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Evidence of Leadership Competencies in the Journal of Mary Easton Sibley, a Pioneering 19th Century Women's College Founder

by

Julie Anne Beard

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

degree of

Doctor of Education

School of Education

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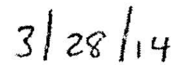

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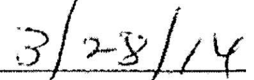

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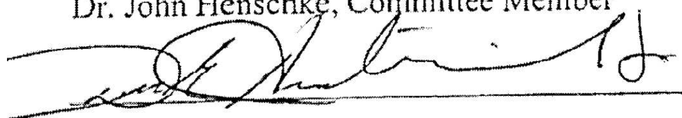

Dr. Don Heidenreich, Committee Member — Date

Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: Julie Anne Beard

Signature: Julie Anne Beard Date: 3/28/14

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Abstract

Little has been written about Mary Easton Sibley, the founder of Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri, which until its acceptance of men in the mid-20th century was the oldest women's college west of the Mississippi River and stands today, a thriving private coeducational institution, as the second oldest college west of that demarcation. This dearth of literature seemed unwarranted since Sibley was as progressive as her more famous East Coast contemporaries (Mary Lyon, Catharine Beecher, et al). All were motivated by the socially progressive Protestant evangelical movement known as the Second Great Awakening and by the founders' quest for an enlightened citizenry. Sibley particularly embraced the founders' notions of a useful, practical education. She was a strong-willed and generally admirable educational leader who founded a long-lived college during a cholera outbreak and in the face of criticism (for teaching young women to be independent and also for educating slaves at the St. Charles Sabbath School for Africans).

This study shed new light on Sibley's educational leadership through a comparative analysis using her spiritual journal and a book titled *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge* (1985, 2007) by USC professors emeriti Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus. The researcher examined whether evidence of Bennis and Nanus' four leadership strategies or competencies could be found in Sibley's journal, which she wrote primarily during the founding of Lindenwood (circa 1831), the rationale being that if contemporary leadership theory was evidenced nearly 200 years ago, it would likely be relevant 200 years hence, and therefore could be considered valid for today's educational leaders. The analysis required the creation of decontextualized researcher statements that enabled the

coding of an historical document using contemporary theory. The study showed strong evidence of most of the researcher's statements (e.g., Leaders are singularly focused on their agenda and produce results, Leaders know what they want and communicate that clearly to others, Leaders challenge others to act, etc.) There was moderate evidence of competencies involving an awareness of strengths and weaknesses, and evidence of social scaffolding was weak, largely because of the nascent state of the college during the period studied.

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Chapter One: Introduction

If there is one thing that researchers and authors tend to agree on regarding the subject of leadership is that there is no agreement on its definition (Cohen, 2009; Hoffman et al., 2011; Kezar & Carducci, 2006; Schuhmann, 2010):

> Literally thousands of empirical investigations of leaders have been conducted in the past 75 years alone, but no clear and unequivocal understanding exists as to what distinguishes leaders from non-leaders, and perhaps more important, what distinguishes effective leaders from ineffective leaders and effective organizations from ineffective organizations. (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 4)

If there is no definition as to what it means to be a leader, how do university business schools, educational leadership programs, and corporate trainers teach men and women to be leaders? Not very well, according to Bennis and Nanus (2007), two University of Southern California educators who spent a lifetime studying and teaching on the topic.

Bennis and Nanus (2007) maintained that in most instances, students are taught to manage rather than lead. They are taught the mechanics of organization rather than the essence of what it takes to inspire others to buy into a unique vision, to manage their own talents as required to sustain that vision, and to raise the experience of achievement from the level of mere proficiency to something that transforms the mundane into the profound, whether in business, the arts, volunteerism, or education, etc.

In the bestselling book they co-authored, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, Bennis and Nanus (2007) declared that leadership is hard to define: “Leadership is like

the Abominable Snowman, whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen" (p. 19). Yet, they argued that in a point of stasis, after "Great Man" and "great events" theories of leadership have come and gone, there exists an opportunity to reevaluate the meaning of leadership. They argued that leadership is transformative in nature and comprised of strategies that anyone can learn (Bennis & Nanus, 2007), which is reassuring at a time when modern complexities and spiraling technology leave even the most willing leaders in a state of flux. From a study of 90 leaders, they identified four competencies or strategies that give aspiring leaders the "capacity to translate intention into reality and sustain it" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 16).

The first edition of Bennis and Nanus' (2007) book elaborated on these competencies, both with elegance and simplicity, and was published in 1985. An updated version was released in 2007, and their premise seems to have withstood a quarter-century of cultural and social evolution—that leaders must have a compelling and consistent vision, must communicate a cohesive purpose and use substance to establish a shared style, must build trust through constancy, and must effectively deploy their strengths and recognize their weaknesses. But will these transformative leadership ideas seem relevant in another quarter century? Will the authors' ideas continue to stand the test of time, especially in a time when changes in social and educational structures, in world economies, in devolving politics, and evolving technologies seem to make even the speed of light seem slow? To answer that question, one cannot transport oneself into the future, but one can examine the past to look for evidence of real-world applications of Bennis and Nanus' leadership theories. This study is predicated on the notion that if these leadership theories were applicable in the past, it is likely their relevance will

survive in the future, and it is further likely that they are sound principles that can guide educational leaders in the present.

The Research Question

The research question hinges on the four leadership competencies identified and expounded upon by Bennis and Nanus (2007).

The first competency is *Attention Through Vision*. Leaders manage the attention of others by creating a focus on their vision. That clarity of vision enables employees to find their role in an organization's overarching mission and empowers them to work effectively and to ultimately become leaders in their own right. Bennis and Nanus (2007) emphasized, however, that attention is a two-way street. Great leaders not only garner attention, they also pay attention, and frequently, the vision they champion is not one they originate, but one they articulate after listening carefully to others.

The second competency is *Meaning Through Communication*. Leaders manage meaning through the "communication of a compelling image of a desired state of affairs—the kind of image that induces enthusiasm and commitment in others" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 31). Whether they are extroverts or introverts, whether they use symbolism, models, actions, or role-modeling, great leaders use shared meaning to create a social architecture, or culture, that unifies the organization. They communicate the "know-why" rather than the "know-how" that engenders crucial, institution-wide commitment to their vision.

The third competency is *Trust Through Positioning*. Leaders evoke trust when they are clear about where they stand and their actions are consonant with their beliefs. When leaders earn the trust of those within their organizations, they are positioned to

establish for their organization a niche in the marketplace, a clear identity, and public perceptions of integrity. The authors wrote that the most common assessment of the 90 leaders they interviewed was that they were “all of a piece” (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 43). They were constant and, therefore, deserving of trust.

The fourth competency is *The Deployment of Self Through Positive Self-Regard*. Leaders deploy themselves effectively, in part, through an appreciation of their strengths as well as an understanding of their weaknesses. They have the wisdom to avoid leadership positions for which they are not well suited, and at the same time they are committed to continuous learning in order to turn weaknesses into strengths and to burnish their talents for the greater good of their organization.

With that understanding, the research question is this: can modern notions of leadership, as elucidated by Bennis and Nanus (2007), be found in an educational leader of the past? More specifically, is there evidence of Bennis and Nanus’ four leadership competencies in the journal of Mary Easton Sibley, the founder of Lindenwood University?

Mary wrote the majority of her journal during a two-year period that coincided with the founding of Lindenwood Female College, which Mary and George began as a boarding school for girls in St. Charles, Missouri, in the early 1800s. Wolferman, who in 2008 wrote the first and only full-length biography of Mary Easton Sibley, characterized Linden Wood in Mary’s time as “a combination grammar and finishing school for girls” (p. 125):

> The curriculum at Linden Wood, from the outset, involved instruction in all branches of English—literature, grammar, writing, spelling, and elocution. For an

> additional fee, the school also offered instruction in French, music and piano, landscape painting, flower painting, and needlework—all considered womanly arts. (p. 14)

The Sibleys established a homelike environment for their students. “The first building at Linden Wood was a log cabin that housed the Sibleys in one of its wings and accommodated twenty boarders in the other” (Jones, 1969, p. 228). The cabin was completed in 1831 (Huffman P. E., 2014). The school struggled with low enrollment and difficult finances off and on until the college was deeded by the Sibleys to the Presbytery of Saint Louis in 1853. The school survived against improbable odds as a women’s college until the 1969-1970 school year when male students were accepted. In 1997, Lindenwood College adopted the name of Lindenwood University (Huffman P. E., 2014). Henceforth in this paper, general references to the modern university will use the name Lindenwood. References addressing the institution during the Sibley era will use the name Linden Wood.

Mary’s journal resides in the St. Louis Historical Museum. A typed transcription was made in the early 20th century, from which a newer transcription was created in 2008 in Word for Windows under the supervision of university archivist Paul Huffman (Huffman, Lindenwood University Archivist, personal communication, January 7, 2014). The Word transcription, which consists of roughly 125 pages, will be used for this study. The journal focused on Mary’s observations and thoughts about her conversion to an evangelical Presbyterian faith, which occurred roughly during the same period as the founding of Linden Wood. There are also observations and thoughts about her school and various day-to-day events in her busy life. She recorded details about her efforts to

move forward plans to build a new Presbyterian Church, her contributions to the creation of a controversial St. Charles Sabbath School for Africans, her reaction to criticism from parents of her students and community members about her approach to education, and her care of the sick and dying, all of which she accomplished even as she founded her school for women. In this study, the search for leadership competencies evidenced in Mary's journal was conducted on entries that detailed all areas of her life, not just her leadership in regard to higher education.

Rationale for the Study

Why choose Mary Sibley as the focus for this contemporary-historical qualitative analysis? There are three compelling reasons:

First, Mary established the first female seminary-turned-college west of the Mississippi River—a college, moreover, that has survived to this day. While she came from a family of pioneers in the literal, westward expansion sense of the word, she was also a pioneer in a metaphorical sense in the realm of education, no less ambitious for the cause of women's education than more well-known East Coast educators.

> Sarah Pierce, Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, Zilpah Grant, Mary Lyon, and Almira Phelps...drew on Enlightenment republican thought and on evangelical sentiment to enlarge the scope of women's higher education. Women, pioneering new roles, founded schools where the female student became the focus of academic purpose. (Solomon, 1985, p. 17)

To put Mary's accomplishments as a female seminary founder in a broader perspective, Sarah Pierce started a female seminary in her Connecticut home in 1792. Mary Lyon founded a seminary in Massachusetts in 1837, which later became Mount

Holyoke College. The others established East Coast seminaries or academies in between those dates. The terms *seminary* and *academy* were used fairly interchangeably to describe these early precursors to degree-granting women's colleges. Mount Holyoke, the first of the famed Seven Sister colleges, was considered the most progressive of the early East Coast female seminaries in terms of curriculum (Thelin, 2011, p. 55). "In 1861, the three-year curriculum was expanded to four, and in 1893 the seminary curriculum was phased out and the institution's name was changed to Mount Holyoke College" (Mount Holyoke College, 2014). Mount Holyoke benefitted not only from strong leadership but also from sufficient resources (Thelin, 2011, p. 56). By way of comparison, though Linden Wood's "versatile curriculum and academic excellence would gain it renown in the West, if not nationwide" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 105), the college struggled financially as a two-year institution for decades and even closed during the 1841-1842 academic year. Yet Mary would not abandon her dream of a women's college, and reports of her continued fundraising were recorded in an 1859 Presbyterian Church statement six years after the Sibleys deeded the college to the Presbytery of Saint Louis.

Though the college would not be accredited as a four-year-degree-granting institution until 1921, the church appointed the Rev. A.V.C. Schenck as Lindenwood's first college president in 1856 with the intention of fulfilling Mary and George's long-standing intentions of creating a college:

> To make it an Institution of great importance and of wide influence—a school for our daughters, not only in name, but equal to the best in the land, containing its hundreds of students within its walls.... To make it an Institution in which the

> daughters of the Church, and all others who may choose to enjoy its privileges, may be qualified and prepared to fulfil (sic) the important duties of their future positions with honor and usefulness. (Schenck, 1859, p. 6)

Four years after Schenck was named president, an advertisement for Lindenwood Female College appeared in a business and city directory, touting it as "a first class institution for young ladies" that offered "normal, collegiate and preparatory departments" and "extensive and beautiful Grounds, complete Calistenic Apparatus, and all modern appliances for comfort, exercise and study" (Sutherland & McEvoy, 1860, p. 233). In the era of 19th century education, preparatory departments prepared younger women for college-level studies and normal departments trained students in the norms of teaching. Today Lindenwood is a major producer of teachers, principals, school counselors, and superintendents. That represents no small legacy.

Mary Sibley and her East Coast predecessors and contemporaries, though pioneering, were careful to couch their ambitions in terms acceptable for the era in which they lived. "These pioneering instructors attempted to balance their aspirations for students with society's claim of the traditional female sphere. None questioned the accepted Christian Ideal of True Womanhood, summed up in the precepts of piety, purity, obedience, and domesticity" (Solomon, 1985, p. 25).

While an advocate for women's education, Mary Sibley was hardly a feminist by today's standards. She wanted young women to succeed independently, but to do so in the sphere assigned to women. George and Mary Sibley endorsed the notion that in a democracy "women were entitled to enrichment and training" and that "education would

make women more useful members of society, more effective home-makers, and also create a supply of school teachers at a very reasonable cost" (Jones, 1969, p. 305).

According to Lindenwood historian and dean Lucinda de Leftwich Templin, the college's purpose in the educational world was "to train young women for a useful life, giving them a distinctive training for leadership in every sphere of a woman's life" (Templin, L., 1921, p. 8). Yet Templin also opined that Mary Sibley was "a hundred years ahead of her time" in many ways and "she was an early advocate of woman's rights" (Templin L. D., 1926, p. 13), not just women's education. Mary was certainly an ardent advocate for female self-sufficiency and productivity, and the desire to instill independence in her students informed her educational policies and curriculum, as further examination of her journal in Chapter Four of this study revealed.

Charles T. Jones (1969), whose dissertation focused on George Champlin Sibley, wrote of Linden Wood's early days, "The school was neither daring nor unique but followed the patterns already set by female seminaries in the state of Missouri" until 1837, when an East Coast teacher named Miss Rosseter joined Mary and brought with her curriculum that was offered in eastern female seminaries" (p. 232). The year Miss Rosseter arrived, George Sibley wrote a letter to a women's publication stating that he and his wife had set out to offer young women a proper education "in the common English Branches, and in Music; and also in the important matters of *Housekeeping* and other domestic duties." He asserted their school was "materially different in several particulars from the ordinary plan of boarding-schools" and it was "intended to be adapted to the peculiar manners and habits, and necessities of our western people" (Sibley, G., The Ladies' Mentor, 1837, p. 46).

The true significance of what George and Mary Sibley created, one concludes after reading Wolferman's (2008) thorough biography of the latter, was not just the offering of a much-needed educational opportunity for young women living on the frontier, but more specifically a Presbyterian education in a region dominated by Catholic education (Vostral, 1999), which generally focused on "the three R's" and Catholic Church history (Templin L., 1926, p. 17). In 1818, a little more than a mile away from Linden Wood, French missionary Sister Rose Philippine Duchesne established "the first free school west of the Mississippi," which became known as the Academy of the Sacred Heart and still exists to this day (Academy of the Sacred Heart, 2014). Duchesne was so successful in establishing the French Society of the Sacred Heart education tradition in America that she was canonized as a saint in 1988.

Wolferman (2008) quoted a circa 1853 letter written by Mary Sibley in which she declared that "I consider our school the first that lifted up the standard of opposition to convent education in the West." Wolferman asserted that Mary attributed her many travails in establishing her school not so much to the fact that it was a women's school, but because it was a *Protestant* school, a new concept for the frontier. As George wrote in the previously cited magazine piece, Linden Wood was "the *first* school of the kind, and except [for] some Jesuit nunneries that are so unsuitable, the first boarding-school established in this state" (Sibley, G., The Ladies' Mentor, 1837, p. 46).

On the Missouri frontier, establishing any kind of school—for Protestants or Catholics, boys or girls—required grit because of "a small population spread out over thousands of acres, a lack of resources, few books, and even fewer teachers" (Thomas, A., Missouri's early schools., 2006, p. 14). Mary herself had attended a boarding school

for young women in Kentucky for a short time before she married at the age of 15, and she was raised by parents who prized education (Huffman, 2013; Rowe, 2010; Wolferman, 2008). Mary's journal indicated she was aware of other women's educational endeavors (January 21, 1836). But when she founded Linden Wood, one can assume that she was making it up as she went. She was never formally trained as a teacher. She innovated. She created something lasting that had not existed in that place or time before—at the edge of civilization in Missouri at a time in American history when only those with pioneering spirits could thrive. If she exhibited leadership in the context of founding a Protestant school for girls in the hinterlands of American civilization where convent-run education was the norm, she was a forerunner of the kinds of leaders that Bennis and Nanus (2007) interviewed for their book and, therefore, a good candidate for study on educational leadership.

The second reason for choosing Mary Sibley for this study is because her relative anonymity provides a blank slate for research, free of bias-inducing legends or collective assumptions. She was not just another great man who did great things in a great era. She was a little-known pioneering women's educator who rose to the challenge of her times in an era of rugged individualism, as Bennis (2009) noted of the 1800s in his book *On Becoming a Leader*:

> As eighteenth-century America was notable for its geniuses, nineteenth-century America was notable for its adventurers, entrepreneurs, inventors, scientists, and writers, the titans who made the industrial revolution, the explorers who opened up the West, the writers who defined us as a nation and a people. Thomas Edison, Eli Whitney, Alexander Graham Bell, Lewis and Clark, Hawthorne, Melville,

> Dickinson, Whitman, and Twain. These men and women whose vision matched their audacity built America. (p. 12)

All of these great men (and Emily Dickinson) have been thoroughly studied. Mary Sibley, who founded her school not long after Lewis and Clark launched their expedition on a river bank near Linden Wood, is a relatively unsung heroine. Public perception of her life is fairly limited and, therefore, her legacy is not excessively burdened by lore. Furthermore, while her father and husband both were prominent men on the frontier who created for Mary a standard of exceptionalism that was beyond the norm, she herself, as a woman, was not expected to achieve great things or to create something of value that would extend beyond the confines of her home and family. Yet she did.

The final reason to study Mary Sibley is that a woman of her achievements deserves to be the focus of more literature. She is little known beyond the scope of those who live near or who have attended or work for Lindenwood University. In so many ways her motivations and accomplishments mirror those of renowned East Coast educators Mary Lyon and Catharine Beecher, et al, which will be explored further in Chapter Two. Even though her educational accomplishments were achieved at the far western reaches of 19th century civilization in presumably far more challenging circumstances than those faced by her more famous female contemporary educators who made names for themselves among the East Coast academic elite, Mary Sibley is virtually unknown by educators at large, and little has been written about her by academicians outside of Missouri. She has received the most attention from early 20th century Lindenwood academicians Lucinda de Leftwich Templin, PhD, and Kate L.

Gregg, PhD, as well as current Lindenwood history professors Kris Smith, PhD, and Jeffrey Smith, PhD. Her only full-length biography was published by the University of Missouri Press (Wolferman, 2008). Further, no investigative endeavors regarding Mary Sibley have touched on contemporary leadership theory. Therefore, any light that might be shed in this regard is more than what existed before this study was undertaken.

Background for the Study

Mary Easton Sibley was born in New York in 1800, a mere 17 years after the end of the Revolutionary War, and 61 years before the start of the Civil War. Her life was bookended with momentous historical events and annotated with interesting historical footnotes. She was four years old when her father and mother, Rufus and Abial Easton, moved westward from New York with Mary and two younger daughters. The year was 1804, and Rufus Easton hoped that the Louisiana Purchase, which the previous year had doubled the size of America, would lead to meaningful employment. He was soon appointed by President Thomas Jefferson as a judge, and the following year he was appointed as St. Louis' first postmaster (Huffman, 2013; Rowe, 2010; Wolferman, 2008). Rufus and Albial Easton would ultimately have 11 children. Their first son was Alton, whose name was given to an Illinois town established by Rufus Easton (Wolferman, 2008, p. 45).

When Mary was 12, the year during which a series of enormous earthquakes, which were collectively called the New Madrid Earthquake, struck southern Missouri, America attacked Britain in what became known as the War of 1812. A year or two later Mary studied at a boarding school in Kentucky. As a child bride of 15, she moved to the edge of civilization to Fort Osage, which is about 20 miles east of present-day Kansas

City, where she and her husband, who was 18 years her senior, worked among the Osage Indians for nearly a decade, he as the factor who ran the Fort Osage factory, or trading post, and she as an informal teacher of Osage children. When that chapter of their lives came to a close, George was one of three men to receive a commission to survey the Santa Fe Trail (Wolferman, 2008).

Subsequently, George and Mary returned to St. Charles and finally settled on their farm near St. Charles, Missouri, where they established a home and founded a school for girls in a grove of Linden trees. The aforementioned 1859 statement issued by the Presbytery of Saint Louis described it thus:

> The College is located on the height of land between the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. It is about twenty miles from St. Louis, and a half mile West from St. Charles. The land rises with a gentle ascent from the river till it reaches the College, which crowns the summit.... It is called LINDENWOOD from its beautiful grove of large Linden trees. (Wolferman, 2008, p. 105)

The Sibleys befriended famed abolitionist preacher and publisher Elijah Lovejoy, and George once rescued him from an angry pro-slavery mob (Wolferman, 2008, p. 110). Mary wrote editorials for Lovejoy's newspaper. George and Mary both survived several deadly cholera epidemics. Through the years, as they struggled to keep the doors to their girls' school open, George pursued politics, and Mary devoted herself to her deep religious beliefs, to building a Presbyterian Church in St. Charles, and to the charitable works of the Female Benevolent Society and later the House of Bethany (Wolferman, 2008). George died during the Civil War when Mary was 63, and she died 15 years later in 1878.

Today Mary and George Sibley are best remembered as the founders of Lindenwood University, a thriving, debt-free regional liberal arts university with nearly 17,000 traditional and adult students, that to this day is devoted to Mary Sibley's notions of a liberal arts education (Lindenwood University, 2014). The university was founded when Mary started educating young women, first in her home in St. Charles, and subsequently on the Sibley farm at Linden Wood. Yet her educational endeavors were not confined to this demographic. Mary believed in education not only for women, but also for immigrants, African Americans, and the Native Americans whom she taught when her husband and partner in all adventures, George Sibley, operated the Fort Osage Indian trading post (Wolferman, 2008). Mary Sibley was a self-taught educator who taught at various stages of her adult life in a variety of settings—in the Indian territories, in Sabbath schools for whites and black slaves, in her own home at 230 N. Main Street in St. Charles as well as at Linden Wood, and, apparently, wherever the opportunity might present itself (Huffman, Lindenwood University Archivist, personal communication, 2014). An anecdote from later in Mary Sibley's life, attributed to one of her grandnieces, hinted at a serial educator:

> She was very fond of driving and when she came to town and visited at my mother's, she liked to drive in the afternoon. Our carriage driver's name was Jake. He had formerly been a slave but had been freed, and he lived with us until his death. Aunt Mary used to drive out with Jake and she always insisted on sitting on the outside seat. One of the friends she often visited was Mrs. Peugnet. She would say, 'Now, Jake, it is spelled P-e-u-g-n-e-t,' which of course, was all lost to Jake. (Templin L. D., 1920, p. 45).

Though this anecdote was far from objective or definitive, it evokes the image of a lifelong, dyed-in-the-wool educator. An analysis of Mary Sibley's journal in Chapter Four will provide more insight into her attitudes and beliefs about education and whether, at least in formative years of the school's founding, she utilized the competencies that Bennis and Nanus (2007) said are the key to translating intention into reality, their defining notion of leadership.

Purpose of the Study

In 1853, George Sibley deeded Lindenwood to the Presbytery of Saint Louis. The college's first appointed president, Rev. A.V.C. Schenck (1859), outlined the Sibley's intention for the future of their college. They desired, Schenck wrote, "To lay the foundations of an Institution which would be permanent, and continue to diffuse its blessings so long as the sun and moon endure" (p. 6). Thus far, that mission has succeeded. Though tempting, one cannot, at least within the scope of this study, connect the dots between the longtime survival of the school she founded and her personal leadership competencies (i.e., Mary Sibley's school has survived nearly two centuries *because* she was a leader). However, one might aptly search for leadership competencies in her journal and, if they are found, draw conclusions about their value (i.e., Mary used some of the same leadership skills outlined by Bennis and Nanus [2007]; therefore, these leadership competencies have stood the test of time and would likely be valuable for use by educators of today.). The purpose, then, is to identify evidence of contemporary leadership competencies in an historical context that will inform the present and guide the future.

Even if the evidence sought does not exist, and whether it does or does not will be explored in Chapter Four, a greater understanding of this important historical educator, and a contextualized exploration of Bennis and Nanus' (2007) theories, will add understanding about the nature of leadership, then and now, to the field of higher education leadership. If the evidence does exist, it would give credence to the notion of the timelessness of Bennis and Nanus' theories.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

Delimitations. The study is intentionally limited to one contemporary theory of leadership and one historical figure, both of which are of particular interest to the researcher and both of which stand out in their respective milieu. There are certainly other theories of leadership a researcher might choose from—chaos and complexity theories, social and cultural theories, contingency theories, and relational or team theories of leadership (Kezar & Carducci, 2006, p. ix), etc. Other theories might serve equally well as a valid tool for a comparative analysis. However, the goal of this study is not to provide a meta-analysis of all leadership theories or to identify the best in class; rather, the goal is to use an historical figure to add depth to an understanding of one particularly practical and understandable contemporary theory, which Bennis and Nanus (2007) called transformative leadership.

Warren Bennis is considered by many to be the "father of leadership" (Shelton, 2010). With his fellow University of Southern California colleague, Burt Nanus, he was one of the first to "differentiate clearly between the concepts of management and leadership," a distinction which "spawned its own mini-industry of literature on leadership" (Wefald & Katz, 2007). The four leadership competencies Bennis and Nanus

outlined were chosen as the focal point of this study not only because of the high regard in which the authors are held and the seminal nature of their work, but also because of the elucidated competencies' elegant simplicity and because they emphasized identifiable strategies that can be assessed in a qualitative study.

The authors are also clearly students of history. Though their book (Bennis & Nanus, 2007) was firmly rooted in the 20th century, they referenced as prior data in the field of leadership research the ruminations of historical leaders "such as Moses, Pericles, Julius Caesar, Jesus Christ, Martin Luther, Niccolò Machiavelli and James Madison" as well as more recent historical figures such as "Gandhi, V.I. Lenin, Harriet Tubman, Winston Churchill, Eleanor Roosevelt, Charles de Gaulle, Dean Acheson, Mao Tse-tung, Chester Barnard, Martin Luther King, Jr., John Gardner and Henry Kissinger" (pp. 3-4). Bennis and Nanus' broad historical perspective on the subject of leadership made them good candidates for a cross-century study.

Mary Sibley was chosen in part because her relative obscurity contrasts so sharply with her considerable accomplishments. The gap in literature about Mary Sibley constitutes a metaphorical black hole. Her journal was chosen as a tool of delimitation because it spoke so directly to her thoughts and aspirations and provided a wealth of primary source data for qualitative analysis. Moreover, the journal was written during a period that roughly coincided with the founding of Lindenwood. The researcher would hope that great beginnings inspired great insights within the pages of a foundational journal. Founding what turns out to be a centuries-old educational institution might well be considered the apotheosis of educational leadership. "Given the difficulties of institutional survival in the 19th century, it is no wonder that longevity has become a

source of prestige in higher education today" (Thelin, 2011, p. 45). For a researcher of educational leadership, studying a journal that coincided with the providential beginnings of a long-lived institution seemed ideal.

Limitations. There are many limitations to this study. A person who undertakes a journal does so with the understanding if not the intention that his or her words will later be read by others and perhaps even widely so—writing for the ages, as it were. To assume that Mary's diary was a complete—and completely honest—representation of her true nature would be naive. One detects a decidedly pious spin to her ruminations.

Another limitation stems from the fact that the vast majority of interviews with leaders that Bennis and Nanus conducted in 1985 were with white males. There were six women and six black men out of 90 interviewed (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 24). However, considering that Mary's leadership was exercised in a time and place in American history that was even more dominated by white males, the researcher does not consider this limitation to be an overwhelming obstacle to relevance.

Finally, the researcher's entrenchment in the culture of Lindenwood University, as an employee, brings to the study a bias of admiration for what Mary Sibley accomplished. However, the qualitative coding of her journal should enforce a distancing from the subject that helps to circumvent unnecessarily hagiographic assessments and recommendations in Chapter Five.

Definition of Terms

Factor. This term was used to describe the individuals who managed Indian trading posts, which were created by the 1796 Indian Trade Law in an effort to manage

relations with Native American tribes. The posts were called factories, and the men who ran them were called factors. George Sibley was a factor when he married Mary Easton.

Leadership Competencies. This term referred to the mastery of leadership strategies, as opposed to the possession of leadership qualities. The primary reference that will be used as the source of contemporary leadership theory is the book titled *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, by Bennis and Nanus (2007). They used the terms competencies and strategies fairly interchangeably.

Lindenwood. Lindenwood is the name used to describe the university that exists today. Dean Lucinda de Leftwich Templin noted in one of her histories of the college that what was originally called Linden Wood became Lindenwood "sometime in 1870," and the word "College" was not associated with the school until shortly before it was taken over by the Presbytery of Saint Louis (Templin L. D., 1926, p. 19). An 1839 advertisement referred to The Boarding School for Young Ladies at Linden Wood (Sibley, G., 1839). Linden Wood was sometimes simply called Mrs. Sibley's School (Jones, 1969, p. 288). In her journal, Mary once referred to "my little school" (August 27, 1833). In 1841, George Sibley referred to it as The Linden Wood School for Young Ladies (Jones, 1969, p. 234). The first course catalogs published in the mid-19th century referred to Lindenwood Female College. Later catalogs used the name Lindenwood College for Young Ladies, and the name continued to evolve. In this study, Linden Wood will be used to describe the school or farm in references that apply to the early 1800s, and the term Lindenwood will be used for references that apply to the present day or to the overarching history of the institution.

Wallenda Factor. This term was coined by Bennis and Nanus (2007) to describe a leader's ability to zero in on a task without even considering the possibility of failure. The idea was named after the famous 20th century tightrope aerialist Karl Wallenda who, Bennis and Nanus reported, never thought about falling until his last and fatal walk on a tightrope.

Summary

In this chapter, the researcher introduced the conceptual framework for this study. The research and analysis will focus on evidence of one contemporary leadership theory in the journal of one pioneering 19th century educator—Mary Easton Sibley. An overview of Mary's lifespan touched on the momentous times through which she lived and hinted at her strong will and accomplishments, which made her an ideal candidate for a leadership study. Also addressed were the limitations of the study, which primarily revolved around the use of a personal journal as a reliable accounting of the diarist's thoughts and deeds.

In the next chapter, a literature review will delve further into the culture that influenced Mary and the contemporary leadership theory to which her written reflections were compared.

Chapter Two: The Literature Review

This study focused on the search for evidence of contemporary notions of leadership competencies in an historical, educational context. Therefore, this literature review will be bifurcated, with one section focusing on history and the other focusing on one contemporary leadership theory.

Section I will focus on literature that addressed Mary Easton Sibley and the culture that influenced her motives and attitudes regarding the education of young women. Since the literature about Mary is relatively sparse, the review will also be used to paint a broad landscape of her times to give context to the research presented in Chapter Four. Finally, relevant material about Mary's husband, George Champlin Sibley, who was a partner in her Linden Wood endeavors, will also be reviewed.

Section II of this literature review will focus on Bennis and Nanus' contemporary theory of leadership competencies as outlined in their 2007 classic book titled, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*. The authors are not only researchers whose work has been embraced by a large and diverse readership outside the educational field, but they are also educators with credentials in higher academia, which will be further explored later in this chapter. To begin, however, a review of literature relevant to the historical context will be undertaken.

Section I: Mary Easton Sibley and Her Cultural Influences

Two Biographies. One would think that the founder of a college that was until its 1969 integration of men the oldest women's college west of the Mississippi and what "is said to be the oldest Protestant College in the Louisiana Purchase" (Templin L., 1926, p. 95) would be the subject of a fair amount of literature. Yet there is a wide gap when it

comes to Mary Easton Sibley, compared to other female educational leaders of her time. Mary had much in common with better-known contemporaries who blazed trails in the east, such as Mary Lyon, founder of Mount Holyoke College, and Catharine Beecher, the well-known educator and author who advanced 19th century educators' notions of domestic economy and who emphasized girls' need for physical education (Beecher, C. E., 2013). Catharine Beecher and Mary Sibley were born in and died in the same years. These precise contemporaries, as well as Mary Lyon, all founded schools for young women, and all three drew inspiration for their educational endeavors in part from a national evangelical religious movement called the Second Great Awakening (Wakefield, 2011). Yet today Mary Sibley is virtually unknown in comparison to the others. A search on February 25, 2013, of the EBSCO Host Education database under the key search terms "Mary Lyon" and the Massachusetts college "Mount Holyoke" produced more than 30 pieces of relevant literature. A search of the same database using the terms "Mary Sibley" and the Midwestern college "Lindenwood" or its original name "Linden Wood" produced no results.

This dearth of biographical literature in journals made all the more important two books that provided readable and recent biographical treatments of Mary Sibley. Interestingly, the tone of these two pieces of literature contrasted notably in some aspects, which poses a challenge. After reading both, one ponders the question: Was Mary ahead of her times or constrained by her times—or both?

In 2008, Wolferman wrote a short text titled *The Indomitable Mary Easton Sibley: Pioneer of Women's Education in Missouri*, which addressed the major incidents of Mary's entire life ranging from her birth in New York in 1800 to her childhood days in

St. Louis to her marriage to George Sibley and their life together at Fort Osage to the founding of Lindenwood Female College and, finally, to her death at the age of 78. Wolferman's (2008) book, as its title suggests, drew positive conclusions about Mary's legacy from the historical clues that survive. While the book offered suggested readings, it did not proffer citations, which required a greater level of reader trust that the sources used and the conclusions drawn are reliable.

The other treatment was written by Rowe (2010), a history professor at University of Central Missouri. Rowe managed to write a surprisingly comprehensive sketch in a single chapter, one of 11 diverse chapters in a book titled *Feminist Frontiers and Gendered Negotiations: Women who shaped the Midwest.* Rowe's chapter was titled *Mary Sibley Genteel Reformer*.

Rowe (2010), like Wolferman (2008), dealt with Mary Sibley's major life events, but she did so in light of Mary's role as a woman at a time in our history when society did not suffer unconventionally assertive women gladly. The authors pursued Mary's legacy along the same tracks, but in many ways, their research led them to different destinations.

Wolferman (2008) and Rowe (2010) both made references to the legends or stories that arose in the wake of Mary's death and survive to this day as treasured lore, and they both asserted that the stories have, in some instances, trumped the truth about Mary. However, the authors did not always agree on what was legend and what was fact.

For example, Wolferman (2008) wrote that Mary taught young Indians in the Sibley's home at Fort Osage, which was called Fountain Cottage:

> With Mary's sister Louisa living at Fountain Cottage, Mary began teaching her as well as some of the Indian girls and settlers' daughters, offering them piano

> lessons as well as instruction in reading and writing. Never formalized, these lessons nonetheless marked the beginning of Mary's career as an educator. (p. 55)

Wolferman (2008), citing an 1820 letter from Sibley's husband to Thomas McKenney, superintendent of Indian affairs in which George recounted an interchange with Big Soldier, an Osage chief, wrote that Mary realized the Indians at Fort Osage would need to be literate in a changing world—one in which the westward expansion of the Americans was quickly closing in on Indian territories—and she educated them in spite of the disapproval of Big Soldier who "did not like their 'chains' of civilization" (Wolferman, 2008, pp. 56-57). In contrast, Rowe (2010) wrote, "Stories that grew around her after her death have her teaching Indian children to read and write, though there is no evidence of this in sources from the period" (p. 23).

One historical detail on which both authors agreed is the inaccuracy of 1827 as the college's founding date, which Lindenwood University uses to this day. Rowe (2010) wrote, "In promotional literature published by the Sibleys in the 1830s and 1840s, they consistently stated that the school was opened in 1830. There is no surviving evidence, however, that classes were being taught there before 1831" (p. 25). Wolferman (2008) wrote on page 95 of her book that

> Mary's school doubtless started just the way her informal Fort Osage school had begun, by teaching her sisters. In the fall of 1830, Sibley's twelve-year-old sister Alby came to Linden Wood to study. Mary's first two paying students arrived in 1831.

Though the students were not boarders, Wolferman further wrote on page 98 that in 1832, after Mary's religious awakening and after she began to teach Sabbath school in the

country, Mary accepted about six residential students at Linden Wood. According to Lindenwood Archivist Paul Huffman, Lindenwood's founding date is hard to determine, but the following can be written with confidence: Mary started teaching a few girls informally in her St. Charles home in 1827 and continued after she and George settled at Linden Wood in 1829 (Huffman, Lindenwood University Archivist, personal communication, 2014).

Rowe's (2010) piece highlighted the limitations placed on Mary in her role as a woman and attributed societal constraints to the many frustrations Mary expressed in her journal and letters. Rowe wrote that while Mary was "an ambitious, talented, and strong-willed woman" who felt "driven to live a meaningful life and to find purpose as an activist in the public arena," her ambitions were "bound to a very conventional understanding of woman's sphere—one dictated by her social class and the dominant culture of her time" (pp. 21-22). Like [fellow evangelist and girls seminary founder Catharine] Beecher, Sibley reconciled her aspirations with her values by devoting herself to evangelical Protestantism, social reform, and in particular, the cause of women's education" (Rowe, 2010, pp. 21-22). The evangelical Protestantism to which the author referred is what was known as the Second Great Awakening, a fervent strand of faith that imbued Protestantism with a religious urgency that Mary wholeheartedly embraced (Huffman, 2013; Rowe, 2010; Wolferman, 2008). The social reform Rowe referred to, in part, dealt with slavery. Though Mary and George owned slaves until 1859 (Wolferman, 2008), Mary wrote this entry in her diary in the spring of 1834: "Went to town and stayed all night with my Mother. While sitting up wrote on the subject of slavery for the Observer. I pray that this stain on our national character may be removed" (February 16,

1834). Mary's editor was famed abolitionist and Presbyterian minister Elijah Lovejoy, publisher of the *St. Louis Observer*. "By January 1832, Mary was regularly contributing articles to the *St. Louis Observer*. Anti-Catholic pieces were her specialty, though she also wrote on other religious topics and slavery" (Rowe, 2010, p. 28).

In February of 1834, Mary and several other women opened a Sabbath school for slaves, an effort about which she wrote, "I have felt happier after closing this school of an evening than I have done for a long time in the performance of any single duty" (April 24, 1834). In spite of Mary's ebullience, the Sabbath school for slaves closed within the year due to a combination of factors that included the death of Mary's father, an outbreak of cholera, and condemnation from local newspapers (Sibley, M., August 5, 1834; Rowe, 2010, p. 30). Mary continued to involve herself in the issue of slavery by supporting the American Colonization Society, contributing funds as late as 1853 (Rowe, 2010, p. 30). The society, founded in 1817, was inspired by a New Jersey Presbyterian minister and advocated for a "Back to Africa" policy. The society established a colony in Africa that later became Liberia with the goal of purchasing slaves and resettling them in West Africa, an alternative to emancipation (Wolferman, 2008, p. 109). While George and Mary owned slaves, the "Sibleys supported the Back to Africa movement and the gradual emancipation of slaves" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 110). Mary considered the education of slaves to be the key to their independence. "She pursued the ideal of education as the great equalizer, a progressive idea not shared by many at the time" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 111).

In 1837, after Lovejoy published the Abolitionist Creed, George Sibley wrote a letter of protest to his friend and canceled his newspaper subscription. Nevertheless,

George came to Lovejoy's aid less than four months later when he was nearly killed by an angry mob of slave owners in St. Charles. The Sibleys provided the horse on which he escaped (Huffman, 2013; Wolferman, 2009). "Only five weeks later, a vigilante group killed Lovejoy in Alton, as he tried to defend his printing press" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 111).

In her journal, Mary not only disparaged slavery as a stain on the country, she also criticized the indolence-inducing effect she felt slavery had on young women raised in households that depended excessively on the help of slaves:

> Women instead of being raised helpless & dependent beings should be taught a habit of industry & usefulness. Especially that they should be made to consider it a privilege and duty to wait upon themselves to be perfectly independent of the enervating effects that slavery has produced almost universally upon the character of the people of west and South. (August 19, 1833)

These sentiments about slavery seem admirably progressive for the time in which they were written. However, in spite of Mary's willingness to publicly advocate for change on issues like slavery and in spite of her advocacy for the education of independent young women, Rowe (2010) cast Mary's seemingly impressive accomplishments in a negative light. Much of Mary's activism and daily activities revolved around issues championed by the Presbyterian Church. Rowe maintained that the assertive Mary Sibley was an unnatural fit in the patriarchal evangelical world into which she threw herself heart and soul—the only social sphere in which women were able to find some measure of self-expression and independence (Rowe, 2010, p. 22).

While one might assume that Mary and other pioneering souls who lived on the western edge of civilization might find freedom from societal constraints, Rowe (2010) wrote that

> the West did not offer her freedom. Instead, she struggled against a tide of social pressure stronger than that she might have encountered in the family's old New York home, as she negotiated the gulf between her need to define herself and the definition that her society placed upon her. (p. 21)

Rowe (2010) interpreted Mary's journal entries in which she expressed frustrations about teaching as an indication that this pioneering educator was not suited to the task:

> Mary Sibley's activism was constrained by her own conception of a woman's proper role, though her assertiveness and independence, as well as the impatience and "fretful disposition" for which she often chided herself, suggest that she was hardly content with that role. Not temperamentally suited to run a girls' boarding school, she complained frequently of the lack of privacy, the tedious routine, "the thousand little perplexities arising from the misconduct or inattention of the pupils," and her exasperation at the girls, their parents, and the conflict demands of various duties. (p. 30)

Wolferman (2008), in contrast, left the reader with feelings one might have after reading stories about the Unsinkable Molly Brown. Here is one sweeping passage that dealt with some of the same issues addressed by Rowe, but in a more affirmative manner:

> Mary, on the other hand, thought slave children were as capable of learning as were white children. She did not discriminate among the Native America, immigrant, slave, or female children she taught. She believed each child needed

> to be educated to be able to be independent, rather than "an object of charity" or "the object of scorn and rebuke." She pursued the ideal of education as the great equalizer, a progressive idea not shared by many at the time. (Wolferman, 2008, p. 111)

In a similarly positive summary, noting the many self-deprecating comments Mary made in her journal about her efforts as an educator, a diarist, and a Christian, Wolferman (2008) wrote, "Although in her journal Mary lamented her tendencies toward procrastination and indolence, few nineteenth-century women accomplished as much" (p. ix).

In conclusion of the comparison of these two biographical treatments, though Wolferman (2008) and Rowe (2010) seemed to cast Mary Sibley's life in somewhat different lights, the former sunny and the latter cast in shadows, it is clear that Mary's life was quite extraordinary. But to what extent were her accomplishments owing to her courage, persistence, and innate leadership abilities as opposed to the accomplishments, prominence, and resourcefulness of George, who was 18 years her senior and, by the time they married, had "established himself as an explorer, an Indian agent, a land investor, a gifted letter writer, a loyal servant of the U.S. government, and a great asset to the Indian factory system" (Rowe, 2010, p. 51)? That question will presently be explored.

The Partnership. A detailed doctoral dissertation about George Sibley was presented at the University of Missouri, Columbia, by Jones in 1969, and it addressed in clear terms the nature of Mary and George's partnership in the founding and maintenance of Linden Wood.

Understanding the dynamics of their relationship is important to any effort to determine the measure of Mary's leadership competencies. To attribute any part of Linden Wood's success to Mary, as opposed to George, one must understand the roles they played in the college's founding. Jones' (1969) thesis, titled *George Champlin Sibley: The Prairie Puritan (1782-1863)*, focused on George's many accomplishments. Jones detailed the "Puritan strain" that George inherited from his English relatives who migrated to the "New World" in the early 1600s—his honesty, ambition, and industry that made him a successful Indian fort factor. Jones succinctly explained the purpose behind this government-created position:

> By setting up these factories at convenient locations for the Indians, staffing them with honest and experienced civilian storekeepers, and providing them with good quality Indian trade goods, the government would take an important and positive step toward maintaining peace with the Indians on the western frontier. (p. 30)

Later in his dissertation, Jones (1969) stated that

> the Fort Osage Trading House under Sibley's direction had made a profit for the government, had been among the top three factories in volume of trade, and had been located in a key area among the Indians on the western front. (p. 170)

Jones described the duties that George, as an Indian sub-agent, would have been involved with the following:

> They served as intermediaries between the government and the Indians, confiscated whiskey and merchandise of unlicensed traders, delivered annuities and presents to the Indians, negotiated treaties, promoted harmonious

> relationships between the Indians and the white settlers, and tried to ward off inter-tribal warfare. (p. 76-77)

Clearly, George had a record of success that required in its execution a variety of skills and talents. His success made him a desirable prospective husband. Much older than Mary, he was her father's contemporary, and the men had much in common. "They were both government employees and men of education, had eastern backgrounds, and were from old American families" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 45). Whether George met Mary through her father is unknown. "According to the story of the evening they met in 1814, George had eyes only for Mary, and no one seemed to object that she was only fourteen years old and he was thirty-two" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 46).

When George and Mary married in 1815, he brought his 15-year-old bride to Fort Osage, to a home called Fountain Cottage. Jones (1969) characterized George's young Mary as a "handsome, gay, happy, and outgoing girl" who

> throughout her life…displayed a great deal of personal initiative and drive, traits that her husband fully encouraged. An excellent horsewoman, a good pianist, and adequately educated for a young woman in 1815, Mary took with her saddle horse, an organ, some furniture, and her library to Fort Osage. (p. 127)

In 1822, when the Indian factory system had run its course, Fort Osage and the trading post closed, and George was without a job (Jones, 1969; Wolferman, 2008). George planned to create a private trading company and simultaneously farm Fountain Cottages' land (Jones, 1969). To that end, he bought what remained of Fort Osage's trading goods, but his efforts as a trader failed, and "the purchase left the Sibleys with a debt they would need more than ten years to repay" (Wolferman, 2008, p. 75).

In 1825, still in debt, George received an appointment from President John Quincy Adams as one of three commissioners to conduct an arduous two-year survey of the Santa Fe Trail (Gregg, 1952). Though the commission was presumably a financial reprieve, George did not receive payment from the government for another seven years (Wolferman, 2008). That was when the idea of a school for women on the outskirts of St. Charles germinated, as Jones (1969) explained:

> The long history of Lindenwood College for Women at St. Charles can be traced back to the Sibleys, harried and frustrated by debt, who saw in a private school an acceptable and legitimate way to make money. Certainly there were other factors that brought the Sibleys to this decision: their interest in education, Mary's special talent for teaching, their affection for young people, the proximity of Lindenwood to St. Louis and other growing towns east and west of the Mississippi River, and an increasing awareness of the need for women to be educated in that age of the common man. These factors cannot be discounted, but, it seems to me that the Sibleys, weighted down by debt, were determinedly seeking means of overcoming that problem. (p. 224)

Starting a female seminary was clearly a joint venture. "'Mrs. Sibley's School,' as it was sometimes called, represented the combined efforts of two entrepreneurs who believed in the great value of their undertaking" (Jones, 1969, p. 228). In the early days, Mary was the sole teacher at Linden Wood. Jones (1969) described George's duties during this foundational period as a manager of all the practical matters affecting daily life at Linden Wood, as the following quote indicated. (Jones referred in this quote to a slave named Mary. The only female slave referred to by Wolferman [2008] was named

Betty. Regardless of these contradictions, the point of this citation is George's role in the operation of Linden Wood):

> Sibley's role lay outside the classroom. He tended to the farm, raised a garden, planted an orchard, and cared for his livestock. The farm served as the primary source of food for the school's young constituency. Sibley also kept books and handled correspondence with parents and guardians. A few slaves, including a Negro Cook, Mary, did the necessary chores on the farm and in the kitchen. The farm was a key element in the total operation of the Linden Wood Seminary and Sibley managed it well. (p. 230-231)

Regarding George's role, in her chapter on the subject of Mary Sibley, addressing this very topic, previously cited author, Rowe (2010) went so far as to say that Linden Wood survived various cholera outbreaks in the early 1800s and negative reaction to Mary's evangelizing and strict school policies *because* of George's "careful management" (p. 31).

However, George was not the only one who came to the school's rescue during hard times. According to early 20th century Lindenwood professor and dean Lucinda de Leftwich Templin,

> one reason for the development of the college, in spite of the financial difficulties encountered in trying to establish an endowment, was her [Mary's] determination to see the project succeed. When things looked darkest, she packed her bag, went East and raised over $4,000 among her friends and those of Major Sibley…. That Mrs. Sibley had executive ability is shown by the fact that, during the last twenty years of Major Sibley's life, a time when he was a semi-invalid, she ran her house

> and servants, and had time to take an active part in local affairs. (Templin L. D., 1926, p. 14)

So, in answer to the question posited earlier in this literature review—Was Mary the founder of Linden Wood or was George the true force behind the college?—it seems evident that the school's founding could not have occurred without their partnership. George was the manager of the myriad details required to sustain Mary's educational vision. Of the two, Mary was the impassioned educator. As Wolferman (2008) wrote, "Convinced of the potential of educated ladies in society, Mary approached her second year of teaching at Linden Wood in the fall of 1833 as if it had been her lifelong calling" (p. 104). As Rowe (2010) wrote, in apparent agreement, Mary was the driving force behind Lindenwood. "Whatever her original motives for starting the school, she soon imbued it with a new and intense sense of mission" (p. 25).

That mission was to provide something that young Protestant women on the frontier could not elsewise obtain—a useful and practical education, as Mary put it in her journal, a mission that served as an equalizer in a time when even the founders of many women's colleges, like Mary, were loath to proclaim women's equality with men.

Mary's Education of Young Women. Though Mary Sibley seems to have been a serial educator regardless of her students' sex or race, she presented a blend of conflicting notions about the role of women and the role of education in women's lives. In her journal she asserted that women have limited public roles, "believing as I do the injunction of Scripture is not to suffer women to speak publicly in the Churches" (May 1833). Yet in the same period of her life, when she was 33, defending the egalitarian

tasks required of her students, she expressed a captivatingly progressive stance that women should be able to care for themselves:

> One of the great objects I had in view, indeed I may say the principal one, in undertaking such a task [educating girls] is that as far as my influence and example can go, it shall be exerted to do away that pernicious system of education, so common especially in slave countries, which turns upon the world thousands of my sex helpless dependent creatures, mere Doll babies dressed up __ for exhibition decorated with external accomplishments, very pretty to hold in the Drawing room or Ball room but of no manner of use either to ourselves or their fellow creatures, when called upon to take their stations in society as wives, mothers & heads of families. Then they need to be practically & experimentally & what is worth more than all habitually acquainted with all the various duties of Domestic economy & arrangement. In proportion as they are so if, with this essential knowledge is combined a liberal education do they become the pride, the comfort, the stay of their relatives and friends, whereas on the other hand they become a burden to all with whom they are connected. (August 19, 1833)

As forward thinking as that may sound, Mary may have made a distinction in her mind between educating women, as mentioned in this quote, for the purpose of developing competence in running a household versus educating women for the sake of learning. Under a later section of her journal notated "1836 Linden Wood Private Journal Remarks" in which she generally praised the successful Troy Female Seminary in New York that was founded in 1821 by Emma Willard, Mary wrote, after reading an account

of the seminary, the following decidedly conservative ideas about the education of women:

> If the domestic instruction held a more prominent part I think the plan would be an excellent one, but I am opposed to the plan of making learned women at the expense of destroying their fitness for the peculiar duties allotted them in the station of life in which by the providence of God they have been designed to move. There is much yet to be done towards maturing a good plan of female education. Whatever their capacities may be, certainly that kind of knowledge vulgarly called "book knowledge" cannot be so necessary to them as to the other sex. I never wish to see that society in which the nobler sex can not be looked up to as superior in knowledge, as they are in strength & energy of character. It would destroy half the delight of our associations if we were not permitted to feel that we have a protector in man to whom we can regard as Superior. (January 21, 1836)

Ideas about women's education were evolving in the early 1800s, especially on the East Coast, just as they had after the Revolutionary War. The education of women was taken more seriously after the Revolutionary War (Hartwarth, Maline, & DeBra, 1997; Kelly, 1987) when the founders determined that "democracy would not work without an enlightened electorate" (Allen, 1969, p. vi). The concept of the importance of an educated citizenry cast women's social role in a new light:

> The republic conceived by Americans in 1789 would be ruled by an aristocracy of talent and virtue, not by an aristocracy based on family ties or 'divine right.'

> Political leaders were to emerge from the people, and the people themselves would be capable of responsible political action. (Allen, 1969, p. 11)

That capability would be created through education. George Washington dealt with the issue in his Farewell Address: “Promote, then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public opinion should be enlightened” (Allen, 1969, p. 14). Ben Franklin, in a 1749 proposal for the establishment of an academy in Philadelphia, argued “The good Education of Youth has been esteemed by wise men of all Ages, as the surest Foundation of the Happiness…of Commonwealth” (Allen, 1969, p. 11). The founder who was perhaps most associated with the notion of an educated citizenry and the diffusion of knowledge as a means to avert tyranny was Thomas Jefferson:

> To Jefferson then, liberty depended on education, an education that would ensure that the inalienable rights recently proclaimed and fought for in the Revolution would in fact be realized by his and future generations. The need, quite simply, as for an education that would be useful for republican citizens. (Wagoner, 1993, p. 10)

For women, in the days that followed the American Revolution, education became a means to an end not for themselves, but for their husbands and sons. As Mothers of the Republic, women were to become educated so they could teach their sons to be future citizens (McMahon, 2009; Solomon, 1985):

> A major part of the woman’s sphere was child-rearing, which included imparting civic virtue and knowledge. Part of the argument for women’s education was

> based on the increasing realization that the republic needed an educated citizenry and that this in turn required the nurturing of the young by more educated mothers (10). (Harwarth et al., 1997, p. 14)

However, educational theories continued to evolve along with the young country. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, echoed Jefferson's advocacy of the notion of a useful education but advanced the idea by proposing it in the context of women's education. Rush, "in his speech at the opening of the Young Ladies Academy in Philadelphia in 1787, encouraged the idea of a 'useful' education for women: reading, spelling, grammar, history, arithmetic, bookkeeping, science to aid in the sickroom and kitchen, and Bible instruction [Cott 105; Rudolph, Essays, 28; Smith 259-265]" (Kelly, 1987, p. 8). Rush's "Thoughts upon Female Education," written in 1787, inspired Emma Willard, Catharine Beecher, and Mary Lyon, who established female seminaries (Kelly, 1987).

The notion of usefulness as an educational goal was mentioned more than once in Mary's journal. On August 17, 1833, she wrote

> I commenced this spring the little school I had last year consisting of seven or eight young girls—on the plan I have long thought necessary for the good of the rising generation. That is the women instead of being raised helpless & dependent beings should be taught a habit of industry & usefulness. (August 17, 1833).

On August 19 of the same year, about students who were overly reliant on slaves, she disparagingly wrote,

> The delicate girl who could scarcely bear the idea of helping herself to a drink of water is thrown at some period of her life upon this cold world an object of charity (and truly she is an object of scorn & rebuke for that very inability to help herself which has been produced by the injudicious course of education pursued. When the other by the same changes, rises in society and becomes still more capable of filling her station with honor in consequence of her practical & useful acquirements. (August 19, 1833)

For young men, a useful education could be found in academies, which served as a model for what later became high schools and which "taught ideas and skills directly related to the practical side of life and provided intellectual tools for the development of new knowledge about the material world" (Spring, 1986, p. 14). They stood in contrast to grammar schools, a traditional form of education available to the wealthy and elite that migrated to the New World, in which students learned Latin, Greek, and Hebrew and were prepared for college and roles in the highest echelons of society, both church and state. In academies, lessons were taught in English, and students were taught that "the freedom of ideas is essential for the development of society" (Spring, 1986, p. 14) and were prepared for social mobility (Tyack, 1967).

Mary's notions of a useful education were doubtless influenced by the growing number of academies serving boys in Missouri, which by 1850 numbered approximately 200 (Thomas, 2006). Her notions were also influenced by the man who hired her father as the first Post Master of St. Louis—President Thomas Jefferson.

However, while Jefferson emphasized the need for an educated citizenry, he did not advocate for the education of women per se (Wagoner, 1993). After seeing the

virtues and pitfalls of an education abroad during a trip to Europe, he argued that American men should be educated in America. Moreover, Jefferson wanted education to be useful specifically to the republic's citizens and, to that end, he outlined the following high-level educational objectives:

> To give every citizen the information he needs for the transaction of his own business;
>
> To enable him to calculate for himself, and to express and preserve his ideas, his contracts and accounts, in writing:
>
> To improve, by reading, his morals and faculties;
>
> To understand his duties to his neighbors and country, and to discharge with competence the functions confided to him by either;
>
> To know his rights; to exercise with order and justice those rights; to choose with discretion the fiduciary of those he delegates; and to notice their conduct with diligence, with candor, and judgment;
>
> And, in general, to observe with intelligence and faithfulness all the social relations under which he shall be placed (12). (Wagoner, 1993, p. 15)

These objectives, reasonable for either gender even in the early 1800s, might well explain Mary Sibley's emphatic insistence that her female students be productive, independent, and educated even when in the next breath she demurred from the notion that women are equal to men.

Religious Foundations. Another objective that guided Mary's establishment of Linden Wood was the desire to offer young women a non-Catholic girls' school. A close read of her journal leads one to conclude she was a virulent opponent of the Roman

Catholic Church. She made disparaging remarks about Jesuits and convent schools. Mary was an ardent anti-papist who did not consider Catholicism to be a Christian religion and thought those who practiced the faith to be terribly misguided (Rowe, 2010; Sibley, M., February 10, 1834).

Moreover, when she founded Linden Wood, Mary was undergoing a religious conversion inspired by the Second Great Awakening that introduced an evangelical fervor to Presbyterianism. Mary's newfound religiosity was off-putting to her mother and put her in direct conflict on more than one occasion with her students' parents. She wrote to the mother of a Catholic student informing her that she could remove her daughter if she feared Mary's witnessing of her faith might "endanger the peculiar religious tenets you wish your daughter to abide by" (July 5, 1832). Evangelical Christianity was not only at the core of Mary's journal, it was also pervasive at her school. Daily her students recited the Bible, which Mary and George considered "the foundation of civil liberty, a great history book, great literature, and a teacher of morals" as Jones (1969) wrote in his dissertation, citing an 1834 letter from George to William Russell (p. 230).

An 1839 broadside advertisement promoting the school, distributed in George's name, informed potential students that the Boarding School for Young Ladies at Linden Wood, Missouri, offered a "thorough course of instruction, Intellectual, Moral, and Domestic—based on the settled principle of Christianity, and adapted to those on which are founded the free institutions of our highly favoured country." The ad further promised to help young women "become respectable, useful, and enlightened members

of society" and learn the "peculiar duties of the sex" (Sibley, G., The Ladies' Mentor, 1837, p. 46).

In general, religion was the one realm in which women could be independent from men and productive and in which "women could undeniably claim equality with men, even if that equality was defined in wholly spiritual terms" (Norton, 1984, p. 615). In particular, Bible study was a nonthreatening subject for women to study at a time when many questioned, variously, whether women were as intelligent as men, whether they were too frail for higher education, and/or whether women who were as well educated as men would a find husbands or whether they would even be able to reproduce and have children (Clarke, 1875; Harwarth et al., 1997). In 1875, a Harvard medical professor argued that in some instances women have "muscle, mind, and soul" equal to men, but that did not mean they should receive equal training. He claimed that the bodily energy required by the intellectual stimulation of education weakened female reproductive organs:

> That undue and disproportionate brain activity exerts a sterilizing influence upon both sexes is alike a doctrine of physiology, and an induction from experience. And both physiology and experience also teach that this influence is more potent upon the female than upon the male. (Clarke, 1875, para. 134)

To overcome such suppositions parading as science, proponents of women's education "had to reassure the public that the education of women would primarily serve others, not individual women who might threaten the social and domestic order with their intellectual ambitions" (McMahon, 2009). Bible study was a viable, non-threatening course of study for women, and it was a natural choice at Linden Wood because Mary,

like her more famous contemporaries Catherine Beecher, who founded Hartford Female Seminary in Connecticut, and Mary Lyon, who founded Mount Holyoke seminary for women in 1837, was motivated to educate others in part because of religious convictions (Kelly, 1987; Rowe, 2010; Solomon, 1985; Wolferman, 2008).

These female founders drew inspiration from the Second Great Awakening, which started in the late 18th century and was widespread by the early 19th century (Wolferman, 2008):

> The first Great Awakening one hundred years earlier focused on spiritual regeneration. It strengthened evangelical denominations such as Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists and Presbyterians. The second wave had a social impact, generating popular support for temperance, the abolition of slavery, and other social reforms, including universal education. (Wakefield, 2011, p. 6)

In 1832, Mary experienced her religious conversion after attending revival meetings conducted by Rev. William S. Potts, the charismatic pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of St. Louis (Rowe, 2010), whom Mary mentioned frequently in her journal, which she began in March of that year. Her evangelical religious fervor and her desire to convert others to her faith strained at varying points and to various degrees her relations with her husband, her parents, and others, including some parents of the children whom she taught, and even neighbors. In August 9, 1833, she wrote, “Visited some near neighbors with the determination of saying something to them about the necessity of repentance and faith. It was with great difficulty I could find an opportunity of getting in a word so anxious were they to avoid the subject” (August, 1833).

Though her zealous religiosity caused conflict and was not readily embraced by her husband, Mary remained steadfastly devoted to her Christian beliefs, and eventually she won George over to her faith. In 1853, George Sibley offered

> to give to the Presbytery [of St. Louis] the whole of his Lindenwood estate, comprising one hundred and twenty acres; a part of it to go into their possession immediately, and the remainder to become available after the death of himself and wife. (Schenck, 1859, p. 4)

That same year, the legislature granted a charter for Lindenwood Female College. In exchange for the gift, the Presbyterian Church agreed to follow the Sibley's directives, which included "That the Holy Bible should be introduced into the Institution as a school-book, and should be studied daily, and an unwearied effort be made by pious teachers to bring their pupils under its hallowed influence" (Schenck, 1859, p. 6). Because of financial constraints, the college's first catalog was not published until June 1858 (Jones, 1969). On page 14, the catalog stated, "The Bible is a book of daily use. A Bible-class lesson is required of boarding students on the Sabbath" (Lindenwood Female College First Annual Catalogue 1857-8, n.d.). In this way, Mary's evangelically motivated educational goals succeeded.

Section II: Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus' Contemporary Leadership Theory

Almost 100 years after the death of Mary Easton Sibley, two academicians renowned for their expertise on the topic of leadership published what would become a bestseller titled, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*. When Collins Business Essentials, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, issued a second edition in 2007, the

cover proclaimed that more than 500,000 copies had been sold and that the Financial Times had called it "One of the top 50 business books of all time."

The second edition contained new material, including a final chapter in which the authors criticized leadership education within and outside of university settings, asserting that

> management education relies heavily, if not exclusively, on mechanistic, pseudorational 'theories' of management and produces tens of thousands of MBAs each year. The gap between management education and the reality of leadership in the workplace is disturbing, to say the least. (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 204)

The authors reemphasized their original conclusions—namely, that there is a big difference between managing and leading: "Managers are people who do things right and leaders are people who do the right thing" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 20).

The authors also attempted to forecast the ways in which their approach to leadership, which they described as "transformative," giving credit to James MacGregor Burns and his theories of transformational leadership, could be used as the world continued to unfold as one in which organizations operated "not just around the clock but around the globe" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 215). Leaders of the future, they predicted seven years ago, instead of directing and supervising individuals, would need to empower and inspire individuals to work as a team; instead of acting as a boss who controls processes and behaviors, they would need to act as a coach, creating learning environments; instead of leading by goal-setting, they would need to lead by vision—"creating new directions for long-term business growth" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 217).

Even as they tried to predict the future of leadership, Bennis and Nanus (2007) cast a backward glance and avowed that while their view of leadership had changed between 1985 and 2007, the competencies they identified through their interviews with 90 CEOs had not. They eschewed the "great man" theory that great men or women are born, not made or trained, and what they called the "Big Bang" theory of leadership, in which an ordinary man or woman is put into a moment in time, along with followers, in which circumstances combine and combust to make a great leader. Instead, they proposed that true leadership was the "wise use of power" that translated "intention into reality" and sustained it (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 16).

Four Strategies. Bennis and Nanus (2007) maintained that anyone can learn the four strategies, or areas of competencies as they sometimes referred to them, that they identified in the 90 leaders they interviewed over the course of two years:

- Strategy I: Attention through Vision
- Strategy II: Meaning through Communication
- Strategy III: Trust through Positioning
- Strategy IV: The Deployment of Self through (1) Positive Self-regard and (2) The Wallenda Factor (p. 25)

Strategy I. The first strategy is to garner the attention of others through the leader's own attention to his or her vision. "Their visions or intentions are compelling and pull people toward them" (p. 26). The leaders interviewed were often passionate about their vision but blasé about other topics, and that particular passion instilled confidence in employees because they felt as if they belonged to a worthwhile cause. While managers operated on the level of "physical resources," leaders, by virtue of their vision, operated

"on the emotional and spiritual resources of the organization, on its values, commitment and aspirations" (p. 85). Their visions were "simple, easily understood, clearly desirable, and energizing" (p. 95).

Strategy II. The second strategy, meaning through communication, is harder to define. Communication, the authors asserted, does not always involve dialogue. The vision has to be communicated thoroughly and consistently to change an institution's culture or social architecture as Bennis and Nanus (2007) preferred to call it:

> The actions and symbols of leadership frame and mobilize meaning. Leaders articulate and define what has previously remained implicit or unsaid, then they invent images, metaphors, and models that provide a focus for new attention. By so doing, they consolidate or challenge prevailing wisdom. In short, an *essential* factor in leadership is the capacity to influence and *organize meaning* for the members of the organization. (p. 37)

That meaning serves as a coordinating force that rallies employees to work toward the vision and establishes acceptable norms of behavior.

Strategy III. The third strategy, trust through positioning, is succinctly explained with a metaphor: "Trust is the glue that maintains organizational integrity." An essential ingredient in trust is predictability, knowing where a person stands—clearly seeing his or her position (p. 41). The leader whose actions are consonant with his or her vision creates a reliability that engenders trust, which is crucial to not only to customers but also to employees.

Strategy IV. The fourth strategy, the deployment of self through positive self-regard and through the Wallenda factor, is an unintuitive phrase that attempts to

encompass how leaders invest their time combined with a tendency to predict positive outcomes from their efforts. The leaders interviewed achieved positive self-regard by "recognizing strengths and compensating for weaknesses..." and continually honing their skills (p. 53). They also had the ability to discern whether a particular job was well suited to their strengths and weaknesses. The deployment aspect also addresses the leaders' tendency to invest time in building positive and mature relationships and a willingness to forego approval from others (p. 63). The Wallenda factor addresses leaders' tendency to focus single-mindedly on positive outcomes and not the possibility of failure. The phrase refers to the famous 20th century aerialist, Karl Wallenda, who is said to have focused on walking the tightrope, rather than focusing on "not falling"—that is until his last, fatal walk in 1978 when, focusing on not falling, he fell to his death (p. 64).

These four strategies will serve as the basis for the search of leadership competencies in Mary Sibley's journal, which will be expounded upon in Chapter Four.

Chapter Summary

The literature review was broken into two sections. The first addressed the realities of the time and culture in which Mary Sibley lived and founded her school for young women. Noted were similarities she shared with more famous educators who were similarly motivated by fervent religiosity and the passionate desire to educate young women. One subsection addressed the long and successful partnership she shared with her husband, George, and the delineation of their roles in the operation of the school they founded at Linden Wood. Also considered was the prevalence of the notion of a "useful

education," which was rooted in the nation's founders' desire to establish an educated citizenry that could make a go of the young Republic.

The second section dealt concisely with the four leadership competencies that will be used to compare and contrast to evidence of leadership in Mary's journal. Those leadership competencies (vision, communication, positioning, and self deployment) will be elaborated upon in greater detail in Chapter Four. Meanwhile, the next and third chapter will address methodology.

Chapter Three: Methodology

George Santayana, an eminently quotable man of letters and a Harvard philosophy professor who lived from 1863 to 1952, famously wrote in *Life of Reason, Reason in Common Sense*, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it" (Indiana University School of Liberal Arts, 2013, para. 2). This study of Mary Sibley's journal is predicated on the idea that if we can not only remember the past, but also learn from it, we can make more informed decisions in the present and more precisely set a course for the future. In other words, we can use the past to understand the present to guide the future. More precisely if we can affirm that certain leadership theories were relevant in the distant past as well as the present, they are theories that might well be relevant in the future. As two authors who advocated using the "Great Texts" of literature, philosophy, and politics to teach educational leadership put it, "understanding the past, interacting in the present, and exhibiting principled behavior in an effort to advance a common good are the ingredients not only of a liberal education but of effective leadership as well" (Shushok & Moore, 2010, p. 73).

Two-Way Mirror

Seeking meaning through the lives and choices of antecedent luminaries—whether through traditional biographies, through the study of historical primary research, or by more inventive means—is not without precedence in academic research. While historians are the experts in documenting, understanding, and interpreting past events,

academicians in other disciplines, including education, sometimes use the study of historical biography as a qualitative research technique:

> Through the lens of biography, historians have constructed creative windows through which one can glimpse several otherwise undiscoverable realities. Indeed, biography constitutes a unique form of historical study that enables education scholars to explore intersections between human agency and social structure. (Finkelstein, 1998, p. 46)

Biographies allow researchers to “explore the origin of ideas,” and they provide an “aperture through which to view relationships between educational processes and social change” and serve as a “mythic overhaul,” replacing generalizations and assumptions with more nuanced understandings (Finkelstein, 1998, p. 46). Studying the lives of forebears is like looking in a two-way mirror. One views the past from the comfort and understanding of the present. While intellectually engrossing oneself in the details of the past, dwelling imaginatively and coincidentally on the other side of time, one gains new insight about the present.

Using historical biography as qualitative research bears similarities to the use of metaphors in creative writing. A metaphor is a mental construct that requires the reader to straddle the cognitive dissonance that results when two dissimilar realities are presented as one. A simile invites a comparison—one thing is *like* another. But the metaphor demands the reconciliation of two states of being—one thing *is* another. The resolution of that dissonance, which occurs when the reader has invested enough willing suspension of disbelief to give imaginative birth to a third reality born of the marriage of

two dissimilar ideas, catapults the reader into a realm of new understanding and "aha moments" that are the hallmark of good literature.

Likewise, in its simplest form, using historical biography as research for contemporary theory creates a cognitive dissonance in the student by demanding a foundational and constant comparison between the past and the present. The resolution occurs when the researcher has learned just enough to breathe life into an historical figure, when the past becomes so real it seems to exist in a parallel universe. Or, as Finkelstein (1998) elegantly put it, "Biography is to history what a telescope is to the stars. It reveals the invisible, extracts detail from myriad points of light, uncovers sources of illumination, and helps us disaggregate and reconstruct large heavenly pictures" (p. 45). This macro perspective, which results from micro examinations of individuals, great or ordinary, provides the means "for determining who we are, where we fit in the scheme of things, and where we want to head" (Bullough, 1998, p. 31).

In the social sciences, some notable psychohistories have taken the genre one step further by infusing historiography with disciplinary processes, though not without controversy and criticism from historians (Kohut, 1986). In 1916, Sigmund Freud wrote what he titled a "psychosexual study" of Leonardo da Vinci in what is "widely regarded as the first genuine psychobiography" (Elms, 2005, p. 210), though it was criticized for errors and lapses of logic. In 1960, psychoanalyst Erik H. Erikson, who gave us the term *identity crisis*, published a psychobiography about Martin Luther, in which he used psychoanalysis to dissect the greatness of the 16th century founder of the Lutheran religion.

> Erikson associates crisis and emotional ill health with the development of extraordinary abilities. The potentially great man must wait until he can discover an identity for himself in which his own particular combination of belief and affect, his own particular fusion of giftedness and highly charged conflicts, can find vehicle of expression. (Woollcott, 1963, p. 245)

Erikson published a similar work in 1969 titled *Gandhi's Truth* about Mahatma Gandhi that won a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award.

While the goal here is not to find examples of all biographies that are hybridized with a disciplinary purpose, one recent and intriguing example was written in 2011 by a professor at the University of Tehran and published as a journal article titled *Is Socrates a Prophet? (In light of the views of his contemporaries and the main commentators)*. The author strove to prove that the great philosopher's wisdom was divine prophecy that had a "supra-human source" (Ghaffari, 2011, p. 391). What makes this recasting of an historical figure intriguing are Ghaffari's (2011) stated intentions:

> We are not here concerned with adding a new name to the more or less long list of prophets as a religious historian would do, which would somehow be of little philosophical interest. The benefit of such research is the change it can induce in our conception of the history of Western philosophy and culture, and subsequently in the relation between this culture and other cultures. (p. 392)

In other words, Ghaffari (2011) is using what was written about Socrates by his contemporaries to reinterpret the icon, to gain a new perspective of the past so that we might, in the present, have a new perspective that leads to an understanding of culture that would not otherwise be possible. The key to the relevance of Ghaffari's stated

intentions to this study of Mary Sibley can be found in the phrase “the change it can induce in our conception” of history. This study of Mary Sibley is designed to change conceptions of her history by digging deeper in one very specific aspect of her life—educational leadership. What the average person knows about Mary Sibley’s educational leadership style is assumptive. This study was designed to convert what is assumptive into that which is substantive.

There is a creative bent to the increasingly popular use of historical biography in the field of educational research, according to the editor of a very rich and provocative book on the subject titled *Writing Educational Biography: Explorations in Qualitative Research*. “A biographical turn clearly requires that educators look beyond teacher education as technology, as a quest for master of discrete teaching skills” (Kridel, 1998, p. 24). And while, according to Kridel (1998), there are no clear definitions of the myriad qualitative approaches that use personal history as research—whether the approach takes the form of a case study, an intellectual biography imbued with the “author’s analysis of the subject” (p. 9), a “scholarly chronicle” that consists of recitation of facts (p. 8), narrative inquiry of the living, or an historical reinterpretation through a disciplinary lens—what is clear is that these efforts result in a liberating education of the researcher (Kridel, 1998). That has certainly proven to be the case with this study.

All this is to say that a review of Mary Sibley’s diary using contemporary theory with the intention of gaining new understanding that transforms the discipline of education, in ways either great or small, is neither unique nor unfounded.

The Method of Inquiry

This study is qualitative in nature and involved open coding and a comparative analysis of Mary Sibley's journal. Before undertaking this study, the researcher was aware of the existence of a journal written by the founder of Lindenwood University that existed in the Mary E. Ambler Archives, which are housed on the top floor of Butler Library on the historic St. Charles campus. After reading an article written by Bennis and Nanus (2007) that summarized the four leadership competencies outlined in their book, the question came to mind: Could one compare a contemporary book to an historical artifact? After discussing the matter with history professor Don Heidenreich, who later joined the dissertation committee, and coming to an affirmative conclusion, the researcher contacted Lindenwood University Archivist Paul Huffman to request access to Mary Sibley's journal. Huffman directed the researcher to the university's Mary E. Ambler online archives, which contained a copy that can be accessed by the public (Mary E. Ambler Archives, 2014). The original journal is held in the Missouri History Museum. A Butler Library photocopy of the original revealed that Mary's difficult handwriting and the ravages of time would make a pre-research transcription necessary and that the likely outcome would be an unreliable interpretation of her journal entries. Fortunately, someone at the university had already transcribed the journal on a typewriter in the early 1900s, according to Huffman, who said the work was likely done by one of two faculty members who had studied the college's history—Lucinda de Leftwich Temple or Kate L. Gregg. Huffman arranged to have the typed version keyed into a Word document in 2008 (Huffman, Lindenwood University Archivist, personal communication, January 7, 2014).

Both versions—one manually typed on paper and one keyed into a computer—have blank spaces where words could not be deciphered. For this dissertation, in a couple of instances when citing journal entries with missing words, the researcher inserted a likely word in brackets. No other effort was made to modify or excuse (no use of the term [sic]) oddities such as misspelled words or missing punctuation. In some cases, the typed words seemed contrary to what one might assume Mary actually wrote, if one interprets based on context; so there is certainly a margin of error to be considered regarding the reliability of the transcriptions. However, after the researcher re-read the Word version numerous times, Mary's meaning managed to come through, missing-and-occasionally-misinterpreted words and all. The process was not unlike watching an image captured on 35mm film slowly but surely reveal itself in a darkroom. Patience was required and rewarded. After reading the journal numerous times and coding it for themes, Mary seemed as real as any woman one would meet on a street today—multi-tasking, career-oriented, and busily commuting here and there (though by horse or carriage).

The journal consists of approximately 156 entries written over a 26-year period (see Table 1). The number is approximate because sometimes it is unclear when one entry ends and another begins.

Table 1

Chronology of Entries in Mary Sibley's Journal

Month	**Day**	**Year**
March	29, 20, 24, 25	1832 (23)
April	08, 10, 22, 29	
May	06, 13	
June	22, 08 (Letter), 29 (Letter), 24	
July	01, 05, 08, 09, 10, 15, 30	
September	26	
November	13	
January	11	1833 (70)
March	22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30	
April	1, 2-4, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24, 30	
May	04, 05, ?, 19-20	
June	17	
July	2	
August	1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13,15, 17, 19, 24, 25, 27, 29, 31	
September	2, 5, 6, 8, 9, 16, 23, 29, 30	
October	1, 2, 4, 7, 12, 13, 24	
November	8	
December	11, 16, 18, 10, 20, 23,25	
January	1, 7, 8, 10, 28, 29, 30	1834 (39)
February	10, 16, 17, 18, 24, 26,28	
March	3, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31	
April	Monday, 24, 28	
May	19	
July	25, 28, 29, 30, 31	
August	1, 2, 4, 5, 6	
September	11	
March	Letter	1835 (9)
April	19	
May	12 (Letter)	
July	23, 24, 25, 31	
October	9	
December	27	
January	13, 17, 20, Abbott's Method of Journal Keeping, 21	1836 (10)
April	12, 13-17, 18 (Letter), 19 (Letter)	
July	10-12	
July	9	1847 (1)
No Date	No Date	1853 (3)
July	24, 22	
January	7 (Letter)	1858 (1)

As this table shows, Mary tended to write in clusters, with the highest percentage (45%) having been written in 1833, the second highest percentage (25%) having been written in 1834, and the third highest percentage (15%) having been written in 1836. The first five years (1832-1836) of the journal were sequential and constituted 97% of Mary's journal entries. These years represent that the majority of journal entries cited in this study.

Open Coding Methodology. Mary's journal was subjected to open coding to discern the salient themes of her existence that included and went beyond her spiritual development. The open coding process has been succinctly described thus:

> Coding is a process for both categorizing qualitative data and for describing the implications and details of these categories. Initially one does open coding, considering the data in minute detail while developing some initial categories. Later, one moves to more selective coding where one systematically codes with respect to a core concept. (Trochim, 2006, para. 8)

For the reasons mentioned in Chapter One, this research was motivated in part by the desire to shed more well-deserved light on Mary Sibley's legacy. The desire with open coding was to come to a greater understanding of the person to set the stage for a comparative analysis that would result in a greater understanding of Mary Sibley as a leader. The researcher identified broad themes woven through Mary's journal that spoke to her motivations in general and hallmark characteristics revealed through her self-selected topical emphases. Some of the themes and characteristics addressed issues of educational leadership. Most did not. Because of her intentional focus on her religious development, her record of her daily life and the development of her school were difficult

to discern. The process of open coding helped to unravel the entwined religious and educational skeins of her thoughts, actions, and aspirations.

Originally, the plan was to include a section defining unfamiliar or perhaps archaic words using a 1971 issue of *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*. But a search for unfamiliar words in the journal led the researcher to conclude that Mary's language was strikingly similar to that used today. The few unfamiliar words that existed—such as "purpose" used as a verb, "I purpose to", which clearly meant "I intend to"—could easily be deduced in context.

Immersion in Mary's text through open coding, however, proved to be fruitful. The effort peeled away the distancing affect that envisioned-19th-century dress and more formal language has on the contemporary reader. What remained was the realization that Mary Sibley was, truly, just an ordinary woman who did extraordinary things. That was one of the first indications that a subsequent comparative analysis comparing the journal to Bennis and Nanus' (2007) book might reveal that Mary did in fact have leadership qualities similar to the leaders Bennis and Nanus interviewed.

The coding process began with colored highlighter notations in the margins of a copy of the typed Word document. Blue represented faith/church, yellow represented motivations, orange represented leadership, green represented education/school, and pink notated distinctive sentiments. These general categories were too broad to be of particular benefit, but the process helped the researcher come to the conclusion that it was best not to look for leadership competencies at that stage, so as not to prejudice the search when it came to the comparison to Bennis and Nanus (2007). Most people have general

assumptions about leadership skills, but few have defined them as carefully as Bennis and Nanus, and the researcher did not want to prejudge Mary in this regard.

Though of limited value for fine analysis, this broad color coding also helped to make it clear how much Mary focused on various aspects of her life. That's when it became dismayingly clear that she focused far more of her time thinking about faith than she did about her school at Linden Wood. It was dismaying in that one might assume the 19th century founder of a presently thriving university lived and breathed education from morning until night. In Mary's case, her boarding school for girls was just one of many endeavors she juggled at once. The color coding also revealed that the majority of her comments about her school were those that addressed conflict—defending her educational vision and practices when others criticized it or admonishing herself for her failings as a teacher.

The next layer of color coding identified all entries that addressed the three topics that, it had become clear, dominated the majority of her entries: Spirituality/Religion was pink, Education/School was green, and Illness/Death was turquoise. A table was created, and all significant comments were cut and pasted into the table and highlighted in color according to these overarching themes. At this stage of color coding it became clear that the Spirituality/Religion color accompanied a great number of the comments about Education/School and Illness/Death. The researcher then concluded that Mary was, at least during the period of the journal, not so much an educator who had faith but a person of faith who thought of education as a way to do God's work.

The coding also clarified the understanding that death and illness pervaded Mary's life at a time when she was dealing with the stress of opening her boarding school

at Linden Wood and the Sabbath school for slaves and dealing with critical parents, community members, and the press. Without the color coding, Mary's endurance and courage in the face of the death and illness that struck so many neighbors, friends, and family members might not have come so fully into focus. This is the kind of peeling away of distancing layers referred to earlier—revelations that came not from what she wrote or did not write or what she did or did not do but from seeing what themes prevailed at what points in her evolution as a person.

The open coding resulted in 10 general observations about Mary Sibley:

Observations

A) Mary was committed to and acted upon the idea that education was important to everyone, regardless of sex, religion, or race.

B) Mary was a committed educator, even when she found it challenging or a burden.

C) Mary was an innovative educator in religious settings as well as in her own school.

D) Mary considered education a force of good in society—one that ameliorated the ills of slavery, strengthened the country, and brought people to what she considered to be true Christianity.

E) Mary was surrounded by death during the period encompassed by her journal.

F) Mary pursued her religion in the face of many obstacles and self-reproach.

G) Mary was tolerant of other races and religions, except for Catholics.

H) Mary had strong opinions, and she expressed them in her journal, in the newspaper, in letters, and in conversations.

I) Mary was prodigiously productive.

J) Mary succeeded in focusing the majority of her journal on her spiritual welfare, including her lamentations about the journal's upkeep.

The researcher identified journal entries that supported these observations with the intent of sharing the results in Chapter Four. However, after further consideration, some of the observations seemed less significant than others. For example, Observation I addressed Mary's productivity, which, though impressive, was a characteristic, not a fundamental driving force, unlike Observation A, which addressed her universal belief in education as a powerful and benevolent force. The researcher then decided to consolidate the many observations into two that addressed her core beliefs about education and one that addressed the profound impact that the circumstantial presence of mortality had on her during the founding years of her school. The consolidation resulted in these three observations:

1) Mary Sibley was committed to the idea that education was important to everyone, regardless of sex, religion, or race.

2) Mary Sibley was committed to the cause of education as a means of doing good in the world, even though she found it sometimes challenging and burdensome.

3) Mary's life was informed by the presence of cholera and other illnesses.

These three statements in this order are elaborated upon in Chapter Four. The discarded statements, while not included in the analysis of the open coding, are nevertheless addressed as part of the explication of conclusions stemming from the comparative analysis.

Comparative Analysis Methodology. The leadership concepts espoused by Bennis and Nanus (2007) were compared to Mary's journal entries, and her recorded

thoughts and actions that matched the concepts were tagged as evidence that she possessed the leadership competencies outlined in the authors' book. Because Mary used none of the contemporary lingo used ubiquitously in today's world (e.g., commitment gap, emotional intelligence, organizational culture, know-how, thought leader, self-confidence, stakeholders, etc.), evidence of the competencies was sometimes deduced from inferences or from the absence of contradictory evidence.

Comparing a late 20th century text to an early 19th century text posed numerous problems, much like the proverbial comparison between apples and oranges. Today's leaders and leaders like Mary Sibley lived in worlds with disparate contexts for social and gender norms, with extreme variances of modes of communication, and widely divergent understandings of the role and potential of organizations and organizational development. To be sure, Mary never attended any leadership seminars, never produced a business plan, and never devised a modern-day organizational chart, as some of the leaders profiled by Bennis and Nanus (2007) undoubtedly have. So what could leaders who lived more than 150 years apart possibly have in common?

To answer that, the researcher found it necessary to strip Bennis and Nanus' (2007) ideas of much of their contemporary context and jargon to get to the essence of their leadership descriptions, to dissolve the modern-day details so that fundamental and potentially timeless truths about leaders could emerge. This was necessary not only because it made no sense to compare anecdotes about modern leaders who deal with global industries, who communicate through email and cell phones, and who oversee thousands of employees to anecdotes written by an historical leader whose fastest mode of transportation was a horse and carriage, who kept a journal in lieu of blogging, and

who never had a single employee, save for slaves, during the period covered by this study.

It was also necessary to boil the authors' notions down to simple statements because Bennis and Nanus (2007) provided an almost overwhelming number of quotable observations about each of their concepts. Here are just a few of their statements about *Strategy I: Attention through Vision*:

- "Management of attention through *vision* is the *creating of focus"* (p. 26).
- "Vision *grabs*. Initially it grabs the leader, and management of attention enables others also to get on the bandwagon" (p. 26).
- "Attention is the first step to implementing or orchestrating a vision external to one's own actions" (p. 28).
- "But leadership is also a transaction, a transaction between leaders and followers...leaders also *pay attention*, as well as catch it.... And that unified focus is the management of attention through vision" (pp. 30-31).
- If there is a spark of genius in the leadership function at all, it must lie in this transcending ability, a kind of magic, to assemble—out of all the variety of images, signals, forecasts and alternatives—a clearly articulated vision of the future that is at once simple, easily understood, clearly desirable, and energizing. (p. 95)

Each *bon mot* created by the authors exceeded the last in terms of quotability. In order to create succinct observations that could be measured, the researcher boiled the many down to a very bland, few propositions. For Strategy I, the following statements were used:

- Leaders are singularly focused on their agenda and produce results.
- Leaders know what they want and communicate that clearly to others.
- Leaders challenge others to act.
- Leaders create a vision for a desired future state and concentrate the attention of others to achieve it.
- Leaders harness the emotional and spiritual resources of their organization.
- Leaders model the founding principles of their visions.

While less engaging than the wording used by Bennis and Nanus (2007), the researcher's simple assertions made a comparative analysis manageable.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher introduced the use of historical biographies, autobiographies, life stories, etc., in various academic disciplines and forms as an accepted strategy for qualitative research, thus establishing that the use of Mary Sibley's 19th century journal and a book by 20th century leadership theorists for a comparative analysis is neither innovative nor dubious. The researcher also identified the specific tactics that would be used for analysis: open coding and a comparative analysis. In the next chapter, the researcher shares the findings that resulted from these qualitative research tactics.

Chapter Four: Results

Mary Sibley's Journal

Mary Easton Sibley dated her first journal entry March 29, 1832. The first paragraph clearly established her intentions. She planned to use a blank journal she had received as a gift and record her progress as a newly-converted Presbyterian:

> This book was presented to me 3 years since by a friend whom I then thought very dear to me - Our friendship was based on the worldly principles that govern the unconverted heart – by vanity and self – love it was kept alive as long as those passions were exercised by a mutual exchange of sentiments of approbation of each others feelings and conduct. But as those feelings were contrary to pure law of God, a friendship founded upon this exercise could not long continue after God's law was written upon the heart of either of us.... I have reserved this book for three years with a kind of indistinct impression that I would one day use it to record my religious experience & progress in my attempts to serve by Creator and preserver. (March 29, 1832)

In the pages that followed, Mary Sibley was true to her word. Between 1832 and 1853, she made roughly 150 original entries, many consisting of merely a paragraph or two, many beginning with self-reproach that so much time had passed since the last entry. Her thoughts about her faith, or the lack thereof, about her church, and about the fate of the souls of friends, family, and neighbors dominated her journal, though it also included some notable comments about education and other matters involving her day-to-day life. She also included copies of occasional letters she had sent. One letter, after being typed (double-spaces) for archival purposes, consisted of six pages recounting the death of

Margaret Lindsay, whom Mary likened to a mother and called a “dearly beloved friend.” The letter was sent to Mrs. Lindsay’s mother, who learned from Mary Sibley that before her daughter’s death, she prayed faithfully for Mary’s eternal welfare and introduced Mary to the church and zealous faith that would dominate Mary’s recorded thoughts for the rest of the journal (June 22, 1832).

For this study, the typed version of the journal was used. According to Lindenwood University archivist Paul Huffman, the journal was transcribed on a typewriter in the early 1900s, very likely by a faculty member—Lucinda de Leftwich Temple or Katie Gregg. Huffman transferred the original typed transcription into a Microsoft Word document in 2008. Mary’s original handwritten journal, which is extremely difficult to read, is still in the university’s possession, but it is stored in the archives of the Missouri Historical Museum in St. Louis. The electronic version can be accessed from the Mary E. Ambler Archives through Lindenwood’s website (Mary E. Ambler Archives, 2014). Though the typed transcription is a Word document, it has not been paginated. Therefore, citations from the journal will be notated by the dates on which they were written, rather than page numbers.

In some places, the transcription of Mary’s hard-to-read 19th century handwriting resulted in missing words that could not be discerned, and the transcriptionist left blank spaces. In other places, the transcriptionist determined a specific word was used, apparently because Mary’s handwriting appeared thus, when to another reader it might seem (and did to the researcher) that Mary intended another word, based on context. In short, the transcription is not perfect, but anyone who regards the photocopy of the

original handwritten script will recognize that the typed versions represent a monumental effort to make this important document available to today's readers.

The quotes used for the purpose of this study will contain whatever unusual spellings or missing punctuation exists in the transcribed journal. Occasionally, a word that seems likely to have been intended by Mary will be added by the researcher in brackets.

Data from Mary's journal was collected using two approaches: open coding and a comparative analysis of her recorded thoughts as they relate to Bennis and Nanus' (2007) concepts of leadership. The open coding was intended to produce an objective understanding of and unbiased conclusions about Mary as a person apart from any relevance her entries might have to Bennis and Nanus' theories of leadership. The researcher thought it important to cut through the scrim of time and the distancing historical narrative style in which Mary naturally wrote in order to identify overarching themes about her life and to understand her motives and modus operandi, which are difficult to see clearly in the context of a journal whose purpose was the glorification of God. The more one reads this multi-faceted, often cryptic, occasionally terse, and sometimes eloquent journal, the more one is able to look past the person Mary intended to be and see the woman she was. That understanding was necessary for a subsequent analysis of her leadership competencies.

The comparative analysis section was intended to produce evidence of leadership competencies as defined by Bennis and Nanus (2007), and this process mined rich results and an even deeper understanding of Mary Sibley than that which resulted from the open coding process. However, the comparative analysis section also required time-

transporting, translational modifications to enable a reasonable comparison of Bennis and Nanus' modern assumptions to a leader who lived in much simpler times.

Open Coding

The majority of Mary's entries occurred in the first two-and-a-half years of the journal. The inclusion of a few later entries and a letter that was included five years after her last ruminations technically date the journal from March 1823 through January 1858 An attempt was made with open coding to gather general impressions and to identify themes that reoccur. Though her stated purpose for the journal was a record of her spiritual development, she digressed and wrote about many other interesting topics, from details about her care for those dying from cholera to entries decrying slavery to frustration over her mother's rejection of her newfound religion to the night-time dreams a student recounted to her upon waking. What follows are several key findings that were apparent in Mary's journal.

Key Findings from Open Coding

Mary Sibley was committed to the idea that education was important to everyone, regardless of sex, religion, or race.

Mary Sibley is known primarily because she started a school for women at a time in Missouri history when social norms and geography conspired to make higher education virtually impossible for women, and even men, on the Missouri frontier. However, when reading entries in Mary's journal that recount the diverse racial and cultural backgrounds of her students outside of her "little school" at Linden Wood, one is struck by the realization that she had a much larger educational agenda than simply educating young women of privilege.

In addition to informally teaching Native Americans near Fort Osage, Mary referenced in her journal "Dutch" (German) students. She also wrote about "African" students, as she described those attending the Sabbath school for slaves. She mentioned boys as well as girls—able bodied and disabled. She created opportunities to educate the young that likely would not have existed without her efforts—primarily at Sunday schools she helped organize for white and black children. Her dedication to education meant that she sometimes taught in challenging circumstances.

"Attended Sunday school in the country, the cabin full, mostly Dutch children," she wrote on July 1, 1823. The word *Dutch* was used to describe Germans (Deutsch). "They appear very anxious to learn. Had to lecture them upon the propriety of keeping silence during the time of prayer – and to do it through an interpreter, a little boy, the only one among them who can speak English."

Several entries in the journal indicate that she went out of her way to help those who might not otherwise have had the opportunity or motivation to pursue an education, as the entry dated July 30, 1832, exemplified:

> Yesterday being the Sabbath attended my Country School – not many scholars. A young man who has been a cripple from his birth, son of Mr. Cole, a respectable farmer and universalist, has attended constantly at the School for more than a month...He told me yesterday that he had just begun to feel the importance of having a good education & that he wished to go on in the fall to one of the Eastern Colleges. I promised to make some inquiries for him. As to whether he could get in at one of the Schools established on the plan of manual labor & for how much.

Two months later, Mary wrote, “Spoke to Mr. P. about getting a place for Hiram Cole and he has promised to write to Doctor Beecher the President of the Illinois College to ascertain on what terms he can be admitted there.”

Mary mentioned arranging for the education of an orphan. She wrote on April 1, 1833, that after church she visited a “poor woman” to encourage her to send an orphan to school. “She appeared very grateful for the offer,” Mary wrote,

> and much affected when I referred to the situation of beings & their responsibility to God let their lot in life be high or low. May the merciful God be her comforter. She consented to send the boy and on returning to town I made arrangements with the teacher to take him and our Female benevolent society would pay for this schooling.

A short entry on February 17, 1834, mentioned what must have been a socially significant endeavor during this era of slavery: “in the evening commenced an African School which with the blessing of God we hope to continue and make it the means of doing some good.” She apparently worked hard to that end. An entry made two months later hinted at a frenetic Sunday schedule: “Yesterday attended the Sabbath School for white Children in the morning heard two good sermons and attended African School in the evening” (April 24, 1834). In Sabbath schools, students were taught religious lessons but also were taught to read and write (Boylan, 1988, p. 25). Mary’s efforts at the African Sabbath school garnered criticism from the press, but educating slaves was not illegal at that point in Missouri. A law against teaching slaves to read and write was not passed by the Missouri General Assembly until 1847.

Her effort to educate slaves was rewarding for Mary. "The black people appear very much interested," she wrote in the same entry.

> The simple prayer of these poor people at the closing of the school is really affecting. I have felt happier after closing this school of an evening than I have done for a long time in the performance of a single duty. I trust we shall be able to persevere and be instrumental of doing them...good.

One can read between the lines and sense an educator's joy, which casts a later entry in a sad light.

> The [African] school is increasing fast. Some however came & returned their books and said they were forbid to attend by their Masters. One woman appeared to be grieved about it very much. The other two had been permitted to attend the school until a man who has been opposing every good in the Village for a long time took the trouble to make to their master many misrepresentations of the school. We told the poor girls to pray for their masters and be obedience & all would be well with them if they served God. (March 31, 1834)

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary expended considerable effort to educate youth of varied races, ethnicities, genders, and abilities. Mary Sibley was committed to the cause of education as a means of doing good in the world, even though she found it sometimes challenging and burdensome.

In the previous entry about the loss of students in the "African school" for slaves, Mary cast the event in a stoic light, but one can well imagine her disappointment. Her journal entries point to a woman who was not constrained by social norms—who was willing to educate slaves—but one who reluctantly accepted the limits of her ability to

change the world as it was. She chafed at these limitations. She wrote that it made no sense to send the Bible to "heathen nations" around the world yet deny "our slaves" the ability to read scripture (August 1, 1834). She was willing to open the school in spite of public criticism and opposition in newspapers (August 5, 1834), but she could not force slave owners to allow students to attend. This was just one example of circumstances that posed a challenge and a burden to this progressive educator.

Another challenge was her personal frustrations with her students. Mary Sibley was, at least during this foundational period in Lindenwood's history and as she represented herself in her journal, a tireless advocate of education for all. Though she frequently lamented the sacrifice her efforts required, she never admitted to any notions of failure or quitting. She did, however, criticize herself for times when she was impatient with her students. According to biographer Wolferman (2008), Mary had "six students in 1832, seven in the fall of 1833, and eight in the spring of that year" (p. 104). She made numerous references to her lost temper and foul moods when dealing with her young female students:

- Have to lament the breaking out of an impatient & peevish Spirit in attempting to teach and find my temper tried. I pray the Lord to subdue my depraved heart & give me a meek quiet spirit with more faithfulness in the discharge of my duty. (April 16, 1833)
- I have nothing of importance to record except that I have been more impatient in Spirit for several days than is consistent with a follower of the meek & lowly one. I think those who attempt the task of teaching ought to be the very best Christians.

It is difficult for even a Christian to do always what is right when exposed to constant irritation. (October 1, 1833)

- I spent the morning after reading a chapter & prayer in giving music lesson or two of my scholars. I find this employment a great trail of patience. The mistakes they make the discord produced jars on my nerves sometimes I can scarce endure it and find my impatience is so great as to produce an expression of it. The trials of a teacher's life are great & many and surely none would undertake the task unless they had a higher motivation than earthly gain. (July 24, 1835)

In spite of her frustrations, Mary persevered as an educator, citing her duty to do so, as she stated in in this entry:

> My sister whom I love very much arrived yesterday & brought with her two young ladies who are to remain under my care for a year. The responsibility of educating youth I feel to be very great & I pray that I may be enabled to perform my duty as one who is to give an account for all I have received. (May 4, 1833)

Duty was a common theme in the journal entries, not only in reference to her women's school but also regarding her work teaching at Sabbath school. Once she taught Sunday school even though few students had attended owing to rain. She conducted the weekly lessons, then hurried off to church. "I found that I had lost the pleasure of hearing a most excellent sermon from Mr. I.W. Douglass in consequence of being at the Country [Sabbath] School," she wrote on April 29, 1832. "I almost regretted having gone as there were so few children but it was my duty as a teacher to be at my post."

Mary wrote so much about her faith and her work with Sunday schools that the foundational efforts at educating young women at Lindenwood, which in retrospect seem

providential, appear to be almost accidental and secondary to her *raison d'etre*. Her infrequent references to her female scholars are often nestled in a religious context, and the progress of her students' faith seemed to garner most of her attention and bring her the most joy. "When I read a chapter this morning in my school & prayed there was a great feeling manifested by my pupils & I was blessed with a heart to pray currently for them & myself," she wrote on March 24, 1834. "Oh! That the dedication of myself and them to the Lord made this morning might be acceptable to the Lord."

Five days later, she wrote,

> Spent the principal part of the day in conversation and singing. When praying at night with my girls and another young lady who was here on a visit I felt for them more than usual. It is a blessing for which we should be grateful to the giver of all Good, when we know our duty and have the heart to perform it. (March 29, 1834)

Clearly, educating others about her faith was as import to her as was her mission to provide young women a chance at higher education. She wrote to someone in Louisiana about plans to recruit students from that locale:

> I am anxious to have it in my power to educate some of the young ladies of the South that they may carry home some of those principles of the Christian religion which are so little known to the inhabitants of the Catholic districts of Louisiana. (November 8, 1833)

Mary thought Roman Catholics were "for the most part any thing but Christians" because, in part, of their devotion to the papacy.

Mary's desire to have everyone in her sphere embrace an evangelical Protestant faith was reflected in an entry in which recounted a dream that one of her young students, identified as Eliza, had after a visit from Elijah Lovejoy, the abolitionist minister. "[Eliza] said that she thought that herself & Martha Rupert one of the girls to whom she is much attached & myself were on a large block of ice in the middle of the river," Mary wrote on March 31. "The ice was cracking and giving away in every direction—That she was in great alarm as were the people also who were on the shore watching us that I kneeled down & prayer with her & Martha that I observed to them never fear the breaking of the ice you & Martha & I will soon be in Heaven." Mary further wrote that she interpreted the dream as a warning to Eliza that everyone was standing on dangerous ground and that no one knew when the ice would break and the presence of another world would be revealed. Eliza later wept because her dream had motivated her friend Martha to accept a faith in God she apparently did not share, and Eliza did not want to be separated from Martha in the afterlife. Mary knelt and prayed with the girls, and Martha hugged her, weeping and saying she rejoiced in God as her savior.

These efforts to win over students to her view of Christianity were not always well received, which was true in this case. Martha's conversion resulted in her father's decision to withdraw her from Mary's school. Clearly, parental criticism was another challenge with which Mary contended.

Another such incident was recorded on August 17, 1833, which she described as "a trial of a peculiar nature." When two fathers expressed concern, apparently about "tales of well-bred young ladies forced to work like servants at Mrs. Sibley's School" (Rowe, 2010, p. 29), Mary responded decisively that she would not "at any time

condescend to notice the false reports raised by talking children and servants, exaggerated & circulated by ill-natured and intermeddling persons" (August 19, 1833). Nevertheless, she was troubled by the opprobrium.

Criticism came not only from parents of her scholars, but also from the community. Early the following year, a missionary minister told Mary that some criticized her because she allowed her students to "dance by the Piano & they did not see any difference between going to balls and dancing at home" (March 26, 1834). She wrote,

> I told Mr. N that I saw a very great different – That during the weather in winter when the girls could not get out to take exercise I had suffered them to dance by themselves to the Piano about an half an hour in the evening after they had done their lessons for exercise.

It is unclear from this entry whether she stopped allowing the girls to dance after this incident.

Another frustration was the lack of time that she had for prayer and reflection after a long day of teaching. "My journal I fear no longer deserves that name," she wrote on January 11, 1833, "so long an intermission has been being principally to not having the convenience of a private room and somewhat to indolence & an indisposition to overcome difficulties."

Evidentiary Conclusion: Regardless of the difficulties wrought by the challenges of teaching and criticism from parents and the community, Mary Sibley persisted in tending to her duties. She endeavored to better the lives of slaves, see to the spiritual welfare of

her students, and pursue her educational agenda in an effort to make the world a better place.

Mary's life was informed by the presence of cholera and other illnesses.

As mentioned before, an early entry into Mary's journal consisted of a letter that recounted the death of her spiritual mentor, Mrs. Margaret Lindsay. While this was Mary's first reference to death, it was hardly the last. She mentioned illness and death more than 35 times in her journal, frequently recounting a visit with a sick or dying friend, neighbor, or relative. The prevalence of mortality made her accomplishments seem all the more acute. While the death rate in a pre-modern-medicine era was naturally higher than it is today, mortality spiked in 1832 when cholera hit the St. Louis region, including St. Charles. Cholera, which caused agonizing cramps and vomiting, could kill quickly, within a matter of hours, and most deaths occurred in quick succession, which magnified the panic and despair (Daly, 2008, para. 14).

"The Cholera has been & is still there," she wrote before a trip to St. Louis (November 18, 1832) in a simple entry devoid of any emotion or harrowing details.

Seven months later, Mary reported the disease's arrival in St. Charles.

> I heard a Sermon yesterday with which I was much pleased and can say Thanks to my God I can trust my Saviour in these times of Pestilence & peril that all that he does will be right. We have heard of the raging of the Cholera in the Towns around us. It is said there are a few cases in St. Charles and the death of one our friends is reported to have taken place in Palmyra. I feel wearing for my unconverted friends, it seems to me if they were only humble followers of the Saviour I could give them up freely. (June 17, 1833)

The next month Mary reported having tended to the sick, including a "catholic lady" who died in her presence. By August, cholera had "raged in St. Charles," killing a number of her friends (August 1, 1833), and Mary herself became ill

> on a bed of sickness where I suffered much bodily pain for about ten days....The Lord was exceedingly gracious to me in my afflictions, for he permitted me to feel perfectly resigned to his will in the prospect of a speedy death.

Mary reported that her physicians considered her dangerously ill, and she had twice been near death.

Reading entries written later in August and in the fall of 1833, one senses that Mary was numb with grief and dismay, and yet she continued to tend to the ill. She was dismayed that the presence of so much death did not do more to convert people to a faith in Christ. In fact, she remarked that it seemed to do the opposite. "It seems as tho' people were if possible more careless and forgetful of God since that scourge the Cholera has been amongst us than before" (August 7, 1833). In September, she reported that few attended church. "Since the Cholera has left us the Church has been in a state of stupor and those of the community who oppose Christianity are apparently more wicked & inveterate" (September 16, 1833).

Evidentiary Conclusion: There are numerous references throughout the journal to Mary's efforts to tend the sick and dying, intermingled with other entries detailing her efforts to educate others and advance her goals for a new Presbyterian Church. Death was a part of her life, and she did not let it get in the way of advancing her mission and doing her duty to educate and help as many people as possible.

Comparative Analysis

In the open coding section, evidence revealed that in the early 1800s Mary Sibley advocated for education for all, regardless of gender, race, or ethnicity; she was committed to education as a force of good in the world, even though she found teaching to be trying; and she pursued the development of her school for women and her own spiritual development against a backdrop of death and illness wrought by a cholera epidemic. In the comparative analysis section, Mary is shown to be a leader in most regards as defined by Bennis and Nanus (2007) in the late 1900s.

The process of studying Mary’s centuries-old reflections for evidence of contemporary leadership competencies quickly revealed the limitations of comparing the present to the past. There were several inherent challenges.

First and foremost, many of the examples in *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge* were people who had revived or reinvented long established corporations or institutions, such as Lee Iacocca at Chrysler. Mary started Linden Wood from scratch. Other contemporary leaders cited were people who had achieved a significant measure of excellence at an already established institution, such as Sergiu Comissiona at the Houston Symphony. Others excelled in an already thriving milieu or art form, such as Robert Redford, singled out for his innovative direction of the film *Ordinary People*. While Mary Sibley might well be called an entrepreneur, a comparison to an entrepreneur like Ray Kroc, the founder of McDonald’s who was featured in the Bennis and Nanus (2007) book, is hardly apt. Mary Easton Sibley did not revive anything, nor did she appear to have achieved a level of curricular excellence, at least not during the college’s nascent period examined in this study.

Another challenge resulted from the decision to focus exclusively on Mary's journal entries, as opposed to her personal letters or other historical data. Focusing on a document whose creation coincided with the founding of Lindenwood was a conscious delimitation, but the college was so young at that point that it hardly bore the likeness of an organization, and much of what Bennis and Nanus (2007) dealt with was the leader's relationship to the organization and culture or social architecture that he or she created.

To overcome this problem, the researcher extracted a series of simple statements that reduced Bennis and Nanus' (2007) complex ideas to their essence. First, the core ideas behind the authors' identified leadership competencies were summarized by using the authors' own words, winnowed from a rich plethora of pithy definitions that were each so enticing that they made summarization challenging. Then, from those core summaries the researcher created declarative assertions that, owing to their simplicity and denuded of possible anachronistic context, could potentially apply to leaders of any era.

For example, the first of Bennis and Nanus' (2007) competencies was "Strategy I: Attention Through Vision." Nine of the authors' statements that best defined the components of this strategy were extracted from many others. From those nine statements, the researcher devised simple assertions about the actions of those who possess that leadership competency. One of the extracted statements was, "Management of attention through vision is the creating of focus. All 90 people interviewed had an agenda, an unparalleled concern with outcome. Leaders are the most results-oriented individuals in the world, and results get attention." That quote led to this declarative assertion created by the researcher: "Leaders are singularly focused on their agenda and

produce results." Mary's journal was then scoured for evidence of sentiments, thoughts, and recorded actions that matched the assertion.

Evidence of Leadership Competencies

What follows is a description of the evidence of leadership competencies in Mary's journal that matches the leadership assertions drawn from summaries of Bennis and Nanus' (2007) four leadership competencies. The evidence is preceded by tables presenting the authors' summary statements and the researcher's declarative assertions.

This process revealed that some of the clearest evidences of leadership as defined by Bennis and Nanus (2007) are associated with Mary's religious endeavors and her association with the Presbyterian Church. That is perhaps to be expected since, as already mentioned, the authors defined leadership competencies in the context of the leader's relationship to his or her organization. The Presbyterian Church was obviously an institution far more well-established than Mary's college during the period encompassed in her journal. So, the data that follow are initially weighted more heavily in the spiritual context of Mary's life, though later references deal with her convictions about education. As mentioned in the general coding section, Mary Sibley's faith and teaching were indelibly entwined.

Table 2

Strategy I: Attention Through Vision

Strategy I: Author Quotes	Strategy I: Researcher Statements
1A: Agenda/Results “Management of attention through vision is the creating of focus. All ninety people interviewed had an agenda, an unparalleled concern with outcome. Leaders are the most results-oriented individuals in the world, and results get attention” (p. 26).	Leaders are singularly focused on their agenda and produce results.
1B: Clarity of Purpose [Houston Symphony conductor Sergiu Comissioná] “transmits an unbridled clarity about what he wants...and that can come only from vision or, as one member of Comissioná’s orchestra referred to it, from “the maestro’s tapestry of intentions” (pp. 27-28).	Leaders know what they want and communicate that clearly to others.
1C: Call to Action “These leaders are challengers, not coddlers” (p. 28). “Vision animates, inspirits, transforms purpose into action” (p. 29).	Leaders challenge others to act.
1D: Context-Appropriate Vision “But leadership is also a transaction, a transaction between leaders and followers. Neither could exist without the other. There has to be a resonance, a connection between them. So what we have discovered is that leaders also pay attention, as well as catch it” (p. 30). “they paid attention to what was going on, they determined what part of the events at hand would be important for the future of the organization, they set a new direction, and they concentrated the attention of everyone in the organization” (p. 82). “All of the leaders to whom we spoke seemed to have been masters at selecting, synthesizing and articulating an appropriate vision for the future” (p. 94).	Leaders create a vision for a desired future state and concentrate the attention of others to achieve it.

1E) Higher Calling “We have here one of the clearest distinctions between the leader and the manager. By focusing attention on a vision, the leader operates on the *emotional and spiritual resources* of the organization, on its values, commitment and aspirations. The manager, by contrast, operates on the *physical resources* of the organization, on its capital, human skills, raw materials and technology” (p. 85).	Leaders harness the emotional and spiritual resources of their organization.
1F) Role Modeling “Another way the leader communicates a new vision is by consistently acting on it and personifying it” (p. 100).	Leaders model the founding principles of their visions.

1A: Agenda/Results

Leaders are singularly focused on their agenda and produce results.

In the open coding section of this chapter, Mary’s clear sense of duty was noted. Her entries indicated that she was a dutiful educator, even when the experience frustrated her. But what was her agenda as a leader?

Mary clearly stated that her goal for her journal was the record keeping of her development as a Christian, adding

> I purpose to enter at the close of this book some remarks I have occasionally made during by (my) long search of the truth, that the gradual progress from darkness to light of a mind unbelieving but enquiring, and never satisfied until its Savior was presented by faith before it, takes _____ tedious course of investigation. (March 29, 1823)

While she did not end her journal as she had planned, a close read of numerous attempts to bring others to a likeminded faith in Christ make it clear that converting

others was a key agenda item, to use the parlance of today. She attempted to bring "darkness to light of a mind unbelieving" and in some instances succeeded.

Her dedication to providing a useful education was also part of her declared agenda, as she clearly stated in an entry dated August 19, 1833, which, it should be noted, was less than a month after she nearly died in an outbreak of the cholera:

> I commenced this spring the little school I had last year consisting of seven or eight young girls—on the plan I have long thought necessary for the good of the rising generation. That is the women instead of being raised helpless & dependent beings should be taught a habit of industry & usefulness. Especially that they should be made to consider it a privilege and duty to wait upon themselves to be perfectly independent of the enervating effects that slavery has produced almost universally upon the character of the people of west and South.

So Mary's agenda revolved around enlightenment—spiritual and educational. Biographer Wolferman (2008) indicated that the Sunday school for slave children "incorporated both religious training and basics of reading and writing" (p. 106). As Mary stated in her journal, reading was a necessity for Christian enlightenment. One had to be literate in order to read the Bible:

> we who are engaged in [the African school] think it our duty to do something to enlighten the minds of those poor benighted creatures on their souls Salvation.... I believe it to be peculiarly the duty of every Christian head of a family to instruct his servants in the Bible himself or else place them in the way of being instructed. (August 1, 1834)

Soon after Mary started teaching young women at Linden Wood, she was forced to recognize the extent to which her newfound religion would be reshaping her educational agenda:

> At the particular request of their parents I consented to board & teach about half a dozen young ladies a year. Among the number is one who belongs to the Catholic Church.... Her mother when placing her under my care particularly desired that no undue influence should be exerted over her to induce her to abandon her religion. (July 5, 1832)

Mary added that she felt after her profession to the Presbyterian Church it was "my duty to act differently in some things now from what I did when the Daughter was committed to my charge," and so she wrote to the girl's mother offering to release her from enrollment at Linden Wood.

Five days later, she wrote an entry that clearly tied her goals for religion and education together in a symbiotic way—education as a deterrent to what she perceived to be a false religion:

> I hold our Country will never prosper unless the people get knowledge. They will always be the dupes of Political demagogues, Jesuits and of their own evil passions & depraved hearts if they found neglect to get 'wisdom from above (which) is pure' – and I is to be found in the word of God by those who seek it. (July 10, 1832)

Her journal indicated that Mary let little, including the disapproval of others, get in the way of her dual agenda of faith and education. "Mr. Douglass preached after candlelight," she wrote on June 22, 1832.

> My friends are generally opposed to my attending night meeting. I have not thought it my duty yet to yield to their prejudices.... Strange that in my days of worldly folly & gaiety they never thought of finding fault with me for attending Balls, parties, theatres, etc. at night.

Mary recorded many attempts to achieve her goal of converting others, including four attempts in one three-day period when she left behind short religious expositions known as tracts:

- "Visited a sick woman & read two tracts & left some with her" (April 17, 1833).
- "Visited a family who are not pious, found no opportunity of speaking directly on the subject which I hope is nearest my heart. Left a tract on mantle piece" (April 19, 1833).
- "Visited a member of the Church who was sick, gave a person whom I found there & who I knew has been seriously disposed a tract on the Institution of the Lords Supper" (April 19, 1833).
- I was sent for to set up with a sick neighbor. It was a Universalistic family – wife was very ill – Could not introduce the subject of religion, but prayed that if they construe the Bible wrong (as I think they must) that their eyes may be opened to see the truth. Left two or three tracts in the Bible which belonged to the house. (April 19, 1833)

Throughout her journal, Mary admonished herself for not doing enough to convert her friends and family, and she acknowledged initial resistance from her husband and persistent opposition from her mother, but she never wrote about giving up on the goal of converting others to her faith, and she acknowledged success when it came her way.

> Three of my sisters are now members of the Presbyterian Church. Mrs. Gamble, Mrs. Geyer & Mrs. Anderson. The latter was sent when fourteen to convent school while there she was secretly baptized by a catholic priest. The wonderful care of our Heavenly Parent is invisible in rescuing her from the dark superstitions of the Romish Church and bringing her into the marvelous light of the Gospel. (September 5, 1833)

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary had a very clear and unwavering agenda regarding the education of youth and the religious conversion of friends, family, and her students, and in many instances, she produced the results she desired.

1B: Clarity of Purpose

Leaders know what they want and communicate that clearly to others.

Mary poured out her heart and soul in her journal, but she was equally forthright in her communications with members of her church and the parents of her students. Several entries and copies of letters indicate that she was particularly forthright on the topic of a proposal to hire a temporary missionary—Mr. Wood—as permanent pastor for the Presbyterian Church in St. Charles. The letters were so strongly worded that she entered copies in her journal

> for the purpose of ascertaining at some future day if my motives in writing them were reprehensible or not—I believe them to be pure as most human ones are, now I suppose myself to be actuated by a laudable zeal for the cause of religion. 'The heart is deceitful above all things' –time will determine how far mine is deceiving one. (June 8, 1832)

In one of the letters, she wrote to a church elder about the process of selecting a pastor. In the Presbyterian tradition, pastors were elected by local church members and then approved by the larger presbytery (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2014). Mary wrote,

> If the business of the Church is to be done by those who do not care for its interests, it will be badly done—and if the choice of our pastor is to be made for us, by those who will scarcely ever go to hear him, I for one shall [feel] disposed to rebel. Those persons who may have voted him in are at liberty to stay away from the Church. But, the members of the Church are bound by Church regulations to hear the Minister however much they may dislike to hear him.

She wrote in a subsequent letter about suspected subterfuge on the topic, stating that Mr. Wood's stated intentions to leave the church was a "'ruse de guerre' in the Church Militant (let us be on our guard) as well as among those who engage in temporal warfare."

Mary was so determined to prevent Mr. Wood's invitation to a pastoral position that she penned a petition that was signed by 14 other church members to object to a rival petition to hire Mr. Wood. Mary's petition said in part,

> Entertaining as we do, a high regard for Mr. Wood as a Christian brother esteeming him as a useful citizen, we nevertheless feel he is not calculated to do as much good in a place like St. Charles as some other person might be.... The constitution of the Presbyterian Church is republican and every individual has a right the expression of his opinion, and though he may be in a minority that minority has the right to make its voice heard. (August, 1832)

Mary subsequently wrote that Mr. Wood gave up his attempts to stay in St. Charles after he saw this petition and "said many hard things" about those who signed it.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary's letters to church elders, as well as her letters and verbal communications to the parents and caregivers of students, provide evidence that she knew what she wanted and communicated clearly and often forcefully to others.

1C: Call to Action

Leaders challenge others to act.

In April of the following year, Mary delivered to fellow church members a blunt call to action regarding stalled efforts to raise funds for a new church building.

> Went to St. Charles to see Mr. Hall and advise him that if the building of the church (which has been some time in contemplation, and much differenced of opinion expressed about it) was to go on at all, a meeting must be called immediately to ascertain whether the subscribers would authorize the committee to proceed in expending the money as far as it would go towards the erection of a Church. (April 13, 1833)

Then she wrote to one of the elders and plainly told him to give up his opposition and unite with others to get the job done.

Her journal also provided evidence that she prodded adults on numerous occasions to provide children the education about which she was so passionate, as exemplified in these incidents:

- After the Church was dismissed I went to visit a poor woman to get her to send an orphan child to school... She consented to send the boy and on returning to town I

made arrangements with the teacher to take him and our Female benevolent society would pay for his schooling. (April 1, 1833)

- “Went to St. Charles to get the consent of a Dutch family to send their daughter to school in the place of an Orphan girl who had been sent by the female benevolent society and had removed to Illinois” (April 15, 1833).

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary wrote earnestly against religious matters she opposed, prompted action from members of her church, and cajoled adults who had the power to enable the education of children in her care—all evidence that she commonly called others to action.

1D: Context-Appropriate Vision

Leaders create a vision for a desired future state and concentrate the attention of others to achieve it.

Mary engaged in many different activities in order to achieve her twin goals of sharing her faith and providing an education to children regardless of their social status—goals that she believed would make the world a better place. Though her journal does not detail the ways she garnered support for her efforts, one can deduce she had powers of persuasion:

- One this occasion, she used her connection to a church leader to acquire educational supplies: “Received a letter from brother Potts, the minister from the Presbyterian Church of St. Louis, an eminently pious man in answer to one requesting him to send up some cards & books for the Sabbath school in this neighborhood” (April 22, 1832).

- On this occasion, she worked with other women to create a Sabbath school for slaves in spite of public criticism that spilled over into the newspaper: "in the evening commenced an African School which with the blessing of God we hope to continue and make it the means of doing some good" (February 17, 1834).
- On this occasion, she enlisted a friend to help forward her religious agenda: "My dear friend, Elira Baker agreed to unite to day in praying for the conversion of my Dear Mother" (June 22, 1832).
- On this occasion, she used her educational connections to benefit a disabled young man who desired higher education: "Spoke to Mr. P. about getting a place for Hiram Cole and he has promised to write to Doctor Beecher the President of the Illinois College to ascertain on what terms he can be admitted there" (September 26, 1832).

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary knew the kind of future she envisioned for herself and others, a vision that included Protestantism, education for all, and the end of slavery. She held true to that vision and sustained it through the engagement of community leaders, friends, and family.

1E: Higher Calling

Leaders harness the emotional and spiritual resources of their organization.

As previously considered, Mary's religious conversion occurred at the time when she was establishing her boarding school for women. Her curriculum included, in addition to English (grammar, literature, elocution) and the "Womanly Arts" (landscape painting, music, piano, embroidery, etc.) study of the Bible. Her journal was devoted to her spiritual development. It is reasonable to say that she harnessed spiritual resources—

in the realms of her church, her school, and her family—in ways that are perhaps far more literal than Bennis and Nanus (2007) might have intended.

Mary took a leadership role in the selection of the church pastor because she saw the choice as crucial to the spiritual health of her church:

> We have been for some time without that evangelical preaching which is calculated to stir up the Christian to a sense of duty. As for myself I have been in such a dull cold state for some time past that I have performed my religious duties with a listlessness that has been a burden to me. (December 11, 1833)

Mary influenced as many of her family members' religious beliefs to whatever extent possible and as soon as possible after her own conversion. In the case of her husband, the wait required patience. She committed herself to the Presbyterian Church in March 1832, but George Sibley did not profess a similar devotion to faith until two years later. In March 1834, she wrote,

> My husband assented to the truth and acknowledged the importance of his not delaying to search the scriptures. He told Mr. L myself that on the subject of interfering with those who were determined to serve God he was superstitious.

By way of explanation of his change of heart, George told Mary and the visiting Rev. Elijah Lovejoy that when Mary's friend and spiritual mentor Mrs. Lindsay had been dying two years before, George had had a vision that Mrs. Lindsay came to Mary while she slept and whispered in her ear: "this scene made such an impression on his mind," Mary wrote after George recounted this experience, "that when I not long afterwards resolved to come forward and make a public profession it did not surprise him & his

objections which he might have had previous to my taking such a ____ were ____ less" (March 30, 1834).

As previously mentioned in the open coding section, Mary witnessed the conversion of one of her students, Martha Rupert. This occurred the day after George's conversion. Martha's acceptance of evangelical Christianity so angered her father that he removed her from school four months later and left "in a great rage" (July 25, 1834). Nevertheless, Mary felt justified in the way she handled Martha's spiritual guidance, and she continued to concern herself on this matter even after the girl's departure. In the journal, there is a copy of a letter dated March 1835 in which Mary expressed to Martha her concerns about Martha's plans to marry a Catholic. Mary urged her to "take a stand & be firm" in her desire to remain a Protestant and to raise her children in a Protestant church.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary not only educated, she endeavored, within the parameters delimited by her religious intolerance, to inspire, in the sense of the word *inspiration* described in the third definition in the Oxford English Dictionary:

> A special or immediate action or influence of the Spirit of God (or of some divinity or supernatural being) upon the human being or soul; said *esp.* of that divine influence under which the books of Scripture are held to have been written. (Oxford University Press, 1971)

Mary was also cognizant of the importance of acquiring a pastor who would meet the spiritual and emotional needs of her congregation, and her uncompromising goals for the spiritual welfare of her family and her students ensured that she created a holistic experience for those whom she educated and those with whom she worshipped.

1F: Role Modeling

Leaders model the founding principles of their visions.

In the open coding section, Mary was quoted as citing a duty to educate, even when it was inconvenient or frustrating. Yet one might fulfill a duty without conviction or without being an exemplar. In Mary's case, her tenacious and whirlwind efforts to promote her religion, her school for young women, her various Sunday schools, and the cause of anti-slavery spoke of a commitment that went beyond rote duty into the realm of conviction and role modeling.

Mary Sibley's journal showed a record of prodigious activity and productivity in spite of the challenges posed by teaching. She organized Sabbath schools, she wrote editorials for Elijah Lovejoy's newspaper, she helped raise money for a new church and helped select the church pastor, she was a member of the Female Benevolent Society, she attended temperance meetings, she founded the boarding school at Linden Wood, she fasted, she shared her faith, and she tended to the sick—often juggling any number of these activities on any given day, as noted in this entry from August 2, 1834:

> Wrote in the morning "Conversation between A Missionary & Chinese Mandarin" for the "Observer" took it with me to St. Charles where I went to send a part of the day with my mother and sent it to P.O. – visited a sick neighbor in town and said a few words to her on the subject which ought to be always present in every conversation, but which our own sinful hearts keep at a distance – I mean the goodness of God & our responsibility to him – Purchases some German & French tracts for distribution. (August 2, 1834)

Mary modeled the life of a 19th century evangelical Presbyterian even when she felt as if she were a bad Christian. The entries in which berated herself for a lack of feeling or enthusiasm for God, for lackluster efforts to convert others, or for forgotten devotions are too numerous to cite, but here are a few examples:

- After nearly dying from cholera in August, Mary wrote the following:

  Yesterday had the pleasure of attending Church for the first time since my recovery. During the first prayer I was overwhelmed with a sense of ingratitude & hardness of heart. For I stood in the midst of many mourners who had lost their relatives at the time I lay on a bed of sickness -- & I received many temporal blessings and my dearest & nearest friends had been all spared, & had yet an opportunity to repent and turn to the Lord my God—while members had been called to mourn their departed friends. Oh! When will the time come when we can feel the realities of our faith & live according to our profession. Help me Dear Savior to be more grateful to love thee more & more—To serve thee better & better. (September 2, 1833)

- To Mary, the harsh realities of a mortal, cholera-infected world inspired dire thoughts: "Who would not give up the horrors of such a world as this for the approbation of Him who made it" (August 19, 1833). So thinking, she judged her efforts to convert others especially inadequate.

  I am guilty that I do not feel more the awful situation of my unconverted relatives & friends. How weak is our belief of these truths we find in the word of God. We should never rest night or day importuning for mercy to be extended to our

unrighteous friends did we firmly believe the threatening denounced against the impenitent. O! how miserably inconsistent we all are. (September 29, 1833)

- Even when life seemed to emerge from the shadows of death, she lamented her lack of devotion:

  Have prayed less to day than usual—Having neglected retiring in the morning. I forgot until on my way to the Village about 12 o'clock that I had had the temerity to start out on horseback without so much as having asked God's blessing during the day. I was so fully of having my remarks sent to the Editor in time for his next paper I could think of little else. Even when employed usefully of how apt am I to leave the most important matters undone. (January 8, 1833).

Yet even without the benefit of enthusiasm, in a seemingly constant state of self-reproach, Mary acted on her faith. As previously referenced, she visited the sick and dying, apparently without regard to the danger it posed to her own health. She prodded and cajoled members of her church in efforts to build a new sanctuary and hire an inspiring minister. She urged others to accept her view of God, and when she did not have the opportunity to urge them (or when they avoided her efforts), she left printed materials.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary embraced a spiritual justification for the school she founded with her husband, which added numinous reinforcement to her already established educational goals.

Table 3

Strategy II: Meaning Through Communication

Strategy II: Author Quotes	Strategy II: Researcher Statements
2A: Articulated Vision Success requires the capacity to relate a compelling image of a desired state of affairs—the kind of image that induces enthusiasm and commitment in others...The management of meaning, mastery of communication, is inseparable from effective leadership. (p. 31) The actions and symbols of leadership frame and mobilize meaning. Leaders articulate and define what has previously remained implicit or unsaid; then they invent images, metaphors, and models that provide a focus for new attention. (p. 37)	Leaders communicate the value and meaning inherent in their vision.
2B: Social Architecture Above and beyond his envisioning capabilities, a leader must be a social architect who understands the organization and shapes the way it works....Social architecture is an intangible, but it governs the way people act, the values and norms that are subtly transmitted to groups and individuals." (pp. 102-103) The leader is an effective social architect to the extent that he can manage meaning. (p. 136)	Leaders create and communicate social norms that serve as organizational scaffolding.

Mary modeled her educational principles by creating new schools for immigrants, slaves, and young women, sometimes in spite of public criticism. She modeled her Christian principles by tending to the sick and dying without concern for her own health and by sharing her beliefs with reluctant neighbors, students, strangers, and family members to ensure the eternal salvation she envisioned for all. In these ways, her actions reinforced her vision.

2A: Articulated Vision

Leaders communicate the value and meaning inherent in their vision.

Bennis and Nanus (2007) wrote, "Leaders articulate and define what has previously remained implicit or unsaid; then they invent images, metaphors, and models that provide a focus for new attention" (p. 37). In Mary's effort to articulate her vision, she employed multilingualism. Languages were diverse in the St. Louis region in the 1830s where three decades earlier, after the Louisiana Purchase, "both American and European immigrants started to pour into the new area to claim lands and establish homes" (Thomas, 2006, p. 4). A previously cited journal entry addressed Mary's use of a young English-speaking German student, whom she identified as Dutch, who translated her Christian lessons in Sabbath school. She also took advantage of religious publications printed in foreign languages to reach a broader audience. "I have been abled to distribute several Dutch, French, & English tracts this week or two past," she wrote on April 24, 1834.

Mary also used correspondence to communicate the value and meaning of her approach to education to parents who, in a previously cited instance, criticized her for her "domestic arrangements." This excerpt exemplified her forthright and compelling ability to communicate her views in correspondence:

> Now to produce the results I propose so desirable in the education of girls it is absolutely necessary that I should have the entire control of their time and employments. That every one should be created precisely alike and obliged to conform to the same rules -- That the young lady who when at home may have ten or twenty slaves at her heels should be on exactly the same footing as the one

> who is dependent upon her own exertions for a livelihood. And here I would observe, how often do we see, in the changes, the ups & downs of this transitory world these individuals changing places. The delicate girl who could scarcely bear the idea of helping herself to a drink of water is thrown at some period of her life upon this cold world an object of charity (and truly she is an object of scorn & rebuke for that very inability to help herself which has been produced by the injudicious course of education pursued. When the other by the same changes, rises in society and becomes still more capable of filling her station with honor in consequence of her practical & useful acquirements. (August 19, 1833)

Mary also used Elijah Lovejoy's newspaper to express herself. The *St. Louis Observer* published a steady stream of subjective articles about slavery, "popery" (Catholicism), and temperance, among other topics. Though there were no bylines in the newspaper, and it is therefore impossible to discern which of the many articles on these topics were written by Mary, she affirmed in her journal the contribution of anti-slavery and anti-Catholic pieces. So she used interpersonal communications, correspondence, and the medium of the press to express her views and try to persuade others to align with her vision.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary was a prolific communicator of her beliefs, her causes, and her vision through letters, the distribution of printed materials, newspaper articles, classroom lessons, and personal communications.

2B: Social Architecture

Leaders create and communicate social norms that serve as organizational scaffolding.

Bennis and Nanus (2007) stated that "Social architecture is intangible, but it governs the way people act, the values and norms that are subtly transmitted to groups and individuals" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, pp. 102-103). During the short period of Mary's life under review, and from her perspective alone, it is not possible to determine what sort of social architecture she created. She did not write in those terms. Nor did she have the time or perspective to consider what culture she had created, though she did address the culture (not her term) she was attempting to create.

She effortlessly and confidently expressed in her journal fundamental principles that drove her actions and would be the likely foundations of social architecture as her life's work progressed. Seen as a whole, her overarching view of right and wrong, morality and immorality, justice and injustice, was remarkably inclusive in an almost modern sense (with the exception of her antipathy toward Catholicism):

- She deplored sectarian religious disputes: "And shall we, who acknowledge the different protestant denominations are for Him, however we may disagree of some minor points, be so narrow minded, so self righteous, as to condemn all who differ from us in their attempts to Serve God?" (May 13, 1823).
- She cared in her own way for all races and ethnicities that she encountered, expressing in this particular entry the hope that visiting missionaries could convert and thereby preserve

  the remnant of at least some of those powerful tribes who once inhabited this vast Country. There is no hope from any other source – If they become Christianized they will adopt the habits of civilized life and thus provide for themselves the

means of subsistence. Game is at this time so scarce that numbers of Indians who subsist by hunting perish every year from hunger. (July 28, 1834)

- She called into question the behavior of those whose actions appeared to counter her beliefs:

  Visited some Christian friends, enquired of one of them respecting the truth of some reports about him calculated to inure the cause of religion found there is no ground for them & shall take pains to set the matters right in the eyes of those who believe them. (April 18, 1833)

Evidentiary Conclusion: While her actions and many of her journal entries bespoke a commitment to a culture of enlightenment as she saw it, there is not enough evidence in Mary's journal to ascertain success in the area of creating a scaffold for social architecture or institutional culture.

Table 4

Strategy III: Trust Through Positioning

Strategy III: Author Summaries	Strategy III: Researcher Statements
3A: Constancy The truth is we trust people who are predictable, whose positions are known and who keep at it; leaders who are trusted make themselves known, make their positions clear. (p. 41)	Leaders are clear about what they stand for, and their actions are consonant with their beliefs or goals.
3B: Determination This ceaseless positioning was at the core of Martin Luther King Jr.'s human rights movement and fueled Susan B. Anthony's women's vote crusade. Exceptional people have made continual sacrifices, sometimes even facing death for causes in which they believed, because they chose an angle and stuck reasonably to it. (p. 42)	Leaders stick to their beliefs even in the face of opposition.

3A: Constancy

Leaders are clear about what they stand for, and their actions are consonant with their beliefs or goals.

The point has already been made that Mary faithfully tended to the sick and dying, even while as she worked exhaustively teaching at her school and at Sabbath schools and tending to church matters. While she complained about the cholera epidemic's effect on church attendance ("The whole Town seems to be given up to opposition to the Kingdom of Christ. _____ the prevalence of the Cholera."), she never complained about caring for others, even when it posed a risk to her own life, because caring for others was consonant with her Christian beliefs. Education was also aligned with her faith. Giving those who were uneducated the ability to read scripture was a powerful motivator that sustained her through many challenges—exhaustion, angry parents, critical community members, low enrollments, and illness.

Mary also showed consistency when she matched words with money. When she challenged co-congregants to fund a building for the St. Charles Presbyterian Church, she promised to donate half the value of a piece of property that she owned in Alton, Illinois, that she valued at $1,400.

Further, Mary maintained integrity in her communications, matching thoughts with words, even when doing so necessitated confronting others and engaging in unpleasant conflicts. In a few recorded instances, Mary was bracingly honest in her dealings with the parents of her students, even when being honest posed a threat to her school's enrollment. In a previously mentioned exchange with the parent of a Catholic student, she wrote,

> As I have endeavored to deal with the utmost candor towards you in all things that respect Theodosia's welfare, I have intended ever since I became a member of the church of Christ to give you permission to alter your voluntary engagement to keep her with me a year....We are all attached to her, but if your judgment decides it would be more to her advantage to place her somewhere else I shall cheerfully acquiesce to your decision. (July 5, 1832)

Then Mary took candor a step farther by reassuring Theodosia's mother that because her daughter "does not possess an investigating mind and wants application," she would be unlikely to question the tenets of Catholicism and would be less likely to become a Protestant, as would a more ambitious and intellectually discerning student.

She was equally forthright in a previously referenced letter to two parents after she heard rumors of discontent about how she managed the girls in her care. She gave a full-throated defense of her integrity as an educator by insisting her tactics could not be dictated by others:

> I recognize no such right of intermeddling. If on due consideration with a full knowledge of my plan the parents think proper to place their children with us I expect them to have perfect confidence in my integrity & desire in all I do, to forward the best interests of their children. I should suppose it was hardly necessary for me to say, that their studies are pursued with diligence and attended to faithfully & that some of the parents have acknowledged the improvement of their children to have given them entire satisfaction and to have been more rapid than usual elsewhere. Such being the case and the children when here being

> contented & cheerful I find no good reason for altering my course. (April 19, 1833)

This "stay the course" communication garnered one negative and one positive response from the two fathers to whom she directed her communication. One of them, Major Phillips, subsequently withdrew his daughter (August 27, 1833). The other, Mr. Ridgely, wrote to Mary expressing that he was entirely satisfied with his daughter's education. In reaction, Mary noted in her journal,

> I wish to be diligent in my duties as teacher – above all I would hope to do my duty as in the sight of my Maker. WE often seek the applause of the world in what we do. May this never be my governing motive in any thing! (August 31, 1833).

Her clarity in her communications might not have always been well received by others, but she was satisfied with the results, and she evidenced the kind of constancy required of a leader.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary was clear about what she stood for, and her actions resonated with her convictions. She tended to the ill, she taught the uneducated to read and write so they could not only gain knowledge but also read scripture, and she promised money to her church as she challenged others to give. Her words and deeds supported her positions.

3B: Determination

Leaders stick to their beliefs even in the face of opposition.

Mary's response to the concerns of Major Phillips and Mr. Ridgely is evidence of her ability to hold her ground. She readily admitted in this instance that she was pained

by parental criticism, but she withstood the criticism nonetheless. She introduced the incident in her journal by writing,

> To day I have had a trial of a peculiar nature to undergo. Heavenly Parent may I be able to endure all such tribulations with meekness and humility, without being induced by the fear or favor of my fellow worms of the [earth] to swerve from the performance of any duty.

Mary and the women with whom she opened and operated the Sabbath school for slaves were harshly criticized in the press, as this entry on August 5, 1834, noted: "Heard that the attack in the political paper was made upon the St. Charles Sabbath School for Africans – And that the abuse is most gross & outrageous." She did not shrink in the face of this public disapproval, further writing,

> The Lord be pleased graciously to open the eyes of the writer of this article to his own true situation and lead him to repentance & faith in him, who prayed for his enemies even amid the pangs of a cruel death inflicted by him.

Mary faced strong opposition on another front. Her mother was adamantly opposed to Mary's evangelical conversion, and this disapproval caused Mary great distress. "My mother who has been for a long time most violently & unaccountable opposed to all sects of religionist, has a yet stronger and more peculiar aversion to the Presbyterian Church," she wrote early in her journal, shortly after her conversion. The next day, when Mary visited her mother to apologize if she had offended her, Albial Easton "broke out in a violent passion and drove me from her" and then rushed out of the room, leaving Mary in tears. Her mother

> returned again in a few minutes and vented her feelings in a torrent of abuse upon the Presbyterian Church and its agents. Said that by joining them I had abandoned her, and she gave me up & would having nothing more to do with me. (March 25, 1832)

Mary was shaken by this unpleasant conflict, but she did not retreat from her newfound beliefs. Instead, she consoled herself with a biblical reference: "For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law" (Matthew 10:35, King James Version). Mary and her mother maintained their relationship, but numerous journal entries noted ongoing tension between them.

Likewise, as previously noted, Mary's husband did not profess a similar faith for two years after her conversion, and various entries hinted at George's discontent with her new-found religion, which she embraced nearly 17 years into their marriage. She wrote about holding a prayer meeting at a nearby home.

> Our house is more commodious for such meetings than any in the neighborhood but I cannot propose that the meetings shall be here because my husband does not approve of prayer meetings. The Lord will change his heart in his own good time. (September 29, 1833)

George did eventually have a change of heart and later deeded the college to the Presbyterian Church.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary remained true to her own social, educational, and religious convictions and agenda in the face of opposition from her students' parents, from the community, from the press, and from her own family.

Table 5

Strategy IV: The Deployment of Self Through Positive Self-Regard

Strategy IV: Author Summaries	**Strategy IV: Researcher Statements**
4A: Self Assessment We can sum up what we mean by positive self-regard. It consists of three major components: knowledge of one's strengths, the capacity to nurture and develop those strengths and the ability to discern the fit between one's strengths and weaknesses and the organization's needs.	Leaders are confident in their abilities and aware of their weaknesses.
4B: Continuous Learning most of our ninety leaders were very much aware of the importance of their own learning abilities and needs. They were enthusiastic learners, open to new experiences, seeking new challenges and treating mistakes as opportunities for self-improvement. Fewer of them were equally conscious of their roles in organizational learning, but we did find evidence to suggest that much of their behavior served to direct and energize innovative learning. (p. 190)	Leaders learn from their experiences and create a culture of continuous learning.
4C: Expectation of Success Like Karl Wallenda, the great tightrope aerialist—whose life was at stake each time he walked the tightrope—these leaders put all their energies into their task. They simply don't think about failure, don't even use the word, relying on such synonyms as "mistake," "glitch," "bungle.".... Never *failure*. (p. 64)	Leaders focus on success and regard failures as learning opportunities.

4A: Self Assessment

Leaders are confident in their abilities and aware of their weaknesses.

Mary Sibley never mentioned weaknesses in terms of what we would today call leadership skills. She never complained that she was lacking in particular capabilities,

except for the ability to be patient with her students. Once she wrote after giving a music lesson that

> the mistakes they make the discord produced jars on my nerves sometimes I can scare endure it and find my impatience is so great as to produce an express of it. The trials of a teachers life are great & many and surely none would undertake the task unless they had a higher motive than earthly gain. (July 24, 1835)

Once she prayed for God to subdue her "depraved heart" and give her a meek and quiet spirit in the discharge of her duties as a teacher.

Depravity was the sort of hyperbole she also used to condemn intermittent periods when she apparently felt disconnected from God, which she often referred to as "coldness" in church or prayer. "I have this day found reason again and again to mourn over my depravity of heart which makes me so cold and unfeeling," she wrote on April 22, 1832.

> I read & was overcome by sleep. I prayed and my thoughts wandered. I could only call upon the Lord for help and resolve again and again to trust in Him for all things. I fear sometimes I am the veriest hypocrite on Earth, that when I call upon a Saviour that I am hypocritically taking His name in my mouth when my heart is filled with unbelief.

Her entries of self-reproach over "indolence" and neglect of her journal, too numerous to cite, typically read as such: "I have to mourn that among my other sins a disposition to procrastinate, to put off the performance of a duty to some other time stands conspicuous" (June 22, 1832). Her hyperbolic self-rebukes, which were frequently overlaid with religious verbiage, were sometimes balanced with more

reasoned self-assessments that hint at a striving for constructive personal insight, as indicated in one entry that requires some explanation.

Mary's mother, Albial, was appalled by Mary's conversion. In her journal, Mary reported that her mother "would rather have followed her children to the grave than to see them become Presbyterians" (March 24, 1832), though Mary did not explain her mother's antipathy. There is no record of Albial Easton's religious affiliation, and it is likely she had no formal religious ties. Up to the point when evangelical Protestantism surged during the Second Great Awakening, the prominent non-Catholic denominations in the United States were the Congregationalists, descendants of the Puritan Churches, Episcopalians, and Quakers (The Attendance Hall Association, 2014). At the turn of the 19th century, Catholicism was the law of the land for landholders in the Spanish-ruled territory west of the Mississippi River. When the Eastons moved West in 1804, a year after the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, few churches existed, and though many were believers,

> very few of the pioneers made any pretensions to religion, but when one of those Old Ironside preachers came into the neighborhood and preached in some good brother's cabin, they all attended, with their guns on their shoulders, and their dogs at their heels. (Bryan & Rose, 1876, p. 81)

In the early 1800s, in camp-meeting services held by itinerant preachers, the converted engaged in paroxysms of evangelical fervor called "the jerks" (Bryan & Rose, 1876, p. 83) during which their bodies would flail about. Unlikely though it is that the evangelical Presbyterian services that Mary attended were as lively, Mary gave few details about her conversion experience. Only once did she describe the services she attended:

> Our protracted meeting has been intensely interesting. Much feeling has been manifested by Christians and prayer has been offered to the Lord with much importunity for his blessing. Some few came forward to the anxious seat last night and great solemnity prevailed both last night & the night before. I have to thank my Saviour for the privilege of again confessing him before the world by partaking of the Lord's Supper and for a Spirit of prayer. (March 30, 1833)

Whatever fervor Mary felt for her new-found religion, it was more than her mother could accept. In an earlier referenced entry (March 24, 1832) that recounted her mother's violent opposition to Presbyterianism, Mary pondered what had made Albial Easton so angry, which leads back to the point made prior to this digression on the topic of religion—that Mary had the capacity for constructive personal insights. When trying to account for her mother's violent opposition, Mary concluded it must have been owing to her own reserve toward her mother over the previous four or five months:

> During that time I thought I was reserved from the best possible motives, a desire to avoid irritating her on the subject of religion.... Having heard her frequently express her disapprobation of what she considered fanaticism. I naturally avoided all conversation that excited her resentment but I now feel that I may have been deceived by my own wicked heart and what I thought a praiseworthy motive may have been a selfish one, the desire to prevent my own feeling from being wounded by hearing the cause (and the friends of that cause whom I loved) abused.

As this entry indicated, Mary seemed to be capable of great honesty about her perceived shortcomings. She readily admitted that she was susceptible to the criticism of

others, as was the case when she confronted the fathers who criticized the work she required of her students. Though she stood up to the parents, their displeasure caused her heartache. "Yet my wicked heart makes this a severe and sore trial to me because the good opinion & praises of men is what the depraved heart is peculiarly pleased with" (August 17, 1833).

As for evidence of confidence in her abilities, one must make inferences based on what was not written. Mary's interpretation of the qualities that constituted a good Christian led to far more self-condemnation than self-acknowledgement in the pages of her journal. She regretted her "unworthiness," her "neglect of duty," her "depraved heart," her "want of faith," her "sins," her "self righteousness," her "indolence," etc. And yet, while she regretted impatience as a teacher and her lack of devotion as a Christian, she never expressed doubt about her ability to excel in both realms. She only admitted to excelling less fully than she might have. An absence of expressions of doubt about one's ability might reasonably be interpreted as an absence of doubt, especially in light of her propensity toward exaggerated humility.

If humility is at one end of the self-esteem spectrum, pride would be at the other end, and pride was an emotion Mary bemoaned on occasion. Psychology and behavioral science journalist Wray Herbert wrote an interesting blog that without intention encompassed the conundrum Mary Sibley faced in this regard:

> Pride has perplexed philosophers and theologians for centuries, and it is an especially paradoxical emotion in American culture. We applaud rugged individualism, self-reliance and personal excellence, and indeed encourage these traits with gold stars and blue ribbons and statues. But don't you dare let it go to

> your head. Too much pride can easily tip the balance toward vanity and haughtiness and self-love. (Herbert, 2007, para. 1)

Mary was certainly a rugged individualist who espoused self-reliance and personal excellence, and she used the term pride at least once in a positive context, avowing that young, educated women “become the pride, the comfort, the stay of their relatives and friends” (August 19, 1833). But she uniformly condemned a tendency to be proud of her own deeds and accomplishments. Still, one cannot help but notice that even as she condemned herself for the pride she felt from the recognition she received from others, she was in fact *recording* the recognition she’d received.

Mary was pleased when she received an apparently complimentary reply to her request for school supplies from St. Louis Presbyterian minister “brother Potts,” whom she greatly admired. “I have to record that even so trifling a circumstance should have yielded food for my vain & foolish imagination,” she wrote on April 22, 1832. “I was pleased that he should have given me credit for my piety. What is man, that we should be vain of his approbation.”

Her editorials for Elijah Lovejoy’s newspaper gave her ego gratification, which she was quick to condemn in a moment of self-reproach for subsequent “indolence” and “neglect of Christian graces,” which she noted on July 23, 1835.

> When I performed my duties more faithfully and was enabled to write occasionally for the “Observer” I was soon elated with the praise of others and my self complacency was great at the idea that I had done something.... I have been urged over & over again by Brother L. to write – and vanity prompted me to do so.

On another occasion, she wrote, "At night heard another sermon felt in the afternoon & during the evening dissatisfied with myself and sinful in the sight of God, vain thoughts would arise and pride & self righteousness would get the mastery" (March 30, 1834).

Evidentiary Conclusion: Though she brooked no fault-finding in her administration of her boarding school, Mary admitted to weaknesses in the performance of her duties as a teacher. As for awareness of her strengths, self-declared vain thoughts and pride were not proof, but combined with her forthright and confident actions, they indicated she was likely aware of and built upon her strengths. So Mary evidenced a leader's ability to acknowledge weaknesses and utilize strengths.

4B: Continuous Learning

Leaders learn from their experiences and create a culture of continuous learning.

Mary did not directly express the idea that she had learned from her experiences. Though it is hard to imagine that she did not learn from the trials and tribulations she faced and reflected upon during this period, there is no direct evidence, in terms of journal entries, that she learned from her experiences. She was, however, unquestionably dedicated to the power of education. Mary established a boarding school that aspired to higher education, an institution that by its very definition espoused continuous learning. She felt that all rational creatures should learn to read and write so they could be useful citizens and engage in ongoing study of the Bible. Journal entries indicated she also made some effort to continually expand her own knowledge of the education field as well as gain knowledge about how to live an exemplary life as a Christian.

In January 1836, she mentioned having read a magazine article about Emma Hart Willard's Troy Female Seminary in New York. She remarked that she was pleased that Willard did not give awards or prizes to her students, a pedagogical practice Mary apparently disdained, and she wrote "It is encourage to see what one female may affect by perseverance and diligence." It is unclear whether she was referring to the diligence of Willard, who advocated that curriculum for women should be as rigorous as curriculum for men, or whether Mary referred to the diligence of Willard's students.

Mary also indicated on a couple of occasions that she was studying reading materials whose titles sounded as if they were the 19th century equivalent of today's self-help books. One was described as focusing on a particular method of journal keeping (Abbott's Method), which was recommended in a publication titled *Good Christian*. Another was *Baxter's Saint's Rest*, about which she wrote, "Found Baxter's work extremely interesting, tried to judge myself by his 'marks' of those who will inherit the Saint's rest" (August 6, 1833). She also mentioned a tract called *The Almost Christian*, which she notated in pencil with plans to send it to a friend in Kentucky (August 15, 1833).

Evidentiary Conclusion: While Mary never explicitly wrote that she had learned from a particular experience, she prized continuous learning, and she created an institution that provided continuous learning during her life and for subsequent centuries.

4C: Expectation of Success

Leaders focus on success and regard failures as learning opportunities.

As previously mentioned, Mary cited a litany of her perceived failures as a Christian, which were usually followed by prayers for guidance to do better. While she

did not use the contemporary nomenclature of "learning opportunities," she clearly saw her failures as opportunities to do better, which she consistently resolved to do. She also admitted failures to maintain a positive disposition with her students. She perceived her impatience as a personal failing, but she was loathe to admit that her approach to education—providing young women useful and practical skills—was wrong in any way. When Major Phillips and Mr. Ridgely criticized her approach to education, she refused to find fault with herself and cited a higher calling:

> ...I endeavored to do my duty to those under my care from a sense of responsibility to a higher tribunal than any erected by the opinions of the world or a few intermeddling individuals. That if the parents of the children had not confidence in my integrity and desire to promote the best interest of the children I wished them to take them away. (August 17, 1833)

Ten days later, when she wrote that Major Phillips had written to say his daughter would not be returning to Linden Wood, Mary made no mention of regret or failure. She wrote that Major Phillips' daughter had wanted to remain home and, like most children, had contrived a complaint to induce her parents to her will. Mary prayed the girl would realize she was sinning not against Mary Sibley, but against God. Rather than dwell on Linden Wood's loss of the Phillips child, Mary focused on the positive response she received from Mr. Ridgely, who wrote to say he was entirely satisfied with his daughter's education (August 31, 1833). This clearly made Mary happy, and she affirmed her dedication to her duties as a teacher and her determination to do it without seeking applause.

In her journal, Mary did not espouse a personal philosophy about mistakes and failures (i.e., failure is a learning opportunity). But she adapted to setbacks and readily admitted when she had contributed negatively to circumstances. When she nearly died from illness, she was quick to ascribe the event to a divine act of the humbling of her own faulty sense of superiority that she had felt while others around her succumbed to cholera:

> probably felt a little lifted up in my own estimation that I was superior to such a degrading fear. And the Lord was pleased to put a stop to my self righteousness by laying me on a bed of sickness where I suffered much bodily pain for about ten days I learnt that I should remember I had nothing but what I had received. (August 1, 1833)

The word "learnt" in this passage is significant. In this same entry, she wrote that "the Lord was exceedingly gracious to me in my afflictions, for he permitted me to feel perfectly resigned to his will in the prospect of a speedy death." Later still, she wrote, "I have resolved with the blessing of God to be more active and more devoted to the cause of my Redeemer when I am permitted to go forth into the world." So she acknowledged hubris (failure), she admitted to learning, she expressed gratitude, and she voiced resolve.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary admitted failures as a Christian and as a teacher, and she adapted to her perceived shortcomings with resolve to do better, but she was more apt to affirm her successes than dwell on failings with confronted by criticism from others. In that way, she manifested Bennis and Nanus' (2007) concept that leaders focused on success rather than emphasized failures.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, the researcher used open coding to draw three major conclusions:

- Mary Sibley was dedicated to the education of all youth, regardless of their race, gender, or ethnicity.
- Mary Sibley considered education as a means of doing good in the world, though her efforts as a teacher and administrator caused her trials and tribulation.
- Mary Sibley's efforts to establish Linden Wood were overshadowed by a cholera epidemic.

The researcher used a comparative analysis of Mary's journal in light of Bennis and Nanus' 2007 book (*Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*) to conclude that, like contemporary leaders, Mary Sibley

- had an agenda and produced results,
- had clarity of purpose,
- called others to action,
- had a context-appropriate vision,
- had a higher calling,
- served as a role model,
- articulated her vision,
- showed constancy and determination,
- was able to assess her strengths and weaknesses,
- was committed to continuous learning, and
- expected to succeed.

In the next chapter, the researcher will draw final conclusions and reflect on the research.

Chapter Five: Review, Reflections, and Implications

Mary Sibley's journal is a remarkable, dichotomous piece of literature—both dense in subtext and meaning through which one must patiently dig as if panning through murky water for nuggets of gold, as well as diffuse with light and often-mundane details that belie the historical significance of her actions and thoughts during this seminal stage of the founding of Lindenwood.

Because of her relative obscurity in the annals of history, Mary's journal served as pristine ground for exploration of contemporary leadership competencies. Indeed, larger-than-life lore sited by Mary's biographers and others prevails—in her younger days as the "marvelous little wren dressed in a frail white dress gathered high beneath her breasts, with pink satin slippers on her tiny feet and a pale-blue ribbon in her hair" who "sat at the piano, adjusted her shimmering dress, turned and bowed to the Indians" in her house on the prairie, and played with "unladylike" vigor, "ten fingers banging all the keys as hard and as fast as possible," a lively tune that created a "veritable explosion of noise" in her salon (Michener, 1974); in her maturity as the strong-headed woman whose students called her Aunt Mary and who gallivanted around town in a carriage they called the "Ship of Zion" (Templin L. D., 1920); as the intrepid traveler who was said to have been friends with Susan B. Anthony whom she met on a fundraising trip to the East Coast in an effort to keep the school's doors open in one of numerous periods of financial crisis (Templin L. D., 1926); and, in the end, as the woman who was so singularly capable and visionary that she founded an institution that has survived for nearly two centuries.

The researcher was predisposed to admire Mary as a pioneering educator. But Mary's journal, which has not been widely cited in published literature, provided an antidote for heroine-worship. Often difficult to read, the journal was like a jigsaw puzzle of a beautiful landscape. It seemed to take forever, as puzzles often do, to put the scene in order, to find the beauty that one knows will be visible if missing pieces or inscrutable shapes can just be put in place. When the scene finally did congeal, it revealed some not entirely attractive attributes.

The process took longer than anticipated in part because the person Mary presented in her journal was so much more effusively pious than anecdotal history indicated. She wrote for the ages and wrote as the good Christian she was determined to be. She presented a zealous Presbyterian who, though a dedicated educator, seemed to care more about saving souls than enlightening minds, at least during the period covered by and as described in her spiritual journal.

This salient characteristic is not much discussed on the Lindenwood campus today. Though the university's mission statement cites its Judeo-Christian heritage and its historical affiliation with Presbyterianism, it is no longer administratively affiliated with the Presbyterian Church, and Mary's extreme religiosity seems to have taken a backseat to her present-day reputation as a progressive, pioneering, inclusive educator who espoused the need to provide women, slaves, and immigrants a useful and practical education in the best Jeffersonian sense. She was a progressive educator, but first and last, at least from the age of 32 until her death at the age of 78, she was a fervent Christian who upon her death, according to her biographer, bequested property to the Presbyterian Church of the United States as well as property to Linden Wood College.

Rent monies from the latter bequest were to be used to create the Mary Sibley Fund for educational loans to young women seeking to become Christian teachers. Any money left over after all her bequests had been distributed was to be used by the Presbyterian Church to establish the George Sibley Fund to assist young men aspiring to the ministry (Wolferman, 2008, p. 144).

The matter of Mary's fundamental motives—either as a crusader for Christ or a progressive champion of education or a combination of both—is further complicated by her scathing journal entries about Roman Catholics, or as she put it the "Jesuits, Papists & Infidels" (March 3, 1834), which to a contemporary reader acculturated in political correctness seem shockingly biased by today's standards. Very likely, a student of history would be better able to put this bias, which was common on the Missouri frontier (Coburn & Smith, 2004), into historical context.

Mary Sibley is a nuanced, complex figure who defies neat characterizations that one longs for if one seeks an historical affirmation of modern sensibilities. Biographer Wolferman (2008), who drew upon not only Mary's journal but also upon her letters and other historical source material, concluded that "Justifying her ideas on religious grounds, both inside and outside her journal, Mary Sibley expressed attitudes that were far ahead of her time" (Wolferman, 2008, p. x). As was noted in this study's literature review, religion was one of the few acceptable platforms for women's leadership in the early 1800s, and it was a platform to which Mary Sibley firmly ascended and on which she held sway, first as an avid Presbyterian, and late in her life as a Second Adventist (Wolferman, 2008, p. 142).

Mary's sometimes contradictory profile is what ultimately made her an excellent candidate for this study, though that fact was unknown when this endeavor was undertaken. If she had proved to be for all intents and purposes a modern woman somehow born out of time in a previous century completely unencumbered by the norms of her day, the discovery of contemporary leadership competencies would not be very significant. As it turned out, Mary was, though remarkable, very much a woman of her time, and still she possessed many of the leadership competencies identified in the 90 leaders interviewed by Bennis and Nanus (2007).

Leadership Competencies Reviewed

Before final reflections are undertaken, a review of the evidence of leadership competencies found in Mary Sibley's journal would be beneficial. The search for competencies began with open coding to identify major themes that spoke to her motivations and character. This process led to three main observations:

1) Mary Sibley was committed to the idea that education was important to everyone, regardless of sex, religion, or race.
2) Mary Sibley was committed to the cause of education as a means of doing good in the world, even though she found it sometimes challenging and burdensome.
3) Mary's life was informed by the presence of cholera and other illnesses.

The second step involved a comparative analysis of her journal and the four major leadership competencies identified in the classic book, *Leaders: Strategies for Taking Charge*, written by Bennis and Nanus (2007). The authors identified four key competencies or strategies they found common in the 90 contemporary leaders they interviewed: Attention through vision, meaning through communication, trust through

positioning, and the deployment of self. The researcher took the authors' most cogent explanations of these four competencies and largely stripped the modern context from their ideas to come up with simple assertions that were timeless enough to compare to an historical text. What follows are the assertions and the conclusions as to whether Mary evidenced these strategies in her journal.

Strategy I: Attention Through Vision

1A: Agenda/Results

Leaders are singularly focused on their agenda and produce results.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary had a very clear and unwavering agenda regarding the education of youth and the religious conversion of friends, family, and her students, and in many instances, she produced the results she desired.

1B: Clarity of Purpose

Leaders know what they want and communicate that clearly to others.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary's letters to church elders, as well as her letters and verbal communications to the parents and caregivers of students, provide evidence that she knew what she wanted and communicated clearly and often forcefully to others.

1C: Call to Action

Leaders challenge others to act.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary wrote earnestly in letters and in the press protesting religion (Catholicism) and social policies (slavery) she opposed; she prompted action from members of her church and cajoled adults who had the power to enable the education of children in their care.

1D: Context-Appropriate Vision

Leaders create a vision for a desired future state and concentrate the attention of others to achieve it.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary knew the kind of future she envisioned for herself and others, a vision that included Presbyterianism, education for all, and the end of slavery. She held true to that vision and sustained her efforts to that end through the engagement of community leaders, friends, and family.

1E: Higher Calling

Leaders harness the emotional and spiritual resources of their organization.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary not only educated, she endeavored to inspire in the sense of the word *inspiration* described in the third definition in the Oxford English Dictionary:

> A special or immediate action or influence of the Spirit of God (or of some divinity or supernatural being) upon the human being or soul; said *esp.* of that divine influence under which the books of Scripture are held to have been written. (Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 1450).

Mary was cognizant of the importance of acquiring a pastor who would meet the spiritual and emotional needs of her congregation, and her uncompromising goals for the spiritual welfare of her family and her students ensured that she created a holistic experience for those whom she educated and those with whom she worshipped.

1F: Role Modeling

Leaders model the founding principles of their visions.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary found a spiritual justification for the college that would help her and her husband get out of debt—a purpose that shaped her goals as an educator

during the school's founding years. She modeled her educational principles by creating new schools for immigrants, slaves, and young women, sometimes in spite of public criticism. She modeled her Christian principles by tending to the sick and dying without concern for her own health and by sharing her beliefs with reluctant neighbors, students, strangers, and family members to ensure the eternal salvation she envisioned for all.

Strategy II: Meaning Through Communication

2A: Articulated Vision

Leaders communicate the value and meaning inherent in their vision.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary was a prolific communicator of her beliefs, her causes, and her vision through letters, the distribution of printed religious materials, newspaper articles, classroom lessons, and personal communications.

2B: Social Architecture

Leaders create and communicate social norms that serve as organizational scaffolding.

Evidentiary Conclusion: While her actions bespoke a commitment to a culture of enlightenment as she saw it, there is not enough evidence in Mary's journal to ascertain success in the area of creating a scaffold for social architecture or institutional culture.

Strategy III: Trust Through Positioning

3A: Constancy

Leaders are clear about what they stand for and their actions are consonant with their beliefs or goals.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary was clear about what she stood for, and her actions resonated with her convictions. She tended to the ill, promised money to her church as

she challenged others to give, and she stayed the course she had set for the creation of a college even in the face of criticism.

3B: Determination

Leaders stick to their beliefs even in the face of opposition.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary remained true to her own social, educational, and religious convictions and agenda in the face of opposition from her students' parents, from the community, from the press, and from her own family.

Strategy IV: The Deployment of Self Through Positive Self-Regard

4A: Self Assessment

Leaders are confident in their abilities and aware of their weaknesses.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Though she brooked no fault-finding in her administration of her boarding school, Mary admitted to weaknesses in the performance of her duties as a teacher. As for awareness of her strengths, self-declared vain thoughts and pride are not proof, but combined with her forthright and confident actions, they indicate she was likely aware of her strengths.

4B: Continuous Learning

Leaders learn from their experiences and create a culture of continuous learning.

Evidentiary Conclusion: While Mary never explicitly wrote that she had learned from a particular experience, she prized continuous learning, and she created an institution that provided continuous learning during her life and for subsequent centuries.

4C: Expectation of Success

Leaders focus on success and regard failures as learning opportunities.

Evidentiary Conclusion: Mary admitted failure and adapted to difficult circumstances with resolve to do better, and when she refused to find fault in herself when criticized by others, she nevertheless used those moments to redouble her efforts to be a better educator.

Assessing the Relative Strength of Evidentiary Conclusions

A comparative analysis of Mary Sibley's journal and Bennis and Nanus' (2007) theory of transformative leadership began with the creation of 13 simplified statements defining various competencies that comprised the authors' four leadership strategies. The simplified statements, devoid of contemporary context, enabled the researcher to search for leadership competencies in Mary's historical ruminations. The evidence showed strong evidence of transformative leadership in nine of the 13 competencies, moderate evidence in three of the competencies, and weak evidence in one competency.

Mary's journal supplied abundant evidence that she most strongly possessed the six competencies that comprised Bennis and Nanus' (2007) first transformative leadership strategy: Attention Through Vision. She was singularly focused on her agenda and produced tangible results. Managing a whirlwind schedule and multiple demands (church, school, Sabbath school, tending to the sick and dying, etc.), she launched a boarding school for young women in the most trying of times (a cholera epidemic) and managed her lessons and sometimes difficult relations with her students' parents while negotiating for the construction of a new church, teaching at Sabbath schools for immigrants and slaves, and expounding upon her political, religious, and moral beliefs in newspaper editorials.

In addition to writing articles for the *St. Louis Observer*, Mary wrote articulate and strongly worded letters communicating her vision for her school and her church. She never expressed doubts about her purpose or goals and evidenced clarity of purpose by verbally communicating her agenda to virtually anyone who would listen—and even to those who would not.

Like the contemporary leaders interviewed by Bennis and Nanus (2007), Mary challenged others to act, cajoling adults to provide the children in their care the opportunity to learn, demanding action of church elders on stalled initiatives, and editorializing in the press to forward her desire to end slavery.

Mary also possessed a leader's ability to weave from the many threads of her life on the frontier a context-appropriate vision that was, though perhaps in some ways ahead of her time and therefore, in some cases only moderately successful, appropriate for the world she wanted to create. In spite of virulent disapproval from her mother, she embraced the evangelical Protestantism that also inspired other progressive female educators on the East Coast and adamantly defended her vision for a practical and useful education for young women at a time when many came from households where slaves did the majority of work. Her educational vision, and its practical application, at times rendered students and parents aghast at the daily chores she expected of her scholars. Likewise, though records indicate that during this period she and her husband owned three slaves, Mary resolutely sustained her vision for a country free from the "stain of slavery," a vision, though compromised by the circumstances of her life and the politics of the time that prevailed, she sustained in her reflections and her newspaper editorials.

Another component of coalescing support for her vision through the management of attention involved Mary's ability to harness the emotional and spiritual resources of her organization. There were really two primary organizations for which Mary provided leadership—her school at Linden Wood and the St. Charles Presbyterian Church. Both were spiritual endeavors. While her church's singular purpose was the saving of souls, that purpose also guided her decisions with her students at Linden Wood. She wrote more in her journal about her students' spiritual development than their educational progress, which was perhaps to be expected since her journal was dedicated to spiritual matters. Nevertheless, Mary's spiritual calling reinforced, and in some cases, superseded, her well-established goals as an educator.

Finally regarding the first of Bennis and Nanus' (2007) leadership competencies, Mary modeled the principles of her vision. She not only advocated for the kind of educated citizenry espoused by the nation's founders, she also helped to make it happen by contributing to the creation of Sabbath schools for immigrants and African slaves and founding a Protestant school for young women when no other existed in the region. Modeling her Christian beliefs, she tended to the sick, at great risk to her own health.

The second-most supported leadership strategy revealed by the data was Trust Through Positioning. Like the 90 leaders interviewed by Bennis and Nanus (2007), Mary was clear about what she stood for, and her actions were consonant with her beliefs and goals. Though she acknowledged the ravages of the cholera epidemic and its stupefying effect on her church congregation, she never once wrote of any hesitation to tend to the sick and dying. Serving others was a manifestation of her belief system. She also believed that slaves should be able to read the Bible, so she helped to open the St. Charles

Sabbath School for Africans because it aligned with her beliefs that slaves needed a chance to better their lives. She admitted to distress over criticism from parents, but she refused to change her curriculum because it supported her belief that education was an equalizing force that provided women an opportunity to become independent, productive members of society.

The journal also revealed very strong evidence that Mary stuck to her beliefs even in the face of strong opposition, which was a hallmark of the leaders interviewed by Bennis and Nanus (2007). On every major front—social (slavery), educational (practical skills for women), and religious (Second Great Awakening)—Mary received strong criticism from, respectively, the press, her students' parents, and her own family. Yet she avowed to maintain her stance in all three regards.

The third strongest showing of evidence regarding Bennis and Nanus' (2007) leadership strategies was for Strategy II: Meaning Through Communication. Mary communicated the value and meaning inherent in her vision in an impressive array of media—verbal communications, brilliant and unflinching correspondence, multi-lingual religious tracts, progressive classroom lessons, and editorials in a controversial abolitionist newspaper. Through these efforts, she communicated the "know-why" rather than simply the "know-how" of what she wanted to accomplish (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 38).

Unfortunately, the journal did not cover a long-enough period of Linden Wood's history to show strong evidence that she successfully created social norms and organizational scaffolding that enabled the continuation of the culture she endeavored to

create. Organizational scaffolding was the second component of Bennis and Nanus' (2007) second strategy.

Finally, and least of all, Mary's journal showed some evidence that she employed Bennis and Nanus' (2007) fourth strategy, The Deployment of Self Through Positive Self-Regard. Mary's recorded actions indicated that she was confident in her abilities and aware of her weaknesses, but she never addressed weaknesses in the realm of leadership, only a failure to be more disciplined as a Christian and a failure to overcome the desire for approval from other humans (as opposed to God). She created a culture of continuous learning for her students, and she recorded reading books that were apparently designed to improve her personal development, but she never made any entries espousing the need for continuous learning for learning's sake. Finally, she was driven to succeed and she thoughtfully ruminated on setbacks, often resolving to do better in terms of her role as a Christian, but she never spoke of the need to focus on success, like Karl Wellenda, the aerialist mentioned in Leaderhip: Strategies for Taking Charge. Bennis and Nanus wrote that Wallenda always focused on walking the tightrope, rather than falling, until his last, fateful attempt when he worried about failure and fell to his death. Mary seemed to focus on success, adapt to her failures, and move ahead, but she never called failure a learning opportunity. For these reasons, the researcher determined there is only moderate evidence of Bennis and Nanus' fourth strategy in Mary's journal.

Reflections

This study involved the granular examination of approximately 156 ruminations of pioneering 19th century frontier educator Mary Easton Sibley. Her reflections were written during a period that most intensively covered only four years, or about 5%, of her

long life. Providentially, they were the years that coincided with her founding of a little boarding school nestled in a grove of linden trees at the outskirts of St. Charles, Missouri, that today is known as Lindenwood University, which boasts nearly 17,000 students and is just shy of celebrating two centuries of survival as a liberal arts institution.

So what does this study in higher education leadership mean to the past, the present, and the future? More to the point, was Mary Sibley a leader by today's (Bennis and Nanus') definition?

The answer is an emphatic yes. Though they provided many micro-definitions of leadership, Bennis and Nanus (2007) most often emphasized this concept: *Leaders have the ability to translate intention into reality and sustain it*. Simply based on her journal, Mary translated her goals as an educator into impressive realities: She taught at a Sabbath school for immigrants and helped establish the progressive St. Charles Sabbath School for Africans. She arranged for the education of a young disabled man and orphans. And, of course, she educated women at the Boarding School For Young Ladies at Linden Wood, which marked a great institution's humble beginnings. She sustained herself through the arduous work all this required by returning time and again to her fundamental beliefs about education: 1) That America would never prosper unless citizens had knowledge (July 10, 1832), 2) that all rational human beings should be should be taught to read and write so they could study the word of God (August 1, 1834), and 3) that young women should be provided a useful, practical, and liberal education (August 17, 1833).

Mary did not address in her journal lofty goals of establishing a large higher education institution. She wrote about providing young women "experimental"

education that would make them self-sufficient and the pride and joy of their families and their country rather than being "mere baby dolls" who could not even fetch themselves a glass of water without the help of a slave. Doubtless, Mary could not have envisioned the sprawling university that exists today, but that is not to say her vision in and of itself was not lofty.

Mary knew the kind of future she envisioned for herself and others (a world without slavery, a world where all children could be educated, a world full of evangelical Christians), and she engaged community leaders, friends, students, and family to make that desired state a reality. She did not succeed in fully achieving the goals of her broad social agenda—she could not even convert her mother to her faith, for example; the African Sabbath school she helped to create did not last long; even as she supported the back-to-Africa movement as a means to end slavery, she and her husband maintained slaves on their Linden Wood farm; and the beloved Presbyterian college for women that she founded and supported up to and after her death through her will is no longer a women's college and no longer administered by the Presbyterian Church. On February 8, 1974, President F.L. McCluer announced that Lindenwood's formal relationship with the Synod of Missouri of the Presbyterian Church had been replaced by a covenant relationship with the United Presbyterian Church U.S.A. (McCluer, 1974). Today, Lindenwood employs a Presbyterian chaplain, a Presbyterian minister as chair of the religion department, and pronounces in its mission statement that it "has a historical relationship with the Presbyterian Church and is firmly rooted in Judeo-Christian values" (Lindenwood University, 2014). However, the largest sect of Christianity represented by students at Lindenwood is Roman Catholicism (Evans, personal communication, 2014).

So while Mary's original vision for a robustly Presbyterian female college has morphed in the intervening decades into something she could not have imagined, and in some respects perhaps would have adamantly opposed, the fact remains that during her life she sustained a culture of continuous learning, one of the hallmarks of leadership identified by Bennis and Nanus (2007). That dedication to the teaching of liberal arts persists to this day.

Through sheer tenacity and unflagging productivity, through an absolute refusal to let others compromise her vision, Mary set a course of experiential learning that is still manifested in many of Lindenwood's programs. She could not know that her vision would succeed—at least not as evidenced in her journal entries. But she apparently did know the inherent worth of staying the course, articulating a vision, challenging others to action, and leading by example and commitment—all hallmarks of leadership. In so doing, she created a purpose and a mission for a holistic, liberal arts institution that remains committed to "values-centered programs leading to the development of the whole person" and that still values "the dignity of work, the worth and integrity of the individual, the obligations and privileges of citizenship, and the primacy of truth" (Lindenwood University, 2014).

Implications

This study was predicated on the idea that if a contemporary theory of leadership was valid in a higher education setting nearly two centuries ago, it might likely be valid two centuries hence and, therefore, is likely a theory that college administrators can confidently embrace today. Mary Sibley's journal provided evidence that she exhibited many of the transformative leadership competencies outlined by Warren Bennis, the

founding chairman of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California, and co-author Burt Nanus, a USC management professor emeritus (Bennis & Nanus, 2007).

In their book, Bennis and Nanus (2007) maintained that transformative leadership involves a continuous exchange of energy between leaders and those whom they lead—that leaders spend most of their time dealing with people, building relationships that enable them to “translate intention into reality and sustain it” with the ultimate goal of transforming followers into leaders in their own right (p. 16). They wrote,

> As we view it, effective leadership can move organizations from current to future state, create visions of potential opportunities for organizations, instill within employees commitment to change and instill new cultures and strategies in organizations that mobilize and focus energy and resources. These leaders are not born. They emerge when organizations face new problems and complexities that cannot be solved by unguided evolution. (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 17)

This statement has several positive implications for today’s college leaders. First, if leaders are not born, everyone is a potential leader. Second, if leaders emerge as a result of an organization’s unmet needs in challenging circumstances, then crises are moments of opportunity. That is reassuring in today’s brave new world of massive open online courses (MOOCS), increasingly powerful accrediting agencies, and national political gridlock and federal financial crises that threaten to upend how traditional four-year colleges do business. In moments of disquieting change and challenge, what is a college administrator to do? Become a transformative leader à la Bennis and Nanus.

To study an historic figure like Mary Sibley in search of transformative leadership skills, it was necessary to strip the ideas of their contemporary contexts. That adaptive research technique created an unintended, positive byproduct—the realization that no matter what the era, the circumstances, or even the magnitude of the challenge, there are context-free, simple, and universal principles of leadership that can be utilized. That is not to say their implementation is easy or straightforward, but if one at least has time-tested guiding principles in which one is reasonably confident, the leader's end-game is much more assured than if he or she were to let ever-changing circumstances lead the way.

Higher education administrators have an advantage over other industries in the realm of leadership. "Learning is the essential fuel for the leader, the source of the high-octane energy that keeps up the momentum by continually sparking new understanding, new ideas and new challenges" (Bennis & Nanus, 2007, p. 176). Learning is the *raison d'être* of universities. Unlike non-educational workplaces, the university is an environment in which ideas matter in and of themselves regardless of their potential moneymaking value. College leaders would do well to make continuous learning on the part of faculty and staff the highest priority. They would also do well to take advantage of the knowledge, experiences, and expertise their faculty and staff can offer in return. As Bennis and Nanus (2007) pointed out, great leaders are the ones who not only get others to listen to them, but who listen to others. Listening is a crucial component of the learning process, and learning is the fuel of transformative leadership. In a time of man in which technology, science, and human relationships are hurtling ever more quickly

toward unanticipated new paradigms, continuous—even exponential—learning is requisite.

Recommendations

As mentioned earlier in the study, a student of history could well add depth to an examination of Mary Sibley's leadership competencies by conducting a review of her personal letters and other historical documents. This study, conducted by a student of educational leadership, focused exclusively on her journal as an intentional delimitation. In what other original source material might there be evidence of Mary's leadership competencies? In what ways subsequent to the early years of her journal keeping did Mary reinforce her vision, which Bennis and Nanus (2007) wrote is a requirement of leadership:

> A vision of the future is not offered once and for all by the leader and then allowed to fade away. It must be repeated time and time again. It must be incorporated in the organization's culture and reinforced through the strategy and decision-making process. It must be constantly evaluated for possible change in the light of new circumstance. (p. 101)

As well, future researchers might add to the body of educational leadership literature by comparing Bennis and Nanus' theories to the ruminations of other 19th century women college founders, such as Mary Sibley's aforementioned East Coast contemporaries Mary Lyon and Catharine Beecher. It would be interesting to see if some of the same cultural influences, over and above the Second Great Awakening, that affected frontier educator Mary Sibley's role as a leader also influenced the East Coast founders of female institutions. Focusing on the role of the leadership competencies of

men who founded early female colleges, such as Stephens College in Columbia, Missouri, which began in 1833 as Columbia Female Academy, might unearth valuable data as well.

There are any number of ways that future researchers might design further analyses comparing contemporary leadership theories—whether Bennis and Nanus' (2007) or others'—to historical educational leaders—whether women or men, black or white, founders or inheritors—of great colleges. A series of studies that focus only on historical educators' journals, especially those at the nation's oldest institutions, would produce a neat microcosm for reflections on educational leadership.

Finally, a study of those who led efforts to educate slaves would be fascinating. Mary Sibley's journal entries about the launch and ultimate failure of the St. Charles Sabbath School for Africans were heartbreaking to read. A study of educational leadership exhibited through overt and covert efforts to educate African Americans in pre-emancipation America would likely reveal about the nation's educational history "otherwise undiscoverable realities" (p. 46), as University of Maryland education professor Barbara Finkelstein so elegantly put it in the previously cited and highly recommended book *Writing Educational Biography: Explorations in Qualitative Research* (1998). Further, a study of leadership in the Sabbath schools of the 1800s would be worthwhile. Sabbath schools played an intriguing role in teaching literacy to children who had no other educational recourse (Boylan, 1988).

Conclusion

Mary Sibley was, quite simply, an amazing woman. She had vision, determination, energy, grit, courage, tenacity, and the ability to survive crises and

tragedies with aplomb, barely missing a beat in her exhaustive efforts to achieve her admirably lofty goals for her life. It was an honor and a privilege to study, and thereby understand more fully, this impressive educational leader who was called *Aunt Mary* by her students and *indomitable* by her biographer. Historian Wolferman (2008) wrote that Mary was fond of driving her carriage to town and did so almost daily. “The approach of her vehicle, which her students nicknamed the ‘Ship of Zion,’ inspired fear and awe” (p. 118), so forceful was Mary’s personality and so uncompromising was her determination to see her will done.

Searching for and finding evidence of Mary Easton Sibley’s leadership skills was an extremely enriching endeavor, a treasured opportunity to glance through time at a small female boarding school settled in a grove of linden trees and to meet the remarkable woman who traveled in the ‘Ship of Zion’ from Linden Wood into the pages of educational history.

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Vitae

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