



**University of
Nottingham**

UK | CHINA | MALAYSIA

Ways of seeing women's leadership in education

Jill Berry and Kay Fuller



Reflecting on our roles as insider researchers

‘We benefited from shared knowledge and understandings of women’s experiences, whether they were described by women or men in secondary school settings. The first author also shares knowledges and understandings of working in higher education; the second author of working in the independent sector and as an education consultant. However, as two white straight women without children and of similar ages, we do not share the experiences described by women of Black and Global Majority (BGM) heritages, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or women who identify as non-binary, or mothers and younger women. We do not share the experiences of men working in education as straight or gay men, as men of BGM heritages, or fathers’.
(Fuller and Berry 2019)

‘The advantages and disadvantages of such research and the risks of informant bias, reciprocity in interviews and research ethics dilemmas associated with insider research must be acknowledged’ (with reference to Mercer 2007 cited in Fuller and Berry 2019).



- Teacher/leader for 30 years, and a headteacher for the last ten of these
- Completed an EdD at the University of Nottingham on 'The Transition to Headship' after leaving full-time work
- Conducted research on the challenges of headship and how heads can be supported, with UCL Institute of Education
- Conducted research with Kay Fuller on the development of #WomenEd: an insider researcher
- Leadership consultancy work for the past nine years



- The use of a reflective log throughout my doctoral studies
- The writing of blog posts – for the platform @staffrm and then, after the demise of @staffrm, via WordPress (since 2017): [jillberry102.blog](https://jillberry102.wordpress.com/)
- The writing of diary entries since 1972, when I was 14 years old, until the present day (47 years)
- Revisiting diary entries at ten year intervals: 20, 30 and 40 years ago
currently rereading ‘this day in history’ from 1979, 1989 and 1999



1979, 1989 and 1999





“I went to a Conference on ‘Women Teachers and Promotion’. If I hadn’t been successful in the interview on Wednesday I really don’t think I could have faced it, but as it was I enjoyed it.

The facilitator actually wasn’t that impressive, but once we moved into groups and started talking, things improved dramatically. I met a girl I knew vaguely at College, and during the course of the day I felt I got to know quite a few of the women well.

I must join a women’s group, I think. I want to pass on to others lessons I’ve learnt from the last two years, and I want to learn from them.”



Involvement in #WomenEd from the outset, including the production of, and response to, my blog post, 'Lost Leaders' in 2015 (reproduced here on the #WomenEd blog in 2017):

<https://womenedblog.wordpress.com/2017/10/05/lost-leaders/>

Speaking at #WomenEd events, making contacts and developing friendships among the #WomenEd community, men and women

Research with Kay: interviews were “conversations with purpose”

Contribution to the first #WomenEd book (2019) – my chapter 'Applying for leadership positions – Get the job you dream of'

Kay Fuller - '7 up' life grid



1962



1969



1976



1983



1990

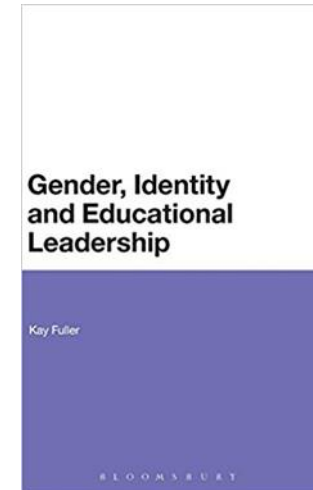


1997



2004

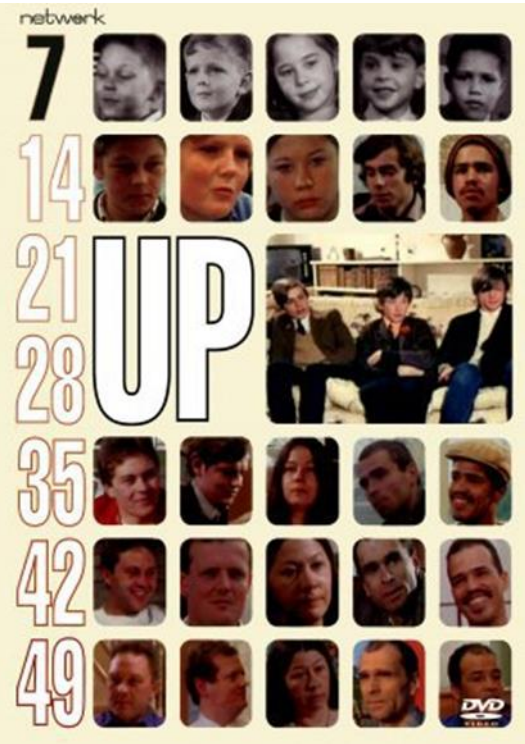
0 to 56 in 9 pictures



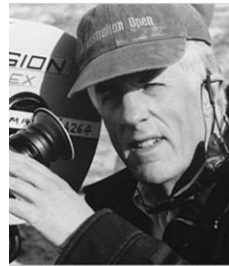
2011



2018



4 of 14
children
filmed
were
girls



“Give me a child until he is seven
and I will give you the man (sic)” -
Jesuit motto based on a quotation by
Francis Xavier (also Aristotle)



ITV television
programme - June 2019

Programmes made
every 7 years since
1963 when the children
were 7 years old

Class experiment
Gender & race feature
too

One interviewee told
MA questions were
sexist

'7 Up' life grid

age	year	family, friends, community	wider society	relationship with education	educational leadership & policy	race relations	gender relations
birth	1962	Secure and loving nuclear & extended family Generations in area (father) Church-going w/c father factory mother hairdresser	Post-war aspirations Beatles - fun pop songs (highly gendered) – 'Bobby's Girl' released in 1962	Educ asps parents no quals Ext family inc teachers Father failed 11+; 2 aunts passed (1 got college education) 2 grt-grandmothers illiterate	Education Act 1962 mandated LEAs to fund first FT degree and provide maintenance	Race Discrimination Bill 1960 Petition against Racial Discrimination 1962 Race Relations Act 1965 Jamaica gained independence 1962	1961 - Introduction of the contraceptive pill 1964 - Married Women's Property Act revision 2 nd wave feminism Betty Friedan (1963)
7	1969			Favourite teacher - JC			
14	1976			O levels started			
21	1983			Graduated (English)			
28	1990			Decided to become a teacher			
35	1997			Head of English			
42	2004			Deputy headteacher			
49	2011			Initial teacher educator			
56	2018			Associate professor			



Fuller, K and Berry, J. (2019) *#WomenEd: A movement for women leaders in education*. Nottingham: University of Nottingham.

<https://www.nottingham.ac.uk/research/groups/crelm/documents/womened-report.pdf> (accessed 2 July 2019)

Mercer, J. (2007) The challenges of insider research in educational institutions: wielding a double-edged sword and resolving delicate dilemmas. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33:1, 1-17.

Parry, O., Thomson, C. and Fowkes, G. (1999) Life Course Data Collection: Qualitative Interviewing using the Life Grid, *Sociological Research Online*, 4(2)

<http://socresonline.org.uk/4/2/parry.html> (