The Greenfield Awards, 1978-1987:
An examination of the purposes, conceptual frameworks, methodologies and findings

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Abstract

This paper examines the doctoral theses that received CASEA’s Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Award from 1978-1987. Each dissertation is examined by topic, research questions, conceptual framework, methodology, findings, and implications for research and practice. The theses are then categorized, using a system based on frameworks by Murphy & Seashore Louis (1999), and Miklos (1992). Finally, the dissertations are discussed in terms of their characteristic quality, the degree to which they reflect women’s perspectives, and the extent to which they can be considered indigenously Canadian works.
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Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to examine the doctoral dissertations that received the award as CASEA’s best Canadian thesis in the field of educational administration from 1978-1987. To conduct such an examination, it is first necessary to establish a conceptual framework that acts as a backdrop for analysis and a system for categorizing the theses. This is accomplished by reviewing the works of scholars who have developed systems for classifying scholarly work in educational administration.

With the conceptual framework established, this paper then provides a review of related literature, which begins with a focus on the historical development of educational administration as a field of scholarship. This provides a foundation for discussing potential emerging trends in the research themes and methodology. The second area of related literature includes those scholarly works that describe similar studies focusing on an examination of doctoral research in educational administration. This will provide insight into the methods and findings of other scholars conducting such studies.

To analyze the award-winning dissertations, each of the ten theses will be examined and categorized according to their thematic focus within the field, using the system established by Murphy & Seashore Louis, in the Handbook of Research on Educational Administration (1999). The theses will be further classified according to their applied research methodologies. This exercise will utilize the system created by Miklos (1991) to analyze doctoral research in one academic institution.

In a final examination of the doctoral theses that received CASEA’s Thomas B. Greenfield award, the dissertations are discussed in terms of quality and disciplined
enquiry, the degree to which they reflect women’s perspectives, and the extent to which they add to the knowledge base in educational administration within a Canadian context.

Conceptual Framework

Since the late 1800s, educational administration has evolved into a “broad and complex academic field” (Willower & Forsythe, 1999, p. 1). In recent years, “genuine specialization was to come with the development and professionalization of educational administration as a field of study, which became more serious after World War II” (p. 6). During this evolution, however, there has been diversity of thought as to the definitive ‘centre’ of educational administration, as well as the methods used to conduct research.

Scholars in the field continue to examine the discipline in order to find a unifying centre. Some, such as Donmoyer (1999), suggest that there is no centre but, rather, the field has adopted a ‘big tent’ strategy. Within the political arena, the big tent strategy refers to a method of inclusion among those with differing ideas. Political parties, for example, may support opposing or contradictory proposals, for the purpose of garnering a broader base of support. Donmoyer suggests that big tent politics has found its way into the field of educational administration, by including and supporting scholars with opposing philosophical views and methodological practices.

Donmoyer sees this big tent strategy as “confused and, at the aggregate level at least, contradictory” (p. 36). However, in discussing the internationalization of educational administration, Chapman, Sackney, and Aspin (1999) suggest that diversified insights and interests benefit the field, and scholars should commit to an ‘open society.’ Similarly, Starratt (2004) values diversity of thought, and suggests that critical, yet affirming dialogue is essential to the ‘common journey’ of scholars in the field of educational administration.
A review of CASEA’s 1978-1987 award-winning dissertations suggests that diversity was evident in educational administration during this time period. As such, an examination of these theses requires a flexible framework for categorizing them. The comparatively brief time period, from 1978-1987, does not warrant the use of an historical categorization system that classifies the theses by era. Rather, the system must allow for categorization based on the topics studied, questions asked, and research methods utilized.

Many scholars in educational administration have designed frameworks for categorizing studies, topical approaches to scholarship, scholarly perspectives, and research methodology. For example, in the *Handbook of Research on Educational Administration* (1999), editors Murphy & Seashore Louis establish a framework for organizing the handbook by theme. Borrowing the core elements from a framework developed by Parsons (1960), Murphy & Seashore Louis establish a framework that is based on the technical, managerial, and institutional levels of an organization:

In education, the technical level is concerned with the learning-teaching process. The managerial level refers to leadership, administration, and organization of schooling. The institutional level attends to relations between the school and its external environment - both close-in relations, such as those with parents, and more distal relations, such as those with the economic, political, and social dimensions of society (p. xxii).

Murphy & Seashore Louis’ categorization system is general enough to be inclusive of a variety of research studies in education, and yet specific enough to target differing topical elements. Therefore, this framework may constitute the most appropriate and effective instrument for examining the topics focused upon in the 1978-1987 CASEA dissertations. Unfortunately, Murphy & Seashore Louis’ framework is limited, in that it lacks a focus on
research methodology. Since the purpose of this paper is to categorize the CASEA doctoral
dissertations by theme and methodology, the technical-managerial-institutional framework
must be supplemented for use herein.

Miklos (1992) conducted a unique examination of doctoral research in educational
administration at the University Alberta, from 1958-1991. Some of the strategies used for
categorizing the 330 theses completed during that time period prove valuable for
categorizing the CASEA dissertations. Miklos’ system for examining the research methods
used in these studies is based on the overall purpose, research strategy, and data collection
for each thesis. Instead of dividing studies according to qualitative and qualitative
methodologies, Miklos suggests that the general goals of a study guide the selection of
methods used. As such, he establishes six purposes for classification, and identifies them
as: descriptive, relational, evaluative, developmental, conceptual, and methodological
studies. According to Miklos, “While most theses could be described accurately by single
terms, combinations of terms such as descriptive/relational were required in order to
categorize studies with multiple objectives” (p. 11).

Miklos’ second basis for categorization focuses on six research strategies or designs
used in the studies. These are: surveys, case studies, comparative studies, causal-
comparative studies, experimental studies, or panel studies. Miklos classifies the theses
further, on the basis of data collection methods. His five categories include: questionnaires,
interviews, documents, observations, and records.

Miklos uses this purpose-strategy-data framework to categorize all of the 330
documental theses. He also conducts an examination of the theses to identify research topics
such as: organizational analysis, policy development, educational change, decision making,
and administration. However, Miklos found that this classification exercise did not provide
extensive insight, as the studies varied significantly in thematic focus. Nonetheless, Miklos’ system of categorizing theses by research methodology is in depth and functional, and is most relevant for use in classifying the CASEA award-winning theses from 1978-1987.

One option for categorizing the CASEA theses is to merge the framework developed by Murphy & Seashore Louis with that of Miklos. This allows for a more accurate classification by topic, using the themes established by Murphy & Seashore Louis, but provides more specific categorization of the studies by applying Mikos’ system of identifying purposes, research strategies, and data collection methods. Using the theme-methodology framework developed herein, the CASEA award-winning doctoral theses are examined and categorized, in an effort to identify major research themes, describe methodological characteristics, and determine possible trends in the research over the decade in question. This categorization system establishes the conceptual framework for the paper, and provides an approach for examining the CASEA award-winning dissertations. This, in turn, may offer a sense of the position of each thesis on the changing landscape of educational administration in Canada.

Related Literature

The literature related to this study falls under three categories – the scholarly works that establish the conceptual framework for the paper, the publications that provide an historical context of educational administration in Canada, and other studies that present a review of doctoral dissertations in educational administration. The first works, by Willower & Forsythe, Donmoyer, Murphy & Seashore Louis, and Miklos, have been presented within the development of this paper’s conceptual framework.

The second category of literature is related to the history of educational administration and, specifically, the history of educational administration in Canada. In
global terms, the works of Culbertson (1988) and Murphy (2005) provide historical views of the evolution of educational administration, by establishing distinct eras that are based on the influences of specific time periods. Donmoyer (1999) brings these historical views into a more present-day perspective by examining the years from 1976-1998.

Culbertson (1988) presents an historical perspective of the field of educational administration by describing five time periods and the progressive changes in the field during those eras. He suggests that, for over a century, scholars have worked to define and professionalize the field of educational administration. Culbertson depicts the growth of the field beginning with the speculative era, from 1875-1900, which was strongly influenced by the work of William Payne, a school superintendent who published the first book on educational administration. From this, Culbertson proceeds to describe the positivistic era from 1901-1925, the pragmatic/positivistic era from 1926-1950, and the logical positivistic era from 1951-1966. Culbertson’s final era, from 1967-1985, is described as adopting post-positivistic, phenomenological, and critical perspectives. This era was strongly influenced by the work of Griffiths (1979), Bates (1982), Foster (1980), and especially Thomas B. Greenfield (1975), who challenged the rational, empirically-based perspective of his for-runners in the field of educational administration.

Murphy (2005) provides a similar historical framework, which includes four eras. He begins with the time period from 1820-1900, when philosophy was the centre of gravity in educational administration, where religion was the field’s foundation, and values its engine. Murphy then describes the 1901-1945 management era, the 1946-1984 social sciences era, and the current dialectic era which centres on school improvement.

In order to describe the contemporary changing landscape in the field of educational administration, Donmoyer (1999) discusses the emergence of diverse approaches by
feminist scholars, post-positivists, critical theorists, and postmodernists, and proponents of queer theory and culturally-based approaches to research. At the same time, there remains a strong focus on positivist approaches and traditional, empirically-based research. Although Donmoyer suggests that the current state of the field is wrought with ‘big tent politics’, such diversity may well be the answer to examining the current educational system which, in itself, is based on an eclectic society that can no longer be described as mainstream.

Within the Canadian context, the literature related to the history of educational administration includes scholarly works by Townsend & Lawton (1981), Allison (1991, 1999), and Young (2004). These studies examine the historical context of the discipline for varying purposes and from different perspectives. Townsend & Lawton (1981) served as editors on a series of essays examining the question, *What’s So Canadian About Canadian Educational Administration?* The essays are written by scholars in the field, as well as notable practitioners and civil servants in education. The collection examines American influences on the Canadian field of educational administration, the differences between the two country’s systems of education, and the ensuing effects on scholarship. In order to answer their own question and shed light on the uniqueness of Canadian educational administration, the contributors examine some of the traditions and special interests of Canadians involved in educational administration. Topics include social mobility and equality through education, governance, politics and decision-making, and the roles of both practitioners and academics in educational administration within Canadian institutions. In essence, the message in this book suggests that, although Canadian “educational administration as a field of study is inextricably tied to American-developed conceptual frameworks” (Hickox, p. 1), there is a need “to defend and construct much more of an
indigenous knowledge base. In our field of educational administration, there’s a bright future for truly Canadian studies” (Townsend, p. 205).

Allison (1991) examines and discusses the development of ‘academic educational administration,’ a term he uses to describe scholarly study at universities, as opposed to practical employment in the school system. Allison compares the history of American and Canadian educational organizations, from the turn of the century up to the 1960s. He notes, specifically, that Canada lagged behind by a half century in offering intensive graduate studies in educational administration. He suggests that this occurred, in part, because American school systems established superintendencies early in the century, while the Canadian education system relied on inspectors. Although the roles were similar, there was a stronger push to professionalize the superintendency through graduate work. Hence, university scholarship in educational administration flourished in the U.S. As such, graduate programs expanded throughout the States, and such degrees were supported, respected, and often required at the principal and superintendent levels.

In Canada, it was not until the 1950s, when the inspectorate was abandoned and superintendencies were established, that educational administration was viewed as an essential and integral field worthy of study and funding. Graduate programs began to develop across the country, but not to a parallel degree as had occurred to the south. As such, “much of the theoretical, conceptual and methodological knowledge, values, and assumptions that came to form the initial core of Canadian graduate programs in educational administration were naturally borrowed from the field as it had come to be defined and understood in the USA” (p. 18). This, of course, meant that trends, such as the Theory Movement, made their way into the Canadian context. Many scholars in educational administration unquestioningly accepted the approach, which made it even
more surprising when Greenfield challenged the Theory Movement. His argument that the
current approaches to scholarship in educational administration were restrictive and
inhumane, may have been the first step in inspiring other Canadian scholars to question,
avoid blind acceptance, and to pave their own path forward in the field. Allison, along with
other Canadian scholars such as Townsend, suggests that Greenfield may have established
the beginnings of educational administration in a purely Canadian context.

In Allison’s second paper (1999), he traces the historical development of the
Canadian Association for Studies in Education Administration. His work has significant
relevance to this paper, as Allison outlines the initiation of the CASEA doctoral awards,
later named for Thomas B. Greenfield. As noted in his previous paper, the scholarship of
educational administration in Canada found its beginnings during the 1950s, with research
projects on educational leadership and the 1956 opening of the first Canadian department of
educational administration, at the University of Alberta.

In 1972, the Canadian Association of Professors of Educational Administration was
formed, and became CASEA in 1973, when it joined the Canadian Society for Studies in
Education (CSSE). Over the years, membership has fluctuated, but has seen a increase in
women and student members in the last decade. CASEA offered its first doctoral
dissertation award in 1978, and the award was renamed for Greenfield in 1994. Allison
offers a list of the 1978-1999 CASEA doctoral dissertation winners, honourable mentions,
the corresponding universities, and supervisory advisors. He explains that, “The purpose of
the award has always been to give recognition to outstanding dissertation research and to
facilitate communication about that research” (p. 125).

Allison focuses next on issues of identity and enquiry, outlining some of the
successes and struggles within educational administration in Canada, resulting from the
diversity in the field. He suggests that, as a result of the Greenfield debate and the expansion of perspectives, “the positivist epistemic heritage of logical empiricism has become less and less tenable: although critiques of ‘standard science’ still appear, central debate now hinges on what might constitute disciplined enquiry in the post-empiricist world” (p. 134). This statement is a powerful reflection on how research has been redefined in the field. The statement also constitutes a point of discussion for examining the CASEA award-winning dissertations, as the studies may reflect what Allison refers to as “disciplined enquiry in the post-empiricist world.” As such, the final examination of these theses warrants a closer look at the studies as meritorious, disciplined enquiry.

Young (2004), another notable Canadian scholar in educational administration, provides a feminist perspective on the history of the field. Young begins with an historical examination of the academic developments in the field, specific to the Canadian context. She then reviews publications in refereed Canadian education journals from 1988-1993, in order to identify what was being considered legitimate research and conceptual knowledge. Although this review focuses on the years immediately beyond those of the CASEA dissertations examined herein, Young’s paper provides another perspective of the historical context of educational administration in Canada. Young suggests that, even though Greenfield made strides in opening up the field to new forms of scholarship, the feminist perspective was not one of them. Since the mid-1980s, women have been more visible in university departments of educational administration, and now make up approximately 20% of the staff in Canadian universities. The number of female graduate students in educational administration has also increased significantly. Nonetheless, as of the publication date of Young’s paper, “Not one doctoral dissertation receiving the annual CASEA award has been based on feminist analysis, although several award-winners have been women” (p. 7).
The third category of related literature, which examines Canadian doctoral dissertations in educational administration, is, not surprisingly, extremely limited. Other than Miklos’ work, the only similar study was conducted by CASEA, and constitutes a collection of dissertation abstracts from 1985-1992. Although the publication provides a categorical key by which each thesis is identified by education level and topic, there is no analysis offered, or examination of research methodology. As such, the CASEA document mainly serves as a summative catalog of doctoral theses.

It appears that the study conducted by Miklos is unique in this area, and may be held up as a model for subsequent studies. Miklos’ study of 330 doctoral dissertations, completed at the University of Alberta from 1958-1991, attempts to identify the research methodologies, search for trends in the methodologies, identify the major research themes in the studies, summarize the outcomes of the studies, and use these findings to discuss the future of doctoral research. (Miklos, 1992, p. 1-2). The rationale behind Miklos’ study is based primarily on the state of the field of educational administration at that time and, arguably, up to present times. Miklos suggests that, as a result of diversity and fragmentation within the field, research has not had the cumulative effects of building knowledge. Further, Miklos attests that, “in spite of the numerous studies conducted in educational administration, the literature that relates directly to research methodologies is fairly limited” (p. 2). He concludes that this examination of dissertations in educational administration offers insight into trends and future directions for research in the field.

By applying his classification scheme to the dissertations from the University of Alberta, Miklos identifies several characteristics of the doctoral research:

Although there was diversity across the theses, most of the studies were oriented primarily toward description and toward the examination of relationships among
variables. In general, the main purpose of the research appears to have been to increase knowledge about current practices and about the ways in which different aspects of administrative structures and processes are interrelated. Neither the evaluation of current administrative practices nor the development of alternatives received much attention in this set of doctoral studies. Similarly, only a limited amount of research was oriented toward developing new conceptualizations, testing models and theories or explicitly examining new research methods (p. 162).

Miklos suggests that the emphasis on descriptive and relational studies may be expected, as a result of the constraints under which most doctoral students work. Limited time, funds, and other resources may warrant such decisions. Nonetheless, Miklos states that the select few dissertations that did focus on evaluative, developmental, conceptual, and methodological purposes prove that it is indeed possible and worthwhile to approach doctoral work in diverse ways. He therefore concludes that, “The potential of doctoral studies to contribute to research in these areas merits further consideration” (p. 162).

Miklos also found that the methods used in this collection of dissertations were limited, and focused primarily on surveys and case studies. Only a few studies used case/survey, comparative, experimental, panel, and causal-comparative strategies. However, there appeared to be more diversity within the data collection methods used in these 330 studies. The major methods involved the use of questionnaires, interviews, and documents, with less focus on observation and records. Further, Miklos draws a significant conclusion with regard to the field’s struggle with methodological diversity:

Noteworthy in relation to the nature of the data collection techniques is the extent to which researchers have used qualitative data as well as the extent to which analysis based on both quantitative and qualitative data has been used to address particular
research questions. Evidently, some of the more fundamental issues associated with quantitative and qualitative research have not posed major problems for researchers who have used both types of data in a single study (p. 164).

Miklos also identifies trends in the research that became evident over the 33 year time period. There appears to be a move away from exploring relationships and toward description. There also tends to be a trend away from survey research toward case studies. Similarly, the era saw a move away from the use of questionnaires, in the direction of increased use of interviews, document analysis, and observation. “In general, the trend was away from quantitative toward qualitative data and associated methods of analysis as well as toward increased use of multiple methods of data collection” (p. 165).

The review of related literature herein builds upon the purpose and conceptual framework of this paper, and establishes a basis for examining CASEA’s Thomas B. Greenfield award-winning dissertations. As such, these doctoral studies will be analyzed by categorizing the themes and methods, and articulating the findings of this exercise.

Major Findings

*Categorical analysis.* The ten CASEA award-winning dissertations were examined in terms of each thesis’ statement of problem, research questions, conceptual framework, methodology, findings, implications for practice, and implications for research. This offered insight into the themes and research methods used in each thesis, which, in turn, allows for categorization using the theme-methodology framework.

*Themes.* A thorough examination and analysis of the CASEA award-winning dissertations from 1978-1987 finds that the theses spanned a variety of topics within the field of educational administration, from organizational theory, leadership roles and
principal effectiveness, to school culture and moral atmosphere. The studies may be
categorized accordingly, using the themes articulated by Murphy & Seashore Louis:

Table 2
Themes in the Doctoral Research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>The concept of moral atmosphere in educational settings. (Mays, UT).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Cultural change in an inner city high school. Alpern (UA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>Work-related learning efforts of school principals: An exploratory study. (Storey, UBC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>The principal as boundary administrator: A field study of inner-city schools. (Schwartz, UT).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>Attitudes of educational administrators toward human resources accounting. (Myroon, UA).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>A meta-analysis of Fiedler’s contingency model of leadership effectiveness. (Crehan, UBC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>Interorganizational relationships and effectiveness in a program for the preparation of allied health professionals. Andrews (UA).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the ten theses examined, two focus on the technical work of schools, studying the moral atmosphere in classrooms, and cultural change in an inner-city school. Four of the theses examine the role of administrators, focusing on issues of principal learning, the principal’s role as boundary administrator, administrators’ attitudes toward human resources accounting, and models of leadership effectiveness. The remaining four theses focus on more global issues of the educational organization, examining interrelationships in health care training programs, theories of bureaucracy, interorganizational systems, and collective bargaining. It appears that, during the era of these studies, less emphasis was placed on
researching the technical work of schools, while more focus was directed at the managerial and organizational contexts of educational administration.

*Research Methodology.* In order to examine the methodological aspects of the CASEA theses, the Miklos’ scheme was used to categorically identify the purpose, strategy, and data collection of each dissertation. Table 3 outlines these findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thesis</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Research Strategy</th>
<th>Data Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978 - Interorganizational relationships and effectiveness in a program for the preparation of allied health professionals. Andrews (UA).</td>
<td>descriptive relational</td>
<td>survey</td>
<td>interviews, questionnaires, records</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979 - Work-related learning efforts of school principals: An exploratory study. (Storey, UBC).</td>
<td>descriptive relational</td>
<td>survey</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - The concept of moral atmosphere in educational settings. (Mays, UT).</td>
<td>relational conceptual</td>
<td>survey</td>
<td>questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982 - The principal as boundary administrator: A field study of inner-city schools. (Schwartz, UT).</td>
<td>descriptive conceptual</td>
<td>survey</td>
<td>observation, interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983 - Attitudes of educational administrators toward human resources accounting. (Myroon, UA).</td>
<td>descriptive relational</td>
<td>survey</td>
<td>questionnaires</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984 - The interorganizational collectivity: A study of the Manpower institutional training system in Manitoba. (Rees, UT).</td>
<td>relational descriptive</td>
<td>case study</td>
<td>interviews, documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985 - A meta-analysis of Fiedler’s contingency model of leadership effectiveness. (Crehan, UBC).</td>
<td>evaluative</td>
<td>comparative</td>
<td>documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987 - Cultural change in an inner city high school. Alpern (UA).</td>
<td>descriptive</td>
<td>case study</td>
<td>interviews, documents, observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to Miklos’ classification scheme and descriptors, an analysis of the CASEA dissertations from 1978-1987 reflects some significant findings. In keeping with the findings of Miklos’ much larger study, seven of these CASEA award-winning theses are descriptive in nature. Of these seven studies, five are descriptive relational, while one is descriptive conceptual, and one is purely descriptive. The two remaining theses are single-purpose studies, one being conceptual and one evaluative. None of the studies articulate a developmental purpose aimed at designing and testing a program or policy, or a methodological purpose aimed at testing a current or innovative research technique.

With regard to research strategies, again the findings herein reflect Miklos’ findings to a significant degree. Surveys appeared to be the most common research strategy used, with eight of the ten studies applying this methodological design. Of the remaining four theses, two used case study strategies, and two implemented a comparative research design. None of the theses applied a causal-comparative, experimental, or panel research strategy. As Miklos suggests, this may be the result of constraints in doctoral studies. For example, doctoral researchers may find it difficult to access naturally occurring experiments as are used in causal-comparative studies. Similarly, these researchers may be challenged with ethical constraints in using experimental designs on human subjects within the educational setting. They would surely also find the long-term commitment to panel studies unrealistic within the context of a doctoral degree.

There appears to be more diversity in the data collection methods used in the 1978-1987 CASEA dissertations, as opposed to the purposes and research strategies. This is a finding that Miklos also realized in his study. Single and multi-use data collection methods were evenly distributed: five studies applied only one form of data collection, while five applied two or three methods. The most commonly used forms of data collection were
questionnaires and interviews, both of which were used in five studies. Four studies utilized documents, while two used observation, and one relied on records for data. These findings are in line with Miklos’ study, which found that the major data collection methods involved the use of questionnaires, interviews, and documents, with less focus on observation and records. Similarly, Miklos suggests that many studies tended toward a blended use of qualitative and quantitative designs, as is the case with the CASEA dissertations as well.

Trends. It is a difficult task to accurately identify trends in research over a relatively short period of time, such as the decade from 1978-1987. As such, it may be more useful to examine the findings of this paper alongside the findings of the other doctoral cohort members examining the following two eras of CASEA award-winning doctoral dissertations. Such an examination may well bring to light emerging trends and patterns within educational administration as a field of scholarship in Canada.

Discussion

The final analysis of CASEA’s 1978-1987 Thomas B. Greenfield doctoral dissertation award-winning studies will involve a discussion of some key questions arising from the literature review presented previously. First, the theses will be discussed in terms of the extent to which they construct “an indigenous knowledge base…of truly Canadian studies” (Townsend, 1981, p. 205). Secondly, as suggested by Young, the doctoral studies will be discussed in terms of the degree to which they are written by and about women, and employ a feminist perspective. Finally, the dissertations will be discussed in terms of reflecting “disciplined enquiry in the post-empiricist world” (Allison, 1999, p. 134).

Canadian Context. In terms of Canadian context and content in the 1978-1987 CASEA dissertations, diversity prevails. With the exception of Allison’s conceptual examination of Weber’s bureaucracy (1981) and Crehan’s meta-analysis of Fiedler’s
congruency model (1985), the remaining studies examine local or provincial organizations, institutions, and systems, thus contributing to the knowledge base of educational administration by exploring specific Canadian jurisdictions.


In all, the studies take place within the provinces from Ontario west, inclusively. Interestingly, none of the studies explore issues in the Quebec, Atlantic, or northern territorial contexts. One might surmise that the reasons behind the apparent absence of award-winning studies conducted in eastern Canada might have more to do with language and geographic barriers, as opposed to a lack of quality research of award-winning calibre.

Women’s perspectives. Of the ten CASEA award winning theses from 1978-1987, three were the work of women. Annabelle Mays was the first woman to be acknowledged with this honour in 1980. Mays went on to become the Dean of Education at the University of Winnipeg. Ruth Rees followed in 1984, as the next woman to be recognized with the Thomas B. Greenfeld dissertation award. Dr. Rees is currently a professor in the Graduate
Program in the Faculty of Education at Queens University. Pat Crehan was the next woman to win the CASEA dissertation award, in 1985. Crehan went on to work at the University of British Columbia, in the Department of Educational Studies.

Although these three women may have paved the way for female scholars in educational administration by being recognized for their meritorious scholarship, the ten year era examined in this paper offers no examples of studies that focus on women’s issues or adopt a feminist perspective. Such themes were to be evident only in the Thomas B. Greenfield dissertation awards in years following 1987.

Disciplined enquiry. According to Allison (1999), the trend in educational administration research has been a gradual move away from logical empiricism toward more humane and qualitative approaches to scholarship. Challenges to the Theory Movement began in the 1970s by scholars such as Habermas (1975) and continued through the 1980s with the Greenfield (1980) and Foster (1986). Interestingly, this emergence of new thought was occurring at the same time as doctoral students, such as those who earned CASEA’s doctoral award, were designing, developing, and conducting their research. One might therefore anticipate that these theses would reflect this changing epistemic. Of the ten CASEA dissertations from 1978-1987, six have an empirical element, although only three rely strictly on quantitative data. The remaining four theses would fall under this emerging epistemological approach that relies on conceptualization through qualitative research.

Allison suggests that one of the prevailing conflicts in educational administration is the argument that studies not using those approaches that are purely positivist and objective construct less than credible knowledge. He advises, however, that since these new schools of thought are not going to disappear, scholars must approach such research with a lens that examines the degree of disciplined enquiry, and not the degree of quantitative data.
The Greenfield dissertation awards began in 1978, during the emergence of these new approaches to research in educational administration. The selection criteria for the award include: (a) significance of the research problem, (b) conceptualization, design, and execution of the study, (c) potential for theory development, further research, and improved practice, and (d) relevance to the field of educational administration in Canada (CASEA, 2005). Since the theses examined herein were recognized by the CASEA selection committees, one might conclude that they reflect disciplined enquiry, and focus on significant and relevant issues. With Allison’s advice in mind, however, it may be argued that the most significant trend evident in the research that was awarded this CASEA honour from 1978-1987 is that many of them veered away from empirical research designs, and were still considered by designated scholars in the field to be the best of the best. It appears that, even during the midst of the growing conflict over epistemological traditions and perspectives, these scholars determined that research conducted through different lenses should be considered meritorious, disciplined enquiry.

**Conclusion**

The appearance of contradictory perspectives within any field of scholarly work is not uncommon, in fact, it is essential to the pursuit of new ideas. In allowing for and respecting diversity of thought, content, and methodology, scholars further the field of educational administration. Such is the case with CASEA’s 1978-1987 award-winning doctoral theses that collectively represent varying epistemological lenses and approaches to research, while adhering to high standards of disciplined enquiry and knowledge-building. The doctoral students that earned the distinction in receiving the Thomas B. Greenfield Dissertation Awards during this era must be acknowledged and celebrated as distinguished scholars who contributed to the knowledge base of educational administration in Canada.
References


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