

## *Female Doctoral Students in Educational Administration: Who Are They?*

Members of the SEEL Project at CEPM frequently receive inquiries from women who are thinking about pursuing a doctorate in educational administration. The women ask questions such as: How many women are in the program? What do they experience in their classes? What kind of support and encouragement can I expect to receive? What would a doctorate in educational administration prepare me for?

Some of the questions have easy answers. For example, we know that not many years ago, women virtually were absent in the doctoral program in educational administration at the University of Oregon's Center for Educational Policy and Management. Today, however, they comprise almost half of the student body. Although men still outnumber women better than five to one in the Center's certification programs for principals and superintendents, the increase of women at the doctoral level has been dramatic in recent years. At present there are more women in the doctoral program than have been graduated since 1960.

As another example, we know that the doctorate does not automatically lead people to positions as practicing administrators in public schools. Only 34% of the 143 men who received a doctorate in educational administration from CEPM since 1960 are public school administrators, *none* of the nine women who similarly have earned a PhD or EDD in educational administration are currently working as practicing administrators in public schools.

Other questions are not so easy to answer, and so, Sakre Oller, a graduate student in educational administration at CEPM and a member of the SEEL Project, surveyed female graduate students at CEPM who were majoring in educational administration in the summer of 1977. The study was a "pilot" for a dissertation study of male and female graduate students in educational administration across the country that Oller will conduct in 1978-79. Comparative data between men and women is needed to have a complete picture.

She surveyed 14 of the 16 women who were enrolled that summer. The mean age of the sample was 37 years, with a range from 29 to 51 years. Twelve were single or divorced, and two were married. Over half had no children. Most claimed to have no strong religious affiliation, although nearly all said they were raised in "religious" families. Most

considered themselves to be Democrats. Over half came from homes where the father was a professional or white-collar worker and almost one-third of them had mothers who held similar positions. Over half were first-born or only children.

### *Parents' Aspirations*

Three-fourths of the sample said their parents expected them to go to college and become professionals. One said, "My sister was to be 'domestic' and I was to be a 'career woman.'" Another stated that she was encouraged to get a college degree so that she would "be financially independent *if that ever became necessary.*"

Less than half remembered their parents emphasizing traditional female roles for them. More often they had been urged to combine a career with a family. As one said, "I was always encouraged to achieve, but 'homemaker-wife-mother' aspirations were encouraged along with attaining a college education."

### *Students' Aspirations*

The women in the sample recalled that, as children, they had wanted to be lawyers, doctors, professors, writers, or teachers. Only a few mentioned that they had ever looked forward to being a mother or a wife. Many said they had altered their childhood aspirations in adulthood, particularly when they had been discouraged from entering another field. For example, one mentioned that at the time she applied, "Women were simply not welcome in law school."

Most had shown a consistent commitment to education by choosing an undergraduate major in education; on the average, they had nearly six years' teaching experience. Few however, exhibited an early interest in educational administration. For most, their change of interest coincided with a new perception that administration had become a field more accessible to women and their recognition of their own leadership potential. Several reported that they had been encouraged by professors and practicing administrators to pursue the degree.

Three-fourths of the sample had experienced barriers to realizing their aspirations. One said, "The barriers have only

been the role expectations I internalized about what I could do and what I heard *others* tell me I could do." However, some thought their sex had kept them from equal pay and job promotions and from participation in established support systems. One woman commented, for example, "The biggest barrier has been my sex. Because of it no one has taken me as a serious aspirant for the superintendency." Another said, "Continually, women are told that they must take an internship or a lower-level job to gain experience, but men are not told that. It seems possible that a woman could spend a career getting prepared, only to retire having done nothing."

Only half indicated that their present career goals included becoming a public school administrator. Three expressed the desire to become superintendents; three others mentioned the goal of educational administration in general. Despite the fact that over half of them already had an average of four years of administrative experience in schools, more than half indicated they would pursue top executive and consultant positions *outside* of education. The more frequently cited reason for moving outside education was the fear that administrative positions in education would not be available to them. As one woman said, "Will districts *hire* women?"

### Experiences in the Program

When asked if and how they were affected by taking classes from male professors and in which male students outnumber female students, most remarked that the program mirrored their experiences in the work world and in higher education in general. Some reported a lack of support from their male peers while others emphasized favorable characteristics of professors with respect to non-sexist language, behaviors, and attitudes. One commented on the use of "sexist materials;" another deplored hearing sexist jokes in class and said, "There is no room for feminists in educational administration classes." Another expressed concern that women's management styles are not explored in the program.

When asked about the role of affirmative action, the women's responses varied. One felt that affirmative action efforts were "necessary," but stressed that attitudes and competency are "most necessary" for success in the program. Others felt that affirmative action would only be helpful with stricter enforcement. As one said, "If it [affirmative action] was rigorously and consistently implemented, it would demand either that traditionally favored groups bear the brunt of discrimination or that there be a sweeping socio-economic reform of a scope unlikely to be accepted by society."

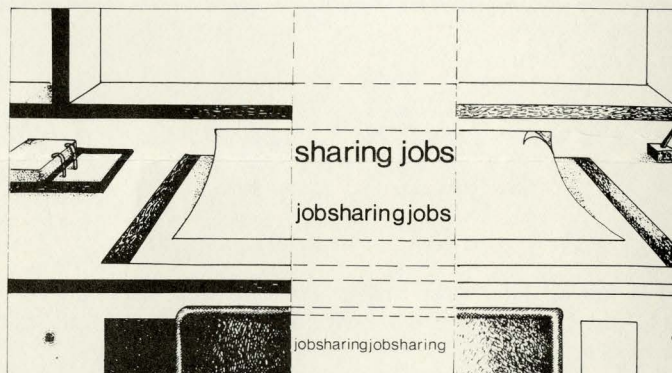
Although many said they had found a mentor to guide them educationally and although eight were receiving financial support in the form of assistantships, many felt the lack of emotional support in the program. Even though, as one woman stated, "The women's support system at the University is very valuable and very strong," they still lamented the lack of support from their male peers and professors.

Perhaps the value of a study of this nature is that it uncovers more questions than it answers. We still need to know if the experiences of these females are only representative of this program. We also need to know if males and females differ in their experiences in graduate programs in educational administration. Although this sample was admittedly a small one, this study points to the direction for future research. The answers concerning women graduate students will not be complete until we more fully understand male aspirants.

## Job Sharing in

## Educational Administration

N. C. McFadden



Job sharing in Oregon school districts is limited for the most part to classroom teaching positions. Official job sharing at the administrative level seldom occurs.

A current exception is the Scio district, where Ellis Mason and Jim Sipe are serving as co-superintendents for the 1977-78 school year. This particular example of job sharing differs in some respects from the usual definition in that the position was not intended to be a shared one.

Late last summer, when the board found itself without a superintendent, the district's administrative assistant was asked to fill the position temporarily. In mid-October, after an unsuccessful search, the board designated Mason and Sipe as co-superintendents. Each has continued as full-time building principal (Sipe at the middle school and Mason at the elementary school), but with some extra compensation for the additional duties.

This solution, reached with state department assistance and considered a one-year appointment by all, sounds simple. Arriving at it was not, yet the arrangement seems to have worked well.

Mason and Sipe have been personal friends and professional colleagues for some four years, and this relationship has shaped both their approach and their attitudes toward their joint position. The job responsibilities are divided according to individual strengths, as might be expected. But Mason and Sipe have also brought some new dimensions to their job, as in requesting that their evaluation be done in an open meeting, rather than in executive board session.

Both stress the importance if not the necessity of cooperation and frequent consultation. Often four people are involved in the decision-making, since the new high school principal as well as the administrative assistant, Ruth Scott, are part of the management team. All four attend board and budget meetings and district activities.

In January, the board opened the search for superintendent.

Mason and Sipe miss their former close contact with building staff and students, but both say they have enjoyed the challenge of this year's experience. As for next year, their options appear to be several.

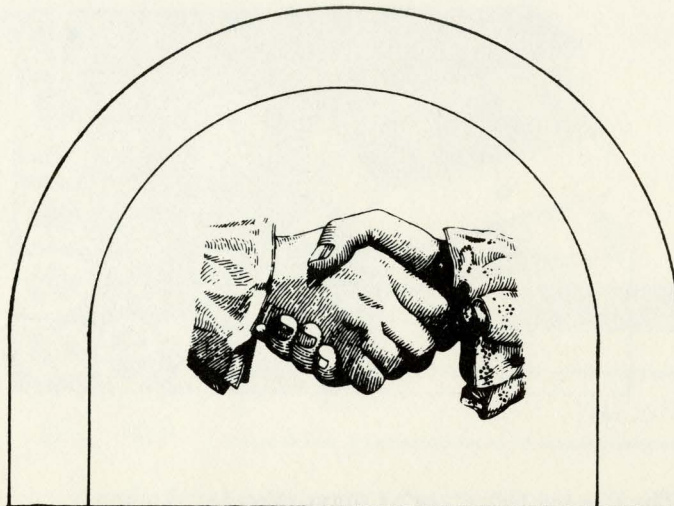
Apply jointly for the superintendency? No. "Everybody—anybody—wants to be top in their chosen field," and sooner or later the urge to be "the best of two equals" would emerge. This, they believe, would be harmful both to the district and to what is obviously a valued friendship. Apply separately? No. If both wanted to apply they "would flip a coin," with the loser of the toss giving wholehearted support to the winner's candidacy. Among other possibilities: a return to building principalship; application to other districts; a decision by the administrative assistant to apply for the job (Scott holds a two-year community college degree, and would be eligible for this only under unusual circumstances).

Scio's temporary co-superintendency aside, a number of other Oregon superintendents were asked about job sharing in general at their level of administration. Most felt that, for varying reasons, a co-superintendency would not work. A sampling of comments from the rest: "The superintendent's job is becoming more complex, and the way society is evolving we'll probably see more of this—although somebody else will have to try it first;" "I've written such proposals before, but the board wasn't ready for it. I plan to go back and try again;" "It's great. It's all in the organization. I've done it (in another state), and it worked so well the next superintendent did the same thing."

### *Conference Termed Success*

In January, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), through a Ford Foundation grant, sponsored three regional workshops to assist women in moving into superintendency positions. A total of 75 women from across the nation participated in the training sessions. Margaret Nichols, Director of Educational Services for School District 4J in Eugene, was one of 25 participants selected to attend the western region workshop held in Los Angeles.

The program included presentations and discussions by many nationally-known educational leaders on such topics as the job search and application process, the informal system ("old boys' network") which exists for hiring superintendents, and negotiating the superintendent's contract, plus simulated interviews with board members and informal conversations with several women superintendents about their experiences. Nichols reported that she was pleased with the practicality and helpfulness of the sessions. For her, they provided an awareness of the tremendous time and energy commitment required to actively pursue a superintendency opening. Also, the personal costs of the position were discussed openly by both women and men currently holding superintendencies. Apart from the useful content of the workshop, a highlight for Nichols, and a "first," was attending a conference specifically for women and experiencing the feeling of camaraderie and support that existed. She concluded that it was a growth-producing time and very helpful to her long-range career plans.



## ***Oregon Women in Educational Administration***

### **FIRST ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

**June 21, 1978**

Convention Center  
Seaside, Oregon

*The idea for this conference grew out of a woman's caucus held at the COSA Conference in 1977, at which time the need was identified to provide information, support and encouragement for women administrators and those seeking to be administrators. Although there are national and state organizations concerned with the problems of women or the issues in public school administration, Oregon needs an organization specifically devoted to the issues of public school administration.*

#### Registration Form

Name: .....

Address: .....

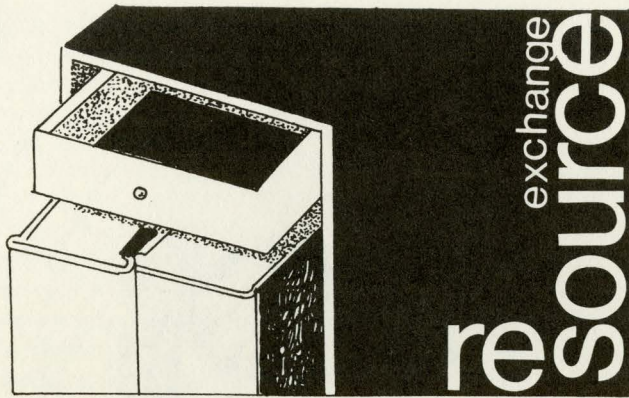
City: .....

State: .....

Enclosed please find \$10.00 membership fee for OWEA (make checks out to OWEA).

Enclosed find \$10.00 for OWEA Annual Conference registration (including lunch).

Make your reservation now by returning the registration form to SEEL. More information is available upon request.



**The Oregon Governor's Commission for Women**, funded under the Governor's budget, is intended to act as a source of information on women's issues and as a clearing-house for the activities of women's organizations throughout the state. One of the immediate objectives is to develop a statewide referral program of available community resources and support services for women. For further information, contact:

Marilyn Miller, Executive Director  
Oregon Governor's Commission for Women  
116 Labor & Industries Building  
Salem, OR 97310  
Phone: (503) 378-6520

**New Day Films** is a group of independent filmmakers who cooperatively distribute 16mm films about changing sex roles. From *Growing Up Female* to *Men's Lives*, from *Anything You Want to Be* to *Joyce at 34*, the films can be used as powerful teaching tools. The films' lengths range from five to 50 minutes and the rental prices from \$15 to \$60. For a list of available films, write:

New Day Films  
P.O. Box 315  
Franklin Lakes, N.J. 07417

**Guidelines for Nonsexist Language in APA Journals.** The Publication Manual, Change Sheet 2, of the American Psychological Association, states the policy on sexist language in APA journals. Also offered are some general principles for journal authors to consider, and some suggested ways to avoid sexist language. To obtain single copies of this change sheet at no cost, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

Publication Manual  
Change Sheet 2  
American Psychological Association  
1200 Seventeenth Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

**The Longest War: Sex Differences in Perspective** is a 33-page book by Carol Tavris and Carole Offir, published by Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, Inc., New York, 1977. This book is a good, concise introduction to the nature of sex differences and inequality. It includes explanations of sex inequality from biology, psychoanalysis, psychology, sociology and anthropology, plus a discussion of differences in sex inequalities in other cultures. Available in paperback for \$6.95.

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We would like this column to become a true exchange among our readers. Your suggestions would help our project and other readers keep abreast of current resources in the field of education.

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*Sex Equity in Educational Leadership Report*

Editor: Carole Starling  
Assistance: Joan Kalvelage, C. Sakre Oller, Pat Schmuck, Jean Stockard,  
Nancy Gubka, Peg Williams, Mary Ann Smith, Spencer Wyant  
Graphics: Ellie Specht

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Sex Equity in  
Educational Leadership  
CEPM  
University of Oregon  
1472 Kincaid  
Eugene, Oregon 97401

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