continued to engage in school-related narrative. Irony in social settings tended to take the form of gentle sarcasm among friends. Whenever an
acknowledged ironist, such as Jack, was present, the participants deferred to his privileged position in this area. When questioned in this regard, several participants stated that they had come to expect a certain type of response from Jack and would be disappointed if it was not forthcoming.

Finally, the dominant poietic element engaged in meeting rooms was stereoscopic vision. At each formal meeting, one of the participants assumed the responsibility of providing alternative points of view and keeping the discourse from narrowing too soon. At Lakeview, Eric sat directly in the middle of the zone of power and, often humorously attempted to keep the discourse open; it was apparent that this was an expectation which the other participants had of him and he was obviously comfortable with that role. However, Eric’s efforts met with limited success largely because of the reluctance, on the part of other influential leaders, to entertain extended discourse on controversial issues. Linguistic metaphors were also a central feature of the discourse leading up to the decision making point of the meetings. In a meeting I attended, several administrators effectively used linguistic metaphors to situate the debate surrounding a policy on smoking on school property. The process was compared to poking a sleeping bear, a mousetrap, and leasing a truck.

In summary, all the poietic elements were observed in one or more of the micro-rooms; however, the impact of the elements varied from room to room. The presence and effectiveness of the elements depended not only on the external characteristics of the room but also on the dynamic, reciprocal, poietic-aesthetic relationship which the participants initiated.

As anticipated, these observations suggest that the concepts of “leadership” and “followership” are not readily differentiated. The notable absence of the poietic
elements in some rooms was largely attributable to the reluctance of participants to engage in the essential aesthetic reciprocity. Conversely, the willingness of formal "leaders" to provide aesthetic reciprocity resulted in the effective exercise of the poietic process by "followers" in some rooms. As the conceptual frame indicates, both aesthetic and poietic processes are necessary for effective leadership.

**Poietic Elements in Macro-rooms**

The selective engagement of the poietic elements in the micro-rooms resulted in the creation of two macro-rooms where these elements were manifest quite differently. We perceived this difference to be due to a number of contributing factors; the three which we deemed to be most significant are given below to explain the difference in use of poietic elements at Lakeview and Riverside.

First, the size and student demographics of the schools were quite different. Riverside was a 7 to 12 school with a larger student body and staff complement; Lakeview was a smaller K to 12 school. These differences affected the way the staff interacted with each other, with administration, with the students, and with the community. The smaller staff size at Lakeview tended to produce conditions in which staff contacts were much more frequent and familiar. As a result, the poietic elements took on a different significance in Lakeview; moral discourse was often undertaken on subtle levels between participants who had little need to discuss an issue in order to convey their position to the others. Probably the most predominant poietic element in such circumstances was implied narrative. The participants had a bank of stories which were familiar to all and to which they were all connected. In
public discourse, subtle cues would be all that would be required to focus everyone on a particular common narrative.

There is an old story about a comedian's convention at which the participants were all so familiar with a common body of jokes that they simply referred to them by number. To an outside observer, their late-night sharing sessions consisted simply of individuals taking turns saying a number followed by apparently unsolicited bursts of laughter from the group. One was left with that same disquieting sense of being outside the "circle of knowers" when sitting in on sharing sessions at Lakeview.

The old story also does much to explain why it is that newcomers to the group are so hungry to hear the stories of the veterans. As the story continues, a rookie comedian dared to try his hand at telling a joke. He confidently shouted out "Number 43," but no one laughed. Puzzled, he asked a nearby veteran why he was unable to get a laugh when he had followed the accepted protocol and furthermore number 43 was a particularly good joke. The veteran replied laconically "It's all in the delivery." The veterans at Lakeview have internalized a body of common narrative which serves as their base for moral discourse even though the narrative is not immediately apparent to the outsider.

Because Riverside was larger and more diverse, the use of narrative was less subtle. Participants generally were less familiar with each other and did not have the richness of common narrative found at Lakeview. Therefore, stories were used more overtly to situate and particularize issues that required resolution as well as to convey values to the uninitiated.

Second, the past histories of the two schools determined their propensity to engage certain elements. Riverside has a history of stable reliable leadership; a spirit
of mutual trust has arisen among the participants, and between the participants and external stakeholders. This history of stability and trust seemed to increase the willingness of the participants to engage in irony and stereoscopic vision since these two elements require a high tolerance for ambiguity and risk-taking.

Conversely, Lakeview has a history of instability on the part of the central office leadership. Since the appointment of Mac, and the recent engagement of a new director, this situation has been remedied; however, the wounds of mistrust are still healing. As a result, the inclination of the participants to engage in or appreciate irony or stereoscopic vision is lacking. The concerted effort on the part of the formal leaders to employ symbolic acts reflects their perception that trust is an essential ingredient in creating a good room.

Third, the cultural demographics of the two schools partially determine the selective engagement of poietic elements. Riverside is a diverse culture comprised of at least three sub-cultures, each affecting the whole.

The division III sub-culture is the most closely allied to the main culture of the school. Perry used the expression "free trade" to describe the relationship. The division III teachers have their own staff room and are physically isolated from the main body of the school: yet, there is a great deal of student and faculty exchange between them and the school's mainstream. The casual observer would have difficulty distinguishing this sub-culture. The same could not be said for either the computer room, where Buck has created a sub-culture virtually isolated form the mainstream, or the technical-vocational wing where the exchange is slightly more free but still restricted.
Each of these sub-cultures is distinct; however, each is not only acknowledged but welcomed as a vital factor in the health of the school. This willingness to embrace the positive impact of sub-cultures is reflected in the willingness of the participants to engage irony. Much of the mystique of the computer lab sub-culture is based on irony. The technical vocational sub-culture employs metaphor and symbolic acts extensively to maintain their uniqueness. The three remaining members maintain a rich tradition of excellent craftsmanship and hard work through a common stock of colourful stories and physical artifacts. Andy employs powerful symbolic acts and a well-defined guiding *metaphor* to unify the cultures and while allowing space for moral discourse.

![Diagram of Riverside culture](image)

**Figure 12.** A schematic of Riverside culture.
At Lakeview, the cultural scene is quite different. Rather than a central culture containing vital subcultures, the participants at Lakeview find themselves locked into a dichotomized situation wherein two cultures find few commonalities.

**Figure 13.** The cultures of Lakeview.
Many of the senior teachers in the school are career high-school teachers with little interest or involvement in the elementary culture. The younger high-school teachers have been readily enculturated into this group and while their access to power is minimal, they nevertheless identify strongly with the high-school culture. The elementary culture is managed by an equally committed group of teachers who have little interest in the high-school culture. Michelle, who is married to Graham, a high-school teacher, resolutely maintains strong allegiance to the elementary culture. A few teachers— notably Eric, Carla, and Mac— have all found distinct ways to personally reconcile this cultural dichotomy; however there is little indication that their resolution is effecting others and even these few are often forced to take a position on one side or the other.

At best, participants in the two cultures have found an uneasy place of peace within the same macro-room; yet, because of their differences, certain poietic elements do not work in this setting. For example irony, where it exists, serves largely to relieve conflict and to unify the participants at a superficial level; it does not play as significant a role in the moral discourse. Stereoscopic vision is very difficult to maintain since the two cultures are largely inclined to maintain their position in the face of perceived opposition. The use of symbolic acts that convey the need for unity and collaboration is the most effective poietic process at Lakeview.

In summary, Riverside engaged all four elements extensively in the creation of their macro-room. Andy engaged stereoscopic vision and narrative in his formal leadership; he also demonstrated a high degree of appreciation for the irony of other participants. Two types of metaphor, the symbolic act and the guiding metaphor were used by both formal and informal leaders. Lakeview was more limited in their
use of the poietic elements. Symbolic acts were used most extensively by the formal leadership; narrative existed on a much more subtle level and, generally, was neither openly demonstrated nor acknowledged; irony was limited to staff room humour; and stereoscopic vision was practised by a few participants but the impact was not profound.

These observations point to the significance of external factors in the effective engagement of poietic elements. Several political, cultural, and physical variables were perceived to mitigate the engagement of the poietic elements in the two rooms. It would appear that a leadership poietic is not merely a personal enterprise dependent only on the predisposition and personality of the "leader;" rather, the effective engagement of poietic leadership is dependent on numerous factors beyond the immediate control of the leader. Starratt (1993, p. 130 affirmed these observations; he stated that "leadership is better understood as a very complex phenomenon which cannot be treated in isolation from the historical social context, nor in isolation from the qualities of the followers."

The creation of a good room may depend as much on the prejudices, biases, and inclinations that the participants bring to the room as on the artistic inclinations of the "leader."

Question Two

How are these poietic elements engaged by the participants in their leadership practice?

In the previous section, I examined the selective engagement of the poietic elements in the micro-rooms and, then, compared the engagement of the elements in
the two macro-rooms at Riverside and Lakeview. In response to question two, I propose to examine the "how" of poietic engagement. Even though the elements were not widely acknowledged among the participants, each of the four poietic elements were engaged by the participants for specific identifiable purposes; in this section, I will examine what the inquiry indicated about what those purposes were.

**Stereoscopic Vision**

*Under the dominion of the modern industrial state, critical distance tends to be lost, and the process of introjection and identification with the system becomes almost automatic. In this process, the distancing from experience through which critical consciousness can appear is eaten away. The loss of such inner distance, combined with the overwhelming efficiency of the organized system, blunts the individual’s awareness so that he or she has less and less space in which to voice dissent. Without such space, the power of negative thinking—the power of reason—atrophies from disuse.* (Brown, 1983, p. 560)

In his seminal treatise, *A Poetic for Sociology*, Brown (1977) identified three elements of sociological inquiry—point of view, metaphor, and irony—which are essential to a "cognitive aesthetic" (p. 25), a way of understanding which breaks down the false dichotomies between science and art. The essence of Brown’s argument is that in any sociological endeavour, the optimal position is one which transcends the dichotomy through the exercise of "calculated naivete," whereby the inquirer "incorporates into his analysis both his own perspective and those of the people whom he wishes to study or serve" (Brown, 1983, p. 561).

The conceptual frame developed for this inquiry included a similar element; I suggested that the engagement of stereoscopic vision would facilitate the creation of a space for moral discourse among the participants in a school setting. Several of the participants manifested an intuitive inclination to engage in stereoscopic vision. Typically, this element was manifest in formal decision making situations where there
was a perceived need to keep the discourse from zeroing in on a traditional position too quickly.

Stereoscopic vision was most effective when it was endorsed or initiated by the formal leader; however, in Lakeview, neither Mac nor Garth showed an inclination to assume this role. By default, it was co-opted by Eric, a veteran teacher with an ironic bent and sufficient informal authority to render his alternative perspectives credible. At meetings, Eric consistently sat directly opposite Mac in the very centre of the "power zone" as if to provide a visual metaphor for the alternative position he was providing. In spite of his efforts to broaden moral discourse, the legitimate authority wielded by Mac and Garth was sufficient to countervail against Eric's efforts; discourse was frequently arbitrarily and abruptly terminated.

At Riverside, the formal leader, Andy was particularly adroit at promoting stereoscopic vision. In formal meetings, he frequently assumed this role whether or not he was the chairperson. In meetings where he was not the chair, he located himself in the same relation to the chair as did Eric at Lakeview; from that vantage point, he engaged in a dialectical conversation with the chair.

Perhaps because it was heartily endorsed by the formal leadership, the exercise of stereoscopic vision had a salutary effect on the moral discourse at Riverside. All participants assumed that they were entitled to offer their perspectives and that their position was worthy of consideration. By their presence to the right of Andy at formal meetings, the two ironists, Buck and Cam, symbolically contributed to the exercise of stereoscopic vision. Typically, they said very little at the meeting but, when they did speak, it was generally to raise a contrary viewpoint. Their influence was more the result of their reputation than their verbal contribution.
In summary, stereoscopic vision was exercised in both rooms as a means of broadening the discourse and ensuring that the participants did not converge on the status quo before considering a wide range of alternatives. The engagement of stereoscopic vision had a more positive effect on the moral discourse at Riverside, at least partly because the formal leaders zealously encouraged it.

Narrative

Narrative was employed in a variety of ways in the two rooms we observed. The purposes and significance of narrative in organizations can be assessed through a number of complementary frameworks. For example, Witten (1993) proposed that narrative may be seen as a way of ensuring obedience in the workplace. She claims that organizational narrative makes strongly persuasive truth claims, provides models for correct behaviour, and imparts values that affect problem definition (p. 105). In a more positive vein, Deal (1995, p. 124) stated that stories can be used to bond group members, to pass on wisdom, values, and rules of conduct to inductees into the group, and to redefine transitions in the organization. Johnson (1993) conceived of narrative as a primary vehicle of moral discourse. He stated that "narratives can embody our moral ideas and can give us the means for exploring possible actions within concrete day-to-day situations that make up the moral fabric of our lives" (p. 171). By "making our actions, motives, and thoughts intelligible" (p. 175), narrative provides the particulars on which moral reasoning is based.

In this inquiry, four functions of narrative were manifest. It is important to note that while the participants clearly recognized that they were engaging in narrative and that this process was of value to them, there was little recognition of the
actual functions that the narrative was fulfilling. People simply like telling and listening to stories; it is a pleasurable and cathartic process. The poetics and aesthetics of narrative clearly demonstrated the relationship between leadership and art; participants appreciated well-constructed narrative in much the same way that they would appreciate a good concert.

One of the important uses for narrative was that of communicating role expectations or models for appropriate behaviour to the group. The stories that Andy told to his vice-principals in the casual intimacy of Perry’s home conveyed specific expectations to the group. Andy was creating a room characterized by caring and concern. Stories can also convey expectations indirectly; in both Lakeview and Riverside, negative stories about former administrators conveyed messages of what the group expected from the present administration.

A second use for narrative was that of affirming organizational values. In both Lakeview and Riverside, the newer staff were more attentive to the “old stories” which the veterans had doubtless repeated many times. This hunger for stories indicated a need to understand and internalize the values of the school. Novice participants recognized that moral discourse was based on a body of common wisdom and understandings to which they were not connected; therefore, they requested and attended to stories from the veteran staff.

In some cases, the unique values of a sub-culture are embedded in distinguishing narrative. Will and Lorne employed familiar narrative about a former colleague, who had profoundly influenced the technical vocational sub-culture, to convey the values of that culture to me and indirectly to re-affirm those values for themselves. It was apparent from the way they talked that certain elements of the
narrative had been repeated over and over again as an affirmation of their sub-
culture.

A third way that narrative was used in the two rooms was to imaginatively
explore possible choices. In this case, narrative had the effect of particularizing the
discussion so that the participants could imagine concrete situations where the
possible choices might apply. At Lakeview, one of the ongoing issues with which the
teachers struggle is the issue of student smoking. When the issue is raised at a staff
meeting, the discussion quickly turns to particular incidents in which teachers have
been called upon to address the issue. The discourse is carried on at several levels
but on each one, the participants resort to narrative, not only to recall what they have
done in the past to deal with the issue, but also to explore ways of dealing with
future incidents. In this way, narrative became a problem-solving and decision
making vehicle.

Finally, narrative was employed as a unifying and morale-building vehicle for
the staff. This was especially apparent in the staff rooms where one or more
storytellers frequently entertained a casual gathering of teachers after school. Woods
(1984, p. 193) suggested that "laughter is an enormous aid to solidarity." The
humorous narrative which we observed in the staff rooms corroborated this
statement. Stories about former administrators, or occasionally about colleagues on
staff, served to unite the staff either through pride of belonging or sometimes in
unified opposition to an external threat.

On some occasions, a particularly secure participant would offer himself as a
"standing butt" of the humour. Other participants would sometimes relate stories
about Eric, in his presence, which served to alleviate the stress of tense situations and
unify the staff through laughter. Eric was unflaggingly cheerful throughout these sessions and often accentuated the humour by giving back as good as he got.

In summary, our observations indicated that narrative was used in several significant ways by the participants in the room. It was used to convey expectations of behaviour to the group, to affirm organizational or cultural values, to explore past behaviours and future possibilities prior to decision making, and to unify the staff, frequently through humour. Each of these uses facilitates moral discourse by defining its boundaries, providing common understandings for the discourse, and imaginatively exploring possibilities for future judgements.

**Metaphor**

For the purposes of this study, the traditional definition of metaphor as a linguistic device was expanded to include symbolic acts within the metaphoric domain. Within this expanded conceptualization, three uses of metaphor were commonly observed. These were the use of linguistic metaphors to clarify meaning and expand the boundaries of discourse, the use of internalized metaphors to guide action, and the use of symbolic acts to convey meaning.

As might be expected, linguistic metaphors abounded in the daily discourse of the participants. Johnson (1993, p. 193) states that "the chief imaginative dimension of moral understanding is metaphor . . . [since] virtually all of our fundamental moral concepts are metaphorically defined." Typically, these metaphors have become internalized to the point where they are no longer recognized as metaphorical; nevertheless, they continue to affect the moral reasoning which occurs in the room.
Some common examples of metaphors that influenced moral discourse at Riverside were the metaphor of students as "products" of the educational process, the metaphor of "elitism" among division IV academic teachers, and the metaphor of a ladder of leadership in the school. The technical vocational program was conceived of as "down there" in relation to the academic program. The school motto, \textit{Striving together for success}, was employed frequently as a metaphor for the relationship between faculty and staff in the school. Taken together, these and other metaphors formed the background to the moral discourse that occurred among participants.

At Lakeview, the prevailing metaphors related to an ethic of hard work and perseverance under difficult circumstances. Several mottos and cartoons in the staff room conveyed the message "Teaching is tough, but never give up!" Both Mac and Garth frequently described their role as "taking pressure off the staff." Carla used the metaphor of school as war to describe life in the school.

Well, it's like life in the air raid shelter—cope day by day. The bomb drops, let's go... those leaders never did get down in the trenches... [t]hey remained generals who were removed from the trenches.

Taken together, these linguistic metaphors not only indicated the prevailing attitude of the participants but also affected the tone of the moral discourse in the room.

Guiding metaphors, also exerted a profound, albeit more subtle, influence on the two rooms. After identifying the leaders who were perceived to have the most influence on the creation of the room, we asked each to identify the metaphors which guided their leadership. In each case, these leaders were able to clearly articulate a guiding metaphor; furthermore, this metaphor was consistently manifest throughout each leader's professional activities.
In previous chapters, I have described some of the more exceptional of these metaphors. In each case, the leader’s subsequent observed behaviour was entirely consistent with their declared metaphor. Mac’s “lighthouse” metaphor was manifest in the way in which he interacted with the staff in both formal and informal contexts. Buck’s “open for business” metaphor was reflected clearly in the way he ran his computer room. Carla’s “dance” metaphor created a climate of artistic collaboration both in her class room and in the staff room.

The efficacy of these guiding metaphors depended on their recognition by other participants in the room. Each demands an aesthetic reciprocation from others. For example, Andy’s “banks of a river” metaphor was only effective to the extent that others recognized and affirmed his ability to perform that function. Mac’s “lighthouse” metaphor was more passive, yet it, too, was only effective to the extent that others perceived him as a guiding beacon.

This observation leads to the third way in which metaphor was engaged by leaders in the two rooms. Symbolic acts were a powerful and effective method for establishing and declaring guiding metaphors. Andy’s “banks of a river” metaphor was vigorously reinforced by his symbolic behaviour in hallways and meetings. Garth’s “work-horse” metaphor was reflected in his being the first to arrive and the last to leave, as well as in numerous small acts of attention to detail and going the extra mile.

These symbolic acts conveyed emphatic messages to the other participants regarding the intentions and expectations of the leader. They also imparted a message of leadership integrity which created an atmosphere of trust in the room. By
observing and interacting with leaders' metaphors through symbolic acts, the participants were inclined to be more free in their moral discourse.

In this section, I have suggested that participants engaged metaphor in three ways within the two rooms. These ways were linguistic metaphors, guiding metaphors, and symbolic acts. Where all three of these methods were engaged in a consistent manner, they conveyed a message of reliability and trust to the other participants and, thereby, freed them to engage more effectively in moral discourse. Along with narrative, these metaphors defined the framework and provided the grist for the moral reasoning process.

Irony

_Ironic freedom presupposes the capacity to imagine things other than they are, the capacity to de-realize the present. This act is the heart of dialectical irony. To summon forth through the power of symbols the contrary of that which is, is the basis of moral freedom and imagination, an imagination lacked by both the romantic ideologue and the politivist [sic] technocrat. The ironic imagination lifts us above our purely subjective, enculturated "given" view of what the world is or must be._ (Brown 1983, p. 560)

The ways that participants engaged irony in their poietic was, perhaps, the most fascinating outcome of this study. In fact, one of the most definitive differences between the two macro-rooms was the propensity of the participants to engage irony poetically and aesthetically. At least two Lakeview participants showed ironic inclinations; however, this perspective was largely unacknowledged and unappreciated by the other participants. The ironist position was much more widely held and appreciated at Riverside. In the response to question three below, I argue that this difference in the use of engagement of irony influenced the nature of the rooms.
Brown (1983) distinguished two social uses of irony: ritual or "safety valve" irony, and free or mastered irony (p. 557). I employ these two uses as a framework for examining how irony was used as a poietic element in the two macro-rooms.

Ritual irony has a long and colourful history. Court jesters, fools, and arguably, some present-day satirists practice ritual irony. The Medieval Church demonstrated an appreciation for this perspective by indulging in ironic feasts such as the Feast of Fools and the Feast of the Ass. Welsford (1935) metaphorically illustrated this "safety-valve" use of irony:

Wine barrels break if their bung-holes are not occasionally opened to let the air in, and the clergy being nothing but old wine-casks badly put together would certainly burst if the wine of wisdom were allowed to boil. (p. 202)

This quotation illustrates the use of ritual irony to relieve tension in potentially explosive or frustrating situations. Sarcasm is a low form of ritual irony.

Brown (1983, p. 558) described two common features of ritual irony. First, it always refers to the central values of a particular system; the symbols that represent the source of the system's legitimacy are mocked. Second, it is enacted or controlled by the very persons who are ironized. Just as only Ukrainians are allowed to tell Ukrainian jokes, so to the ritual ironist functions from within the system which he or she is mocking.

Both rooms manifested the engagement of ritual irony although Riverside participants demonstrated it more clearly. This type of irony was most often employed in staff room conversations and occasionally in a subdued form at meetings. Jack and Thor were the most obvious ritual ironists at Riverside. The staff room interactions recorded in chapter five illustrate their use of this element. Ritual irony functioned as a release for frustrations and also as a unifying influence on the
staff. At Lakeview, Eric often played the role of ritual ironist not only in the staff room, but also in staff meetings; from his customary position at the centre of the zone of power, directly opposite to Mac, he dispensed quips, one-liners, and half-heard sarcastic commentary, all clearly welcomed by the participants as a tension reliever when the discourse became intense.

In spite of their ironic stance, the participants who practised ritual irony were, nevertheless, considered to be "insiders" and their irony was assumed to be contrived or affected for a specific purpose. These three participants were also adept at ironizing themselves as partakers in a common value system. While the formal leaders did not show an inclination toward self-mockery or ritual irony, both Andy and Perry demonstrated and articulated a willingness to permit others to exercise it "within bounds." At Lakeview, Mac and Garth were much less cognizant and appreciative of the significance of this position.

Free irony is radically distinct from ritual irony. It is the kind of irony which Kierkegaard (1992) advocated as the fundamental existential position. Brown (1983, p. 559) referred to it as "subterranean irony" to emphasize its opposition, sometimes even hostility, toward the status quo. "[T]he subterranean ironist has no desire except to create freedom through his irony . . . . His purpose is existential freedom itself, independent of any pre-given determination. In this sense, free or mastered irony not only serves freedom. It is freedom" (p. 559). Contrary to ritual irony, which is "digested by the status quo as part of a healthy diet" (p. 559), free irony attacks and subverts organizational practice.

At Riverside, Buck maintained an overt free ironist stance in the school. In his classroom practice and in his interactions with other participants, he steadfastly
sought and practised existential freedom. The impact of this stance on the moral
discourse in the room varied. Reactions to his irony ranged from apprehension to
grudging admiration. Nevertheless, his presence in the meeting room (possibly the
only time he ever interacted directly with the staff) and his influence on the student
body had the effect of elevating the discourse from the level of resigned acquiescence
or conformity to a continual questioning of all assumptions. For some participants,
his irony had the effect of consolidating the accepted position; however, it was
apparent that the entire room was continually, and sometimes uncomfortably, aware
of the fact that an ironist voice was present.

Buck identified his colleague, Cam, as a kindred ironist; our observations
supported this claim. Both men sat together at staff meetings and although they
spoke little, their influence was apparent in that they created a subtle dialectic that
encouraged the participants to conceive imaginatively of situations beyond the
"enculturated 'given' view of what the world is or must be" (Brown, 1983, p. 560). In
addition to their ironic collaboration at staff meetings, both men spent virtually all
their time with students, shunning the staff room except to pick up mail or ask a
question. Again, this represented a major departure from accepted practice and
served to accentuate their ironic stance.

At Lakeview, we identified Carla as a "reluctant," free ironist. Like Buck and
Cam, she worked on the perimeter of the social groups in the school, yet she had
developed such a credibility and respect among the other participants that her
influence was felt beyond the doors of the class room. Mac admitted to a grudging
respect for her position, even though she admittedly caused him some consternation
because of her free-wheeling style. However, her impact as a free ironist was greatly
diminished because this position was neither acknowledged nor encouraged by the other participants. Unlike Riverside, where irony was an acceptable element of the room, the Lakeview room manifested a singular disinclination to it. As a result, Carla rarely demonstrated her ironic stance overtly, choosing instead to rely on subtle nuances such as refusing to abide by the "fine system" which the staff employed to enforce minor internal regulations. She was frequently late for meetings or attended them sporadically ($1 fine); she refused to abide by dress-code regulations which she thought to be "petty" (25 cent fine). In her classroom, Carla created and encouraged ironic imagination among her students. It was here that she was able to exercise free irony to its fullest and her students demonstrated a level of moral discourse which far surpassed that of any elementary school class room I had ever witnessed.

In summary, both ritual and free irony were engaged by participants in the two rooms. Each type of irony served a unique function; ritual irony was employed largely as a relief valve in both rooms; free irony was effective in elevating the moral discourse at Riverside but was neither acknowledged nor appreciated at Lakeview. The moral discourse in the rooms was influenced by the presence of both types of irony.

The observations presented in response to question two corroborate and expand the conclusions reached in response to question one. The necessity of aesthetic-poietic reciprocity was clearly evident whenever the poietic elements were engaged. For example, both Buck and Carla had the potential to be free ironists, yet Carla's irony was not as effective as Buck's because of the lack of aesthetic support for her position. Furthermore, the external factors which affect the creation of the room became evident when we considered the ways in which the elements were engaged.
Our detailed examination of "how" the elements were engaged also pointed to the importance of the formal leaders influence on the poietic process. Both stereoscopic vision and irony were perceived to be less ineffective at Lakeview because of the lack of aesthetic support from the formal leaders. In both schools, the principal was the significant formal leader that either enhanced or inhibited engagement of the poietic elements.

The outcomes described above further suggest that effective engagement of the poietic elements may be partially dependent on the principal's guiding metaphor. Andy's river metaphor connoted an active role for the formal leader in the school. On the other hand, Mac's lighthouse metaphor implied a more passive guiding role for the formal leader. These observations were confirmed through conversation with the two leaders during which they elaborated their metaphors. The results suggest that Andy's more active stance as a leader may have a bearing on the propensity of other participants in the room to engage in poietic activity. In any event, it became increasingly apparent as the study progressed that the most influential participant in the poietic process was the principal of the school. This finding is consistent with the conclusions of the study by Hajnal et al. (1996), wherein they found that the leadership attributes of the principal influenced the effectiveness of the school.

These outcomes suggest that the leadership attributes to which Hajnal et al. (1996) referred should include those creative, imaginative qualities which enhance the poietic process. Such attributes as a healthy envisioning imagination, a tolerance for ambiguity, a humility that facilitates the capacity to "attend the world," a facility with metaphor, an appreciation for the power of narrative, and a finely cultivated taste for irony might all warrant consideration for their list of leadership qualities.
Question Three

What is the nature of the "moral clearing" or "room" created by the engagement of these poietic elements?

In the conceptual frame (Figure 5), I proposed that four poietic elements were instrumental in defining and maintaining a room within which discursive moral reasoning might occur. In essence the poietic elements provided the walls of a metaphorical room or the frame of a picture. The moral reasoning that occurred within the room was characterized by four imaginative capacities—attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping. Each of these capacities was underwritten by the four poietic elements which define the room. In this section, I examine and compare the nature of the two rooms by analyzing the moral discourse within each; the four moral reasoning capacities provide the frame for this analysis.

The two metaphors by which I originally conceived the two rooms serve as an introduction to their comparison. I suggested initially that the Riverside room resembled a river because its participants manifested an adventurous "pioneering" spirit, an openness to change, and a willingness to consider what was around the next bend. By contrast, Lakeview resembled a prairie lake because its participants manifested more of a "settler" mentality, a cautious approach to change, and a healthy mistrust of new and unproven ideas. A number of political and cultural factors have pre-disposed the participants of the two rooms to reason and act in these unique ways. Their inclination to engage the poietic elements has also been influenced by these political and cultural factors. As a result, the moral reasoning in the two rooms was as unique as the cultures of the two schools. Each of the four capacities
identified above was manifest in different ways and to different degrees in the two rooms.

Attending

Attending refers to the capacity to pay attention to the moral significance of a situation. I have suggested that attending is the first step in the moral reasoning process and that moral judgements are not possible without the preliminary imaginative work of particularizing the situation by paying attention to its moral details. Two poetic elements, narrative and stereoscopic vision, are of special importance at this stage. The two rooms varied in their attentive skills, largely because of the difference in their engagement of narrative and stereoscopic vision.

At Lakeview, narrative was conspicuously absent from most staff room and meeting room discourse for several reasons. First, the veteran staff had been together for so long that they no felt the need to relate common stories; these stories were shared common experience for these participants and they were not inclined to share them more broadly. Second, the two cultures in the school precluded the wide sharing of stories, the two cultures had separate histories which they showed no inclination to reconcile. Third, the fallout from the recent turmoil at central office had left the staff with wounds not yet healed. The recounting of stories from their past was still a painful exercise. As a result, the participants had limited access to narrative as a particularizing vehicle.

Similarly, stereoscopic vision was not widely manifest among the participants. The formal leaders of the room would normally be in the most favoured position to exercise stereoscopic vision since the formal meeting agenda is largely under their
control; yet neither Mac nor Garth demonstrated a tolerance for ambiguity or a propensity toward "disciplined naivete." In fact, they were generally the ones to terminate discourse prematurely, particularly when the emotions involved in the debate showed signs of escalating. Eric manifested some willingness to engage in stereoscopic vision; however, because he did not have legitimate authority to support this position, his influence was diminished.

Both formal leaders articulated a need to "take the pressure off the staff" in potentially confrontational issues; this desire may account for part of their reluctance to engage stereoscopic vision. However, the effective engagement of this element also requires a healthy amount of self-assurance and humility. The informal power structures inherent in this staff may have affected the formal leaders' willingness to tolerate ambiguity to the point where such tolerance might be perceived as a threat to their legitimate authority.

The lack of narrative and stereoscopic vision among the participants, produced a room where the attending process was often cut short before participants could create sufficient moral discourse to permit sound moral judgements. Many issues were discussed until Mac perceived that tensions were mounting or his position was threatened; then he would terminate the discussion with, "Think about it and get back to me." This approach was satisfactory to the veterans on staff who had the informal authority to make decisions outside the formal meeting. They interpreted Mac's statement as "Decide amongst yourselves and let me know." However, the small number of newcomers to the school, who had virtually no informal authority, interpreted his remark as "I don't want to discuss it any more; let's put it off and see if it will resolve itself."
Because of the unequal distribution of informal authority among the participants, the moral discourse in formal meetings was often a source of frustration among the impoverished group. Informal authority was perceived to be distributed at three levels among the staff. A small number of long-term veterans were authority "millionaires," having amassed a fortune in currency over the years of tenure at Lakeview. They spent their currency discreetly in informal decision making situations. The largest number of participants were of "middle-class" status; their currency was limited but, nevertheless, they had significant influence on the informal decision making process by virtue of their association with the millionaires or because of their professional credibility. Finally, a few poor souls lived "below the poverty line" when it came to informal authority; these participants felt disempowered and frustrated by the lack of opportunity to engage in meaningful moral discourse and influence the ensuing judgements and decisions. Figure 14 illustrates the distribution of "authority currency" among the staff.

The room at Riverside manifested effective engagement with narrative and stereoscopic vision and, not surprisingly, the level of attending was high. Andy engaged in, and encouraged, narrative in both formal and informal settings. At meetings, the discourse was replete with particularizing narratives. This seemed to be the accepted way of moving through the decision making process. For example, the discussion around the issue of smoking on school property quickly turned into a storytelling session about personal past experiences with confronting this issue and speculative stories about possible consequences of alternative choices. In every situation, there was a vital stock of common narratives and several master narrators willing to share them.
Figure 14. Authority distribution at Lakeview.

Stereoscopic vision was a prominent part of moral discourse. Andy demonstrated a high tolerance for ambiguity and the self-confidence necessary to allow a wide range of opinions to emerge. As a result, participants were liberated in their discourse, knowing that their divergent opinions would have an influence on the outcome.
In summary, the Riverside room was much more conducive to the process of attending because of the particularizing and liberating effects of narrative and stereoscopic vision. The Lakeview room, by contrast was much less amenable to the attending process at least partly due to the relative paucity of narrative and the reluctance of the formal leaders to engage in stereoscopic vision.

**Envisioning**

The imaginative capacity which I have called envisioning involves the mental exploration of alternative realities. Sound moral judgements can only ensue when the participants in the discourse have engaged in the envisioning of conceivable choices and of the possible consequences of those choices. Two poietic elements, narrative and irony, emerged as primary facilitators of envisioning capacity. Narrative provides the vehicle through which the exploration of alternatives can take place; the subversive nature of the free ironist constantly challenges participants to "transcend the sterile dichotomies of one dimensional thought" (Brown, 1983, p. 560) and imagine worlds which are contrary to their pre-conceived reality.

I have already noted that a room with limited narrative tends to inhibit the attending process; this is also true for the envisioning process. At Lakeview, participants had few imaginative resources to allow them to mentally create alternative futures or to examine the consequences of choosing such futures. As a result, the moral judgements that defined the decision making process were seldom brought to resolution. This again was a particularly frustrating experience for the younger staff who perceived themselves as powerless in influencing the process.
The irony at Lakeview tended to take the form of ritual irony; collegial sarcasm was appreciated for its pressure relief value and for initiating novices to the room. Eric, the participant most willing to engage ritual irony acknowledged its safety-valve function, but did not perceive his ironist role to extend to the imagining of alternatives to the status quo. On the contrary, he typified the ritual ironist who engaged in irony from within the accepted system. Carla, the reluctant free ironist was bursting with the creative ability to imagine alternatives. She frequently engaged in this process with her class; however, because there was little aesthetic appreciation for her position on the part of other participants, the envisioning potential of her irony was lost to the room.

Narrative was encouraged and widely appreciated at Riverside, both in formal meetings and in the staff room. The envisioning function of narrative is closely related to its attending function. As indicated above, often the stories told in the discussion leading to decision making not only particularize the issue, they also lead to the imagining of alternative solutions and potential consequences of choices.

Buck and Cam, the free ironists at Riverside, played a very prominent role in the envisioning stage of moral discourse. Their irony assumed the form of an alternative approach to education which continually presented the other participants with examples of extreme perspectives thereby aiding in the envisioning process. Hargreaves (1984, p. 216) states that "while teachers hold a range of views about education and exhibit a diversity of patterns of thought in this area, they do so within very definite and unquestioned limits." He further claims that "contrastive rhetoric" provides the vehicle for extending the limits of these views. In the case of the free ironists at Riverside, the limits were expanded more by contrastive behaviour than by
contrastive rhetoric. In any case, these two ironists served an invaluable function in broadening moral discourse so that effective envisioning could take place.

In comparing the two rooms, it was also apparent that free irony was not effective in the absence of stereoscopic vision on the part of the formal leaders. Both Andy and Perry manifested and articulated a willingness to tolerate the ambiguity necessary for the envisioning process to occur. Without this openness to alternative perspectives, the moral discourse tended to terminate before effective moral judgements could be achieved by the participants. In other words, the aesthetic response to the poietic engagement of free irony was essential to its effective engagement in the envisioning process.

Intending

According to the conceptual frame developed for this study, intending is the imaginative capacity which influences the motivation of participants to carry through on moral judgements they have achieved. In developing that frame, I suggested that, while moral judgement has a highly cognitive component, the formulation of intent is more imaginative in nature. Rest et al. (1986) observed that people were more motivated to act morally if they had experienced a positive affect related to the moral issue. Bebeau (1993) found that students increased their propensity to pursue a moral course of action if they could imaginatively map the particulars of a moral situation onto pre-established internal image schemata. These observations suggest a strong role for metaphor in the formulation of the intent to carry out a moral action. I have previously proposed that the motivation to act may be a function of the congruence between one’s internal schemata and the perceived world; conversely, the formulation
of intent may derive from the incongruity or dissonance between one's internal schemata and the particularity of the perceived world. In either case, the engagement of metaphor is crucial.

The participants at both Lakeview and Riverside manifested very strong inclinations to formulate intent once a moral judgement had been reached. I would suggest that this positive feature of the moral reasoning in the two rooms is due in large part to the artistic engagement of guiding metaphors and symbolic acts on the part of the participants in the rooms. All formal leaders and several key informal leaders steadfastly maintained and consistently modelled personal guiding metaphors which participants could internalize and integrate with their own image schemata. By mapping the particular situation onto these schemata, the participants would be motivated to act.

The formulation of group intent can only be achieved if the internal schemata of the participants has sufficient commonality. This commonality is at least partly achieved through the influence of guiding metaphors created by influential members of the group.

Symbolic acts by influential group members also influenced the common image schemata. Andy's continuous presence in the hallways and his pastoral approach to the student body was perceived by several teachers to be a strong influence on their attitude toward students. At Lakeview, Garth's focus on diligence and perseverance was clearly acknowledged and internalized by other participants. These are but two examples of how leaders may influence the image schemata of the group and, consequently, create the intent to act.
Hoping

This final imaginative capacity is closely related to the formulation of intent discussed above. In the conceptual frame, I proposed that hope was essential to the creation of the perseverance and resoluteness necessary to carry out moral actions. This final step of the moral reasoning process involves the "inclination of a person to see that the world . . . need not remain as it is—that it is possible to be otherwise and better" (Greenfield, 1988, p. 216). It might be argued that all four of the poietic elements are involved in the creation of hope; however narrative and stereoscopic vision were most clearly manifest.

At Lakeview, hope and despair were both evident. The veteran teachers, who had access to a common store of narrative and, therefore, owned a larger share of the "authority currency" demonstrated a hopeful attitude and the accompanying perseverance to carry out moral acts. In this group, there was a strong commitment to excellence in teaching and a security in their privileged position. However, at the other end of the hope scale several disempowered teachers who did not have access to the same resources, manifested a frustration bordering on despair. Furthermore, the reluctance of the group to participate in stereoscopic discourse, effectively removed the disempowered from the decision making loop, thereby producing an escalating spiral of frustration, despair and inaction.

The level of hope at Riverside was greatly enhanced by the presence of narrative and the willingness of participants to engage in stereoscopic discourse. In formal meetings, Andy took care to keep the discourse open through his engagement of stereoscopic vision. Implicit in the groups moral reasoning was an understanding that all participants were empowered, all voices heard, and a wide range of
perspectives considered. This climate was not only conducive to sound moral
judgements but also to the will to carry them out. Narratives of successful past
experiences were commonly shared; these narratives created the hope and confidence
that present moral acts could be carried through to completion.

In response to question three, I have examined the nature of the two rooms
through the framework of four imaginative moral reasoning capacities. Each capacity
involved the engagement of specific poietic elements. Therefore, the effectiveness of
each capacity in the two rooms was determined by the propensity of the participants
to engage specific poietic elements.

Lakeview had little success in the attending and envisioning processes since
these were largely dependent on the engagement of narrative, irony, and stereoscopic
vision. As a result, the moral judgements and decision making in this room were
perceived to be enacted in ways which were unsatisfying to a number of participants
in the room. This lead to frustration, despair, and inaction on the part of these
participants. The participants who had access to tradition, narrative, and common
experience were much more involved in the decision making, albeit in a subtle,
behind-the-scenes manner. Once a decision had been reached, the participants at
Lakeview showed a strong commitment to carrying it out. This was perceived to be
related to their strong engagement with guiding metaphors and symbolic acts. The
imaginative capacity for hope was manifested by the empowered veteran participants
but was perceived to be lacking in the newcomers to the staff. The moral discourse in
this room tended to be inhibited by the reluctance of participants to engage in the
poietic elements of stereoscopic vision, narrative, and irony.
Riverside participants displayed a greater propensity toward engaging poietic elements; as a result their moral discourse was more open and satisfying to the participants. The attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping processes were generally manifest in the room. This is not to say that the elements were uniformly applied or appreciated. Sub-cultural differences, and individual differences were observed in both the poietic and the aesthetic practices of the participants; nevertheless, the macro-room was characterized by a freedom and openness which was empowering to all. This was due in large part to the presence of several participants who were unusually capable of engaging or appreciating one or more of the poietic elements. The willingness of the formal leaders to engage imaginative elements in their leadership resulted in the creation of an abundance of space for satisfying moral discourse.

Summary

In this chapter, I have examined the two rooms from a di-stanced perspective. This was accomplished through detailed responses to the three research questions which underwrote this inquiry. All four of the poietic elements were clearly manifest in the two rooms; however, the participants in the two rooms engaged them differently. Furthermore, the manner in which these elements were engaged determined the quality of the moral discourse in the rooms. One room manifested a good integration of all four poietic elements in their moral discourse; consequently, the room was characterized by spaciousness and freedom. The other room was perceived to be lacking in the engagement of key elements; as a result, the room offered little freedom and openness to some levels of moral discourse.
The outcomes of this study suggest that the conceptual frame proposed at the outset offers a valuable perspective on leadership. To return once more to Starratt’s (1993) reflection on the value of alternative framings of leadership, it seems clear that the poietic framework does provide a valuable alternative framework, a way of conceptualizing leadership which may lead to a deeper understanding of the concept and inform the praxis of educational leaders.

**Educational Leadership Rooms**

![Diagram]

**Figure 15.** The poietics of school leadership.

Two prominent features of the frame, emerged from the study. First, it became apparent that poietic-aesthetic reciprocity was an essential component of
leadership. None of the poietic elements were engaged in isolation; rather, their effectiveness was dependent on the aesthetic appreciation which other participants extended to the poietic process. The effectiveness of each of the poietic elements was dependent on this reciprocity. Second, the notion of shared leadership was elaborated. While the principal in each school was perceived to have the greatest poietic influence, poiesis was shared broadly by informal leaders as well. Furthermore, the notion of leadership was extended by the aesthetic-poietic reciprocity that was necessary for engagement of the elements. Essentially, all the participants in the room were involved in the leadership process. Leadership did not simply reside in the person of a formal leader; rather, it resided within the room which all participants had helped to create.

In the summary of each section of this chapter, I provided an analysis of the outcomes in terms of the conceptual frame. In the interest of drawing that analysis into a coherent whole, I summarize those points here as the conclusion to the chapter.

1. The conceptual frame developed for this study proposed that the relationship between art and leadership could be understood in terms of a leader’s engagement of imaginative elements in a poietic process. The results of the study indicated that leaders in the schools engaged all four of the poietic elements in their daily practice and that the engagement of these elements influenced the moral reasoning of the participants in the rooms. By Eisner's (1995) definition of art as both a creative process and a product with normative value, leaders are artists since they are creators of a product which is valued by others. The
study showed that the four elements are necessary, if not sufficient, aspects of a leadership poietic.

2. The results of the study suggested that definitions of leadership, which distinguish the concept by contrast to followership, do not do justice to the complexity of the relationships between participants in a room. Rather than distinguish participants as leaders or followers, it may be more appropriate to conceptualize two types of behaviours—aesthetic and poietic—by which participants mutually create the conditions for moral discourse (see figure 15).

3. A number of external factors were perceived to influence the creation of the room. Political, cultural, and physical influences determined the propensity of participants to engage in poiesis. This finding was consistent with Starratt’s (1993) claim that leadership is a very complex phenomenon that cannot be isolated from the historical context nor the qualities of the followers. This study indicated what some of those external influences might be and how they might influence leadership in particular contexts.

4. The primary formal leader, the principal, manifested the greatest influence on the nature of the room. In both cases, the principals were not particularly adept at engaging the four elements; however, their willingness to acknowledge, appreciate, and encourage the exercise of the elements among the participants determined the nature of the moral discourse in the room.
5. The two rooms were perceived to be different in the way that moral reasoning was carried out. This difference was perceived to be at least partly due to the manner in which the poietic elements were engaged in the two rooms.

In the introduction to this chapter, I stated that the ultimate question to be answered was: How does the poietic perspective further our understanding of leadership? The summary presented above suggests that by conceptualizing leadership as an artistic process, we broaden the definition to include all the participants interacting in the moral reasoning process, gain an understanding of the aesthetic-poietic reciprocity which is an essential aspect of leadership, and discover how engagement of the moral imagination contributes to effective praxis. At the outset of this study, I proposed that the poietic domain furnished the symbols and meanings that allowed participants to move from "knowing to acting." As indicated in response to the three research questions, this study has provided evidence to support that proposal; the engagement of stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony by leaders facilitated the move from theoria to praxis.
Chapter 8

BACK AT THE DESK

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

This inquiry has been a metaphorical journey of exploration. It began several years ago with an overwhelming desire to discover what artistic leadership might look like. With a knapsack of biases on my back, and fuelled by naive optimism, I set out to adventure in strange lands. Chapters four to six are an account of that adventure. In those chapters, I invited the reader to join me in the exploration. In chapter seven, I paused for a backward look from the distance of the high country on the borderland. In this chapter, like Frodo returned to the safety of the Shire (Tolkien, 1991), I pause to reflect on past experiences. The journey has not ended however, for it has simply whetted the appetite for more adventures. There is so much more to discover.

In this final chapter, I summarize the inquiry, review the findings and conclusions, and suggest implications for educational leadership which emerged from the study.

Summary

This study was prompted by a fortuitous reading of Max DePree's (1989) Leadership is an Art. His eloquent discourse on the relationship between leadership
and art prompted me to begin reflecting on how that relationship could be articulated in ways that would challenge educators to incorporate artistry into their leadership practice. The problem, as I perceived it, was that this relationship had not been conceptualized in a way that would allow for exploration of the process of artistry. Clearly, some leaders had found ways to integrate these concepts but, understandably, their attempts to describe that process were a bit like a songwriter explaining how a song is written. This study was designed to at least begin thinking about and exploring the relationship in a disciplined fashion.

**Purpose of the Study**

In chapter one of this thesis, the background to the inquiry was presented and the purpose was declared. If leadership is an art, I reasoned that it would have an imaginative component that would be most closely allied to the creative aspects of the performing arts and that the work of art created would be as ephemeral and ambiguous as the mysterious, metaphorical "room" which performing artists allude to when evaluating their performance.

With this analogy in mind, I proposed to explore the creation of such a "leadership room" and to determine its nature. In order to understand the process by which such a metaphorical room might be created, the Greek concept of *poiesis* was introduced by way of Gilson's (1965) *The Arts of the Beautiful*, and Nattiez' (1990) subsequent application of this principle to the theory of music creation.

Eisner (1995) identified two meanings for "art" which helped to clarify the poietic model employed in this study. He claimed that art describes a "product that
displays certain kinds of excellence . . . a normative ideal that only certain works approximate," and also a process which he called "arting" (p. 2).

The resulting poietic model proposed that the art of leadership involved creating a "room" (the product) within which vigorous moral discourse could occur. The process of "arting" involved four poietic elements, stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony, all clearly imaginative in nature, which could be engaged in the creation of the "room." These four poietic element provided the vehicles by which participants engaged their imaginations to convert theory into practice, to move from knowing to acting. The process of moral reasoning, by Rest's (1983) conceptualization, involves this movement from knowing to acting. Through this limited lens I proposed, to explore the ways in which participants of two schools went about creating their distinctive rooms.

In formal terms, the purpose was "to explore the ways in which school leaders engage poietic elements in their practice." The research questions that guided the exploration directed me to inquire into what poietic elements were demonstrated or acknowledged by the professional participants in the school; how these poietic elements were engaged by the participants in their leadership practice; and the nature of the room created by the engagement of these poietic elements.

The conceptual framework delimited the exploration to the four poietic elements which were identified by a review of the literature on the role of imagination in moral reasoning. In anticipation of the contention that the study was too limiting, I would argue that because this was a relatively uncharted domain, it was necessary to establish a framework through which to make sense of what we observed; however, this framework was continually held in an ambiguous state which
allowed for adjustment and change as the inquiry progressed. Clearly the artistic domain is much larger than traditionally portrayed (Eisner, 1995); this framework was simply offered as a useful starting point for exploration.

Methodology

From the outset, it was important to ensure that the inquiry methods employed and the manner of reporting results complemented the nature of the phenomena being studied. I was exploring the art of leadership; therefore, I resolved to explore as artistically as possible. Wolcott's (1995) *The Art of Fieldwork* provided a worthy research model.

Two schools were selected for intensive exploratory case study. The selection criteria were largely determined by the meta-study being conducted concurrently with this investigation; for the purposes of this study, all that was required was two schools, located within the limits of my resources, whose participants were amenable to our intrusion into their professional lives. The study was crafted on Yin's (1984) six sources of case study data. The investigation included data gathering from written documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts.

The art of research became especially important in the participant observation and interview processes. The artistry of the giving and receiving of gifts was used as a model for interacting with the participants throughout the study. Narrative was chosen as the primary vehicle for reporting results because of its creative potential for making meaning. Since I was observing and experiencing the professional life stories
of the participants, the most appropriate method of describing these stories was through narrative.

Findings and Conclusions

Chapters four to seven of this thesis present the findings and conclusions of this study. In one sense, it could be said that I found what I was looking for. The poietic elements were clearly manifest in the two rooms. However, to leave the matter there would be to belie the richness of the results of the exploration. Certainly, the four poietic elements were actively engaged by participants in the two rooms; the manner in which they were engaged, however, resulted in the creation of two distinct rooms. At least part of the difference between them was perceived to be the result of the level of engagement of the moral imagination in the poietic process. The poietic elements were differentially employed in the two rooms; this difference was reflected in the level of moral reasoning in the rooms.

There was a discernible difference in the propensity of the participants in the two rooms to engage in stereoscopic vision. The leaders at Riverside were more inclined to engage in and encourage stereoscopic vision. As a result, the moral discourse was broader and more sustained in this room.

The use of narrative at Lakeview was more subtle and less effective than at Riverside where the participants valued overt narrative highly. At Lakeview, the veteran staff had internalized a common body of narrative which coloured their discourse but was not readily apparent to newcomers to the room. As a result, the narrative at Lakeview tended to be more claustrophobic and limiting. In many instances, the veterans would have reached a commonly understood moral
judgement, but the novices were left in a state of irresolution because they did not have access to the common narrative.

The participants in both rooms engaged metaphor effectively to create the room, but the types of metaphors used determined the discourse within the room. Perhaps the most obvious and powerful metaphorical type was the symbolic act. Participants, particularly formal leaders, in both rooms employed symbolic acts effectively to create the room and influence the nature of the moral discourse.

Irony was used effectively in both rooms, albeit for different purposes. Both ritual and free irony were employed by a number of participants in the two rooms. Free irony was more widely encouraged at Riverside; as a result, the perspectives countenanced in decision making were much broader. Both rooms had one or more acknowledged ironists; these participants were perceived to be valuable in relieving the tension in stressful discourse and in expanding the boundaries of the status quo.

The distinctive nature of the two rooms was not only determined by the manner in which the elements were employed but also by who employed them. Elements engaged by formal leaders had a greater influence on the nature of the room than did elements engaged by participants lacking in legitimate authority. At Riverside, the principal was a primary initiator of stereoscopic vision, narrative, and metaphor. Because of his formal position, these elements were much more widely appreciated by other participants; the result was a room in which open and free discourse was enjoyed by all participants. Furthermore, the principal evidenced an aesthetic reciprocity in his appreciation for the irony, narrative, and metaphor of other participants. This aesthetic component liberated other participants to engage in the poietic process.
At Lakeview, the formal leaders were less inclined to engage stereoscopic vision, narrative, or irony. They employed symbolic acts effectively, but the absence of the other elements tended to produce a claustrophobic room in which moral discourse was limited and some participants felt disempowered in the decision making process. The veteran teachers, who held significant informal authority in the room, were also very reserved in their engagement of the poietic elements. The perception was that they had a subtle control over the decision making processes of the room and were reluctant to relinquish that control through the common sharing of the poietic process.

The nature of the rooms was explored by comparing the level of moral reasoning in each. In the conceptual frame, I proposed that four imaginative capacities—attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping—inevitably each component of the moral reasoning process, as elaborated by Rest (1983) and Cochrane (1979). The effectiveness of these four capacities was examined in relation to the engagement of the poietic elements. Participants in the Riverside room demonstrated a facility with, and a willingness to engage in, moral discourse through each of the four capacities. This facility was attributed to the ways in which the four poietic elements were engaged in the Riverside room. At Lakeview, the envisioning capacity was particularly diminished; as a result, the participants lacked the competence and freedom to make decisions and judgements as a group. This inadequacy was attributed at least partly to the unwillingness, on the part of formal leaders, to engage stereoscopic vision and to appreciate irony.

Finally, the intimate reciprocal relationship between leaders and followers was explored through the poietic-aesthetic relationship. The findings indicated that the
poietic elements were only engaged effectively when the poietic and aesthetic processes were both present. An ironist had no effect on the room unless the other participants interacted aesthetically with the ironist. Stereoscopic vision and irony were particularly vulnerable to this relationship. We observed some instances of a participant attempting to engage these elements with little or no effect on the room because the other participants were not prepared to acknowledge or appreciate his or her poietic attempts.

This came as no surprise since in the performing arts, the quality of the performance is dependent as much on the aesthetic appreciation of the audience as it is on the poietic behaviour of the performer. However, it does point to an important aspect of leadership which is often ignored—namely, that a leader is only as effective as the followers will permit. The findings suggested that leadership was a much broader concept than most are prepared to acknowledge and that all participants in the room are involved in leadership.

As I have already indicated, the formal leaders had a distinct advantage in the poietic process since respect for legitimate authority was a sacred norm in both schools. When a formal leader spoke or acted (metaphorically, narratively, or prosaically), other participants attended more closely and more aesthetically. This is not to deny the poietic contribution of other participants; in both schools, informal leaders contributed through each of the four poietic elements. However, the leaders imaginative capacity, and, hence, his or her willingness to create and to appreciate the creation of others, was a major determinant in the nature of the resulting room.
Redeeming the Art of Leadership

Rationalists, wearing square hats,
Think in square rooms,
Looking at the floor,
Looking at the ceiling.
They confine themselves
To right-angled triangles,
If they tried rhomboids,
Cones, wavy lines, ellipses—
As, for example the ellipse of the half-moon—
Rationalists would wear sombreros.
Wallace Stevens (1954)

Rather than following the traditional format for discussing the implications of this study, a format which relies on three standard categories—theory, practice, and research—for elaboration, I have chosen a wholistic approach more in keeping with the spirit of the investigation. The implications presented below are relevant to educational leaders regardless of their formal position within the discipline. The relationship between art, leadership, and moral imagination as explored in this study has relevance equally to practitioners and pure theorists, to students and teachers of leadership, to artistic and scientific researchers. Perhaps one of the most important implications of the study is that it may challenge the reader to reject the false dichotomies, which have tended to isolate the categories of educators identified above, and begin looking at educational leadership with stereoscopic vision. After all, as Eisner (1981, p. 9) reminded us, "looking through one eye never did provide much depth of field."

Redefining Leadership

At the beginning of this thesis, I made reference to Starratt’s (1993, p. 17) disquieting questions: "Would leadership take on fresher tones and meanings with
different frameworks? Why must leadership be confined to the present language employed in the literature?” For Starratt, the new framework was leadership as drama, and the language he employed was the language of the theatre.

The results of this study suggest that there are multiple ways of looking at and talking about leadership; each has value and together they enrich our understanding of this complex concept. I have attempted to introduce a novel frame and language to the discourse by re-examining the role of imagination in educational leadership praxis. Because leadership is an ambiguous and ill-defined concept (Starratt, 1993), I chose to limit the exploration to imaginative elements of the poietic process. I proposed that imagination and educational leadership are related through the poietic (creative) process and that this process facilitates the theory-practice connection; a connection, I might add, which desperately begs of comprehension and reconstruction.

Furthermore, the poietic-aesthetic relationship may provide insight into the leader-follower relationship. Previously, I demonstrated the mutual dependence of the aesthetic and poietic processes. Further examination of the dynamics of the poietic-aesthetic reciprocity may greatly expand our understanding of leadership and lead to a re-definition of the concept of leadership which does not set it in opposition to followership.

Art and Leadership

Schon (1987, p. 13) claimed that we may learn about the artistry of leadership by “carefully studying the performance of unusually competent performers.” In this study, I have attempted to understand the relationship between art and leadership by
studying the performance of all the participants involved in the practice of leadership within two schools. Admittedly, the study was focused on four specific imaginative elements; nevertheless, the findings indicated that the artistic engagement of these elements enhanced moral discourse in the school settings. In short, the poietic domain contributed to effective leadership practice.

The way that poiesis influenced praxis was through the effective engagement of four specific elements, stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony. Each of these elements played a specific and necessary role in the creation of the room; however, they were not presented as sufficient conditions. By considering the poietic elements engaged by artists in other fields such as music, drama, literature, dance, the plastic arts, philosophy, and athletics, it may be possible to identify other elements which apply to the leadership poietic.

Deal (1995, p. 119) proposed eight strategies that "embrace the expressive side of human experience: art, poetry, music, rituals, ceremonies, dance, metaphors, and humour." He claimed that organizations may be improved by the engagement of these strategies. While I do not believe that this is a comprehensive list, it does indicate a direction worthy of research. An exploration of how these strategies are engaged in effective organizations would enhance our understanding of the way in which these and other artistic elements inform praxis.

I have demonstrated that four poietic elements inform praxis by enhancing the components of moral reasoning. Further research in this area might address the question of how Deal's strategies, or other similar artistic strategies, influence the effectiveness of organizations. There is growing consensus, among theorists and
practitioners, that art and leadership are related; the question of how they are related
certainly remains open to further investigation.

**Educating for Artistic Leadership**

One pressing question which emerges from these findings relates to how
educators might prepare themselves to engage in the poetics of leadership. There is
no shortage of precedents to support the view that engagement with the arts and
humanities is an effective vehicle for preparing leaders. Rorty (1989) claimed that
people who care about moral development turn, not to philosophical texts but to
novels, short stories and plays. Nussbaum (1995) advocated the use of literature to
help prospective leaders engage their moral imagination.

When one turns specifically to educational leadership, Greenfield (1988)
proposed a socialization model for principals which incorporates both technical and
moral dimensions. Popper (1989) lamented the failure of programs which have
attempted to incorporate the humanities into educational leadership training. He
offered two explanations for this lack of success.

First, the pervasive attitude seems to be that the humanities as *high
culture* are of *consummatory* value only for school administrators . . . .
Second, advocates of the humanities in educational administration have
not presented ways-and-means models of how humanities content
might be integrated with other components of education programs. It
is one thing to say "yes" to the humanities, but quite another to find
instrumental applications for their content in program contexts. (p. 369)

One of the implications of this study is that it addresses Popper's second contention
by providing a "ways-and-means" model of how the arts might be integrated into a
leadership training program. Each of the four poietic elements provide a unique
avenue through which the arts may enter educational leadership training.
Stereoscopic vision. The study indicated that one of the most important attributes of educational leadership was stereoscopic vision or a tolerance for ambiguity. Greenfield (1988) stated that the work situation of principals, in particular, is characterized by a high degree of ambiguity. We found that the principal’s ability to tolerate ambiguity facilitated moral discourse in the Riverside room. Unfortunately, tolerance for ambiguity and a willingness to engage stereoscopic vision was frequently associated with uncertainty, ambivalence and lack of conviction, and therefore not widely perceived as a positive attribute of leadership. The leaders at Lakeview were disinclined to practice stereoscopic vision or encourage it in others.

Professional development courses should address this crucial imaginative element of moral reasoning. Moral dilemmas could be employed extensively to provide students with opportunities to hold conflicting positions in dynamic tension without feeling the urgency to resolve dissonance. Bebeau (1993) recommended extensive use of cases of this type to enhance ethical sensitivity.

Earlier, I described narrative works which specifically addressed the complexity and ambiguity of moral issues. Leader interaction with such fictional narrative, cinema, and drama would promote the tolerant attitude necessary to consider situations with stereoscopic vision. Furthermore, educational leaders should be afforded the opportunity to learn and practice techniques for dealing with dilemmas, in simulated school settings, that keep moral discourse open to creative solutions.

These methods may provide leaders with an understanding of the way that stereoscopic vision influences moral discourse, an appreciation for how this capacity
may be cultivated by engagement with the arts, and a willingness to allow other participants in the room to engage in stereoscopic vision.

**Metaphor.** The study identified metaphor as a predominant vehicle for enhancing moral reasoning. The participants in both rooms manifested a propensity toward this element. In particular, the metaphors that the formal leaders used to guide their praxis had a profound effect on the nature of the room. The metaphors principals brought to their roles vitally influenced the kinds of decisions they made.

This finding is consistent with Bredeson’s (1985) analysis of the metaphorical schemata employed by school administrators. In a study of five administrators, he identified three distinct metaphorical themes in common use: maintenance, survival, and vision. Each of the five administrators studied used a particular metaphorical theme to interpret their role, conceptualize the education process, and put their beliefs and values into practice. Bredeson concluded that administrators need help in redefining the nature of their roles. He suggested that this may be possible by awareness of and reflection on the metaphors which guide our reasoning (p. 48).

Since this study used a different frame, the manifest metaphors did not fall into simple categories such as Bredeson’s; however, his conclusions are valid for this study. We found that the two principals were able to clearly articulate metaphors which they perceived to guide their action. Their animated and elaborate responses to our request for this articulation suggested that these metaphors were very important to them. However, neither principal could recall ever having articulated their metaphor prior to this encounter; they both stated that the opportunity to reflect on and clarify the metaphor had been a valuable experience for them.
The formal and informal leaders in both schools effectively engaged symbolic acts as visual metaphors. This practice was the most ubiquitous and most effective use of metaphors in both rooms. Again, the participants had not consciously reflected on their use of these metaphors nor the influence which they were perceived to have on the room.

With this in mind, I suggest that it would be helpful to offer a course directed specifically at metaphorical understandings of educational leadership. Included would be an epistemology of metaphor as well as an in-depth analysis of the personal, professional, and organizational metaphors which guide leaders’ moral reasoning. The course should stress not only the poetics but also the aesthetics of all types of metaphors, since the appreciation of the metaphor is equally as important as its presentation.

**Narrative.** In the literature review, I presented arguments for the importance of narrative in the moral reasoning process. The results of this study confirmed that local narrative influenced the moral discourse in both rooms. Unfortunately, while all participants appreciated good stories, their importance for moral reasoning was not widely acknowledged. Humorous staff room stories abounded, but the use of particularizing and grounding narrative in the decision making process was not widely practised. Andy used stories very effectively in his leadership of the Riverside room; stories were notably absent from the Lakeview room, to the detriment of the resultant moral reasoning.

The arts, particularly literary fiction, drama, and cinema have the potential to not only provide leaders with a stock of situating narrative, but also pre-dispose participants toward empathy and moral attentiveness. Furthermore, the study
indicated that story-telling is an art which might be learned and cultivated in leadership training programs. Leaders should develop a facility and appreciation for local and fictional narrative.

**Irony.** As I indicated earlier, the engagement of irony in the two rooms was a fascinating aspect of this study. None of the formal leaders showed much of an inclination to practice irony in any of its forms; however, the willingness of the Riverside principal to allow ironists to flourish in that room, made a great difference in the level of moral discourse that was observed.

Torbert (1994) described four complementary leadership roles in traditional societies. These are the Chief, the Warrior, the Priest, and the Clown. While our modern institutions have embraced the first three of these roles, they have, sadly, neglected the fourth. Torbert called for a redemption of this role.

[I]t is the presence of the fourth character on the team—the Clown or Court Jester—that goes farthest to assure that not just short-term action but also fundamental inquiry occurs among the four. His presence cheerfully forces each to extend his vision beyond himself and—even rarer—to extend his vision, often laughingly, to himself. Like a court jester, this person finds ways to assure that truth will be spoken in the corridors of power. (p. 39)

Torbert claimed, and I agree, that there will be very few formal leaders who actually practice free irony; in fact, one is hard-pressed to conceive of how a leader, constrained by legitimate authority, could ethically practice free irony. However, this study indicated that it is crucial that formal leaders appreciate and embrace the ironists in their midst.

How does one develop or cultivate a taste for irony? The current conditions in our society with its obsession with "political correctness" are clearly antithetical to irony. I propose that cinema, fictional narrative, and classical literature hold the most
promise for reclaiming irony in educational leadership, since these sources are replete with ironic narrative and, therefore, provide opportunities for leaders to imaginatively engage in irony. Charlie Chaplin was a consummate ironist in the classical Greek tradition; movies such as Modern Times and A Dog's Life provide wonderful opportunities for heightening awareness of the value of irony. Bakhtin (1981, p. 158) described a chronotope, the ironic trinity, commonly employed in novels to create a space for dialogue. This ironic trinity, consisting of the rogue, the clown, and the fool, serve a function in the novel which parallels the function of the free ironist in a leadership room. Identification of this chronotope in novels would give leaders a richer understanding of the importance of irony in leadership. Furthermore, those involved in leadership training might begin cultivating a taste for irony in educational leaders by modelling appropriate ironic behaviour and by granting permission for participants to engage irony in educational settings. The aesthetic-poietic reciprocity necessary for effective engagement could be nurtured in leadership training programs.

I have proposed several ways in which the imaginative, poietic resources might be incorporated into a professional development program for educational leaders. The possibilities for such development are limited only by the imagination of the participants; the outcomes of such an endeavour will provide educational leaders with the confidence and capability to create good rooms in their schools.

**Artistic Leadership Research**

Throughout this dissertation, I have openly declared my bias toward artistic research. This is by no means a novel concept since researchers such as Eisner (1981, 1995) and Brown (1977) have passionately advocated such an approach to sociological
inquiry throughout a long and illustrious career. However, until recently, the educational leadership domain has been particularly resistant to such an approach.

One of the implications of this study is not only that leadership may be understood poetically, but also that research into leadership may also have a poietic domain. The complexity of the concept of leadership lends itself well to an artistic research approach. Educational leaders practice in ambiguous and indeterminate zones (Schon 1987) which do not lend themselves to rigorous empirical investigation. Rather, they are more aptly investigated through participant observation where the researcher lives within the cultural milieu of the leader and "imaginatively participates in the experience of the [leader]" (Eisner, 1981, p. 6). The results of such an investigation are not statistical verification of a hypothesis but rather a narrative of the cultural biography of the leader based on "the observer's ability to imaginatively project himself into the life of another in order to know what that person is experiencing" (Eisner, 1981, p. 6).

To say that research is artistic implies a poietic process and an aesthetic product. I would suggest that the same poietic elements that go into the poietic of leadership can also be applied to the poietic of research. Certainly the engagement of stereoscopic vision, or what Renihan (1985) called "disciplined naivete" is essential on the part of the researcher, since imaginatively entering into the experience of another, entails the ability to suspend one's personal dogma. Both metaphor and narrative are essential aspects of the "attending" process by which the researcher enters into the experience of the leader. Furthermore, these two poietic elements are the basis of artistic reporting. Finally, an appreciation for the subtle (and sometimes egregious)
engagement of irony within a culture provides the artistic researcher with a fresh perspective on the meanings of social interactions.

I have attempted to engage these poietic elements in both the research process and the creation of this "product." The "trace" of that endeavour is represented in these pages; perhaps this trace may be used by others who wish to explore leadership artistically.

Moral Imagination and Leadership

At the beginning of this inquiry, I proposed that leadership involved an artistic, imaginative dimension, completing and enriching the theory-practice dimensions. Further, I proposed that leadership involves creating a room or arena in which participants could engage in discourse, create common meaning, and make decisions which are both creative and rational; and that such an arena was created through the engagement of the imagination in the poietic process.

Now at the end of this research, I can state with confidence that the imagination does play a vital role in the moral reasoning process; and that it is through the engagement of specific poietic elements that sound moral reasoning is possible. Gilson's (1965) conceptualization of three ontological domains was affirmed by this study; the imaginative (poietic) domain was found not only to exist but also to play a key role in mediating the theory-practice dichotomy. The leaders in the two schools demonstrated that attending, envisioning, intending, and hoping—the four imaginative capacities of moral reasoning—were facilitated by the use of the poietic elements identified as stereoscopic vision, metaphor, narrative, and irony.
Furthermore, it was clear that the quality of the moral reasoning was dependent on the level of engagement of these elements.

There was no evidence to indicate that the four poietic elements identified in the conceptual frame are sufficient for effective moral reasoning. Both Deal (1995) and Duke (1989) offered alternative "strategies" for engaging artistic leadership which also warrant further exploration; doubtless, a case could be made for the necessity of additional elements in a leadership poietic. However, the four elements investigated in this study are engaged regularly as imaginative vehicles in the moral reasoning process; it is difficult to conceive of effective moral reasoning in their absence. The moral imagination, regardless of how it is engaged, facilitates the move from theory to practice and, therefore, is an essential part of school leadership.

I trust that the outcomes presented in this study will motivate other researchers to continue the exploration of the relationship between imagination, art, and leadership. I conclude with an excerpt from John Ciardi's eloquent address to executives delivered at an in-service for professional development through the humanities in 1959 (cited in Popper, 1989, p. 383).

*An ulcer, gentlemen, is an unkissed imagination taking its revenge for having been jilted. It is an unwritten poem, a neglected music, an unpainted watercolor, an undanced dance. It is a declaration from the mankind of the man that a clear spring of joy has not been tapped, and that it must break through, muddily, on its own.*
References


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Leadership Interview Questions

These are some of the areas I would like to explore with you in an interview. We may not have time to do justice to all of them; you are free to choose the ones we talk about.

1. How would you describe the culture of this school? What values does this staff hold to be "sacred?"

2. How are new staff oriented to the culture of the school? How is culture passed on?

3. Does this school have sub-cultures or counter-cultures? How do they affect the change process in the school?

4. Commenting on a principal's leadership, a teacher said, "I think his style and ideology are just natural for SSIP." How would you interpret that statement?

5. How would you define leadership?

6. How would you characterize your leadership style?

7. What metaphors do you use to guide your leadership?

8. What stories situate your leadership in the context of the school?

9. What is the preferred style of decision making in this school? Where does decision making rest in this school?

10. Many writers (eg. Schön, 1987) state that leadership is largely practiced in "indeterminate zones" where things are seldom black and white. Do you agree? What qualities does a leader need to make decisions in ambiguous situations?

11. What role does irony play in the leadership practices of the school? Does this school have an ironist on staff?
APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM
UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Project Title

A Poietic for Leadership: Engaging the Moral Imagination in Educational Leadership

Purpose of Study

To explore the poietic (artistic) domain of leadership in order to ascertain how the elements of that domain influence effective leadership.

Rationale

This interview is a vital component of a case study being undertaken in your school. The researcher proposes that traditional leadership models have been largely governed by the assumption that moral decision making and problem solving are technical-rational processes; however, most of leadership is practised in "indeterminate zones" (Schon 1987) or ambiguous situations, where technical-rational models break down. This study explores ways in which imagination and creativity (the artistic domain) influence moral reasoning and leadership practice. It is anticipated that an awareness of, and willingness to engage the artistic domain will enhance the effectiveness of school leaders.

Procedure

The interview will include structured questions as well as a more informal opportunity for you to share your perceptions and insights. The interview will last about 45 minutes. It will be tape recorded for the purposes of accuracy; however, only the research team will have access to the data on the recording, the transcripts of the tapes, and the notes taken during the interview. The confidentiality and anonymity of your responses will be protected by the use of pseudonyms for the sites and persons in reporting the results.

This is a voluntary process from which you may withdraw at any time. If you do not wish to be recorded, you may exercise that option. You will have the opportunity to review your personal transcripts and notes taken during this interview to confirm their accuracy and your approval. Ultimately you have the right to veto any data attributed to you. Any data collected in this study will be used for academic purposes only.

I consent to be a participant in the study described above under the specified conditions. I understand that (a) the information gathered may be used for publications related to this study and (b) I am free to withdraw at any time.

Participant’s Signature ________________ Date: ________________

Researcher’s Signature ________________
APPENDIX C
SURVEY QUESTIONS
Dear

Thank you for welcoming us into your professional life. We are thankful for your graciousness in allowing us to stumble around your workplace and even your homes (if there are mistakes in this document it's probably because our fingers are still greasy from that extra spicy wing sauce). We will be in your school for the rest of this week and hope to return again in late November. At that time we will focus more on semi-structured interviews with as many of the staff as time and your inclination will allow. It would be a great help to us if you would take a few minutes to respond to the questions below and drop them into the box by the phone. If you indicate a willingness to be interviewed, we will contact you to set up a time which suits your schedule.

As you know, we are primarily interested in the factors which have influenced the success of SSIP in the school. The ability of this staff to manage and implement change suggests that the culture of the school (that is the shared beliefs and values that allow you to work together effectively) is very conducive to continuous learning and growth. We want to understand what elements of the culture contribute to this ongoing organizational learning. We are primarily concerned with the ongoing process by which you continue to implement changes. Thanks again for making us feel at home. We welcome any questions or suggestions you might have regarding our research.

1. What is your teaching history in this school division? (Please provide teaching assignment, school, and dates)
2. Distributive leadership, or the quality of the informal leadership in the school, influences the change process. To help us understand this influence, please identify one person on staff (other than the administrative team) whom you perceive to be a school leader; indicate why you chose this person.

3. Here are some of the topics we will be considering in the interview process:
   - your perceptions of the effectiveness and success of the SIP program in this school
   - what factors have influenced the success of the program
   - how you have been personally involved in SIP
   - how you would describe the culture of your school (what values, beliefs, symbols, rituals, stories, celebrations, heroes, outlaws, etc. define culture)
   - what role do sub-cultures play in facilitating or restricting change

Would you be willing to be interviewed for this project (time commitment of about 1/2 hr)?

Yes____ No____
Staff

Thank you for welcoming us into your school. We have had a great time participating in your lives and coming to understand the uniqueness of your culture. We very much appreciate the informal conversations and colorful dialogue to which we have been treated. We are here until Thursday afternoon, but plan to return in mid-February. At that time, we would like to conduct semi-structured interviews with as many of you as time, and your inclinations, will allow.

As you may know, we are primarily interested in the cultural influences that affect the change process in schools. Some of you were involved with the SSIP initiatives of a few years ago; your insights into that process would be helpful, but we are also interested in the current climate for change in the school and how your peculiar culture affects that change process.

It would be of great help to us if you could take a few minutes, over the next two days, to respond to the questions below. If you indicate a willingness to be interviewed, we will arrange a suitable time when we return in mid-February.

1. What is your teaching history:
   A. In this school?
   B. Prior to coming here?

2. Distributive leadership, or the quality of the informal leadership in the school, has a significant influence on the change process. To help us understand this influence, please identify one person on staff (other than the administrative team) whom you perceive to be a school leader: indicate why you chose this person.

3. What is your personal metaphor for
   A. the culture of this school?
   B. education in general?

4. Here are some of the topics we will be considering in the interview process
   • the ‘sacred’ values, beliefs, and norms which hold the culture together
   • sub-cultures and counter-cultures in the school
   • heroes, outlaws, villains, saints, rogues, clowns, and ironists that contribute to the culture
   • legends, myths, stories and narratives that define this school
   • your insights into the SSIP process (successes and failures)
   • what factors make this school open to change
   • the relationship between culture and change

5. Would you be willing to be interviewed in February (time commitment of about 1/2 hr)?

   Yes__________ No__________

   Name__________________________
Teachers

3 December 1996

It's very good to be back in your school. We are back only for this week before Christmas, and would like to do some interviews while we are here. I realize that this is a busy time for all of you but if you have any free time (day or evening), we would be more than happy to accommodate your schedule.

As you may know, we are interested in the cultural influences affecting the change process (SSIP in particular). The interviews will be semi-structured to allow you the freedom to express your perceptions and opinions without adhering to a strict interview schedule. Here are some of the areas we will explore:

1. Your personal metaphors for education in general, and for this school in particular?
2. Legends, myths, stories, and narratives that define this school.
3. Heroes, outlaws, villains, saints, rogues, clowns, and ironists (past and present) that contribute to the culture.
4. Sacred values, beliefs, and norms which hold the culture together.
5. Sub-cultures and counter-cultures.
6. The success of SSIP
7. The relationship between culture and change.

The final outcomes of this study will probably emerge in narrative form so 'storytellers' will be most welcome. We will be back again in January, so if you are too busy now, perhaps we can arrange a time later. If you have any free time Wednesday or Thursday, and you are willing to be interviewed, please indicate this on the accompanying page and drop it in the box by the phone. We will contact each of you personally to confirm the time. (Lunch or dinner appointments are fair game; we will even spring for the meal)
APPENDIX D

EXAMPLE OF FIELD NOTES

(PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS)
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Row 4: Support of alumni

Row 5: Temporary contract
APPENDIX E

EXAMPLE OF LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT
I would like to talk a bit about your personal leadership style and how you would characterize it and talk about what we talked about before—the ambiguity idea, tolerance for ambiguity that is necessary for leadership as you see it. Well, let’s start with how do you characterize your leadership style?

I think it is collaborative. I like to believe that I am a collaborative person although I recognize that I wish I could make the decision on my own because it would be more efficient but I think I tend to be a very actively engaged person with a lot of irons in the fire and flying around here fairly feverishly trying to manage what I have to manage involving students, involving teachers. To some extent, like I said earlier, the science of muddling through characterizes a lot of what we do because we are thrown curves every day and all the best laid plans of mice and men get led astray because a new problem comes our way and every time that happens when you are dealing with people and kids you have to find the answer it just doesn’t automatically jump out at you. We have a policy book two inches thick from the school division office but we follow it not depending on the way the wind’s blowing and the way the situation requires something. And even in clear cut issues of discipline where the policy says, suspend a pupil, we always take in consideration the circumstances and sometimes we handle things on the sly and phone and say, we are going to circumvent the policy today because of these circumstances. I would say very much operating in the shades of
gray, I like to listen to people and hear what kids have to say. and hear what teachers have to say and hear what parents have to say and our decisions are based a lot on situations. I forgot more than I wish I had of about situational ethics. I think a lot of our situations are based on the situation and that's how I would like it to be. I don't think I could operate in a strict policy environment with people. A policy should be a guide, it should give you direction but we have to deal with individuals. I don't know if muddling through, I have given you a clear answer to the question.

I: How do you think teachers and students respond to this kind of more of ambiguous or particular approach to discipline and to problem solving?

P: I think it depends on the outcome of a situation, very much. For example, if you got a student in the office who's got a conflict with the teacher clearly if the teacher sent him to the office they want something done and they want it done now and they see black and white. The student also has a perspective and while I would like to always side with the teacher because they're the professionals on staff I also recognize that when you have 30 students in a classroom sometimes you don't always make the best decisions and sometimes there is so much happening in there that we may not always see what it was that triggered that student to behave in an inappropriate way. And we need to listen to that student. Unfortunately, when you hear the student sometimes you have a better understanding for them but the teacher who was frustrated with that student they are not ready yet to see the student behaved in an inappropriate way for a reason and sometimes teachers are frustrated by that but the student feels okay about it because they've been heard. I think if we don't hear students we lose a lot more students. I think I use to hear more people say, why is a student here, they have no right being here, their behavior is inappropriate, time they go. I haven't heard that much at all this year from people because the law says the student should be in school until their 16. Our job is to make them fit in. Our job is to give them a reason for staying in schools and under the Act we would be in serious trouble if we take a student out of school. If the behavior is inappropriate then let's find a way to deal with the behavior. I think we have done a lot of things. I think we have put a lot of programs in place to try to work with difficult students - our call(?) lab, our in-school tutor, our aboriginal liaison counselor, our guidance counselor. People who have been asked to work with students and that is extremely important. But getting back to your question when you work in ambiguity you don't always please everybody and yet everybody has a story to tell. Every parent who is unsatisfied they've got a perspective because they've heard their child talk and we need to invite them in and to hear their side of the story too. And then we need to go back to teachers and you know 9 times
out of 10 it becomes a win-win situation. The teacher does understand once the student is able to express their point of view. But one of the ten times the teacher was totally frustrated by what the student did and they don't want to hear the other side of the story. There are two sides to every story - I really believe that.

I: Before we put the tape machine on you were talking about how you would really like the teachers to think more in terms of gray areas instead of black and white. Are there ways as administration that you or the three of you together help teachers have more comfort with ambiguity or whatever?

P: I think that is a process that takes time. I think we point out to them the gray areas often for example the situation I just referred to a student and teacher in conflict. When you listen to the student you go back and say, hey, there's another side here. I think from time to time we tell teachers directly that we're not in the business of getting rid of students, we are in the business of helping students to succeed and our policies have to be flexible because each student has an unique situation. I think we need to keep saying that over and over again to people. And it will make people uncomfortable from time to time but I think you have to agitate too sometimes and I really believe that my job as a vice principal is to be an advocate for our students too. Certainly advocate for teachers and advocates for education but we have to listen to students. We're here to help our motto is striving together for success we have to work with our kids and help them find ways to succeed and where anybody is frustrated teacher/student/teacher aide we have to work them through that frustration and help them to see other ways of looking at the world or other ways of behaving. I think that is a good part of our job. It is not real clear cut but I think as long as we err on the side of trying to help people succeed we might make some errors in that process but if that is our general direction if that is our belief I guess that's my value. Going back to the very first question you asked what are one of my personal values is our goal is to help people succeed.

I: So that motto does have a very deep meaning for you in terms of what you do here as a leader.

P: I use it often when I write letters to kids and even when at the end of the term I just sent out 77 letters to kids congratulating them for being on the honor roll in division three and I pointed out in the letter and the letter says, our goal, our motto is to strive together for success and we're delighted that you set high goals for yourself and we want to continue to help you succeed. When students are unsuccessful here and I talk to them one on one I frequently refer back to the motto which hangs on the
wall that we want to find ways to help you succeed, we want you to be successful.

I: This has been very good. Thank You. Do you want to talk to me about irony at all.

P: Ask me the question and throw it at me and see what we can do.

I: First of all could you identify either in the formal leadership in the school or amongst the teachers an ironist in the sense that we talked about it before?

P: Could you give me the definition again?

I: An ironist is someone that helps define the boundaries between order and chaos. They need to show people that the boundaries are farther out than we ever thought they were. Like we have this fear of the chaos that seems to surround us so we construct this area of order that we run our lives in, and an ironist is a kind of a person that always keeps pushing those boundaries around or try to help us find where they are.

P: I think this is a very interesting metaphor and I think it is appropriate for the nineties when you look at what's happened first of all in a world stage in the last number of years. It's a world where boundaries have come down, barriers have come down and the boundaries are being pushed outward. I think in the 70 and 80's people were comfortable with clearly defined boundaries. I think still from time to time when we say we have to deal with the areas of gray people would like to have boundaries. But yet at the same time if we sat down and pushed that issue with people they would also say ya but we do like to bounce and push them out. When you gave me the example I could picture rubber walls and people just pushing out here, and pushing out there and gradually pushing the walls back. I would say we have a number of ironists. I would say Cam is very much an ironist and a positive ironist. An agitator maybe that is another way of looking at it. The agitators who keep agitating to look things in a new way or change what not. Cam would be one, and would be another one, Thor would be another one. Although Thor is more comfortable inside the boundaries, he wouldn't be a strong one but from time to time if he doesn't like something he is sure pushing at the walls. I think that is really healthy, it is awkward to deal with it as an administrator from time to time as it is with a teacher because it's like the student who is always asking why, why. Sometimes that makes us uncomfortable but when we are able to take a step back from that and recognize maybe it was a good question then we find ways to deal with that. And the ironist to push us and even though at a meeting from time to time we might get our backs up against the wall and say because this is
the way we are doing things, then we go back and \( \text{Chris} \) and I will often talk and at the next staff meeting we have a new proposal to throw out and it is because somebody has been pushing at the boundaries. I would say from time to time - an agitator but \( \text{Can} \) clearly would be the agitator, the ironist.

I: Do you want to add anything else?

\( \text{D} \): You said something earlier when you were defining to me a kind of division of leadership and it kind of reminded me, I've been thinking about this the last hour. The very first year I taught, I taught at and I will never forget my principal, whom he and I didn't see eye to eye that well because he was a very black and white person and I attempted to deal in areas of gray, and I will never forget him coming to me and saying to me, "Bill you have all the art of teaching and this is in my first year and I'm sure I didn't have all the art of teaching and I still don't. In fact you have so much of the art of teaching that some might say that you are a charismatic." Then he went on to say, and I'll always hate him for this, "but you know what happened to the greatest charismatic of them all, he was crucified." And the next statement he made was, "but you have none of the science of teaching." Which he had never been in my classroom so I don't know how he could make. He had never observed me, he had never looked in my day book, he never looked at my planning and I truly believe he was wrong but I'll always think about that that there's an art to what we do and I guess anything we do we do need to push the boundaries of creativity and what not. And we have to be thrown the curves because if no one ever came in here and threw us a curve ball the boundaries wouldn't ever expand outwards. We need the ironists because they help us to view the world differently. If we are going to change a culture we need to be always pushing at the edges and trying to figure out what's possible. My belief is that we should always be striving for what's possible, not what we have done in the past.

I: That's great.
APPENDIX F

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS
1. TITLE OF THE STUDY: A Poietic for Leadership: Engaging the Moral Imagination in Educational Leadership

2. SUBMITTED BY: Dr. Keith Walker
DEPARTMENT: Educational Administration, College of Education
STUDENT: Don Shakotko, Student Number 705408
PROGRAM: Ph.D. in Educational Administration

3. ABSTRACT:
The purpose of this study is to explore the poietic (artistic) domain of leadership in order to ascertain how the elements of that domain influence effective leadership. The elements to be considered are metaphor, narrative, irony, and creative ambiguity; evidence of other elements will also be sought. Five research questions will form the focus of the study:
   1. What poietic elements are demonstrated or acknowledged by school leaders?
   2. How do the poietic elements enhance or deter the perceived effectiveness of school leaders?
   3. How do leaders employ the poietic elements in creating a moral context for the practice of leadership?
   4. How do the school's culture and the leader's poietic interact?
   5. How do participants (teachers and other stakeholders) contribute to the leadership poietic?

Academic Validity:

Traditional leadership models have been largely governed by the assumption that moral decision making and problem solving are technical-rational processes, that theory and practice were directly related variables. Unfortunately most of leadership is practised in "indeterminate zones" (Schon 1987), where technical-rational models break down. This study explores ways in which imagination and creativity (the artistic domain) influence moral reasoning and leadership practice. It is anticipated that an awareness of, and willingness to engage the artistic domain will enhance the effectiveness of school leaders.
4. FUNDING:

The student is funded through a University of Saskatchewan Doctoral Thesis Scholarship. Additional support is provided through the sharing of research resources with a larger concurrent study under the auspices of Drs. Hajnal, Sackney, and Walker.

5. SUBJECTS:

This study will encompass two rural Saskatchewan high schools. The primary subjects involved will be the teachers and in-school administrators of the two schools; however, participant observation and informal interviews may involve students, support staff and parents. Prior to engaging in the case studies, permission will be obtained from the directors of education, the school administration, and the teaching staff. The researcher will present a research proposal to each staff in a staff meeting prior to beginning the fieldwork phase of the study to solicit informed consent. An information and consent form (Appendix A) will be presented to each subject prior to engaging in formal interviewing.

6. PROCEDURES:

The inquiry consists of two case studies conducted intermittently at two separate sites. In total, twenty days will be spent at each school in two-week blocks. The following methods of data collection will be employed: 1) participant observation wherein the researcher engages in prolonged interaction with the staff and administrators of each school; 2) semi-structured interviews of selected formal and informal leaders in each school; 3) document analysis of minutes, policies, organizational communication documents, archival records, and demographic information; 4) direct observation of artifacts, rituals, and formal and informal social practices. Collaboration with other members of the larger research team will provide opportunities for peer de-briefing and appropriate triangulation of data. These procedures will generate a rich and diverse data base and ensure credibility and general trustworthiness of the results.

7. CONFIDENTIALITY:

Anonymity and confidentiality will be ensured through the use of pseudonyms in all references to the site and participants in the study. The researcher will ensure that, in the construction of the final narrative, no personal details which might compromise the identity of individuals will be disclosed.

8. FEEDBACK AND DEBRIEFING:

The researcher will engage in continuous member checking during and after participant observation sessions. All participants in the formal interview process will have the opportunity to review audio tapes, interviewers notes, and transcriptions of their interviews. A final report of the findings will be available to each school; also, the findings will be published in scholarly and professional journals.
UNIVERSITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
ON ETHICS IN HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION
(Behavioral Sciences)

NAME AND EC #: K. Walker (D. Shakotko)  
Educational Administration

DATE: December 12, 1996

For Reference: 96-130

The University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation (Behavioral Sciences) has reviewed your study, "a poietic for leadership: Engaging the moral imagination in educational leadership" (96-130).

1. The Committee requests clarification on the following issue and/or that the consent form be modified to account for the following:

   • Approved.

   • A copy of the consent form should be provided to participants.

   • Questions have been raised about the level of assent/consent required for the participant-observation component of the study. If individuals express dissent about involvement in this element of the study, how will the researchers comply with their wishes?

2. Please respond (one copy) to the above questions and comments. Please direct the response to the Director, Research Services, Room 210 Kirk Hall.

3. Any significant changes to your protocol should be reported to the Director of Research Services for Committee consideration in advance of its implementation.

Michael Owen, Secretary
for the University Advisory Committee
on Ethics in Human Experimentation, Behavioral Science

Please direct all correspondence to: Michael Owen, Secretary
UACEHE, Behavioral Science
Office of Research Services
University of Saskatchewan
Room 210 Kirk Hall, 117 Science Place
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5C8
To: Director  
Office of Research Services  
UACEHE, Behavioural Science  
University of Saskatchewan

From: K. Walker (Don Shakotko)  
Ref. 96-130

Date: 31 January 1997

Re: Research Proposal Approval

Thank you for the approval of my research proposal dated 12 December 1996. In response to the two concerns raised, I offer the following:

1. I will ensure that a copy of the consent form is provided to participants.

2. Consensual assent will be solicited from all participants in the study through group information sessions at each school with all participants present. Provision will be made for individuals to express dissent in private. Since the study primarily involves observation in common settings, such as staff rooms and common areas, it would not be feasible to study a school in which the participants dissented. Therefore, if dissent is voiced, an alternative school will be sought.

I trust that these procedures meet the ethical standards for this type of research.

[Signatures]
Don Shakotko  
K. Walker