
Accountability, responsibility and school leadership

Lee-Anne Perry

Principal, All Hallows' School, Brisbane, Australia

Erica McWilliam

*Queensland University of Technology, Kelvin Grove,
Queensland, Australia*

Abstract

School leaders are faced today with a new 'attentional economy' (Taylor 2005) in which schools must be seen to perform, and to perform in ways that are measurable and thus are rendered visible to all. In this paper we seek to account for this new attentional economy as one that is an effect of risk-consciousness impacting on schools as social organisations. We attempt to show how rationalities of risk have come to require principals as school managers to pay attention to, and require of others, the forensic work of making schooling calculable. We then raise some questions about the extent to which the new accountabilities that prompt so much of the forensic work school managers do should be differentiated from the responsibilities of principalship.

Introduction

School leaders have a broad and some would say, ever-burgeoning, array of responsibilities. From marketing to musicals, from staffing to salaries, the busy-ness of schooling requires that its leaders pay attention to an array of activities that is historically unprecedented. Moreover, unlike the headmasters of old who were emperors in their own domain, school principals are now under constant pressure to provide an account of all school policies and practices to anyone and everyone: governments, boards, staff, parents current and potential, student guilds, community groups and the like. In Australia, without a history of democratic localism of the sort that has characterised schooling in the USA (McWilliam 1987), this new context is doubly confronting. It requires a whole new managerial style from principals, a new 'attentional economy' (Taylor 2005) in which schools must be seen to perform, and

to perform in ways that are measurable and thus are rendered visible to all. No longer are principals figures of awe and unlimited power in their own empire, but, for better and worse, they are now the targets of all school-related aspirations and complaints. Moreover, the pleasures that were once afforded to the school head as ‘most expert teacher’ are now buried in a flurry of paperwork and a lack of opportunity to do any actual teaching. No longer a headmaster or headmistress, the principal who was once a teacher and an expert teacher at that, now does everything *but* teaching.

This paper seeks to account for this new attentional economy as one that is an effect of risk consciousness impacting on schools as social organisations. We attempt to show how rationalities of risk have come to require principals as school managers to pay attention to, and require of others, the forensic work of making schooling *calculable*. In other words, we are interested in exploring the ways in which all those involved in managing learning need to be involved in a labour of constant self-description (and/as self-justification) in order to be seen to be on guard against the potential for harm – reputational, financial, academic – that schools bring with them. In doing so, we raise some questions about the extent to which the new *accountabilities* that prompt so much of the forensic work school managers do should be differentiated from the *responsibilities* of principalship. Following Marilyn Strathern (2000b, page?), we mount a cautious argument that ‘the self-evident efficacy of audit’ does not fulfil our intellectual and social responsibility to students; indeed, it may distract us from that very important and time-consuming work. Our argument is not for a return to mythical grand old days when heads were allowed to get on with the ‘real work’ of running schools, but to create a space for thinking about the limits of the current high level of investment in the culture of audit, in terms of what it can deliver to school communities.

We want to explore further the so-called ‘new accountabilities’ of school principals which are derived from pre-determined outcomes often set by external agencies such as governments. To do so, it is necessary firstly to understand what is usually meant by the term ‘accountability’. Kogan (1986, p 19) argues that the term accountability ‘cover[s] ... a wide range of the philosophies and mechanisms governing the relationship between any public institution, its governing bodies and the whole of society’. At the schooling level, Fullan (in Earl, 2002) argues that the most important accountability relationships for teachers are those they have with parents and students and, therefore, teachers are responsible, first and foremost, to their students. Lello (1993, p 1) posits that accountability necessitates reporting to other people and having ‘a moral responsibility about what you are doing’. It is interesting to note here the extent to which accountability and responsibility are elided (we would argue problematically) in expert educational discourse. As Strathern (1997) notes, the ‘is’ and the ‘ought’ become conflated in the drive to find quantifiable measures of educational outcomes. It is our contention that responsibility includes the idea of accountability but also transcends it. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to explore the gap that may exist between a principal’s accountability and responsibility, and the significance of this gap in terms of decision making.

The rise of accountability

Clearly, schooling accountability – that is, being answerable to someone for the activities that go on in schools – is not new. Teachers have long been accountable for following the prescribed curriculum, for maintaining good order in their classroom, and for carrying out various duties that include but extend beyond classroom teaching. Until quite recent times, teachers were also accountable for their personal presentation (standards of dress) and behaviour (both within and outside the school context) to a degree that was arguably far more rigid than the various dress and ethical behaviour codes that exist today. What have changed quite dramatically over the last three decades are the nature, scope and purpose of accountability regimes in schools. These regimes have become ubiquitous in schools to the extent that they threaten to leave little, if any, space for experimentation, innovation and risk taking – the conditions so important for learning.

It is common for school educators, as they respond (or react) to yet another call for ‘greater accountability’, to look with critical eyes at the business world as the source of this seemingly new burden. However, the origin of the practices of accountability can be only partly attributed to the business world. It was education itself that provided a model for human accounting to the business sector by way of the examination system. As Hoskin (1996, p 268) observes, ‘writing, grading and examining practices, were inventions not of business but of the educational world’. More specifically they originated with the examination system established by Cambridge University which, in 1792, introduced numerical marking to the written responses to examinations. Thus, as Strathern (1997, p 307) notes, a ‘particular performance became a register of a general truth’ and, moreover, with measurement came targets: ‘what is became explicitly joined with what ought to be’. The results of individual student performance on the specific examinations became, in time, a measure also of institutional performance.

While the origins of accountability may be located in educational practices, the concept has subsequently been changed, codified and re-invented in the modern business world. This process, which Strathern terms ‘cultural replication’, is one where ‘values cross from one domain of cultural life to another and then, in altered form, back again’ (Strathern 1997, p 308). Having been re-imported into education, accountability has over time been further refined and developed to a point where it is one of the dominant discourses among educators at every level. Indeed, many would argue that regimes of accountability have been developed to such a degree that accountability is no longer simply one component of the education system but ‘constitutes the system itself’ (Ranson 2003, p 459).

The imperative for ‘more accountable schools’ arises in part out of the press to justify government spending at all levels. As pressure mounts on the public purse, governments in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand are increasingly tying funding for schools to learning outcomes as ‘products’ that are available to be measured. That is, they are rendered calculable through the application of government-determined performance indicators. These performance indicators are generally linked to government-approved outcomes such

as better employment skills, wider international markets, and improvements in literacy, numeracy and citizenship, as defined within state-sanctioned policy.

A number of academics (eg Corson 2002; Gale & Densmore 2003; Gewirtz 1999; Luke 2003; Meadmore 1999; Parry & O'Brien 2000; Sachs 2003) have used the term 'corporate managerialist discourse' to attack the logic that drives mechanisms of calculability. Corson's (2002) critique below is typical of such analyses in that it foregrounds the negative impact of accountability by focusing on accountability in the form of standardisation, particularly in relation to testing:

[G]overnments across the world are saddling schooling systems with an extravagant array of tests and assessments, so much so that some warn against the arrival of the 'evaluative state' that will be tied in all respects to a doctrine of competition, measurable results, and efficiency. (Corson, 2002, p 7)

While there is no doubting the ubiquitous nature of calculability mechanisms as a tactic of educational governance, we are less than sanguine about identifying a more complex set of imperatives as an 'ism' produced by a monolithic neo-liberal state. Rather, we posit the notion of risk as a 'political and moral climate' (Giddens 2003) eliciting a particular *performative* work from schools, namely the work of rendering their activities calculable in order to minimise financial, reputational and personal risk. In performing as good 'risk-conscious' school managers, teachers and principals focus on 'what counts' in schools and therefore both declare and de-limit what is valued in schools. Good order in the form of learning outcomes can and must be measured if expenditure on schooling is to be justified.

Thus, we are now seeing an almost exclusive fixation on performance data that can be standardised via benchmarking techniques, allowing for local, intra-state, national and international comparisons. Moreover, we see a strong public demand for school 'league tables' which use student results to provide the basis for the ranking of schools. In Australia, as in the UK, USA and Canada, annual league tables, based on student results at the end of their final year of schooling, allow governments, education authorities, parents, students and the wider community ostensibly to compare the performance of schools (Ranson 2003). Thus the league tables serve as tactics for making schooling visible as an organisational performance, for better *and* worse.

While some applaud league tables as a new-found 'transparency' available to the clients of schooling, it could well be argued with justification that the outcomes of effective teaching and learning are not well represented by league tables. Ball (2001, p 221) characterises them as 'artefacts produced out of a complex set of policy strategies and practical tactics which underpin the fabrication of performance'. Notwithstanding ongoing debates around the efficacy of these artefacts, school managers understandably are pushed towards teaching and learning strategies that maximise student results in the precise assessment tasks that form the basis of the league table data. They do not have, as others do, the luxury of debating these issues from afar.

Audit culture

What began with written and numerically-graded examinations designed to compare individual students has now returned to education in the form of a comprehensive regime of accountabilities which has shaped what Strathern (1997) has termed the 'audit culture'. While Strathern's work is focused on institutions of higher education, the same audit culture can, in our view, be seen in secondary schools. McIntyre (2000) explains an audit culture as

involving sets of largely unconscious assumptions that have somehow become embedded in the minds of many people, through complex collective processes of which we have little clear understanding. (McIntyre, 2000, p 1)

The audit culture reflects assumptions about what is and is not important, what should be called to account. Schools are held accountable for the quality of their provision. In an audit culture it is often the stakeholders (governments, governing bodies, parents, students) that determine the areas or domains of most importance and for which schools are to be held accountable. As we have outlined earlier in this paper, the current audit culture in schools prioritises such measurable outcomes as student performance on standardised tests, acquisition of information and communication technology skills, and those areas often gathered under the global descriptor of 'risk management' such as child protection, student safety, workplace health and safety, and employee relations.

At this point, we must again make clear that our argument is not set in opposition to accountability or audits *per se*. There is clearly a place for school leaders to demonstrate adherence to appropriate standards of conduct, safety and learning; teachers must be appropriately qualified, physical infrastructure needs to be sound, activities involving students need to be carefully planned to meet not only educational but safety criteria. There is no question, in our view, that increased accountability requirements in such areas as safety have significantly improved the thoroughness and care with which activities, especially experiments and excursions, are now conducted. Many current teachers would still remember the times when they, as students, 'played' with mercury in the science laboratory, chasing little silver balls all over the lab bench. Such unsafe practices in science laboratories have been all but eradicated in these days of risk assessments, safety protocols and workplace health and safety requirements. The establishment and application of appropriate safety standards for which teachers and principals are answerable have been quite clearly beneficial in terms of their capacity to tighten up laissez-faire pedagogical protocols. However, in identifying, measuring, quantifying, documenting and reporting on certain specified areas of accountability, the attention given by principals to their broader responsibilities can be diminished. It is this space that we wish to explore.

Strathern (2000a; 2000b) and McIntyre (2000) have identified aspects of the audit culture that in their view are potentially detrimental to the pursuit of quality education. The current focus in many countries of the world, particularly the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada and Australia, on student performance on standardised tests and the use of such results to measure school performance, has led many schools to concentrate their efforts on preparing students for these

standardised tests to the relative exclusion of other educational objectives. Such an approach reflects Goodhart's Law: 'what's counted counts', and has led many schools to a reductionist view of education, one defined in terms of scores, market appeal and conformity, despite school plans and mission statements that promote creativity, flexibility and individuality. Success, McIntyre (2000) would argue, has become equated with measurable outcomes, with the measures determined in advance based on previously (often-outdated) objectives established by governments in keeping with their particular political objectives. Schools have become, in many cases, closed systems where externally determined targets drive activity, while the diversity and breadth within and between schools made possible by an open system built around reflective practice have all but disappeared.

The matter of who measures what and how is crucial indeed. Strathern (2000a, p 4) notes that the audit culture also reflects an assumption that the performance of an organisation (school or university) can be observed and measured and that, secondly, such performance can be made public and visible and thus transparent: 'audit is transparency made durable; it is also transparency made visible'.

Fundamental to these assumptions is the view that transparency permits critique and, in turn, improvement. However, Strathern(2000a), McIntyre(2000) and others have questioned whether more information leads to greater understanding or, indeed, to improvement. Tsoukas (1994; 1997) shares this view and also highlights another risk: that a focus on what can only be a sub-set of educational outcomes can lead to a lack of focus on other possibly equally or more valuable educational outcomes. What value is given in our schools to the social development of students, to the growth of a social conscience, to relationships and collaboration? There is much rhetoric about such values, often couched in terms of employability, citizenship or civic responsibilities and entrepreneurialism. One has only to look at government statements such as those promulgated by the Queensland government, which prides itself on being the 'smart state': '[The smart state] is about using innovation, creativity and science to ensure Queensland's future prosperity.'¹

We note, however, that performances reflecting these values (innovation, creativity) are not so easily measured, quantified and tabulated. They do not appear in the league tables; they are not part of the high stakes reporting or credentialing. Schools build up the requisite information – reports, plans, lists, records, documents, publications – and governments ensure that there is some form of public accounting of the required information, yet 'the "real" workings of the institution, its social structure, cultural values, modes of organisation ... are ignored' (Strathern 2000a, p 4).

In this way, the social is overpowered by, or at the same time eludes, the systemic. When quality is rendered calculable, there is little capacity to absorb or tolerate discordant or disconfirming data. What falls in the space between accountability and responsibility is not valued in the same way or to the same extent

¹ http://www.smartstate.qld.gov.au/vision_achieve/ss_strategy/queensland.html

and is in real danger of being lost. Our argument then is not precisely, as Hargreaves and Goodson would have it, that a 'sense of social and moral visions' is 'left out' of schooling (in Sachs 2003, p xi). The articulation of such visions is now important work done as part of the branding of the contemporary progressive school. It is a key feature of most school mission statements and school plans. Values, pastoral care and a sense of community are more often than not foregrounded in the array of promotional tools currently used by schools as a 'selling point' for a larger section of the parent 'market'. What we argue is that the push to quantify quality is fundamental to the audit culture and thus constantly threatens the collapse of these visions into, at best, hopeful rhetoric in the daily work of managing the school's performance. The 'closed' system means no divergent or unsought outcomes are, or can be, valued and so experimentation is marginalised or lost. Studies by Gewirtz (1999) in the United Kingdom and Lingard, Martino, Mills and Bahr (2002) in Australia support this view, with the development of critical, autonomous and creative thinking skills valued only in so far as they can be seen to contribute to productivity as measured by the school's aggregate examination performance.

What is also in danger of being lost is the sense of trust on which most expert systems depend. In a complex, expert system such as teaching it is not possible to make all practices transparent, auditable and accountable. As Tsoukas (1997, p 835) observes:

Such practices [like teaching] cannot be made fully transparent simply because there is no substitute for the kind of experiential and implicit knowledge crucial to expertise, and which involves trust of the practitioners.

The language of trust, so critical to the teaching profession, exists in a discursive world that is outside the language of accountability, in that trust and heightened risk-consciousness are in general mutually exclusive imperatives. Narrowly based, quantifiable performance indicators can be not only self-defeating but at times quite absurd, as Tsoukas (1997) demonstrates in a study of local authorities in the United Kingdom who were required to publish their results on 152 indicators of output. Such results, it was argued, would make the local authorities more transparent and give them an incentive to improve. One such indicator was the number of home help visits to the elderly to serve meals. Regardless of the fact that the elderly may in fact prefer a microwave or freezer rather than home help, the local authority can only be seen to improve its service if it increases the number of home help visits. Thus it improves by increasing a service that the elderly may not, in fact, want. As Strathern (2000b) would argue, common sense becomes the victim. Once prescribed, measures become entrenched as the only possible indicators. In other words, the indicators or performance measures come to have a life of their own; they are self-perpetuating as a 'regime of truth' (Foucault 1980, p 131). This is replicated in the various ranking measures used by schools to determine tertiary entrance where the activities and practices which underpin such indicators become 'decontextualised for the purposes of quantification' (Strathern 2000a, p 2). Students become defined by their ranking (for example, the OP or TER in Queensland senior schooling). Few, if any, members of governments, employer or parent groups appear interested in what students actually know, understand or can do, let alone their social skills, cultural awareness, or engagement with issues of justice. The presumption is

made that all is well if and when the individual score is high. Students and, in turn, schools are ranked and valued on the basis of this single score, which by its very nature can reflect only a small part of the total educational experience provided by schools.

In their drive for an accountability regime that provides demonstrated, quantifiable outcomes in return for their investment dollar, governments have been seduced by a linear, reductionist approach which assumes that there is one single and best pathway, that 'best practice' can be determined, defined and measured and will be a 'one-size-fits-all' model. This type of model conflates the necessary 'quality control' accounting appropriate to manufacturing products such as pharmaceuticals, aeroplanes and computers, together with appropriate safeguards against human irresponsibility, incompetence and ignorance, alongside a need and desire to promote innovation, creativity, higher order thinking and problem solving. No single model can meet these diverse objectives. As McIntyre (2000, p 3) argues, 'the most highly developed skills and learning come from the ignition of interest, not the imposition of auditing'. This ignition of interest is dependent, in large part, on those elements of the expert systems of teaching that are less tangible and less conducive to quantification. Many aspects of the performance of the school – the wisdom, care and enthusiasm of committed staff, the flexibility in responding to the diverse needs of the individual students, the development of intra and interpersonal skill – are lost in the 'blissful clarity' (Barthes 1978) of the audit culture. Paradoxically, a system promoted as ensuring that school performance is made more visible, more public, more accountable and therefore more open to improvement can in fact render these things value-less. In Strathern's (2000a, p 5) words,

the language of assessment, in purporting to be a language that makes output transparent, hides many dimensions of the output process ... The rhetoric of transparency appears to conceal the very process of concealment.

Accountability, responsibility and the principal's work

Schools are complex organisations that require leaders to make choices and selections from many possible representations. These choices are made within the constraints and possibilities of the political and social environment in which the school operates. They are 'informed by the priorities, constraints and climate set by the policy environment' (Ball 2001, p 216) both internal and external to the school. Accountability, as noted above, implies implicitly or explicitly the notion of answerability and so is inextricably linked to questions of power, control and authority. The formal accountability regimes so evident in schools today are preoccupied with systemic concerns and instrumental consequences of action. The social, ethical or moral dimensions of education are privatised, marginalised and closed down by the demands of the performativity culture. The focus on what is in fact a quite limited repertoire of outcomes can, as Ranson (2003, p 467) argues, 'inadequately represent the more comprehensive spiritual, cultural, moral, aesthetic, and intellectual values and purposes [of schooling]'. School leaders, in our view, have responsibilities that go beyond formal accountability regimes. Such responsibilities include ensuring that the values, philosophies and principles

articulated in mission statements, strategic plans, curriculum and pedagogy frameworks are enacted in the day-to-day reality of schooling practices.

As school leaders are required to become more risk-conscious and more performance-driven, opportunities for engagement with principles and values such as social justice and equity are diminished. Without room for debate and critique, Wrigley (2003, pp 89–90) warns, ‘the drive to improve can easily become an acceleration up a cul-de-sac’ where intensification is substituted for improvement. School leaders who unreflectively accept the underpinning tenets of the audit culture may lose the capacity to engage with the social as well as the systemic:

The push is more for the specific, the detailed, and the obvious. Slowly ... we begin to lose the ability to focus on the moral, aesthetic, existential and intellectual dimensions of learning to live inside communities of people. (Clarke 2001, p 30)

An example of the reductionist impact of accountability on the responsible behaviour of teachers can be seen in the area of child protection. The inappropriate actions of some adults in positions of trust within schools have led, quite rightly, to improved screening of individuals working with children and to a proliferation of policies and procedures relating to child protection. Some schools have interpreted the requirement to improve the safety of children by instituting a ‘no-touch’ policy for staff working with children. Such policies are quite clearly compliant with the formal accountability requirements imposed in this area. However, it can be argued that such an accountability regime loses sight of the responsibility schools have to provide a warm, nurturing environment for students. As McWilliam and Sachs (2004) imply, a pat on the back, a friendly hand on the shoulder, a congratulatory ‘high-five’ or other appropriate forms of touching may be problematic to risk minimisation and accountability protocols but they may indeed be the most responsible action. The institution of more formal accountability processes in areas such as student safety have, as noted earlier, led to needed improvements in some areas of school practice (such as safety in laboratories); the processes have been enabling. Unfortunately, however, the same processes can also constrain what is both accountable and responsible action (such as appropriate touching). The challenge for leaders is to ensure that the accountability regime does not subsume the opportunities for responsible action.

Moreover, we would argue that the limit of responsibility held by school leaders is not the same as the limit of their accountability. School leaders are not accountable for providing opportunities for students to engage with contemporary political and social issues arising from natural disasters such as the Boxing Day 2004 tsunami, nor are they accountable for ensuring that teachers provide students with pleasurable and enjoyable learning experiences. They are, however, responsible for ensuring that such experiences and opportunities are provided. In making decisions, school leaders must maintain the spaces that make this possible. The capacity of skilled teachers to be responsive to classroom dynamics, to allow students and themselves to experiment and take risks, must not be buried in an exclusive drive to respond to systemic accountabilities. Accountability is an essential component of the professional repertoire of contemporary school leaders.

However, the responsibility to engage with the social as well as the systemic can be lost when accountabilities are the *only* leadership imperative.

References

- Ball S J (2001) Performativities and fabrications in the education economy: towards the performative society. In D Gleeson and C Husbands (eds) *The performing school: managing teaching and learning in a performance culture*. London: Routledge Falmer, pp 210–26.
- Barthes R (1978) *A lover's discourse: fragments*, trans R Hurley. New York: Hill and Wang.
- Clarke P (2001) Feeling compromised: the impact on teachers of the performance culture, *Improving Schools*, vol 4, no 3, pp 25–34.
- Corson D (2002) Teaching and learning for market-place utility, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, vol 5, no 1, pp 1–13.
- Earl L (2002) *Accountability: where do teachers fit?* Occasional paper no 74. Victoria: Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria.
- Foucault M (1980) *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972–1977*. New York: Pantheon.
- Gale T & Densmore K (2003) Democratic educational leadership in contemporary times, *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, vol 6, no 2, pp 119–36.
- Gewirtz S (1999) Efficiency at any cost: the post-welfarist education policy context. In C Symes and D Meadmore (eds) *The extra-ordinary school: parergonality and pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang, pp 129–47.
- Giddens A (2003) *Runaway world: how globalisation is reshaping our lives*. New York: Routledge.
- Hoskin K (1996) The 'awful idea of accountability': inscribing people into the measurement of objects. In R Munro and J Mouritsen (eds) *Accountability: power, ethos and the technologies of managing*. London: International Thomson Business Press, pp 265–82.
- Kogan M (1986) *Educational accountability: an analytical overview*. London: Hutchinson.
- Lello J (1993) *Accountability in practice*. London: Cassell.
- Lingard R., Martino, W., Mills, M., & Bahr, M. (2002) *Addressing the educational needs of boys*. Canberra: Department of Education, Science and Training.

- Luke A (2003) Teaching after the market: from commodity to cosmopolitan. In A Reid and P Thomson (eds) *Rethinking public education: towards a public curriculum*. Flaxton: Post Pressed, pp 139–55.
- McIntyre M E (2000) *Audit, education, and Goodhart's Law: or, taking rigidity seriously*,
<http://www.atm.damtp.cam.ac.uk/people/mem/papers/LHCE/dilnot-analysis.html>
- McWilliam E (1987) The challenge of the new right: it's liberty versus equality and to hell with fraternity, *Discourse*, vol 8, no 1, pp 61–76.
- McWilliam E & Sachs J (2004) Towards the victimless school: power, professionalism and probity in teaching, *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, vol 3, pp 17–30.
- Meadmore D (1999) Keeping up to the mark: testing as surveillance. In C Symes & D Meadmore (eds) *The extra-ordinary school: parergonality and pedagogy*. New York: Peter Lang, pp 149–61.
- Parry L & O'Brien M (2000) Contemporary issues and imperatives: teacher education in Australia. In A Scott and J Freeman-Moir (eds) *Tomorrow's teachers: international and critical perspectives on teacher education*. Christchurch: Canterbury University Press, pp 43–55.
- Ranson S (2003) Public accountability in the age of neo-liberal governance. *Journal of Education Policy*, vol 18, no 5, pp 459–80.
- Sachs J (2003) *The activist teaching profession*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Strathern M (1997) 'Improving ratings': audit in the British university system, *European Review*, vol 5, no 3, pp 305–21.
- Strathern M (2000a) Abstraction and decontextualisation: an anthropological comment or: e for ethnography. Paper presented at Virtual Society? Get Real! Conference, Hertfordshire, UK, 4–5 May.
- Strathern M (2000b) The tyranny of transparency, *British Educational Research Journal*, vol 26, no 3, pp 310–23.
- Taylor P G (2005) Managing our attentional economy in a changing landscape: complexity, learning and leadership. Keynote presentation at Queensland Teachers Union's Leadership: The Changing Landscape Conference for Educational Administrators, Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre, 19 August.

- Tsoukas H (1994) Introduction: from social engineering to reflective action in organizational behaviour. In H Tsoukas (ed) *New thinking in organizational behaviour*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann Ltd, pp 1–22.
- Tsoukas H (1997) The tyranny of light: the temptations and paradoxes of the information society, *Futures*, vol 29, pp 827–43.
- Wrigley T (2003) Is ‘school effectiveness’ anti-democratic? *British Journal of Education*, vol 51, no 2, pp 89–112.