Power, meet ethics: a formal introduction of political philosophy to educational administration and to the political relativity of theories in the field

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Abstract

This paper introduces a potential role for the discipline of political philosophy in the growth of knowledge in the field of educational administration. It does this by offering working definitions, summarizing the history and conceptual domain of political philosophy, and indicating how 'thinking about thinking' regarding the use and legitimacy of power and current political arrangements in education may help advance practice, research and theory building in educational administration, educational leadership and educational policy making. It then uses the discipline to clarify the relativity of the political theories that appear to have already made largely unheralded contributions to the growth of theories in the field. It concludes with three recommendations concerning the discipline of political philosophy; it should be regarded as a foundational discipline in educational administration; it should be used to trace and critique political ideologies in the development of theories of educational administration; and it should be used more explicitly to arbitrate knowledge claims that purport to justify the use of power in education.

The elephant in the room

To begin, there is already an elephant in the room, albeit a small one, and its name is political philosophy. I say small because a search of the full text of all articles published the *Journal of Educational Administration* did not find any references to 'political philosophy'. A parallel search in the *Educational Administration Quarterly* found seven references, although most were made in passing and actually referred to political ideologies, not to the activity and discipline of political philosophy. This distinction is all important and bespeaks the need for careful working definitions.

Let us assume that the room, educational administration, is a hybrid field of practice, research and theory that has been attempting to blend the more trustworthy ideas about leadership and policy making from education and administration through the rigour of scholarship. There is much to be learned in this regard from exemplary programmes of philosophical scholarship. One that originated in philosophy of administration (Hodgkinson, 1978) was able to openly clarify and advocate a particular political ideology (neo-Stoicism), and yet remained fundamentally inclusionary of plural educational values:

> Administration is philosophy-in-action. Philosophy, whether it be in the mode of articulated policy utterances of inchoate or unuttered values, is daily translated into action through the device of organisation. How? In a two-fold way. By means of administrative processes which are abstract, philosophical, qualitative, strategic, and humanistic in essence, and by means of managerial processes which are concrete, practical, pragmatic, quantitative, technical and technological in nature. (Hodgkinson, 1981, p. 145)

The deeper questions that Hodgkinson attended to were the philosophical dimensions of leadership, alternatives to pragmatism and positivism, and the moral arts of educational leadership (1978;

Hodgkinson 1981; Hodgkinson 1983; Hodgkinson 1986; Hodgkinson 1991). Hence, by 'scholarship' I mean the process of advancing knowledge through discovery (disciplined investigation that creates new ideas and understandings, adding to the stock of knowledge), integration (making connections across fields, in a disciplined way, to order to interpret, draw together and bring new insights to original ideas), application (the responsible and rigorous application of knowledge to problems of consequence to people, institutions and peoples), and teaching (disciplined interaction between learners and teachers intended to build skills, understandings and dispositions, and to interrogate knowledge) (Boyer, 1990).

By 'philosophy' I mean "thinking about thinking" in three distinct ways; "rationally critical thinking in a more of less systematic kind about the general nature of the world (metaphysics or theory), … the justification for belief (epistemology or theory of knowledge) … and the conduct of life (ethics or theory of value)." (Honderich, 2005, p. 702). Putting these definitions together implies the need for four sets of processes and conditions that are crucial to the organized growth of trustworthy knowledge through scholarship. First involves the need for systematic improvements in rationally critical accounts of the general nature of educational administration. Second are increasingly persuasive processes of arbitrating knowledge claims in theory construction. Third are developing more sophisticated methods of evaluating the rightness of practice. Fourth are integrating syntheses of educational and administrative purposes, theories and practices.

Clearly, major advances have been achieved in all four sets over recent decades in educational administration, exemplified to me by the articulation of fresh theoretical perspectives since Greenfield (1975) demonstrated that organisations and theories about them were social constructions. This opened the theory gates to socially critical reconstructions (Bates 1983), to non-foundational epistemology (Evers & Lakomski 1991), and to other moral codes being applied to educational leadership (e.g. Duignan 2006). This diversification was further encouraged by editors enabling an international scholarship of integration (e.g. Pounder & Johnson 2007; Ribbins 2006). It is now timely, and this reiterates the key purpose of this paper, that the quality of all four sets of conditions be further enhanced by the systematic use of the tools offered by the discipline of political philosophy. This takes us back to the elephant.

We might begin with each of the four conditions essential to the organized and scholarly growth of trustworthy knowledge in educational administration. First, the deliberate development of the 'rationally critical account' of educational administration might use political philosophy to reconcile the metavalue of education, learning, with Hodgkinson's axiom; that "power is the first term in the administrative lexicon" (1978, p. 217). Leaders in education wishing to improve the legitimacy of their service would presumably appreciate reasonable and effective methods of evaluating and sustaining such reconciliations on a daily and practical basis. Second, with regard to evaluating knowledge claims about educational administration, political philosophy provides a methodology for 'thinking about our thinking' concerning power. At its most potent, this methodology enables us to critique the justifications employed for the use of power, politics and current political arrangements. Third, regarding the rightness of practice, political philosophy enables a disciplined discussion of power practices and structures, what actions and processes are morally reasonable, and then, perhaps even more importantly in the long term, how power might be allocated and used wisely. Fourth and finally, the process of refining educational and administrative purposes, theories and practices will be significantly enhanced by uncovering the nature and consequences of power structures and practices, and the relativity of political ideologies being employed in justifications and theories.

A critical point here is that the term 'political philosophy' has two meanings that are quite different, yet often confused. It is, firstly and formally, the branch of philosophy concerned with the quality of politics and political infrastructure. The term is often, however, used to refer to a personal credo or ideology being used to justify forms of political action, including the ingratiation of a personal ideology in a theory. The formal meaning is explored in this paper by reviewing definitions, the history of the field and its conceptual domain. I will also show where the latter and often colloquial meaning is evident when researchers' contributions have employed personal 'political philosophies' or more accurately, political ideologies, as well as a tentative and often unrealized engagement in political philosophy, in order to help advance the growth of knowledge.

Political philosophy, as a discipline, can be understood as a pragmatic project of understanding, interpreting, evaluating and then improving the quality of politics and its structures. When doing political philosophy, it is assumed that "at some level, our political arrangements are subject to rational assessment and choice. This assumption lies behind the effort to distinguish political practices and forms of political action that can be justified and those that cannot. That effort, more than anything else, defines the general project of political philosophy." (Bird, 2006, p. 4)

This 'general project' is ubiquitous in daily life, yet typically rather disorganized, and plagued by the inaccurate use of terms. Political arrangements are often discussed in ways that recognize 'authority,' 'rights,' 'responsibilities' and 'representation.' We are quick to make judgments about practices that violate our intuitive conceptions of 'freedom', 'equality' and 'justice.' The 'legitimacy' of policies, laws and administration is often questioned, usually with vague reference to 'vested interests,' 'the public interest' or the 'common good.' Interestingly, while ideals and practices are often bundled in conversations, they tend to be treated quite differently. Some of the concepts that are used to justify or criticize political behaviors, such as 'freedom,' 'equality,' 'justice' and 'the common good,' are ethical ideals or principles, and can often be put into service as largely unexamined absolutes. Others, such as 'authority,' 'rights,' 'coercion,' and 'obligations' tended to be regarded as more arbitrary, and attract a great deal more comment.

To avoid confusion, political philosophers tend to consider practices in order to uncover the actual values in use, and then to evaluate how well these embedded ideals or principles justify current political arrangements, taking historical principles and precedents and alternative perspectives into account. Where the embedded ideals or principles fall short, reasoned proposals are developed and examined. The nature of political philosophy as critical practice is illustrated by how higher education courses in the discipline tend to focus on particular types of justifications:

> A course in political philosophy usually takes as its subject matter general justifications
> for the state and for other political institutions, and for particular actual and imagined
> ideal forms of these; it all tends to be the abstract politics of quarterlies rather
> than the concrete politics of the dailies. Besides the state, such other institutions
> as property, the family, the legal system, government and public administration,
> international relations, education, class structure, religion and individual rights duties,
> and obligations are discussed (Flew, 1984, p. 279).

The nature of political philosophy as a critical research methodology is also evident in the way that political philosophers analyze the nature of organization to reveal political values, and then to use ethics to evaluate the quality of political organization. They use a range of descriptive-explanatory and ethically normative approaches, concepts, data and tools of analysis in order to propose improvements to political arrangements or key concepts. The concepts they tend to research are

the bases for justifications related to power, such as 'autonomy', 'authority', 'ideology', 'sovereignty' and 'justice'. Most noteworthy is that an 'ideology' is "any system of ideas and norms directing political and social action" (Flew, 1984, p. 162), which, as noted above, gives it the same meaning as a personal political credo for action. Making this sharp distinction between the imperatives of singular political ideologies and the disciplined activity of political philosophy may also help theorists move around counter-productive ideological disputes during theory building, essentially by establishing and acknowledging the relativity of political ideologies at work. The distinction may also help ensure that educational administrative theories are politically contextualized. That is, whatever the concepts, institutions and questions focused on during engagement in political philosophy, it is generally expected that they "must be combined coherently into an account of a properly structured and functioning community … with its main constitutive institutions and values." (Sankowski, 2005, p. 230).

This all helps define political philosophy as a form of philosophical reflection on how best to arrange collective affairs, both political institutions and related collective social practices, such as education systems and family life. Political philosophers tend to strive to identify basic principles that will, "for instance, justify a particular form of state, show that individuals have certain inalienable rights, or tell us how a society's resources should be shared among its members. This usually involves analyzing and interpreting ideas such as freedom, justice, authority and democracy and then applying them in a critical way to social and political institutions that currently exist." (Miller, 1998, p. 687).

Although the outcomes of political philosophy tend to reflect the pressing political issues of the day, and have changed as the assumptions and tools of epistemology and ethics have developed, three unresolved questions have persisted concerning the production of principles. They are the extent to which the principles established by political philosophers may be regarded as (a) universal, (b) reflecting the assumptions and values of a particular political community, or (c) reflecting the nature of human beings, their needs, capacities and limitations. The challenges embedded in the questions have been illustrated by a critique of educational leadership as conceived in Islamic contexts over time (Macpherson & Tofighian, 2007). These questions remain stubbornly unresolved in political philosophy and must be expected to confound theorists in educational administration searching for universal principles.

Political philosophy in educational administration, to be worthy of the discipline, really should include an evaluation of the nature and justification for systemic, institutional and personal power practices, and a philosophically informed appreciation of their relativity, prior to recommendations for action being developed. An example closely related to educational administration is analysis that tests the justification for having coercive institutions or degrees of coercion in institutions, and what these arrangements do for their legitimacy and effectiveness as educational organizations. Such analysis might proceed on the assumption that while institutions may range in size from groups to global organizations, a common feature is that they either employ force or use the threat of force to control the behavior of members. Hence, as Sterba (2000, p. 718) put it, "justifying such coercive institutions requires showing that the authorities within them have a right to be obeyed and that their members have a corresponding obligation to obey them, i.e., that these institutions have legitimate political authority over their members."

As noted above, another intended outcome of political philosophy can be the explication of a single concept or principle, such as justice. Kymlicka (2002, p. 6) clarified the consequences of adopting this approach:

> Political philosophy, as I understand it, is a matter of moral argument, and moral argument is a matter of appeal to our considered convictions. In saying this, I am drawing on what I take to be the everyday view of moral and political argument; that is, we all have moral beliefs, and these beliefs can be either right or wrong, and these reasons and beliefs can be organized into moral principles and theories of justice. A central aim of political philosophy, therefore, is to evaluate competing theories of justice to assess the strength and coherence of their arguments for the rightness of their views.

Having introduced the nature and potential role for the discipline of political philosophy in the growth of knowledge in the field of educational administration, it is now appropriate to expand on the history and conceptual domain of the activity of political philosophy.

The elephant's genealogy

The growing range of purposes and intended outcomes that political philosophy might serve or seek to achieve in educational administration reflects the evolution of description and explanation for politics and the rigorous evaluation of political arrangements since ancient times. To illustrate the evolution, a sample of political ideologies was selected from Antiquity (Plato, Aristotle and Cicero), the Middle Ages, (St Augustine), the Renaissance (Machiavelli), the Enlightenment (Hobbes, Locke, Burke, Rousseau), industrialization (Bentham, Mills, Hegel, Marx), modernization and post-modernism (Dewey, Mosca, Bakunin, Lyotard) and more contemporary works (Nozick, MacIntyre, Habermas and Rawls).

Many outstanding contributors were necessarily excluded, such as the contributions of ancient Chinese and Indian political philosophers, the Islamic scholars from the 7th to the 14th century, the scholars from the New World (other than Dewey) and indigenous civilizations, and those in modern times who place questions of cultural and gender identity and social vision central to politics (Berki, 1977). Tables 1-3 below are therefore no more than introductory and modest summaries of political ideologies that are intended to illustrate the conceptual genealogy of political philosophy and its potential contribution to the field of educational administration.[1] The selected positions are contrasted by reference to their focus of analysis for description and explanation and the focus of their justification for ethical and normative evaluation. These contrasts help illustrate the relativity of political ideologies and the part they have played in the growth of knowledge about politics through the activity of political philosophy.

Table 1 summarises five political ideologies from Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. They include philosophic visions, a religious vision from medieval thought and the beginnings of political science.

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1   The compilations were informed by Sankowski (2005), Hampsher-Monk Hampsher-Monk, I. (2000, p. 691). History of Political History. The concise Routledge encyclopaedia of philosophy. London, UK, Routledge. Flew, A. (1984). Political philosophy. A dictionary of philosophy. Basingstoke, UK, Pan Books. Plant, R. (2000, p. 693). Nature of political philosophy. The concise Routledge encyclopaedia of philosophy,. London, UK, Routledge, and the texts cited in the table. A more comprehensive treatment is available at http://lgxserver.uniba.it/lei/filpol/filpole/lintexe.htm

Table 1: Political ideologies from Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.

Significant Positions	Focus of Description and Explanation	Focus of Ethical / Normative Evaluation
Utopianism (Plato, 1974)	The alignment of reason, spirit and appetites. The role of a 'philosopher king' who identifies and applies universal principles such as justice and goodness.	The development of 'just' action, the 'just' individual and the 'just' state.
Perfectionism (Aristotle, 1912)	Moral education, reason, describing and perfecting the institutions and constitutions of city states (*polis*).	The development of persons of excellence as statespersons.
Cicero's republicanism (Gaskin, 2005, p. 142) (White, 2000, p. 141)	Peace, unity, human rights, brotherhood of man, the equality of all men, active citizenship, and binding universal laws based on the common nature of man. Divine reason and order that permeate all that is.	The development of a mixed and balanced constitution that subordinates different interests to the interest of all citizens, preventing the capture of government by power sharing, checks and balances, and the redistribution of resources.
St. Augustine's Christian religionism (Flew, 1984; Mathews, 2000)	The temporal political order and the hereafter. The divine right of kings to rule, and the relative jurisdictions of secular and religious authorities.	The development of Christianity-compliant governments in Medieval Europe.
Realism (Machiavelli, 1886)	Detached political science, Roman republican virtues, and the economic use of violence to achieve political ends. *Realpolitik* - purely practical politics that achieve in the interests of the state, however coercive or amoral.	The development of an institutional balance between the nobility and the common people where the ends of reinforcing the state justify the means.

Table 2 summarizes seven major political ideologies from the Enlightenment and from the era of industrialization. They include the evolution of civic visions.

Table 2: Political ideologies from the Enlightenment and Industrialization eras.

Significant Positions	Focus of Description and Explanation	Focus of Ethical / Normative Evaluation
Natural contracturalism (Hobbes, 1914)	The nature of man, the laws of nature underpinning the reason of law, and the pooling of individual rights to self-preservation into national security.	The development of sovereignty as part of the social contract that underpins the modern secular nation state.
Lockes' individualistic contracturalism (Wootton, 1993)	Constitutional rule, the rights of the individual, and the legitimacy of government derived from natural rights, the consent of the governed and a constitution - with the right of revolution.	The development of a positive freedom through an individual's social contract with civil society, requiring government, law, property rights and toleration.
Burkes' traditionalism (Kramnick, 1999, pp. 108-109)	Appreciate the subtleties of social and political institutions that developed incrementally in a particular context, beyond the comprehension of rational theorizing.	Custom and tradition are to take precedence over any doctrine of what is natural or universal for man when developing institutions.
Collectivism (Rousseau, 1987)	The general will as the sole source of legitimate sovereignty, inevitably in the common good, resulting in a moral obligation to obey the law and reconciliation of autonomy and authority.	Direct participation in the development of, and the total and voluntary subjugation to, the general will, with little allowance for individual conscience, private life, freedom of religion and political dissent.
Utilitarianism (Bentham, 2002)	The degree of pleasure achieved over pain for individuals (act utilitarianism) or for all (rule utilitarianism).	A hedonic calculus intended to measure the degree of pleasure over pain, with rightness or wrongness judged by the degree of utility or welfare achieved.
Classical liberalism (Mill, 1972)	Freedom and other rights of the individual, social controls only legitimate to prevent harm to others and when violation of other's right have occurred, rejection of paternalism and religious authority in politics, fear of 'the tyranny of the majority'.	Respect for the rights of the individual and the greatest welfare for all when striking a balance between the democratic state and its constituent institutions in a properly functioning community.
Hegel's idealism (Pippin, 1999, pp. 365-370)	Society is more real and more fundamental than the individual, making the state and its claims primary in comprehensive and integrative analyses using a coherence theory of truth; thought governing reality.	The development of a state's political systems using social and political concepts to advance consciousness of freedom through projection and transcendental thinking, and thus control history.
Marx's historical materialism (Tucker, 1978)	History as struggles between classes, 'state' as an instrument of oppression by one class over another, with changes in the economic infrastructure causing changes in the institutional and ideological superstructure.	The development of a proletarian revolution that will replace the capitalist state with a dictatorship of the proletariat, followed by a withering of the state.

Table 3 clarifies eight political theories from recent modernization, post-modernist and contemporary eras.

Table 3: Political ideologies from the Modernization, Post-modernist and Contemporary eras.

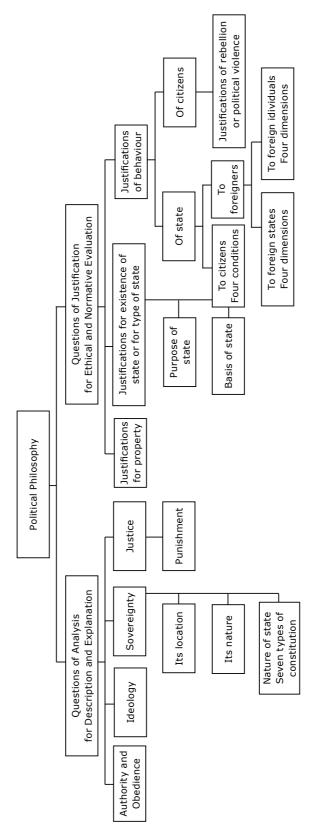| Significant Positions	Focus of Description and Explanation	Focus of Ethical / Normative Evaluation
Dewey's democratic and educative pragmatism (Campbell, 1995)	Scientific experimentalism, rejecting dualisms in favor of mediating ideas. Combining fallibilism and optimistic progressivism.	The development of a democratic community committed to growth through inquiry-based learning.
Mosca's elitism (Finocchiaro, 1999, p. 591)	The nature of human social life makes true democracy impossible to attain and may enable anarchy, political decisions are inevitably be in the hands of an elite, how organized minorities rule host societies.	The development of democratic political systems that use the principle of 'juridical defense' to prevent any person, class, force or institution from dominating others.
Bakunin's anarchism (Miller, 1984)	The individual is sovereign, authority is an unjustified repression of will, and attempts to resolve individual and common interests through institutions of the threat of force are futile.	The resistance of coercion and the development of non-governmental collectivism based on voluntary co-operation without private property or religion, and reward according to contribution.
Post-modernism (Lyotard, 1979)	The collapse of grand narratives, the open multiplicity of incommensurable language games, rejection of the values of enlightenment, critique and rational consensus.	The development of many first order, natural and pragmatic narratives as the touchstone of democratic freedom.
Libertarianism (Nozick, 1974)	Individual will and initiative create the economy and social life, protection of the rights of individuals, process theories that demonstrate the rightness of piece meal actions independent of final outcomes.	The development of a minimal state in support of self-determining individuals in free-market capitalism.
Communitarianism (MacIntyre, 1984)	Social life, identity and relationships, the collective providing rights and obligations to individuals, and the integrity and value of traditional practices, such as the social construction of meaning.	The refinement of institutions and practices that promote and serve the community, the public good, and co-operative practices and values such as reciprocity, trust and solidarity.
Communicative rationalism (Habermas, 1992)	Control, understanding and emancipation, communicative as opposed to instrumental rationality, disruptive effects of market and bureaucratic systems, inter-subjective notions of practical reason, the discursive procedures used to justify universal norms.	The development of an open, participative and deliberative democracy for a complex modern world that uses the values of the Enlightenment, legitimate law and discourse ethics to provide a defense and critique of institutions using public practical reason.
Egalitarian liberalism (Rawls, 1993)	A new hypothetical social contract derived from an 'original position' of not knowing socially significant facts or what a good life is – this 'veil of ignorance' leads to an equal concern for everyone and distributive justice.	The development of justice as fairness; equal liberty and equal opportunity, with inequalities only justified if they benefit the worst off.

Figure 1: A concept map of political philosophy (abridged from Honderich 2005)

These preliminary summaries locate the discipline of political philosophy alongside moral philosophy, social philosophy, philosophy of economics and philosophy of law, in addition to its symbiotic relationship with political science. And, in contrast to the ideological differences evident between these significant positions, there are two striking commonalities. First, particular concepts have achieved high saliency over time in the discipline of political philosophy, as evident in Figure 1.

Second, two general approaches to justification have traditionally dominated the discipline of political philosophy; 'common good' and 'social contract' justifications, although a range of more socially-critical forms of justification have emerged in recent decades. They are each now briefly introduced and related to educational administration.

'Common good' justifications include the utopianism proposed by Plato (Nettleship 1935), the perfectionism proposed by Aristotle (Burnett 1936), and the modern utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham (2002) and John Stuart Mill (1972). Utopianism, perfectionism and utilitarianism have all, of course, evolved to reflect various contexts. Utilitarianism, for example, was used over 80 years ago by the United States Supreme Court to justify the ruling that parents should have to right to educate their children in nonpublic schools. A more recent review found that the Court sought to maximise educational opportunities in the 'common good' using both economic utilitarianism and "egalitarianism, the apparent political philosophy of the day". (Murphy 1979, p. 120)

Instead of appealing to the common good, 'social contract' justifications clarify the extent to which they satisfy voluntary agreements entered into between the state and 'the people,' however defined, including agreements the people would have freely agreed to, if consulted. This approach was developed in the seventeenth century by Thomas Hobbes and John Locke, advanced in the eighteenth century by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant (1991), and in the twentieth century by John Rawls (1999). They all focused on how well the state was delivering on implicit or explicit social contracts to their polities, and on the resultant legitimacy of the state and its institutions, such as education systems and institutions.

To illustrate this approach, Morte's (1997) research into the influence of social contract theory on American institutions identified the strong felt need for (a) due process under law where liberty and property were involved, and (b) greater clarity over the nature of the individual's responsibility to the government wherever social contract theory impacted public education, despite "an unawareness or conscious disagreement among some leadership personnel with Social Contract Theory, a political theory on which many agree our country is based." (pp. 31-32) In particular, Morte's study revealed ambivalence by school authorities over the role they should play in maintaining the order required to educate students, partly because their attempts to exclude students or dismiss employees reportedly ran into serious constitutional difficulties whenever schools assumed they could act as instruments of state.

In addition to 'common good' and 'social contract' justifications, other justifications have been derived from the radical critiques offered by other political philosophers. One general reason often cited is that Marx, Rousseau, Lyotard and others deconstructed the many forms of 'political reality' and revealed the relativity of concepts associated with institutions of state and Enlightenment principles. Three implications of their works for the field of educational administration were highlighted by Capper (1998); the importance of (a) maintaining a 'critical distance' from the institutions of state and political processes being described and evaluated, (b) giving 'voice' to those 'silenced' by traditional distributions of power, and (c) employing critically-orientated theories, including socially critical, feminist, race and queer theories, as well as critical pragmatism and feminist poststructuralism, to develop understandings and proposals for reform.

A fourth implication not similarly highlighted was that the relativity of socially-critical ideologies must also be revealed by political philosophy. As Tables 1-3 illustrated, the ideological relativity of social visions dominating political philosophy in modern times can be seen to have been developed from the philosophic visions of ancient times, the religious visions of medieval times, and the civic visions of modern times (Berki, 1977), and are no less worthy of critical examination. In the next and penultimate section, I will attempt to summarize the major political ideologies that have already appeared in theory building in educational administration, using the same method as above to both illustrate the ideological relativity of major positions, and to complete a formal introduction of political philosophy to the field of educational administration.

The elephant in educational administration

Two seminal texts in recent years have demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that political ideologies have impacted massively on theory building in educational administration over the years, yet, largely without employing systematic political philosophy that would have revealed the relativity of the ideologies given carriage in the process.

The first text, assembled by Glass, Mason, Eaton, Parker, and Carver (2004) evaluated the textbooks of the field over the decades and demonstrated that the orthodox knowledge claims about school leadership, and the legitimate use of power in educational administration, had at various stages been justified in four very different ways: as an applied philosophy of virtue; as executive action; as an applied behavioral science; and most recently, as standardized professionalism. Their findings informed the assembling of Table 4 below.

The second text, edited by Samier and Stanley (2008), had three parts. The first related a selection of political ideologies to educational administration and educational leadership using a dualism much beloved of social visionaries who tend to justify their theories of educational administration as alternatives to capitalism and bureaucracy, rather than identifying them as being driven by a particular political ideology. In sharp contrast to Hodgkinson's (1981) more inclusive definition of educational administration, Samier (2008, p. 2) reduced educational administration and educational leadership to two categories of roles by arguing that:

> administrative roles are those that are formally structured and whose legitimacy are sanctioned through policy regimes that do not require acceptance of the person but the responsibilities of the office; leadership roles, on the other hand, are constructed in interpersonal relationships that are not necessarily formally sanctioned, whose legitimacy is conferred by followers on individuals for their personal qualities, and whose value is not bound by existing organizational or institutional purpose, design, and policy regimes.

The second and third parts of the Samier and Stanley edition extended this underpinning dualism by reviewing forms of political structures and the types of political dynamics that give shape to formal organizations and informal constructions. While the approach usefully explicated an array of largely socially-critical tools of analysis, it also shrouded the architecture of political ideologies in the theories advanced without employing or encouraging political philosophy to explicate their relativity.

To illustrate the need for politically-critical evaluations of theory building, Table 4 below uses the same structure as Tables 1-3 above to name and contrast selected political ideologies that have impacted theory building in educational administration. Once again, it necessarily excludes major contributors well worthy of inclusion, and conversely, offers some of my own modest contributions up for criticism.

Table 4: Some political ideologies in the history of educational administration

Significant Positions	Focus of Description and Explanation	Focus of Ethical / Normative Evaluation
Democratic Utopianism and Perfectionism, e.g. Ella Flagg Young (Webb and McCarthy, 1998)	The alignment of reason, beliefs and motives. The role of a 'philosopher superintendent' who identifies and applies universal principles such as justice, goodness and democracy as a means of perfecting schools and communities.	The development of 'just' action, 'just' leaders, 'just' schools and educational statespersons in democratic communities.
American Pragmatism, e.g.s behavioral and sociological functionalism and standardized professionalism, (c.f. Getzels & Guba, 1957; Griffiths, 1964; Abbot, 1965; Griffiths, 1977; Hoy & Miskel, 2005; Murphy, 2005)	The degrees of 'unity in diversity', efficiency and effectiveness achieved by educational leaders blending plural commitments with the values of the Enlightenment (i.e. reason enables people to think and act correctly, individuals and humanity can progress toward perfection; all people are equal before the law and in individual liberty; there is tolerance of other creeds and ways of life; beliefs are accepted only on the basis of reason; reason is a global resource; and, the non-rational is less important) (Honderich, 2005).	The development of valid standards of meaning, truth, and value, as ultimately rooted in considerations of practical efficacy, of 'what works in practice'. (Rescher, 2005, p. 23)
Scientific Humanism (c.f. Greenfield & Ribbins, 1993)	Organization not as an empirical and morally neutral entity but as a socially constructed artifact that reflects the values of those with power and ability to manage perceptions of being organized and to develop organizational cultures. (Gronn, 1983; Gronn, 1984)	The development of a humane science of leadership that values rationalism and discovering the natural world of educational administration, primarily to provide a context and grounding for personal morality.
Communitarianism (c.f. Sergiovanni, 1980; Sergiovanni, 1994)	'Social humanism' proposed as an appropriate socio-political theory for the field, along with switching the central metaphor of theory building from 'organization' to 'community,' and exploring appropriate political arrangements in communitarian terms.	The extent to which sources of authority for leadership reflect shared ideas about obligations and duties emerging from the ties of community, and professional authority reflects forms of commitment to virtuous practice as followers of shared values, commitments, and ideals; a community of mind.
Communicative rationalism (c.f. Bates, 1980; Bates, 1983; Bates, 2006)	The degree of justice and fairness in social and educational arrangements in society, especially in the management of the structures of knowledge and the structures of control that reproduce culture and society. The extent to which communicative rationality contests market and bureaucratic systems, enhances practical reason, and encourages the use and justification of socially-critical operational norms. (Foster, 1986; Foster, 2004)	The development of contestation in an autonomous public sphere, social solidarity through the development of social capital, and educational leaders prepared for 'argumentative agency' in the governance of public institutions, and engagement with both public and private interests in a civil society and in the public sphere. (Bates, 2008)
Egalitarian liberalism (c.f. educative leadership, Duignan & Macpherson, 1992; Macpherson, 2008a; Macpherson, 2008b)	How people in learning communities (re)create their diverse organizations bound by social contracts that straddle their public and private lives (Rorty, 1989), achieve a reflective equilibrium through political decision-making in modern liberal democracies (Rorty, 1991), and how educative leaders facilitate reflection using ethically-critical, socially-critical, environmentally-critical, politically-critical and globally-critical perspectives - with an equal concern for everyone and distributive justice (Macpherson, 2008b).	The development of educational administration that is (a) pragmatic, holist, rule consequentialist, non-utilitarian, humanist and non-foundational (Dewey, 1916), (b) appreciative of 'common good' and 'social contract' justifications, and (c) committed to liberal democratic governance and organizations that challenge the dynamic conservatism of nationalism and factionalism, and deliver justice as fairness, with inequalities only justified if they benefit the worst off (Rawls, 1993; Rawls 1999).

The table is only intended to reveal the largely unheralded impact of political ideologies in the field of educational administration and to enable and promote the evaluative activity of political philosophy in knowledge production.

Conclusions and recommendations

Political philosophy has been defined in this introductory paper as disciplined scholarship that describes and evaluates justifications for political arrangements. This paper has offered a general account of its history and its methodology that might lead to proposals for the improved use of power in structured educational organizations and functioning learning communities. The purposes of political philosophy were shown to range from critical reflections on the quality of collective affairs, using general principles, such as justice, to a sharp focus on the means and ends of justifiably exercising power, such as the legitimacy of coercion. Common good, social contract and socially-critical justifications were clarified.

Educational administrators, educational leaders and educational policy analysts and advisers are evidently deeply implicated in the political infrastructure of educational institutions and systems of education. It is recommended that political philosophy be regarded as a fundamental discipline of educational administration and that it be taught in preparatory programs so that practitioners can justify their practices and political arrangements in politically-critical terms.

Researchers and theorists are similarly implicated in the ideological 'structuration' (Giddens 1984) of theories in educational administration. It is recommended that political philosophy now be employed more openly and extensively in educational administration to trace and evaluate the impact and relativity of political ideologies in the development of theory, practice and policy.

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