



2010

Unto Perfect Manhood: An Instrumental Case Study of Leadership Formation in an African American Boys High School

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LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

UNTO PERFECT MANHOOD:

AN INSTRUMENTAL CASE STUDY OF LEADERSHIP FORMATION IN AN
AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

PROGRAM IN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

BY

DANIEL IVAN MACKINNEY

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

MAY 2010

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The completion of this work would not have been possible without the help and support of many people. First of all I would like to express my appreciation to my wife for her patience and loving support throughout this project. Secondly I would like to thank my dissertation committee chair, Dr. David Ensminger, and the other members of my committee, Dr. Leanne Kallemeyn and Dr. Mark Senter for the many hours they spent reading and listening as well as the time they spent giving me guidance and support. Each one was very helpful and patient as they counseled me. Finally I would like to express how very grateful I am to the administration, faculty, and students of Assisi Franciscan High School. Their assistance and cooperation throughout the study was invaluable. May God continue to bless the work that they do there.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents David and Betty Lou MacKinney for their loving guidance through the years, to my wife, Marilyn, who is my greatest joy and a constant source of serenity, beauty, stability, and great cookies. It is her love, patience and faith that have held the family together through many difficult times. Above all this is dedicated to the Lord Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith and the one who calls us *unto perfect manhood*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	iii
ABSTRACT	viii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
Background of Single-Sex Education	9
Current State of Single-Sex Schools	12
The Problem: Decline of an Educational Format that Nurtures Leadership Formation	13
The Importance and Purpose of this Study	14
The Need for a Study of the Impact of Single-Sex Education	16
A Brief Overview of the Research Method	17
Research Questions	19
Theoretical Framework	20
Contributions and Limitations of this Study	24
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	26
The Concern: At-Risk and Disadvantaged Boys	26
The Goal: Providing Positive Mentors and Role Models for At-Risk Boys	30
The Need: An Educational Format that Nurtures Success and Leadership Formation	34
Theoretical Framework Part I: Institutional Characteristics as a Means to Explain Student Post Baccalaureate Success	37
Theoretical Framework II: The Correlation Between Self-Efficacy Behavior and Role Models	40
Theoretical Framework III: Servant-Leadership	42
Association Between Single-Sex Schools and Success and Leadership in the Literature	45
Women's Colleges	46
Men's Colleges	51
Girls' Schools	54
Boys' Schools	59
Evidence of Success with Minorities	62
Why Gender Matters	66
Ambiguous and Negative Findings	72
Summary of the Literature Review	77
Rationale for this Study	79
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY	81
Brief Overview of the Purpose of Study	81
Research Questions	83
Research Design, Including Justification for the Methods	83
Case Selection Process	85

Description of the Case, Including How the Case and Context are Bounded	86
Data Generation Tools	92
Procedures for Doing Data Generation	95
Ensuring Validity	99
Data Analysis	101
Description of the Final Report—Plan for the Organization and Format of the Final Report	103
Strengths and Limitations of the Study	104
 CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS	 108
How is Leadership Defined at this School?	109
Definition 1: Leadership and Unto Perfect Manhood	110
Definition 2: Leadership as Service	114
Definition 3: Leadership as Character and Moral Values	118
Family Man: An Essential Element of Character	122
Definition 4: Leadership as Success Through Perseverance	123
Definition 5: Leadership as Wisdom and Foresight	126
Summary of the Definition of Leadership at Assisi	127
What Environmental or Institutional Factors Encourage or Nurture Leadership Development?	129
Institutional Factor 1: The Number of Positive Male Role Models	130
How do the Different Role Models Impact Leadership Development at Assisi?	136
How the Religious Role Models Impact Leadership Formation	137
How the Faculty Role Models Impact Leadership Formation	138
How the Student and Alumni Role Models Impact Leadership Formation	141
How the Role Models in the Curriculum Impact Leadership Formation	144
Summary of How Leadership is Modeled at Assisi	145
Institutional Factor 2: The Values Taught and Modeled	146
Institutional Factor 3: High Expectations and a Strong Academic Environment	151
Institutional Factor 4: The Single-Sex Environment	154
Institutional Factor 5: Small School/Family Environment	158
Institutional Factor 6: An All African American School	162
Summary of Institutional Factors that Encourage or Nurture Leadership Development	163
To What Extent do Students and Graduates Exhibit Leadership?	164
Evidence That Graduates Exhibit Leadership Beyond Assisi	168
Summary of the Extent to Which Students and Graduates Exhibit Leadership	171
 CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	 173
The Problem and Purpose of this Study	173

The Case and Theoretical Framework	174
Discussion of Findings	177
Conclusions	180
Alternative Explanations	187
Implications of this Study	190
Legal Ramifications	192
Limitations and Recommendations	193
APPENDIX A: STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	195
APPENDIX B: FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	198
APPENDIX C: PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	200
APPENDIX D: ALUMNI INTERVIEW QUESTIONS	203
APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL	206
APPENDIX F1: STUDENT LEADERSHIP SURVEY	211
APPENDIX F2: RESULTS OF STUDENT SURVEY PRIORITIZED BY STRONGEST TO WEAKEST ATTRIBUTES	214
APPENDIX G: NOTABLE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS WHO ARE GRADUATES OF SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS	216
APPENDIX H: NOTABLE WOMEN LEADERS WHO ARE GRADUATES OF SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS	218
APPENDIX I: FACULTY SURVEY: SINGLE-SEX V COED GRADUATES	220
APPENDIX J: RESULTS OF FACULTY SURVEY USING CHI SQUARE	222
APPENDIX K: QUALITIES OF SUCCESSFUL LEADERS FOUND IN THREE STUDIES ON LEADERSHIP	224
APPENDIX L: AFRICAN AMERICAN MANHOOD PLEDGE	226
APPENDIX M: ASSISI FRANCISCAN HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE	228
REFERENCES	231
VITA	243

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study investigates the influence of single-sex education on leadership formation at an all boys, urban Catholic high school where a majority of the students come from disadvantaged backgrounds. The researcher has found an association between graduation from a single-sex school and leadership attainment. In order to understand what it is about a single-sex education that might nurture leadership development the author completed an instrumental case study of the school seeking to identify those elements that might nurture leadership formation.

The theoretical framework for this study is based on the research of Wolf-Wendel (1998) who relies on institutional characteristics as one means to explain students' post baccalaureate success, Bandura (1997) who identified the influence of role models on self-efficacy behavior, and Greenleaf (1977) who contends that the most effective leaders are servant-leaders.

The author identified six environmental or institutional factors that encouraged or nurtured leadership development. They were the number of positive male role models, the values taught and modeled, the high expectations and strong academic environment, the single-sex environment, the small school/family environment and the all African American environment.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Please allow this introduction to include a personal journey of discovery to explain some of the thought and experiences that led to this dissertation topic as well as the need for it. I entered my doctoral studies with no particular intention other than to acquire a position at a college or university that would allow me to help aspiring students prepare for a career in education, a career that I have enjoyed immensely. About the same time as I was preparing for doctoral studies I read a book by the late Senator Daniel Moynihan (1996), considered an astute observer of society and a competent policy analyst. In one chapter of the book Moynihan addressed the problem of at-risk and disadvantaged boys and it struck me both profoundly and deeply. Suddenly I had a cause, an inspired motivation to attempt to find a way, through education, to help those boys of whom Moynihan spoke with such passion.

At the beginning of my studies I happened across another book, this one regarding the advantages of girls' schools and single-sex education (Salomone, 2003). I had up to that time attended only coed schools and universities and had taught at a coed high school rather happily for over 30 years. Beyond knowing a few guys who had attended boys' high schools I had never discussed nor considered such schools to be of any particular advantage. On the contrary, if I had ever thought of them at all it was to think of them as dreary places too full of testosterone and void of those charms and gifts that males tend to

find so attractive in females, but are too many to list within the limits of this study.

Intrigued by this first article on single-sex education I began to read more on the subject and to discuss the merits of single-sex education with graduates of such schools.

During this time of informal investigation I discovered two things; one was that the graduates of single-sex schools consistently spoke very highly of the experience with no remorse about missing the opposite sex during that time. The second discovery, mostly from anecdotal evidence, was that there seemed to be a rather strong association between having graduated from a single-sex school and being in a position of leadership. This discovery piqued my interest.

Believing that leadership skills such as accepting challenges, commitment, communication, goal setting, perseverance, and vision (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Locke, Kirkpatrick, Wheeler, Schneider, 1991) would be helpful to anyone, especially disadvantaged and at-risk boys, I began to wonder if single-sex education might be one way of helping such boys lead more positive and fulfilling lives, and less likely to turn to self-destructive behavior such as drugs and gang activity that so many of them tend to do (McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; Mortenson, 2006; Moynihan, 1996). My feeling was that I had stumbled upon something that might be of great value, something that might be more than a little help to at-risk and disadvantaged boys. This led to more formal investigation and eventually to the topic of this study, the impact on leadership development of an inner city boys' high school with a significant number of disadvantaged and at-risk boys.

I am aware that the excitement and enthusiasm of a discovery, of an “aha!” experience may lead me to slant the evidence and be somewhat biased. I will attempt to guard against that and present the evidence as it falls. We are aware that much has been written by writers with a cause or researchers with an agenda. If the preponderance of the evidence in this study favors single-sex education it is because that is what the evidence has lead me to believe, and not some preconceived notion of my own. The fact that I recently completed my sixth decade of life, and a long career in public education should also help temper my excitement. I do not believe that there is a “silver bullet” or any easy answer to difficult problems. The purpose of this investigation is to explore one educational format that might be of help to children in need of it.

Continuing my investigation of single-sex education I came across the lead story of the October 12, 2007 issue of *Newsweek* magazine. It is one example of the kind of articles that lead me to think that there might be an association between single-sex education and leadership formation. It is a report on powerful women and how they lead (Kantrowitz, 2007). Prominently displayed on the front cover of the magazine are the photographs of three female leaders in our society, a politician, a political writer, and a successful celebrity businesswoman. On the inside, on the lead page to the story, are the photos of three eminent female political leaders. They all come from disparate backgrounds; one grew up in a middleclass home, in a rather typical suburban family and attended the local public schools. Another immigrated to the United States as a young woman. Another grew up in an urban environment, the daughter of an alcoholic father whom she barely knew and a hard working single-mother. Another was the daughter of a

grocer who was involved in local politics. Only one grew up in a prominently connected political family. The article makes little to no mention of their educations, just that they are indeed, distinguished writers, businesswomen or politicians who have accomplished much within our society. If one researches the biographies of these powerful women as I did, one will find that although they come from very different backgrounds, five of the six have something else in common besides positions of influence; they graduated from single-sex schools or colleges (Biographies, 2006).

The discovery of an association between being in leadership and having attended a single-sex school is certainly not exclusive to this investigator. I am simply following a path that others have already taken (Astin, Tsui, & Avalos, 1996; Riordan, 1994, 1992; Tidball, Smith, Tidball, & Wolf-Wendel, 1999). It is admittedly not a path trod by many as indicated by the lack of research in the area indicated below. Some attribute the association to the notion that single-sex schools are elite institutions attended by children of the wealthy, and indeed there is some evidence for that opinion (Maxwell, 1995). However, the majority of single-sex schools are Catholic schools with no particular elite connections (NCES, 2008; NCEA, 2008). Others are urban academies set up for inner-city children (YWLF, 2008). Not all influential leaders come from prominent families just as they do not all come from the same kind of schools, but as this researcher explored the backgrounds of many distinguished leaders from various walks of life, disadvantaged as well as advantaged, he found what seemed to be a real association between being in leadership and having attended a single-sex institution, whether high school or college. We will look at a number of these leaders below (see Appendices D and E) but three

prominent examples of influential leaders who came from disadvantaged backgrounds and graduated from single-sex schools are Shirley Franklin, the mayor of Atlanta; Deval Patrick, the Governor of Massachusetts; and Justice Clarence Thomas of the Supreme Court. Mayor Franklin was raised by her single-mother in Philadelphia where she attended Philadelphia High School for Girls. Her alcoholic father was not part of her life until she was 18 (Ramage, 2000). Governor Patrick grew up in poverty on the South side of Chicago, next to the Robert Taylor homes, but did well in school and received a scholarship to the all boys Milton Academy in Massachusetts (Strumolo, 2006). Justice Thomas was raised in a dirt floor shack in rural Alabama until he went to live with his grandparents in a nearby small town, His grandfather sent him to a Catholic boys' high school and he went on to attend Holy Cross College, a Catholic men's college (Glickman & Zerbonia, 2006).

Graduates of single-sex institution represent a rather small percentage of our population. Consider that in 1960 about 1 in 15 of the nation's high schools were single-sex (DeBare, 2004; NCES, 2008a). That number had decreased by 2007 to less than 1 in 30 (NCES, 2008). When we understand that single-sex schools are overwhelmingly private, and the average enrollment of a private high school is 293, far fewer than the coed school average of over 700 (NCES, 2008a), we understand that the graduates of single-sex schools represent a very small percentage of the population (DeBare, 2004; NCES, 2008). An even smaller proportion of our colleges and universities are single-gender. In 2007 there remained 73 men's colleges in the country, 69 of them are seminaries for rabbis or priests. There were really only four men's liberal arts colleges in

the country, (NCES, 2008a). In 1990 women's colleges represented only 1 in 35 of all institutions of higher learning. In 1988 women's college students represented 2% of total college student population (Anderson, 1988, p. 2). They represented 12% of total college students at their peak in the 50s (Tidball et al., 1999) and 8% in 1974 (Anderson, 1988). Graduates of single-sex schools represent a small fraction of our population and yet a significantly disproportionate number of prominent leaders are graduates of such institutions (Data from National Catholic Education Association, College Board on-line, and Elizabeth Tidball et al., 1999).

Is there something about single-sex education that draws future leaders or nurtures and encourages leadership potential? There certainly seems to be a clear association between the two. Consider the following. In 2007 at least one-third of all United States Senators and Governors were graduates of single-sex schools as were 9 of the 16 serious presidential candidates, 4 of the 9 Supreme Court Justices, 20% of our United States Congresswomen, and 12 of 19 U.S. Presidents since 1900 (Biographies, 2008; Global, 2008; Women's College Coalition, 2008). Graduates of women's colleges were more than twice as likely as graduates of coed liberal arts colleges and more than three times as likely as graduates of flagship public universities to serve in a leadership role while attending their undergraduate college or university (Hardwick-Day, 2008). A 1986 study found that they were more than twice as likely as graduates of coeducational institutions to receive doctoral degrees, to enter medical school, and to receive doctorates in the natural sciences (Tidball, 1986), and 44% of a survey of 91 female presidents of independent colleges attended women's colleges (Brown, 2000). One in eight graduates

of Wabash College (an all men's college) is CEO or President of a company (interview with Wabash Admissions' Officer, 2007) and over 12% (14/113) of African American male College and University presidents in 1993 were graduates of Morehouse College, a predominantly African American, men's college (Corrigan, 2002; Phillip & Morgan, 1993). Considering that there were over 2,300 four-year colleges and universities in the United States (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 1999); that means that 12% of these men were graduates of one college that represents .0004% of the four-year degree granting academic institutions in the country. This number is even more significant when we consider that Morehouse is a small college of fewer than 2,500 students (Morehouse College, 2007). This study seeks to understand why graduates of single-sex schools are often disproportionately represented among leaders.

An unusual number of eminent, pioneering, African American leaders (see Appendix D) besides the afore mentioned Mayor Franklin, Governor Patrick, and Justice Thomas, many of them from disadvantaged backgrounds, graduated from single-sex institutions. Included among them are such notables as Civil Rights activists, Julian Bond, Martin Luther King, and Rosa Parks, and former Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice (*Biographies*, 2008). As I investigated the backgrounds of leading women in our society I again found an unusually high number of them to have been schooled in single-sex institutions (see Appendix E). They include such notables as former Secretary of State, Madeline Albright, the first female U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom, Anne Armstrong, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (*Biographies*, 2008). It seems that almost any list of eminent African American and woman leaders and pioneers in fields

from politics, law, and science includes a disproportionate number of graduates of single-sex schools (Biographies, 2008; DeBare, 2004; Tidball, 1986). White males, both living and dead are not to be left out either. Seven of the last ten U.S. Presidents, from southern farm boys to the politically connected, are products of single-sex institutions (Global, 2008) as well as the senators and governors mentioned above.

As my interest in the association between single-sex education and positions of national leadership grew, I began to wonder if I might find a similar association at other levels of society. To see if I could find another occurrence of such an association between single-sex education and leadership I surveyed the faculty and administration of a large suburban high school near a large Midwestern city (see Appendix F1). I counted all whose job description required them to supervise other faculty and staff and found that two of every three graduates of single-sex schools, 67%, were in a position of supervision, a position of leadership among the faculty. Among graduates of coed schools two out of every five were in a position of leadership (40%). A chi square test was conducted and showed that the number of single-sex school graduates in leadership was significantly above the critical value of 5.99 while the number of coed graduates was below the critical value (see Appendix G, MacKinney, unpublished data). It is important to note that this survey was conducted at one suburban high school and is not generalizable to all schools.

In the survey (see Appendix F1) graduates of private coed schools, which traditionally would be smaller than public schools (NCES, 2008), were vastly underrepresented in faculty leadership, only 8% as compared to graduates of single-sex

schools, at 38%, and no more greatly represented in administration, 19%, than public school grads (MacKinney, unpublished data). This might discount the notion that graduates from smaller schools would be more widely represented in leadership because there are more opportunities per capita for leadership participation in smaller schools. Such numbers might also partially discount the socio-economic factor, thinking that graduates of private schools tend to come from more advantaged families, and therefore have greater opportunities or experience with leadership. For a better understanding of the topic we will take a brief look at the background of single-sex education.

Background of Single-Sex Education

Throughout recorded history until midway through the 19th century, with few exceptions single-sex education has been the norm. Prior to the reformation, with the exception of training for the clergy and women in religious orders, schools were a place for the wealthy and upper class males (Riordan, 1990; Schools, Single-Sex, 2006). Some schooling was available for girls in convents but in general women were taught at home or in special schools for the daughters of the privileged classes. Although throughout history there have been well-educated and accomplished women, prior to the 18th century, formal education remained the domain of privileged males. Even in early civilizations where education was considered a duty for all citizens, all but the most basic formal education was for boys (Borrowman, 1989).

In England, the country to which we trace most of our educational roots, free, public, elementary education was not available until 1918. At the beginning of the 20th century a majority of British elementary schools were coed but many of them were *dual*

schools, conducting single-sex classes in a mixed-sex school. In 1921, 75% of British high schools were still single-sex. As more and more comprehensive high schools went coed in the 20th century, a large number of the grammar schools, which focused on a more classical, college preparatory education, remained single-sex. Presently in The British Commonwealth a significant minority of public secondary schools remains single-sex (Riordan, 1990).

As in England, schools in the American colonies were started principally for boys. Only about 1 in 10 boys even attended formal school in the colonial era, most were taught at home. In 1642 the Massachusetts Bay Colony passed a law requiring parents to teach their children to learn to read. In 1647 Massachusetts again took the lead requiring communities to establish schools supported by public funds. The upper schools, called Latin Grammar schools, were for boys only. Girls, if they went to school at all, generally attended at separate times; early, late, on separate days, or in the summer (Borrowman, 1989; Riordan, 1990; *Schools, Single-Sex*, 2006). As was the custom in Europe, schools were considered to be a male sanctuary. Girls were educated at home or in special schools reserved for the daughters of the upper classes.

Due to the sparseness of the rural population in the early days of our country, there were scarcely enough students and resources to have separate schools for boys and girls. Therefore the custom in rural areas, unlike the urban, was coeducation. In the major cities however, schools generally remained separate with few of them for girls. In Boston and Philadelphia a girl's only choice for high school was private for the most part until 1878 when the boys' public high schools were finally opened to them. It might be

important to note that in those days many boys still didn't attend high school, most completing their schooling in the eighth grade. As late as 1900 only 11% of American high school age youth actually attended high school (Riordan, 1990). By 1900 single-sex public schools had all but disappeared in the United States; only 12 of 628 school districts in the U.S. reported having single-sex schools (Schools, Single-Sex, 2006). By 1979 Title IX made coed education the law for public schools. Philadelphia High School for Girls and Baltimore's Western High School remained the only two single-sex public high schools in the nation (DeBare, 2004).

While the public schools had become entirely coed for all intents and purposes, private schools, which currently represent about 10% of the total K-12 school population (DeBare, 2004), were a different matter. In 1860 there were only 300 public high schools in the country but 6,000 private academies educating a quarter of a million students. The vast majority of these were single-sex (Riordan, 1990). In 1966, 45% of the 4,053 private secondary schools in the country were still single-sex (DeBare, 2004). As late as 1978-79 academic year 34% of all private high school students attended either an all boys or all girls' school (NCES, 2008). Forty-two percent of all Catholic high schools at that time were still single-sex (Riordan, 1990).

As stated above, until the modern era, formal education was essentially single-sex, reserved for the privileged male. Girls were taught at home or in a small fraction of cases, in church or convent schools set aside principally for the daughters of the privileged. With the rise of the public school and education for the masses, the private and single-sex schools have generally remained either the reserve of the well-to-do with a

focus on college preparation or religious schools that were founded to serve the children of immigrants and the urban working and middle classes. The sacrifices that parents have made to send their children to these schools are often significant and for the most part it is these schools that have remained single-sex (Schools, Single-Sex, 2006).

Current State of Single-Sex Schools

As the 20th century flowed into the 21st, it seemed that that the single-sex private school was going the way of the 19th century single-sex public school. By the end of the 1999-2000 school year, only 4% of all K-12 private schools were single-sex. Only 9% of private high schools were single-sex (DeBare, 2004.). In the past decade however there has been a slight resurgence in single-sex schools. By 2006, 28% of the 2,900 private high schools in the United States were reported to be single-sex, the vast majority of them being Catholic. However it must be remembered that high schools represent only about 10% of all private schools and that private schools in general have smaller enrollment than public schools (NCES, 2008). In 2007 there were more than 300 public and charter schools that were either single-sex or held single-sex classes in a coed school, most of them reporting very favorable results. However this still represents a very small percentage of the country's 93,000 public schools (NASSPE, 2008; NCES, 2008a).

Throughout the past half-century private high school enrollment represented a good bit less than 10% of all high school enrollments. Single-sex grads represented about 10% to 40% of all private school grads in that time or 1% to 4% of the total high school graduate population over the past 50 years (DeBare, 2004; NCES, 2008). Since the

1980s, due to the decline in single-sex schools, they represented 1% to 2 % of all men and women who graduated from high school in the past quarter century (NCES, 2008a).

The case of higher education preceded and pretty much paralleled that of secondary with the exception of the last decade in which there has been an increase in single-sex secondary schools. It was a male only world for college students until the 1830s and '40s when the first women's colleges were founded. Between 1870 and 1960 the number of women's colleges increased from 70 to 263. Since their peak in 1960 the number fell to 51 in 2006. The number of private men's colleges significantly decreased between 1890 and 1930 from 400 to 198. After raising slightly in the 1950s the number of men's liberal arts colleges fell from 243 to 4 in 2007 (NCES, 2008, Tidball et al., 1999).

The Problem: Decline of an Educational Format that Nurtures Leadership Formation

Despite the fact that that the number of single-sex schools and colleges significantly declined in the past half century (DeBare, 2004; NCES, 2008; Riordan, 1990; Tidball et al., 1999), there are several reports of a strong correlation between single-sex education and improved academic performance (Agnew-White, 2006; DeBare, 2004; Dee, 2006; Gurian, 2005; Lee & Bryk, 1986; Riordan, 1990; Sax, 2006; Younger & Warrington, 2005). There are also reports and anecdotal evidence of a correlation between single-sex education and leadership attainment (Anderson, 1988; Brown, 2000; Fox, 1993; Rhodes, 2007; Riordan, 1994, 1992; Tidball, 1986; Tidball et al., 1999), a correlation that might cause one to wonder if there is something about the nature of single-sex education that nurtures achievement and leadership development.

If something in the single-sex educational environment does indeed nurture achievement and leadership skills such as commitment, goal setting, and perseverance in a way that coeducation cannot or does not for whatever reasons, then it seems that we should have more access to such schools rather than less. No less than the current Secretary of State and former U.S. Senator, Hillary Clinton, agreed when she added her support to a 2001 amendment to an education bill allowing for single-sex public schools. Speaking of the Young Women's Leadership Academy in East Harlem, Clinton stated, "We need more schools like this" (as cited in Sax, 2002, p. 15). Clinton, a graduate of a women's college, added that single-sex public education should be available as a choice to as broad a sector as possible. With her support the Senate passed the amendment unanimously (Sax, 2002).

The Importance and Purpose of this Study

At the same time that we have a decline in single-sex education, we have more serious problems that have little to do with single-sex education; the continuing problems of poor academic performance, social, emotional and behavioral problems of so many at-risk and disadvantaged children. Although these problems may have little to do directly with single-sex education, there are those who have found that single-sex education may be of help to disadvantaged and at-risk children (Agnew White, 2006; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Riordan, 1994). It is the purpose of this study to learn more about single-sex education and its potential to help disadvantaged and at-risk students become successful.

There is a strong correlation between growing up in poverty and being at-risk for poor achievement both in and out of school (Amato, 2005; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Currently it is estimated that 13,000,000 children live in poverty in the United States (NCCP, 2008). Since 2000 there has been a significant increase in the number of children living in low-income families (NCCP, 2008). So we have an increase in the number of disadvantaged children at the same time that we have a half-century decline in single-sex education, an educational format that might be of help to them (Agnew White, 2006; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Riordan, 1994). Among at-risk and disadvantaged children, boys seem most overtly troubled (Amato, 2005; Garbarino, 2000; Mortenson, 2006). According to a host of governmental statistics boys are 20% more likely to drop out of school, 2 to 3 times more likely to be suspended or expelled from school, 2 to 3 times more likely to be diagnosed with learning or emotional disorders, more than 5 times as likely to kill themselves, and more than 10 times more likely to be incarcerated (Mortenson, 2006).

It might be said that it doesn't matter to the disadvantaged whether there is a decline in single-sex education because it has rarely been something that they can take advantage of considering the cost of tuition. As seen above, there have been some from disadvantaged backgrounds who have been able to take advantage of single-sex-schools through scholarships or family sacrifices (Biographies, 2006) but the problem was compounded when in 1972, Title IX made it almost impossible for public single-sex schools to exist. The enactment of Title IX caused many of the few single-sex schools that were available to poor children to close their doors altogether (Schemo, 2006),

leaving single-sex education for only those who could pay or earn scholarships. The question seems to arise, as it did to many of our Senators a few years ago, that if single-sex schools afford advantages to those who can afford them, why not make them available to the less fortunate (Schemo, 2006). In response to that question new federal rules backing single-sex education were implemented in 2004.

While there is now a little more access to single-sex education for the disadvantaged due to recent change in legislation, the question still remains as to whether single-sex schools really help disadvantaged and at-risk students achieve and develop leadership potential. While there are several studies that maintain that they will indeed help (Agnew-White, 2006; DeBare, 2004; Dee, 2006; Lee & Bryk, 1986; Gurian, 2005; Riordan, 1990; Sax, 2006; Younger & Warrington, 2005), there are studies that maintain that they make little to no difference (Gilson, 1999; Lepore & Warren, 1997; Mael, Alonso, Gibson, & Rogers 2005; Marsh, 1989).

The Need for a Study of the Impact of Single-Sex Education

Compared to some subjects in education, there is a dearth of literature regarding single-sex education. A quick Boolean search on EBSCO of “at-risk” or “disadvantaged children” revealed almost 12,000 articles. A similar search of “reading strategies” turned up almost 4,000 articles. A Boolean search using eight different terms for single-sex education single-sex schools such as “single-gender”, “same-sex”, or “same-gender” brings up a grand total of 406 responses, only 40 when limited to peer-reviewed articles within the last nine years. Looking for dissertations regarding at-risk or disadvantaged children finds 648 of them, 203 in the last 10 years. A Boolean search of “reading

strategies” turns up 909 dissertations dealing with the subject, 408 in the last 10 years. A similar search using five different terms for single sex-education, the only five that gave results on EBSCO, turned up a total of 116 dissertations on the subject, 57 in the last 10 years, only one when adding the limiter of leadership development. It was done in 1993.

The comparative lack of studies of the outcomes of single-sex education combined with the small number of single-sex schools available to at-risk and disadvantaged children leaves them with one less possible avenue for discovering their potentials and developing their minds in preparation for the challenges of the future. The current movement of urban, single-sex academies is still in its infancy and although early reports seem favorable (YWLF, 2008) it will be some time before significant results can be established. It would seem to be important for the education community to study every educational environment or instructional methodology that might afford at-risk and disadvantaged children greater opportunities for a more rewarding future. The purpose of this study is to investigate single-sex education and leadership development specifically as contributes to leadership development for at-risk and disadvantaged children. It is also the purpose of this study to help contribute to our overall understanding of the phenomenon of single-sex education, a need for which is evidenced by the lack of literature on the topic.

A Brief Overview of the Research Method

This study is an instrumental case study of a single-sex school, a boys’ high school with a large number of disadvantaged and at-risk students. Through focus groups, interviews, observations, archived data such as aggregate results of standardized testing

and artifacts such as school mission statements, brochures, and pamphlets, this study seeks to understand the association between leadership attainment and attendance at a single-sex school. It focuses specifically on one inner city boys' Catholic high school and how it has influenced leadership development. It seeks to identify those environmental, institutional, curricular, and extra-curricular strategies, instructional methods and experiences unique to this case that might influence or nurture leadership potential in adolescent boys. It is a study of a Catholic high school because the greatest percentage of single-sex high schools in the nation over the past half-century has been Catholic (NCES, 2008) and therefore would be most representative of the single-sex experience. It is of a school set in an inner city neighborhood, attended by minority students from an underprivileged background to control for the elitism argument, the argument that it is easy for a single-sex school to develop leaders because the students are from families of privilege, families who are familiar with leadership.

It includes focus group meetings with a variety of stakeholders including students, parents, and alumni. These groups were asked to discuss their experiences at the school and which among those experiences might have influenced or nurtured their leadership skills as well as experiences that might have impeded the development of such skills. They were asked to discuss experiences that might be common to coed schools as well as those that might be unique to a single-sex environment.

This study also includes interviews with longtime faculty members and administrators. It seeks to understand which experiences in this school influenced achievement and leadership development with the students from a faculty perspective. It

also seeks to understand how the school and single-sex environment changed through the years from their perspective.

The study also includes observations of life in the school both in and out of the classrooms. It seeks to identify those aspects of the school life that seem to influence and nurture achievement and leadership development. It attempts to identify those aspects that are common to coed schools as well as those that are unique to the single-sex environment of the school. The observations take place in all aspects of school life, from all school meetings to one on one interaction between peers and non-peers in classrooms, corridors and cafeterias. It includes observations of the academic, athletic, social, and religious life of the school. Artifacts such as school mission statements, school brochures, and announcements of activities that might contribute to an understanding of the influence of the school on leadership development will be studied and where possible collected for the purpose of this investigation.

Research Questions

1. How is leadership defined at this school?
2. How is leadership modeled in this school?
 - a. Who in this high school, either adult or peer, serves as a leadership role model in the school?
 - b. How do these role models impact or influence leadership development?
 - c. To what extent do these role models influence leadership development?
3. To what extent do students and graduates exhibit leadership?

- a. What evidence is there that graduates from this school attain positions of leadership as defined by this school?
4. What environmental and institutional factors encourage or nurture leadership development?
 - a. What factors in the instructional or curricular structure of this school encourage or nurture leadership development?
 - b. What factors in the extra-curricular structure of this school encourage or nurture leadership development?

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the theories of three researchers: Albert Bandura, Lisa Wolf-Wendel, and Robert Greenleaf. Wolf-Wendel's (1998) study on *Women of Excellence* relied on "a theoretical framework that examines institutions and institutional characteristics as a means to explain student post-baccalaureate success" (p. 142). According to Wolf-Wendel, "Research on the [school] environment shows that the nature of the learning environment produces important differences in students' aspirations, self-confidence and career potential." (p. 143). That the environment influences outcomes as much as individual attributes requires researchers to shift the focus of the analysis from the individual to the institution or characteristics of the institution. The purpose of this study is to do just that, focus the analysis on the institution and its characteristics, especially those characteristics of a single-sex education as it might impact leadership formation in the lives of underprivileged and at-risk children.

Bandura's (1997) work on self-efficacy and role modeling can help illuminate Wolf-Wendel's (1998) theory that the nature of the learning environment produces important differences in students' current and future behavior. According to Bandura, people contribute to their own successes and failures through "mechanisms of personal agency" (p. 3). The most effective mechanism of such agency is one's belief in their personal efficacy, their belief that they can accomplish things through their actions. According to Bandura, efficacy belief is a major source of hope and aspirations. How people act is often dependent on their personal efficacy beliefs, which are in turn greatly based on who their role models are. Bandura's theory of reciprocal determinism is based on the interplay of three determining factors: *personal physical and cognitive ability, behavior, and environment* (Pajares, 2002).

Wolf-Wendel's (1998) focus on the institution or institutional characteristics aligns with Bandura's environmental factor. The student in the institution is of course influenced by personal factors such as cognitive ability and self-efficacy beliefs. These are reciprocally affected by the behavior of the student within the environment and the role models that the environment provides. The self-efficacy beliefs are also affected by the role models that the student chooses based on "assumed similarity" (Bandura, 1997, p. 87). Wolf-Wendel (1998) maintains that much of the disproportionate success of graduates of single-sex institutions is due to the greater number of same-sex role models in positions of achievement and leadership found at such institutions. The disproportionate number of same-sex role models in turn enhances the beliefs of the students that they too can achieve and attain positions of influence and leadership based

on what they have observed in people with whom they can more easily identify. Using the theories of Bandura (1997) and Wolf-Wendel (1998) as a framework this study focuses on the characteristics of one single-sex school, including the factor of how students perceive and choose role models within the school environment and how they believe those role models might have affected their achievement and leadership development.

To research the impact of a school on leadership development it is necessary to have a theoretical framework for leadership. Most of us formed our ideas of what leadership is as children playing games such as Follow-the-Leader. The leader was the one out front, going first, making the decisions and setting the example for the rest of us to follow. In school we viewed our teachers and the principal as leaders. They were up front, the decision makers, deciding what we were to do and showing us how to do it. Later we became aware that peers could hold positions of leadership, both formal and informal. There were leaders on the playground that always seemed to be the captains of our informal games. They were often the skillful risk takers who commanded attention and could inspire the rest of us to follow. In more formal settings they were the ones we elected to the student council or selected for special recognition. As we grew older we became aware that not everyone in a position of leadership was necessarily a true leader. It seemed that there were people in positions of leadership who could inspire others to follow and those who couldn't. What made the difference?

As I searched the literature on leadership and modern leadership development I was struck by Peter Senge's admonition, "that the first and most important choice a

leader makes is the choice to *serve*, without which one's capacity to lead is profoundly limited" (as cited in Jaworski, 1996, p. 1, italics added). Researching the concept of leadership as service I found that much of the modern leadership movement, including Senge, has been influenced by the work of Robert Greenleaf (1977). Greenleaf espouses the idea of servant-leadership, that the true leader first and foremost chooses to serve those he leads, and the test of a leader is whether those who follow him are better people for having done so. This is not a new idea. We have long heard that political leaders *serve* their constituents or that presidents *serve* their nation. Two-thousand years ago Jesus of Nazareth espoused the idea of the servant-leader declaring, "...whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be slave of all" (Mark 10:43b and 44, KJV). Considering that the institution studied is a Catholic school of the Franciscan order it would be reasonable to expect that their philosophy of leadership would be derived at least in part from the teachings of Jesus Christ as well as those of St. Francis. Both taught service to the poor as an important principle of Christian leadership (Mark 10:42-45, NASB; Olinger, 1909). As I explored the concept of leadership formation in the school, I kept the idea of servant-leadership, a desire to serve first, in mind. I looked especially for such qualities as the ability to formulate a vision and pursue goals, communicate effectively, and collaborate with and encourage others. I also looked for a couple of qualities that would be wonderful for every servant to have but do not necessarily fall under the category of servant-leadership, the ability to accept challenges and the ability to persevere in the face of adversity.

Contributions and Limitations of this Study

At the time when single-sex education was in its greatest decline, the 1960s to the 1980s (Debare, 2004; Tidball et al., 1999), there was a dearth of research on the outcomes of single-sex education. A Boolean search on ERIC via EBSCO using six different terms for single-sex education, including single-gender education, same-sex education, single-sex schools, single-gender schools, and same-sex schools, finds 85 articles on the subject between 1959 and 1991, not one of them peer reviewed. A similar search of “women’s colleges” for the same era finds six peer reviewed articles. It would seem that the closing of so many single-sex schools and colleges was done without much serious research into the implications. A Boolean search for articles on single-sex education using the same six terms as above finds only 57 peer-reviewed articles since 1990. Clearly there is a lack of research in this area.

This study will contribute to our understanding of single-sex education as it pertains to a boys’ Catholic high school serving African American boys in a disadvantaged area of a Midwest city. The study will contribute through observations, interviews, and collection of school documents as well as aggregate test scores, to our understanding of curriculum and instruction in such a setting. It will also add to our understanding of instructional strategies that are best suited to an all-boy classroom. It will also contribute to our understanding of the lives of boys from such schools as observations, interviews, and focus groups are conducted. By studying the impact of leadership formation in a school that primarily serves disadvantaged and at-risk boys, the study will also contribute to our understanding of leadership education, especially as it

pertains to African American boys from disadvantaged and at-risk backgrounds. By providing a deeper look into one boys' high school, the study will also provide educators, planners, and policy makers with greater understanding as they plan curriculum, schools, and education policy for the future.

This study will add to the literature and the readers' knowledge of such cases allowing the reader to make "naturalistic generalizations" (Stake, 1995, p. 85). Stake defines naturalistic generalization as "conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life's affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves" (p. 85). As this case study will give us one more, deeper look into a case that may be compared to other such cases, it will add to our understanding of all such cases (Stake, 1995).

In some ways the strengths of this study, a deeper, sustained look into one school, are also its limitations. It is a study of only one school in a disadvantaged area of the city in a limited time frame. It is also limited in the number of stakeholders I was able to interview. I would have liked to have interviewed a greater number of alumni and gather accurate statistics on the number Assisi graduates who finish college as well as the number that go on to actual leadership positions. I would also like to have interviewed a sample of the students who have withdrawn from Assisi to have a more accurate picture of why they withdraw how many of them finish high school and college. Limited in its scope and time, the case, beyond "naturalistic generalization" (Stake, 1995, p. 85) is not generalizable to elementary schools, coed schools, girls' schools, or suburban middle-class boys' schools.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Concern: At-Risk and Disadvantaged Boys

The history of education is replete with reform movements and though much progress has been made in recent years evidenced by the fact that the dropout rate is at its lowest point in decades, nearly one in ten young people in the United States still drop out of high school. Boys are about 20% more likely to drop out than girls (What are the dropout rates of high school students?, 2008). Some of the background and environmental elements that contribute to putting students at risk of not completing their education are poverty, low educational attainment of parents, only one biological parent in household, high absenteeism, lack of relationship to a positive same-sex role model, and behavioral and emotional problems (Fortin, Marcotte, Potvin, Royer, & Joly, 2006; Suh, Suh, & Houston, 2007). The research of Harper and McLanahan (2004) and Moynihan (1996) supports most of these findings. It is not within the scope of this study to establish which of these elements is the greatest predictor for an at-risk student, often it is a combination of them; for example, a strong association has been found between poverty, growing up with only one biological parent in the household, and problems at school (DeBell, 2008; Fortin et al., 2006; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Certainly a low socioeconomic status (herein after as SES) is an important factor (Fortin et al., 2006; Suh et al., 2007). If it is true that poverty is a strong indicator of putting students at risk

academically then we have a significant number of students at risk within our nation—more than 13 million according to the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University (NCCP, 2008).

The outcomes of an at-risk childhood tend to differ between the sexes. According to several researchers and policy analysts the problems of growing up at-risk seem to have more overt consequences for boys in general, partially indicated by the greater numbers of academic problems in school, high-risk and violent behavior (Amato 2005; Entwisle, 2007; Gurian & Stevens, 2005; Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Mortenson, 2008; Viadero, 2006), and incarcerations (Harper & McLanahan, 2004; Mortenson, 2006). Others have found that boys whose lives are dominated from an early age by mothers, grandmothers, and female teachers without a significant, stable relationship to a male role model, are likely to view academics as a women's pursuit, become resistant to female authority and have more behavioral problems in general (Florsheim & Tolan, 1998; Hopkins, 1997; Holland, 1991; Mistry, Vandewater, Huston, & McLoyd, 2002; Moynihan, 1996). Numerous government statistics tells us that boys in general are significantly more likely to drop out of school, three times more likely to be diagnosed with a learning or emotional disorder, more than five times more likely to commit suicide, and ten times more likely to be incarcerated (Mortenson, 2006).

One well-known work on boys is *Raising Cain* (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999). The authors, both respected psychologists, contend that boys are in trouble. Citing numerous case studies of their own, the authors reveal the many ways that boys are put at-risk in contemporary society. They contend that boys grow up in a culture that teaches

them to suppress their emotions and that it is a sign of femininity and weakness to express emotions such as compassion, sensitivity and warmth. Boy culture is often a culture of cruelty that leads them away from constructive expression and toward self-destructive behavior (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999). The authors present persuasive evidence showing that boys are responsible for 95% of juvenile homicides, 80% of the crimes tried in juvenile court, and 90% of the alcohol and drug indictments. The three leading cause of death among late adolescent boys are accidents, homicide, and suicide, which a boy is more than five times more likely to commit than a girl of the same age (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999; Mortenson, 2006). Other studies have cited significant problems with boys and boy culture such as bullying, gang activity and other forms of violence (Garbarino, 2000; Pollack, 1999) as well as being at risk for academic failure (Hoff-Sommers, 2001).

One of the great wounds to the emotional lives of boys is the “culture of cruelty” that boys grow up in and perpetrate amongst themselves. Fearing to look weak or feminine, boys will treat each other in the cruelest of ways, believing it is such behavior that proves that they are “men” and worthy of respect. Until boys can see compassion, sensitivity and warmth as masculine as well as feminine attributes, they will continue the culture of cruelty putting them at greater risk for bestowing the cycle of self-destructive behavior upon their own sons and daughters (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999).

Two more recent studies reveal that this “culture of cruelty” seems to persist. Although cruelty is evident in both sexes, it is more prevalent among boys (Dadds, Whiting, Bunn, Fraser et al., 2004; Kimonis, Frick, Boris, Smyke et al., 2006). In

a study of more than 2,300 children, ages 6-13, in 18 different schools set among middle-class populations, the authors found cruelty to be significantly more prevalent among boys. Using a self-reporting survey of cruelty to animals as a measurement of cruelty in children, the authors found that boys were more than twice as likely as girls to be cruel to animals. While cruelty was present among girls, more nurturing behavior toward others and less cruelty was reported among them (Dadds et al., 2004). In another study of aggression among 49 high-risk preschoolers, the authors reported that the boys scored significantly higher on calloused-unemotional and aggressive behavior while the girls scored significantly higher on behavioral inhibition, indicating that the boys would be more likely to participate in cruel behavior (Kimonis et al., 2006).

Although the authors attribute much common boy behavior to the psychological and hormonal differences between males and females referred to by Cahill (2005), Sax (2006), Gurian (2005, 2001), they contend that it is not the differences between the sexes, but how we respond to them that leads to so much self-destructive behavior. Popular culture and its portrayal of men as tough guys who resolve so much difficulty with violence is only one of the culprits. According to Kindlon and Thompson (1999), many adults have a great tendency to treat boys with a “shake it off” attitude, making light of their emotional and physical hurts while being much more attentive to girls with the same problems. Boys soon learn that their sensitive emotional responses are inappropriate and learn to stuff their pain, while girls are readily accepted and responded to with compassion when they are hurt either physically or emotionally (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999).

According to Kindlon and Thompson (1999), having a positive male role model around can make a significant difference in the life of a boy. “The presence of men can have a tremendously calming effect on boys. When boys feel full acceptance— when they feel their normal developmental skills and behavior *are* normal and that others perceive them that way— they engage more meaningfully in the learning experience” (p. 48). There is no shortage of researchers and analysts who agree that meaningful same-sex role models, ones that provide a caring, stable, secure environment as well as a positive, affirming relationship, seem to make a significant positive contribution to the emotional lives of young people (Brown, 2006; Harper & McLanahan, 2004; Hopkins, 1997; Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004; Moynihan, 1996; Pajares, 2002; Tidball, 1999; Wolf-Wendell, 1998; Zirkel, 2002).

The Goal: Providing Positive Mentors and Role Models for At-Risk Boys

One of the ways in which education can help at-risk and disadvantaged boys and girls is by providing positive mentors and role models. There is data demonstrating that young people are likely to emulate role models that they can identify with and ample evidence that boys tend to imitate men over women as role models (Hopkins, 1997; Pajares, 2002; Zirkel, 2002). There is a problem however in that a disproportionate number of children living in poverty and at risk of academic failure do not have an appropriate male role model at home (Florsheim & Tolan, 1998; Harper & McLanahan, 2004; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; Mistry, Vandewater, Huston, & McLoyd, 2002; Moynihan, 1996), and an overwhelming majority of elementary and middle school teachers are women (Dee, 2006), leaving many boys

who may have no positive male role model with one less opportunity to find one.

There is evidence that indicates that if we were to put disadvantaged and at-risk boys in classes taught by men that they can identify with we will find more of them becoming the productive citizens and community leaders that we hope for. Agnew-White's (2007) descriptive research study used archival data such as grades, test scores and teacher reports, an orientation session consisting of site observation, interviews with the participants, and a survey questionnaire to answer these questions:

1. To what extent does single-gender education of adolescent African American males influence the affective, cognitive, and social behaviors of that population?
2. How does the single-gender education of inner-city, adolescent African American males influence their affective, cognitive, and social behaviors when considering age levels and types of single-gender educational approaches?

The six programs studied sought to place African American boys with adult, African American males either as teachers or mentors. Agnew-White's (2007) study of the effects of single gender education with same-sex mentors on inner-city youth found that they had an overall positive effect on the boys resulting in improved behavior and academic achievement. The boys who went through the programs also reported improved attitudes toward school and 75% of the boys cited having no girls in the program as one of the major reasons for their improvement. Agnew-White reported that same-sex education affording positive same-sex role models was an effective means to address the

affective, academic, and social behavioral development of this at-risk group of young men. The author cites several single-gender programs that have proven effective in the attempt to improve academic and social development of at-risk boys. One of the most impressive programs was founded by Dr. Spencer Holland (1991) in Baltimore public schools. Assigning the rowdiest boys to single-gender classes, taught by males made a significant difference. “[In] a short span of one year, the students standardized test scores in one school, George G. Kelson Elementary School, skyrocketed from the bottom quartile to the top in the city” (p. 24).

Agnew-Whites (2007) research found that participants experienced growth in all three domains studied: affective, cognitive, and behavioral. A majority of the students in the study earned significantly better grades, enjoyed school more, “and experienced positive changes in their social behaviors conducive to overall school success” (p. 120). The author concludes that single-gender programs have a positive influence on the “affective, cognitive, and social behavioral development of inner-city, African American adolescent males” (p. 1) and that such programs should be encouraged to continue and to grow (Agnew-White, 2007). It must not be forgotten that a significant part of each program studied included providing gender- and ethnic-matched role models. Such findings suggest that we need to do more investigation in this area as this current study intends to do. If providing gender and ethnically matched role models truly helps at-risk children improve their lives both academically and socially, we need to confirm it and provide more access to such programs as Senator Clinton contended (Sax, 2002).

Zirkel's (2002) study of the influence of role models demonstrates a significant correlation between achievement and having a role model of both the same race and gender. This longitudinal study (two years) of 80 middle-school students investigates the implications of race- and gender-matched role models for the developing self-concepts of young adolescents of color and their educational outcomes. The author presents two core hypotheses. The first is that young adolescents with at least one race- and gender-matched role model will have more success in school than those who don't; the second is that the availability of such a role model is more influential than the status of the role model.

Testing her hypothesis Zirkel (2002) found that students who had a same race- and gender-matched role model demonstrated greater success and satisfaction in school than either those who had no role model or those whose role model was not of both the same race and gender. The students with a matched role model maintained a B+ average as opposed to a B-average for those with a non-matched or no role model. Students of color with a matched role model averaged twice as many educational and professional goals as students of color with a non-matched or no role model: 3.50 goals for matched compared to 1.75 goals for non-matched. The white students in this study reported a more modest number of academic and career goals but the association was still evident: 2.26 goals for matched students and 1.79 for non-matched or no role model. The achievement status of the role model was not as important as the race and gender match. Students who had a role model that lacked a college education or a high-status job experienced

essentially the same level of achievement and satisfaction as those students who had high-status role models with a college education or professional careers (Zirkel, 2002).

Hopkins (1997), an African American male, professor at Norfolk State University and CEO of an educational consulting group specializing in multicultural education, concurs and supports the finding of both Zirkel (2002) and Holland (1991). He explains that African American boys tend to resist domination by women. They tend to be purposely uncooperative so as not to be like a woman. This is a serious problem, as there are so few African American men in the grade schools. According to Hopkins boys are usually lost by third grade and need positive role models.

The Need: An Educational Format that Nurtures Success and Leadership Formation

Why do we seek an educational format that nurtures leadership to help at-risk boys? As stated previously, at-risk boys are the ones most likely to drop out of school (Mortenson, 2006; Suh et al., 2007), live in poverty, turn to violence, experience incarceration (Garbarino, 2000; Harper & McLanahan, 2004; Mortenson, 2006; Moynihan, 1996), and commit suicide (Mortenson, 2006). It is doubtful that any young boy aspires to such an end; yet it is evident that many of them lose their way between childhood and manhood. Garbarino calls them lost boys. Leaders, on the other hand, are those who accept challenges, persevere, and find a way to accomplish what they set out to do (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000). In a study of seven women leaders who graduated from a small Midwestern women's college, Rhodes (2007) found that common threads of leadership to be a sense of competence, being able to create one's own voice, effective communication, a consciousness of self, commitment, the ability to collaborate, and the

ability to deal with controversy. The participants in Rhodes study indicated that the single-sex environment and the small size of the college were an important part of their leadership development. The all-women's classes and campus life promoted a much more nurturing environment as well as allowing access to more leadership opportunities (Rhodes, 2007).

How can we instill the valuable qualities of leadership in at-risk children? There are no doubt a variety of ways of instilling and inculcating values. This study will limit itself to one educational format that as indicated above, seems to have an association with leadership and might serve in aiding leadership formation. Consider the following. Graduates of single-sex schools represent 2 to 3% of our population and yet a significantly disproportionate number of prominent leaders are graduates of such institutions (Annual Data Report, 2007; Tidball et al., 1999). In two random samples from the 1984 edition of *Who's Who of American Women*, a news publication that seeks to identify influential leaders in the United States and Canada, 15% were found to be graduates of women's colleges. Of those who had received a B.A., 19.4% were graduates of women's colleges. These figures represent women who had graduated between 1960 and 1980 (Anderson, 1988). Graduates of women's colleges represent less than 3% of the population (Tidball et al., 1999). Forty-four percent of 91 female presidents of independent colleges surveyed graduated from women's colleges (Brown, 2000). One in eight graduates of Wabash College (an all men's college) is CEO or President of a company (interview with Wabash Admissions' Officer, 2007). As stated previously more than 12% (14/113) of African American male College and University presidents in 1993

were graduates of Morehouse College, a men's college (Corrigan, 2002; Phillip & Morgan, 1993) and most any list of the most eminent national African American and women leaders such as Justice Thurgood Marshall and Condoleeza Rice as well as a list of current and past presidents will include a significant if not disproportionate number of graduates of single-sex schools (NNDB, 2007; see Appendices D and E).

Based upon the evidence of a strong association between single-sex education and being in leadership, a coalition of 10 new girls' schools has been established in the past 10 years working with the Young Women's Leadership foundation. The foundation maintains that due to the unique nature of single-sex education, they can do more to "raise expectations, increase performance and inspire leadership" (YWL Foundation, <http://www.ywlfoundation.org/index.htm>). Thirty-four other independent single-sex schools have begun based on the above evidence and the successful results of the original Young Women's Leadership Academies in New York and Texas (Colburn, 2006). These charter schools founded in urban centers have open admissions. They enroll students from the same demographics as the surrounding schools. A majority of the students are from disadvantaged homes and are eligible for free or reduced lunch. The schools are experiencing unusual success. In inner-city areas YWL foundation schools report that they are outperforming the surrounding schools academically by significant margins and send over 90% of their graduates on to college while the surrounding coed schools with similar demographics are sending just over 50% on to college (YWL Foundation, <http://www.ywlfoundation.org/index.htm>).

Theoretical Framework Part I: Institutional Characteristics as a Means to Explain
Student Post Baccalaureate Success

There is a certain amount of scholarly literature regarding single-sex schools, especially women's colleges that claim that single-sex institutions produce a significantly disproportionate number of high achievers and successful leaders. Wolf-Wendel's (1998) study on *Women of Excellence* states that her study relies on "a theoretical framework that examines institutions and institutional characteristics as a means to explain student post-baccalaureate success" (p. 142). According to Wolf-Wendel, "Research on the [school] environment shows that the nature of the learning environment produces important differences in students aspirations, self-confidence and career potential" (p. 143). That the environment influences outcomes as much as individual attributes requires researchers to shift the focus of the analysis from the individual to the institution or characteristics of the institution (Wolf-Wendel, 1998).

A quantitative study of baccalaureate origins of women who have been recognized for achievement either by having received a doctorate or being named in *Who's Who* reveals that in 1992 women's college conferred only 2.5% of all B.A.s awarded to women, yet graduates of women's colleges were 3.8 times more likely to earn a doctorate between 1975 and 1993 than graduates of traditionally coed colleges and 6.9 times more likely to be listed in *Who's Who*. In 1992 historically black colleges represented only 3% of all B.A. degree-granting institutions in the U.S. yet awarded 39% of all B.A.s earned by African Americans (Wolf-Wendel, 1998).

The author claims that while women have made great advances in recent years, women of different ethnic and racial groups have not experienced success in equal proportions. In order to better understand where successful women of different ethnic and racial backgrounds are coming from she researched the baccalaureate roots of the most successful women as determined by the record of all doctorates awarded between 1975 and 1991, and the well known publications of *Who's Who in America*.

Two questions are at the heart of Wolf-Wendel's (1998) study:

1. Which institutions and which institutional types graduate the largest proportions of successful women from different racial/ethnic groups?
2. What institutional factors are associated with this success?

Wolf-Wendel's theoretical framework is based on studies that have examined institutions and institutional characteristics as a means to explain student post baccalaureate success.

The author found that "Women's colleges consistently graduated higher proportions of successful European American women than did coeducational institutions" (p. 171). "By combining race and gender however, this study highlights a new finding. Specifically, this study found that historically black woman's colleges out produced not only the coeducational and single-sex predominantly white institutions, but also the historically black coeducational ones" (p. 172). Predominantly white women's colleges also produced a greater proportion of successful black women than did predominantly coed white institutions. ... "Institutional gender was the greatest predictor of institutional success" (p. 173). For European American women "institutional selectivity was less important than institutional gender" (p. 173). For African Americans and Latinas,

institutional race first and institutional gender, second were the greatest predictors of educational success. In other words, an African American was more likely to be successful if she studied at an African American women's college than if she studied at a traditionally white women's college. Institutional selectivity was not a significant factor or predictor of success for either African American or Latina women.

Wolf-Wendel (1998) bases much of her theoretical framework on the investigations of Elizabeth Tidball, who did extensive work on the baccalaureate origins of successful women. Tidball (Tidball et al., 1999; Tidball, 1986, 1985, 1980, 1974; Tidball & Kisiatowsky, 1976) and Riordan (1994, 1992), two of the seminal researchers in single-sex education who preceded Wolf-Wendel, posit the theory that women's colleges are more successful in producing a greater number of high achievers because of the number of same-sex role models on campus as well as the nurturing environment and number of opportunities for leadership on such campuses (Riordan, 1994, 1992; Tidball et al., 1999; Tidball, 1974, 1980, 1985, 1986; Tidball & Kisiatowsky, 1976). Tidball (1999) proceeds to show through her research studying both coed and women's colleges that the number of high achieving female graduates is in direct proportion to the number of women faculty and staff on the campus – the number of same-sex role models.

Theoretical Framework II: The Correlation Between Self-Efficacy Behavior
and Role Models

Although Wolf-Wendel (1998) makes no mention of Bandura (1997) in her study, the idea that a nurturing environment, the number of role models in it, and the opportunities provided, as well as the behavior and personal factors of the learner may impact outcomes agrees with Bandura's social cognitive theory of reciprocal determinism which claims that it is the interaction between personal cognitive and biological factors, behavior, and environment that affect outcomes, not just one or the other (Pajares, 2002). Bandura's work on the correlation between self-efficacy behavior and role models contends that people contribute to their own successes and failures through "mechanisms of personal agency" (p. 3). The most effective mechanism of such agency is one's belief in his or her personal efficacy. If people don't believe that they can achieve hoped for results through their actions, they will have little reason to attempt anything. Efficacy belief is a major source of hope and subsequent actions. "Beliefs of personal efficacy... regulate motivation by shaping aspirations and the outcomes expected of one's efforts" (p. 35). How people view their own personal efficacy depends greatly on whom they choose for social comparison; who their role models are.

... [T]he attainments of others who are similar to oneself are judged to be diagnostic of one's own capabilities. Thus, seeing or visualizing people similar to oneself perform successfully, typically raises efficacy beliefs in observers that they themselves possess the capabilities to master comparable activities. ... The greater the assumed similarity, the more persuasive are the models successes and failures. If people see the models as very different from themselves, their beliefs of personal efficacy are not much influenced by the models' behavior (p. 87).

If “[t]he greater the assumed similarity, the more persuasive are the models’ successes and failures” (p. 87) it would follow that the more students have in common with a potential role model, the more they are likely to believe that they can accomplish the same things that they have observed in the role model and to imitate the modeled behavior. It would also follow that attributes such as age, sex, socioeconomic level and ethnicity carry significant weight in identifying with a role model (Hopkins, 1997; Pajares, 2002; Zirkel, 2002). Children and young people will commonly choose same-sex peers as role models, believing that they have more in common with a peer than an adult or a person of the opposite sex. Likewise, minorities will tend to choose role models of the same race or ethnic origin believing that commonly held attributes are a significant indicator of one’s potential for future accomplishments (Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004; Pajares, 2002; Zirkel, 2002). Seeming to confirm Tidball’s (1999) and Riordan’s (1994) contention that the number of successful same-sex role models on a single-sex campus contributes to the success of the students, Bandura (1997) writes, “Among the influential factors, [in deriving self-efficacy from a role model] assumed similarity carries especially heavy weight” (p.379). “Given a choice, individuals are likely to select models with similar attributes and ignore those with whom they have little in common” (p. 380).

It may be important to remember that a role model may not be consciously or intentionally chosen as a role model to be one. As Bandura (1997) stated ... “seeing or visualizing people similar to oneself perform successfully, typically raises efficacy beliefs in observers that they themselves possess the capabilities to master comparable activities” (p. 87). If Bandura’s claim is true, it would follow that a student who daily

sees teachers, administrators, and leading students similar in ethnicity and gender to himself, perform successfully, would raise his efficacy belief that he himself “possesses the capabilities to master comparable activities” (p. 87). One may even dislike a potential role model but believe that because of perceived similarities, the student can accomplish whatever he has seen the model do.

Theoretical Framework III: Servant-Leadership

While this investigation has a framework for the institution to be studied—single-sex—and a framework for the impact of the institution on leadership formation—the impact of role models on self-efficacy—it also needs a theoretical framework for leadership. Peter Senge, author of several books and articles on leadership, has said, “[A]lthough there are a lot of books on leadership, there is only one that the serious student has to read, *Servant-Leadership* by Robert K. Greenleaf (as cited in Jaworski, 1996, p. 1). According to Greenleaf (1977) the most effective leader is a servant-leader. The servant-leader is indeed a leader. He is out front showing the way, initiating, providing ideas, setting the structure, and taking the risks. He can clearly articulate the goals, and inspires and encourages those who follow (Greenleaf, 1977).

Where the servant leader parts from the traditional concept of leadership is that first and foremost he *desires to serve* before he desires to lead. His *first response to a problem is to listen*. He is *relational* and marked by his ability to accept and empathize with even resistant people. He is one who *collaborates*, who *seeks consensus* in the decision making process *using logic and reason* rather than manipulation. He is *persuasive* but he is also *ethical*. He *understands issues* in light of the past as well as the

present and *articulates them clearly*. He practices *foresight*, understanding the long-term consequences of present actions, which is key to effective leadership. Essential to effective leadership are the *abilities to withdraw, reflect, and prioritize*. He is able to focus on what is most important over what is most urgent. He has the ability to *conceptualize*, to foresee and analyze issues well in advance and adjust his path accordingly. The test of a true leader is that those who follow him have grown and are better people for having done so (Greenleaf, 1977).

Several studies of leaders have found attributes of the servant-leader among the executives studied although not using the same language as Greenleaf. In a study of leaders that surveyed thousands of business and government executives, Kouzes and Pozner (2000) found several qualities common to servant-leadership among those studied. The researchers found that effective leaders accept and respond positively to challenges; they are effective communicators who inspire others to share their vision; have the interest of others at heart, are visionary, and serve as role models. The authors also found that the leaders studied were admired by their followers for being competent, honest, and encouraging (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000). In another study of CEOs of 16 competing companies (Locke et al., 1991), the authors found that the marks of successful leaders were knowledge, skill, vision and the ability to carry out the tasks necessary to accomplish their vision. They were relational, effective communicators, confident, tenacious and proactive in pursuing goals, honest, and persevered in the face of adversity (Locke et al., 1991). Rhodes (2007) in a study of seven college presidents found that the

study subjects were committed people who focused on communication and were able to collaborate.

This investigation has cited four studies that sought to identify the essential qualities of effective leaders (Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Locke et al., 1991; Rhodes, 2007). If we were to try and include every quality found by the researchers, even after combining similar qualities, we would have a list too unwieldy for the purpose of this study. Although the terms used to describe the essential qualities varied, each of the studies found that effective leaders are honest, competent, visionary people of integrity who are committed to their goals, effectively communicate their vision, accept challenges and persevere in the face of adversity. Although the Locke study (Locke et al., 1991) found that leaders are both visionary and effective communicators of their vision, it leaves out certain qualities that are essential to servant leadership, the ability to inspire a shared vision and to have the best interest of one's followers at heart. It does not contradict the other studies however. It would seem that one may effectively articulate a vision, but if he cannot inspire that vision in others, he will not have many willing followers; nor will he have willing followers if they believe that he does not have their best interest at heart. Using the attributes of a servant-leader as a framework we will conclude in a general sense that effective leaders are people with a sincere desire to serve with the best interest of all involved at heart. They are committed to a vision, have a strong sense of where they have come from, where they are, and where they are going. They are able to communicate the vision and inspire others to follow.

Association Between Single-Sex Schools and Success and
Leadership in the Literature

The comparative scarcity of studies regarding single-sex education has already been noted. Studies connecting single-sex education to leadership development are even scarcer. A Boolean search on ERIC of single-sex education and its equivalents plus leadership development turns up only 10 peer-reviewed articles on the subject. Within the limited number of studies available, however, the association between single-sex schools and high achievers and leaders in their fields is strong, especially in the area of women's colleges. There is also evidence, though less, of a significant association between attending a men's college and high achievement and leadership attainment. One of the seminal works on the effects and outcomes of higher education is Astin's *Four Critical Years* (1977). Surveying thousands of students, professors, administrators, and parents over a period of 10 years, Astin found that

Single-sex colleges showed a pattern of effects on both sexes that was almost uniformly positive. Students of both sexes were more academically involved, interacted with faculty frequently, showed significant increases in intellectual self-esteem, and were more satisfied with practically all aspects of the college experience, (the exception being social life) compared with their counterparts in coed colleges. ... Women's colleges increase the chances that women will obtain positions of leadership, complete their B.A. and aspire to higher degrees (p. 246).

Astin found that graduates of men's colleges were more likely to follow through with career plans in professional fields and have an advantage over male coed grads in entry level wages. Locke et al. (1991) identified the ability to follow through on plans, to realize and attain one's goal as one of the key elements of leadership. Astin (1977) pointed out that while students at a men's college were less satisfied with social life than

their coed brethren, women's college students were more likely than female coed college students to be satisfied with college, complete their BA degree, and especially to participate in leadership activities (Astin, 1977).

Women's Colleges

In a quantitative study replicating previous research focusing specifically on the issue of baccalaureate origins of women achievers (Tidball, 1974; Tidball & Kistiakowsky, 1976), Tidball (1980) found that graduates of women's colleges are approximately twice as likely to be listed in *Who's Who in America*, *Who's Who of American Women*, and the Doctorate Records File of the National Research Council, as are graduates of coed institutions. The correlation between high achievement or positions of leadership and graduation from a women's college is much greater than the correlation between high achievement and college size. Graduation from a women's college is much greater predictor of high achievement than is graduation from a select coed college or a coed college with greater resources.

In an expanded follow up study (Tidball et al., 1999) the researchers found that graduates of women's colleges are two to three times more likely to be included in a national register for career achievement. The authors also found a positive correlation between the number of high women achiever graduates and the number of women faculty of any given institution, and an inverse correlation between the number of male students on campus and the subsequent achievement of women graduates of that campus (Tidball et al., 1999). In all fields combined, graduates of women's colleges are 2 times more likely to obtain a doctorate than women graduates of coed colleges and 3.5 times more

likely to earn a doctorate in art and humanities. Comparing 26 women's colleges from the most to the least selective against 275 coed, private and public universities, the 26 women's colleges ranked fourth in selectivity but first in the number of women grads who go on to obtain research doctorates (Tidball et al., 1999).

The authors found that the following were non-essentials in the correlation between subsequent graduates' achievement and the women's colleges attended: highly selective admissions, a large endowment, high faculty compensation, high faculty education level, extensive library holdings, or a conformist student behavior. What was essential to the success of the women's colleges were a clear, well-communicated mission, the belief students can achieve and holding them accountable to do it, making students feel like they matter, providing strong, positive role models, having enough students to form a critical mass, providing ample opportunities for student leadership and including student culture in curriculum (Tidball et al., 1999).

The study (Tidball et al., 1999) reports that graduates of women's colleges have a greater sense of satisfaction with college, a greater sense of competence and capacity for leadership, a greater tendency to pursue the non-traditional and therefore enter fields that are traditionally dominated by men. Other studies have confirmed Tidball's work demonstrating the disproportionate numbers of high achievers and field leaders among graduates of women's colleges (Astin et al., 2005, 1996; Miller-Bernal, 1993; Riordan, 1994, 1992; Tidball, 1985, 1986; Wolf-Wendel, 1998).

Following up Tidball's earlier work, Miller-Bernal (1993) did a qualitative study of 260 women students at four small colleges: a women's college, a women's coordinate

of a men's college, a long-time coeducational college, and a college recently turned coed. The author questioned why alumnae of women's colleges evidenced greater success than graduates of coeducational colleges. The study was longitudinal with a survey sent to the female population of all four colleges at the beginning of freshman year, following up with all initial respondents at the end of sophomore year and again shortly before graduation.

Controlling for socioeconomic status the author found that the students at the women's college came from lower socio-economic backgrounds than did the students at the other three colleges. The findings attributed the higher achievement found in single-sex schools to a correlation between academic success and having a teacher of the same gender, which affirms the theoretical framework of this paper. Miller-Bernal (1993), seeking to confirm Tidball's earlier findings, found

that women's ... colleges differ from coeducational colleges in the three ways other researchers have suggested account for the greater achievement of alumnae of women's colleges. [1.]...having more women faculty as role models, [2.] participating more in classes, holding more leadership positions..., [3.] perceiving college personnel to be more concerned with their needs and taking more courses focusing on women (p. 48).

The study also found that women in women's colleges enjoy higher self-esteem than women in coed colleges. "The college experience that has the strongest effect on seniors' career goals is taking courses with women faculty" (p. 46). Miller Bernal (1989) found in accordance with Riordan's (1994) theory of negative influence of youth culture that women at coed colleges were more likely to report that their friends stressed the

importance of social life and were slightly less likely to stress academic work than students at women's colleges.

Another study (Anderson, 1988) was undertaken to examine why women who graduate from women's colleges appear to be disproportionately more career-successful, defined as entry into *Who's Who of American Women* (1984), than women who graduate from coeducational colleges. Anderson posed the questions: Is it something about the woman who attends a women's college; is it something about the woman's experience at the women's college; or is it a combination of these two factors?

The design of the study was causal-comparative. The study found that indeed a significantly disproportionate number of grads of women's college were represented in *Who's Who* of 1984. Women's college students represented no more than 2% of the college population at the time and yet a random sample of the entries found that 15% of the female achievers in *Who's Who* were graduates of women's colleges (Anderson, 1988). The names of 317 women were extracted from *Who's Who* and the women were mailed a questionnaire to obtain socio-economic and academic background information and general reasons for college choice. From the 185 respondents, 31 were interviewed—12 graduates of women's colleges, 9 of private coeducational colleges, and 10 of public coeducational colleges—who had been matched on a series of variables from the questionnaire data. The purpose of the interview was to explore factors related to career choice, college choice, and college experience. According to the author the study was limited from the lack of response (58.4%) to the initial questionnaire but did reveal that while having attended a women's college was strongly associated with the subsequent

success of the graduates, other factors also contributed to entry into *Who's Who*. These factors included, attendance at a private high school, level of education of both parents, and choice of major in college (Anderson, 1988).

A more recent study (Rhodes, 2007) was done interviewing seven women leaders who are graduates of Cottey College, a small, Midwestern, women's college. The study examined individuals, activities and experiences significant to participants during their college years, specifically asking what characteristics of the single-sex college built or enhanced leadership skills. The study participants most often referenced themes associated with the learning environment and living environment of the all-women's school such as early leadership opportunities, frequent contact with top college administrators, and conflict and its resolution as promoting their growth. The participants found that this women's college provided them with an accepting, nurturing and engaging context in which to develop academically and personally, confirming Tidball et al.'s (1999) findings that providing strong, positive role models, ample opportunities for student leadership, and including student culture in the curriculum gives graduates of women's colleges a greater sense of satisfaction with college, a greater sense of competence and capacity for leadership, and a greater tendency to pursue the non-traditional. Graduates of women's colleges were therefore more likely to find leadership opportunities in fields traditionally dominated by men such as science and medicine (Tidball et al., 1999). The participants in the Rhodes (2007) study found that the increased access to leadership opportunities in the varied activities at an all-women's college taught them leadership skills and encouraged them to see themselves as leaders.

Riordan (1994, 1990) using the *National Longitudinal Survey* of 1972 (N=1,957) and controlling for SES and initial ability through SAT scores, found a strong association between higher educational attainment and occupational status and graduation from a women's college. An interesting side-note is that the graduates of the women's colleges reported that they were more happily married and the data showed that they were more likely to stay married, an indication of being able to maintain successful relationships and a propensity for commitment, important attributes of leadership (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Rhodes, 2007), and an ability to collaborate and to deal with controversy, also important attributes of leadership (Rhodes, 2007).

Using a scale of occupational prestige and controlling for home background, initial cognitive ability based on SAT scores, educational attainment, and work status, Riordan (1994, 1990) found that graduates from women's colleges scored 6.8/100 occupational prestige points higher than their counterparts from coed colleges indicating that they were employed in more highly regarded professions or had attained higher rank within their occupation. Controlling for elitism and school status, these findings were based on a group of women comprised of 30% from highly selective colleges, and 70% from less selective women's colleges (Riordan, 1990).

Men's Colleges

There is very little literature claiming a high correlation between leadership achievement and graduation from a men's college. There is evidence of an association however if we consider that 12 of the 19 United States presidents since 1900 attended men's colleges (Global, 2008) as well as one-third or better of United States male

governors and senators (NNDB, 2008). Part of the problem in finding recent literature regarding men's colleges is that so few remain. A web search for men's colleges and universities reveals that there are only four men's, liberal arts colleges left in the United States. The most well known among them is Morehouse College of Atlanta, an institution founded specifically for the education of African American males.

Graduates of Morehouse often refer to the "Morehouse Mystique" when describing its success in turning out a disproportionate number of outstanding graduates who go on to be leaders in their fields. Among its more famous graduates, Morehouse claims such men as Martin Luther King, Spike Lee, Former Atlanta mayor Maynard Jackson, and former Health and Human Services Director, Dr. Louis Sullivan among a host of scholars and high achievers. It claims to be the alma mater of 12% of all the African American college presidents and 5% of all U.S. African American physicians and dentists in 1993 (Phillip & Morgan, 1993). The Morehouse leadership attributes a great deal of its success in developing leaders to the great number of role models present there. Not only are the students in daily contact with successful African American professors and leaders on campus, they are also regularly reminded of the legacy of great African American leaders from Morehouse who have gone on before them. The upper classmen also serve as role models to the entering freshmen as successful African American men with whom they can identify (Phillip & Morgan, 1993).

Eaves (1999) sought to determine the factors that have lead to Morehouse's reputation for producing outstanding graduates that have profoundly impacted society. The author questioned whether the schools success was due to the pre-college

characteristic of the entering students or the unique environment of this single-sex, African American college, often referred to as the “Morehouse Mystique” (Eaves, 1999). Based on the researcher's analyses of interviews, on-site observations, and campus documents the Morehouse experience was widely perceived to influence student outcomes. Specifically, Morehouse students are cultivated into well-rounded men who exhibit a high level of self-confidence. They are urged to achieve their academic potential and to attain degrees at the highest levels of academia. They are also inspired to assume leadership roles after graduation and to excel in their respective professional fields. Some of the unique accomplishments of Morehouse cited by Eaves (1999) are: In 1955, 52 of 737 African Americans enrolled in medical schools in U.S. were Morehouse grads. In 1967, 1 in 18 of African Americans in U.S. with an earned doctorate was a Morehouse grad. In 1997, 5%, 1 in 20, of all African Americans who received PhDs obtained their undergraduate degrees from Morehouse. This is a highly disproportionate number when we consider that there were more than 2,300 four-year undergraduate institutions in the United States at the time (Chronicle of Higher Education Almanac, 1999).

Eaves (1999) attributes much of the school's success to the fact that future leadership is an expectation at Morehouse. Outstanding alumni of the past are regularly held up as role models to students. Students are regularly told that they can accomplish great things just as the students of the past have. Providing successful role models is an intentional strategy at Morehouse. The author adds that “[b]eing at an all male school provides Morehouse students with a unique sense of camaraderie and brotherhood” (p. 162). The impressive results attained by Morehouse seem to call for further study of such

institutions. My study of an African American boys' high school will shed greater light upon the factors in an all-male institution that contribute to leadership formation as well as expand the knowledge of this field by examining leadership development in a high school context.

There remain but a handful of men's colleges today. None of the Ivy League universities is currently single-sex, but their fame for being among the top colleges and alma maters of presidents and great leaders while still all-men's colleges is legendary. Six of the last eleven U.S. Presidents attended men's colleges (NNDB, 2008).

Girls' Schools

In all the studies that I have found on single-sex education, while several have included the social-emotional factors and outcomes of a single-sex education (Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; James, 2003; Lee & Bryk, 1986; Lee & Marks, 1990), only one has focused specifically on leadership development in a single-sex school as compared to a coed school. In a quantitative study comparing elected female student leaders from six Catholic girls' high schools to equivalent elected female leaders in eight Catholic coed high schools in the San Francisco Bay area, Fox (1993) sought to rank leadership styles, orientations, and level of leadership tasks performed between the single-gender and coed schools. Using the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator, The Bem Sex-Role Indicator, and a Leadership Function Survey, Fox found that the female leaders from the single-gender schools had a stronger leadership orientation, meaning that they were more likely to take charge of a difficult or chaotic situation, and regularly performed higher leadership tasks such as discussing school policy and plans with administrators than the equivalent female

leaders from the coed schools. The equivalent female leaders from the coed schools had a weaker leadership orientation, meaning they were less likely to take charge of a difficult situation, and performed more lower-level leadership tasks such as serving on decorating and clean-up committees.

Several studies have found attendance at a girls' high school to be academically advantageous, as well as affording greater opportunities for participation and leadership. Rennie and Parker (2002) in an Australian study found that single-sex classes provide environments in which teachers can implement gender inclusive instructional strategies more readily and effectively than in coed classes. They also found that girls were more likely to participate and have more interactions with the teachers, and that reduced levels of student-student harassment in girls' single-sex classes were intertwined with increased levels of academic achievement among the girls (Rennie & Parker, 2002). Able (2000) in a two-year study comparing students from 10 triplet schools in England controlled for socioeconomic and selectivity backgrounds found that students from boys' and girls' schools out-performed both sexes from the coed schools. Spielhofer et al. (2002) in another study of English schools found that even after controlling for prior achievement and other background factors, girls in single-sex comprehensive schools achieved better results than their peers in coed schools for all the outcomes measured, except the number of GCSE exams taken. The analysis also suggested that single-sex schooling particularly benefited girls at the lower end of the ability range. However no performance gains were detected for girls attending single-sex grammar schools, which are academically more rigorous and more selective than the comprehensive schools.

In a study focusing more on attitudes than academics in U.S. Catholic schools Lee and Marks (1990) found that the single-sex experience, especially during the formative adolescent period, appears to enable young women to overcome certain social-psychological barriers to academic and professional advancement. It enables them to form values and set goals that distinguish them from girls in coed schools. Such effects appeared on a wide variety of outcomes, including educational aspirations, sex-role stereotyping, and attitudes and behaviors related to academics. Although their list of statistically significant sustained effects for single-sex schools was modest, it was not insignificant and, in fact, favored single-sex education. Rarely did attending a coed secondary school prove advantageous (Lee & Marks, 1990). Dorman (1997) also found significant attitudinal advantages in single-sex schools. His study shows significantly higher levels of student affiliation, interactions, and cooperation existed in Catholic girls' schools.

In a mixed-methods study of career aspirations in adolescent girls focusing specifically on the effects of achievement, grade, and school environment, Watson, Quateman, and Edler (2002) found that whereas aspirations usually decline toward the end of high school in adolescent girls, they remained strong to the end at all levels in girls' schools. The authors state,

The most intriguing results of this study came from our analyses of all-girls' versus coed school environments. ...

What surprised us ... was the absence of any interactions effects of achievement levels in this all-girls' sample. Girls at all levels of achievement in the single-sex schools received a similar benefit from the single-sex school environment in terms of heightened career aspirations - an effect unprecedented in any other portion of our study ... Clearly, girls

in single-sex schools exhibit a belief in their talent and potential that is measurable (p. 333).

The authors explained that past research, including their own has revealed a significant drop in ideals and career expectations for adolescent girls and boys during their high school years. The coed participants in the present study experienced a significant drop in career aspirations between the eighth and twelfth grades. There was no such drop among girls from single-sex schools. Their realistic career ambitions and expectations continued to be high up to and throughout their senior year. Attempting to understand why there was such a contrast in career expectations between the coed and girls' schools studied, the authors looked for the differences between the two kinds of schools. While some of the differences such as a more personal and nurturing environment might be attributed to the smaller size of the girls' schools, the focus on the lives of girls and their potential as women was not attributable to size. The authors concluded, "When girls become the focal point, they rise to a greater level of development than might otherwise ordinarily be the case" (Watson et al., 2002, p. 333). They also called for more investigation into the differences between coed and single-sex schools, a call to which this dissertation and others, as seen below, are attempting to respond.

In the past decade several Young Women's Leadership Academies patterned after Girl's School in Philadelphia have opened in such urban centers around the country as New York, Chicago, Dallas and Austin (YWLF, n.d.). These schools have been established to serve the inner-city populations and founded on the theory that girls' schools nurture success and develop leadership in young women. The schools serve a mostly disadvantaged population in an underprivileged area of the city. The entrance

requirements are simply a C average and a commitment to the program. Young Women's Leadership School in East Harlem New York, which opened in 1997 reports the following demographics: 63% Hispanic, 33% African-American, 4% Other; 10% have IEPs; 64% qualify for free lunch; another 20.5% qualify for reduced lunch. In spite of the disadvantages often associated with poverty stated elsewhere in this paper (Amato, 2005; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994; NCCP, 2008) the school reports that all the graduates of the first class in 2001 were accepted into four-year colleges with one exception—an Air Force recruit. Of this class 59% graduated college in four years. In May 2005, 24% were on track to graduate in five years. Other classes have had similar success. One-hundred percent of the Class of 2005 was accepted into college, the attendance rate for 2003-2004 was 92.6%, and the student dropout rate for 2003-2004 was 0%. This Harlem school was named "National Breakthrough High School" by National Association of Secondary Principals; it was ranked as the #1 school in New York City for bringing struggling 8th graders to graduation on time. In 2005, 100% of the students passed Regents' Exam in Math, English, and Spanish and more than 95% passed in U.S. History, and Global and Earth Science. In comparison the passing rate in New York City schools over all was 42%. The literature on leadership identifies commitment, competence (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Rhodes, 2007), perseverance, confidence (Locke et al., 1991), the ability to envision (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Locke et al., 1991), and to accomplish goals as qualities of successful leaders. Based on the outcomes reported, the Young Women's Leadership Academy seems to be nurturing leadership qualities in its students. The

demographics for the Chicago school, which opened in 2000, are very similar and the outcomes are looking equally as promising (YWLF, n.d.).

One of, if not the seminal study of single-sex high schools was done by Cornelius Riordan (1990). Using data from the *National Longitudinal Studies* of the class of 1972 and *High School and Beyond* Survey of 1982, Riordan studied the outcomes of 1,251 minority students from 39 Catholic schools, both coed and single-sex. In this study, *Girls and Boys in School: Together or Separate?* (Riordan, 1990), found that girls profited in every way from being in an all-girl's school. Comparing urban single-sex Catholic high schools to urban coed Catholic high schools, and controlling for initial ability and race, Riordan found indications that the "single-sex schools offered educational and occupational advantages for women and minorities" (p. 82). The single-sex schools seemed to have a significantly more positive influence on both social and personal growth as well as academics indicating "growth with regard to personal responsibility, initiative, industriousness, cooperation, poise, and maturity" (p. 106). Such attributes are considered important for, and characteristic of people who attain positions of influence, achievement, leadership, and success (Locke et al., 1991).

Boys' Schools

Maintaining that good foundations are bases for future success, several studies have found positive outcomes for graduates of boys' schools. In his two-year study of triplet schools in England controlling for socio-economic status, Able (2000) found that boys from coed schools scored lower than all other students tested, boys and girls from single-sex schools as well as girls from coed, and that boys from single-sex schools

scored higher than all students tested in 1998 while scoring second only to girls from single-sex schools in 1999. Spielhofer (2002), finding in general that there was no significant difference for boys from coed and all-boy schools, did find that boys in grammar schools, which are academically more rigorous, and boys with lower prior attainment achieved more in the single-sex schools.

James (2003, 2001) found especially strong support for single-sex education for boys. Controlling for SES, James found that graduates of boys' schools in the U.S. showed evidence of higher scores on both the verbal and total academic scale, and scored higher in verbal interest than coed boys. The boys' school grads tended to have higher academic achievement, a greater likelihood of graduation, and a more positive attitude towards the humanities and their alma mater. James finds that boys' schools are more successful in teaching reading and writing to boys due to reading material that is more sensitive to their interests and a curriculum that is designed specifically for them (James, 2003, 2001).

LePore and Warren (1997) point out that, while boys from single-sex schools do not show any advantage in increase of learning over the secondary school years, they do, in fact, score higher in achievement over the same years than boys from coed schools. One elementary school in Florida that has begun single-sex classes within their coed school, reports that the students in the single-sex classes, separated by parent choice, are significantly out-performing both sexes in the coed classes (Viadero, 2006).

A study of one middle school found dramatic increases in achievement in student scores in Reading, Language Arts, and Math, after switching to single-sex classes

(Gurian & Stevens, 2005). The switch was made after a number of years of low performance in state testing. The school administrators wanted to find out if switching to single-sex classes would make a difference in student achievement.

The school reports that the results were good for both sexes but seemed especially dramatic for boys. A year before switching to single-sex classes 23% of the sixth-grade boys were performing below the state standards in Reading, 36% below state standards in Language Arts, and 32% below state standards in Math. A year after switching to single-sex classes only 7% of the sixth-grade boys were performing below state standards in Reading and Language arts, and only 11% percent were below standard in Math. The school also reported a 50% decline in discipline referrals from single-sex classes, a significantly disproportionate amount of which had previously been for boys. Four other middle schools and two elementary schools also report significant improvement in achievement after working with the Gurian Institute on gender learning differences and switching to single-sex classrooms for some academic classes (Gurian & Stevens, 2005).

A British study of three coed schools with some single-sex academic classes, researched methods that might help raise boys' achievement levels (Younger & Warrington, 2005). The authors found evidence favoring single-sex academic classes based on student opinion polls, and analysis of academic achievement in those classes where good pedagogical and organizational practices were in place. The school that had first gone to single-sex teaching "found that [it] has been one of the factors which has helped to transform achievement. Not only have the boys 'out-performed' the girls in particular years, but the performance levels of both girls and boys, year-on-year, have

generally followed an upward trajectory over the eight years analyzed” (Younger & Warrington, 2005). Of the two other schools studied, both introducing single-sex classes more recently, one reports improved performance for both sexes while the other reports improvement only for girls. In questionnaires completed by students of all three schools, a majority of the girls in all three schools and a majority of the boys in two of the three agreed that single-sex classes aided their concentration, helped them feel more confident about their work, and had a better atmosphere for learning. The girls from all three schools also reported that they felt more willing to answer questions in single-sex classes and that the single-sex class was a good idea which ought to be continued in those subjects where it had been introduced, but should not be for all subjects (Younger & Warrington, 2005).

Evidence of Success with Minorities

Riordan (1994) after controlling for initial ability and home background variables found that the correlation between attendance at a single-sex school and academic success for minorities was substantial. Both minority boys and girls in single-sex schools outperformed students of similar race and SES in coed schools (Riordan 1994). As mentioned regarding girls’ schools, he found that the students in the “single-sex schools experienced significant growth with regard to personal responsibility, initiative, industriousness, cooperation, praise, and maturity” (p. 106), all important traits and characteristics of good leaders. Other research discussed earlier in this chapter has supported Riordan’s findings regarding minority students (Agnew-White, 2007; Eaves, 1999; Tidball et al., 1999; Wolf-Wendel, 1998).

Hopkins (1997) summarizes the plight of black inner-city males, lagging behind every other group educationally, and describes alternative schools and programs that have been a help to them. Hopkins contends that black male culture is unique and needs a unique educational approach. One helpful approach is the black male academy. In a descriptive study of alternative schools and programs, the author reports the improved behavior and academic achievement African American boys experienced through unique programs designed to benefit urban black males. Interviewing various stakeholders such as staff, parents and students, he asks how alternative education schools and programs designed for African American males “liberate” and how they limit.

Hopkins (1997) found that the factors that tended to “liberate” the boys were hiring teachers with an uncommon level of commitment; wearing uniforms to reduce focus on status clothing and reduce gang influence; holding a group affirmation meeting every morning that built a sense of community; providing before- and after-school programs, and an extended school year.

Hopkins (1997), an African American researcher, perceived as an insider in the African American community, reports that African American boys tend to resist domination by women and are purposely uncooperative as a way of establishing their masculinity. The author maintains that this is a serious problem as there are so few African American men in the grade schools. He maintains that boys that do not experience success in school are usually academically lost by third grade and at-risk of eventually dropping out of school and entering into self-destructive behavior such as drug addiction and gang violence. One means of helping these boys achieve success is by

giving them greater access to positive role models (Hopkins, 1997). Hopkins goes on to explain that inner-city minority children often come to school from psychologically frightening and damaging home situations where they have been left alone for extended periods of time. Many of them have not seen their fathers for long periods of time and have lived with broken promises on a regular basis. They live on streets where drive-by-shootings are a common occurrence, and a disproportionate number have seen a man violently beat their mother. They often come to school traumatized and then are expected to behave as though everything were normal. The male role models that many have are often either absent or negative. Hopkins concluded that providing positive male role models for disadvantaged and at-risk African American boys, made a significant difference.

Hopkins explains that due to developmental differences between boys and girls (see Cahill, 2005, 2004; Gurian 2005, 2001; Sax, 2006) and different psychological and sociological styles, teachers tend to respond differently to males, judging male behavior more negatively. Without intervention, the negative perceptions of boy behavior can adversely affect the educative process and achievement of males. Hopkins's research (1997) shows that those strategies that were consistently most successful with young black males were single-sex classes, recruitment of African American staff as role models, infusion of African and African American culture into the curriculum, mandatory parental volunteer programs, rites-of-passage programs, an extended school day, and extended academic year. Holland (1991), discussed previously, also found that inner-city

African American boys made significant improvements when put in single-sex classes and matched with African American men as mentors.

Brighter Choice Charter Schools (2008) of Albany, New York, opened in 2000 specifically to serve inner-city minority populations, have reported similar success with single-sex classes along with an extended academic day and academic year. Drawing students from the surrounding inner-city neighborhoods with essentially the same socioeconomic demographics as the neighboring public schools, Brighter Choice has seen a dramatic rise in student performance over the nearby coed, public schools. Over the three-year period from 2002 to 2005 the Brighter Choice girls rose from the 26th percentile to the 71st in math and from the 41st percentile to the 66th in reading on the 2005 TerraNova exams. The boys increased from the 44th to the 83rd percentile in math and from the 20th to the 76th percentile in reading. The school attributes their success to a variety of reforms; such as extended time in class, a focus on high academic and behavioral expectations and having teachers instruct only in their areas of specialization. Even at the first-grade level, there are separate math, science, and reading teachers. With all of these innovations the Brighter Choice administration maintains that the single-sex classes are one of the keys to their success. They maintain that all of the children focus better on instruction in the absence of the opposite sex, and that the girls participate more actively when the boys are not around (Brighter Choice Charter Schools, 2008).

Why Gender Matters

Studies of single-sex education will eventually come across the question as to whether or not the perceived differences between male and female academic behavior are really based on socialization, and by separating them by sex aren't the schools just reinforcing patterns of socialization rather than meeting the educational needs of the different sexes (Gurian, 2005). Although that question must arise, it is beyond the scope of this study to answer it. A considerable amount of research, however, does reveal that with all our similarities, boys' and girls' minds really do work differently in several ways that contribute to how we think, act, and learn (Cahill, 2005; Gurian, 2005; Sax, 2006). The latest research gives evidence that many of our significant thinking patterns and psychological differences are due to neurological differences, not socialization. Consider the following findings by Cahill (2005, 2004, 2003) a professor of neurobiology at UC Irvine.

Over the past decade investigators have documented an astonishing array of structural, chemical and functional variations in the brains of males and females. These inequities are not just interesting idiosyncrasies that might explain why more men than women enjoy the Three Stooges (Cahill, 2005, p. 40).

Cahill (2005) explains that with all their similarities there are significant differences in both form and function between male and female brains. Studies involving monkeys, one of our closest animal relatives in brain structure and behavior, given a selection of toys to play with revealed that they make the same stereotypical choices that human children do. The young male monkeys played with things that can be propelled through space, cars, etc. while the females chose to play with dolls. In further study,

when human babies were shown movies, girls watched faces. Boys watched things that move. Even day-old babies showed the same preference. Girls looked at faces while boys preferred to watch mechanical mobiles. According to Cahill, girls are far more likely than boys to suffer from anxiety disorders, and while men will tend to find their way directionally by estimating time and distance in space, women tend to find their way keeping track of signs and other landmarks. Interestingly, a similar sex difference exists in rats. “The more we discover about how brain mechanisms of learning differ between the sexes, the more we may need to consider how optimal learning environments potentially differ for boys and girls” (p. 43). If, as Cahill and others suggest, boys and girls brain structures impact how they learn (Deak, 2002; Gurian, 2005; King & Gurian, 2006; Sax, 2006), and that different learning environments may be more advantageous for one than the other, then it would seem that we need to consider, study, and provide access to those learning environments that can best meet the learning needs of individuals, seeing them not simply as a unisex people but as individuals with identities tied in part to their gender (Dee, 2006; Gurian, 2005; King & Gurian, 2006; Parker & Rennie, 2002; Sax, 2006). As Cahill (2005) has stated, “growing numbers now agree that going back to assuming we can evaluate one sex and learn equally about both is no longer an option.” (p. 6).

In their discussion of male female differences, Kindlon and Thompson (1999) attribute some of boys’ troubles to the developmental disparity between the sexes. They contend that there is significant evidence that suggests that we are teaching reading to boys too early, causing many misdiagnoses in learning disabilities. Many lifetime

learning patterns are set by the third grade, too early for many boys to successfully handle reading. “The age that we teach learning favors girls” (p. 33). Some research suggests that the preponderance of boys among the learning disabled is due to the fact that we push it on them before they are developmentally ready (Gurian, 2005; Sax, 2006). They suggest that many of the learning disabilities would disappear in reading classes if we put 8-year-old boys in with 6-year-old girls.

The first two years in school are a critical moment of entry into the world of learning, but boys’ relative immaturity and the lack of fit that they experience in school set them up to fail. Many boys who are turned off to school at a young age never re-find the motivation to become successful learners. Even among those who press on to achieve success later in life, the emotional scars of those troubled years do not fade (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999, p. 24).

For this reason they cite the contention that elementary school is the time when single-sex education is most beneficial (Kindlon & Thompson, 1999).

A study by Dee (2006) on the difference in learning outcomes between boys and girls was widely reported in the national press. It contributes further testimony to the question of why gender might matter. Seeking to understand some of the causes behind the gender gap in educational outcomes, Dee has investigated the differential impact of a teacher's gender on student learning. He presents the evidence of the gender gap in educational outcomes and hypothesizes that greatly increasing the number of students with teachers of the same gender could make a difference in educational outcomes for both sexes. Dee further hypothesizes that students are more engaged, behave more appropriately and perform at a higher level when taught by a teacher who shares their gender. Using a sample of nearly 25,000 eighth graders from the National Educational

Longitudinal Survey, Dee found evidence that when girls are taught by women and boys are taught by men, student achievement in English, science, and social studies increase for both groups. For all three subjects the overall effect of having a woman teacher instead of a man raises the achievement of girls by four percent of a standard deviation and lowers the achievement of boys by roughly the same amount, producing an overall gender gap of eight percent of a standard deviation in one year alone. The finding for math was inconclusive when other variables such as prior achievement were considered (Dee, 2006).

In addition to examining the effect of teacher gender on student test scores, Dee (2006) also examined teacher perceptions of a student's performance and students' perception of a subject taught by a particular teacher. Dee culled his data from the 1988 survey based on 24,599 students and two teachers of each student. The amount of Dee's database is compelling. Two completed teacher surveys are available on each of 21,000 students. This "matched-pairs" data allows one to see how outcomes of the same student vary with two different teachers. When estimating for the effect of a teacher's gender Dee also adjusted for the effect of other teacher and classroom characteristics that might have affected student outcomes such as shared race, class size, percentage of students in a class with limited English proficiency, and the years of the teacher's experience.

Dee's conclusions are consistent with the results of his statistical analysis after controlling for such variables as prior achievement, class size, and shared race. The limits to this study are that it is only done for one year of the NELS data. This seems such an important finding that it is imperative that it be replicated for the other years included in

the NELS survey. The practical implications are astounding when one considers the percentage of middle school teachers that are female. Dee reports that the percentage of sixth grade teachers across the four core disciplines ranges from 58 to 91%. Eighty-three percent of eighth grade English teachers are female as are more than half the eighth grade math and science teachers (Dee, 2006). Based on the evidence that Dee has gathered it would seem to indicate that gender does matter.

Sax (2006) reports that while many of the stereotypical differences between the sexes, such as verbal or spatial ability, vary more within the sexes than between them, there are real psychological and neurological differences that affect how a boy or girl adapts to learning environments. There are significant differences in the make up of the eyes, ears, and noses of the sexes that cause girls to see, hear, and smell significantly better than boys. Sax (2006) also reports dramatic differences between the sexes in the autonomic function, the part of the nervous system responsible for maintaining blood pressure, body temperature, and internal stability. Because of these neurological differences, girls tend to react differently than boys to stressful or pressure situations. Seeing a fight or a car crash, norepinephrine and adrenalin kick in for a boy causing arousal and excitement. Most girls witnessing the same event will experience a rush of acetylcholine, causing a dizziness, mental slowing, or nausea (Sax, 2006).

Further complicating the classroom conundrum, Sax (2006) reports recent ergonomic findings demonstrating that boys and girls function differently at different temperature settings. While the average boy will tend to feel too warm and drowsy at 77

degrees Fahrenheit, the typical girl will be very chipper and function best at that temperature. The normal boy will perform better in a classroom heated at 71 degrees.

Sax (2006) also explains why adolescent girls generally find it easier to express and write about negative emotions than boys do. During adolescence girls experience a neurological shift that boys don't. In a girl, a larger fraction of the brain activity associated with negative emotions moves from the amygdala, a primitive part of the brain, to the cerebral cortex, a part of the brain associated with higher cognitive functions and speech. This does not happen in the male brain. Therefore if you ask a class full of teenagers to write a paper on a topic dealing with their negative emotions, the girls are more capable of responding in an intellectual manner while the boys are likely to either turn off, respond more viscerally, or just write a paper giving the teacher what he thinks the teacher wants to hear rather than truly expressing his emotions (Sax, 2006).

Sax (2006) adds that in the absence of the opposite sex, boys and girls will begin to do things more readily that they tend to avoid in the presence of the other gender. In an all boy French class the boys will speak out and compete with the guys for best pronunciation. In band the boys will take up the flute and clarinet and become accomplished musicians, while in a girls' band, a greater number will be willing to play the "masculine" instruments such as the trumpet and the trombone. In a science laboratory girls will be more willing to cut up the frog rather than sitting back and let the boys do it (Parker & Rennie, 2002). Researchers have found that boys who attended all-male schools are subsequently more than twice as likely to study subjects such as art,

music, and foreign languages, compared with boys of comparable ability attending comparable coed schools (James, 2003, 2001).

Sax (2006) concludes “that the most important benefit of single-sex education—is not that single-sex education can improve grades and test scores, although it can do that, but rather that single-sex education can broaden educational prospects for both girls and boys” (p. 198). Broader educational prospects would tend to be a stronger foundation for future achievement and leadership potential.

Ambiguous and Negative Findings

The literature search for this paper revealed numerous investigations with results favoring single-sex education in general. The studies finding favorable long-term results such as lifetime achievement or leadership development were in reality few in number but those few, such as Astin (1977), Tidball et al. (1999), Wolf-Wendel (1998), and Riordan (1994, 1990) were thorough, extensively researched, and well documented. Though they all spoke more to career advancement and lifetime achievement, some transfer might be made to leadership in the Tidball and Wolf-Wendel studies. Both studies were limited to the graduates of women’s colleges but both found a significant correlation between women who had made significant accomplishments requiring many of the qualities of leadership mentioned previously in this paper (see Appendix H). There were two studies (Eaves, 1999; Phillip, 1993) specifically linking leadership to attendance at a men’s college, both on Morehouse, an African American, men’s college. There was one study comparing elected female student leaders from girls’ schools and coed schools that found a stronger orientation for leadership among female leaders at

girls' schools (Fox, 1993). I found no studies contradicting any of their findings. The lack of more studies in this area is critical, considering the number of single-sex high schools and colleges that have closed their doors in the past 50 years.

My search found more than 40 reports and studies favoring single-sex schools for either academic achievement or social-emotional advantages. Twenty-four of those studies were from peer-reviewed journals, five were dissertations, and four monographs. There were two (Mael et al., 2005; Marsh, 1989) questioning how tightly such studies controlled for prior ability and SES. Four studies were found contesting the favorable results of single-sex schools over coed in regards to academic achievement. Most of those studies found rather ambiguous results or results minimally favoring single sex-education (Gilson, 1999; Lepore & Warren; 1997; Mael et al., 2005; Marsh, 1989).

In a 2005 meta-analysis of 40 single-sex education studies (Mael et al., 2005) claimed they found mixed results. While 19 of the studies favored single-sex education, 18 studies maintained that single-sex education made no difference, and three studies favored coeducation. The authors concluded that while the preponderance of studies in areas such as academic accomplishment and adaptation, or socio-emotional development, actually favors single-sex schooling, the difference between the two is not significant (Mael et al., 2005). Dr. Leonard Sax (2006b) in a response to the Mael study pointed out the committee's review of studies was neither "exhaustive nor systematic" (p. 1); that a number of scholarly articles on the topic had been left out. Sax also pointed out that the review had given an unpublished study consisting of 200 participants in two schools equal weight to a published study involving "369,341 pupils from 2,954 schools" (p. 1).

In response to Sax, Mael admits that Dr. Sax “raise[s] some very relevant and good points about some potential omissions to the review” (p. 2). It also seems significant that while the authors (Mael et al., 2005) found 19 studies favoring single-sex education, they only found three that favored coed schools.

One study (McEwen & Knipe, 1997) found favorable academic results for coed schools over single-sex, a quantitative study limited to selective grammar schools in Northern Ireland that compared GCSE scores of 1,600 12th year students from 1985 with scores from 1995. The evidence in this study suggested that pupils were more likely to take top-level science courses in coed schools and that boys in particular were more likely to achieve high attainment in coed schools. The authors concluded that there appeared to be no grounds for separating sexes as a means to encourage greater participation by girls in science and that single-sex education conferred no particular intellectual benefits when the contexts of academic results and curricular choices are fully examined (McEwen & Knipe, 1997). This study was limited to science scores for 12th graders in Northern Ireland.

Three other studies, one researching only student self-concept (Marsh, 1988) and a follow up eight years later (Smith, 1996), and another investigating student preferences (Dale, 1976) found in favor of coed schools. Marsh (1988) reports on a study of two single-sex secondary schools, one all-girl and the other all-boy, in Australia that transitioned to coeducational. Although there was an initial drop in self-concept the first year after the transition, for the following four years, self-concept increased and remained higher than it had been for both males and females in the original single-sex schools.

Scores in English and math remained unaffected by the transition and the conclusion, with self-concept taken into account, seemed to favor of coed schooling (Marsh, 1988).

The Marsh report (1988) may have been premature however. At the 10-year mark, while scores and self-concept remained the same at what had been the boys' school achievement levels had dropped off significantly at the school that was originally all girls. The boys' school had changed to an elite coed preparatory school (very possibly contributing to positive scores) after initially transitioning to a coed comprehensive school (Smith, 1996). While self-concept remained higher at what had been the all girls' school, enrollment and achievement dropped off, losing many young ladies to a near-by girls' school (Smith, 1996), testifying to their dissatisfaction with coed classes.

Dale (1976) surveyed student teachers, graduates and students of both coed and single-sex British schools. Especially significant were the surveys of those who had experienced both coed and single-sex education. The rather extensive survey questions asked mostly for preference of education type, attitudes, and discipline as well as SES. No research was done here on academic outcomes of the two types but reported that *academic outcomes alone favored the single-sex school* [italics added] whereas social preference outcomes favored coed. The preference among all surveyed was significantly in favor of coed schools, especially by girls. This is in contrast to much of the more recent research in the U.S. and Australia where girls seem to prefer or experience definite advantages in girls' schools (Lee & Bryk, 1986; Lee & Marks, 1990; Parker & Rennie, 2002).

Dale (1976) reported that girls from single-sex schools found female teachers to be overly fussy and only concerned with academics! Discipline was reported to be stricter in single-sex schools and laxer in coed. The survey also found that women prefer male bosses and a significant number of girls were happier with male teachers than females though the majority reported that it depends on the teacher. This contrasts with the findings of Dee (2006) who found that students seem to perform better and have fewer discipline problems when the teacher was of the same sex. Dale argued, mostly from conjecture that coed schooling is advantageous because it reflects the real world where men and women have to live and work together. This would seem to contradict the findings of Tidball et al. (1999), Wolf-Wendel (1998), and Riordan (1990, 1994) who found that graduates of women's colleges were disproportionately successful in the "real world" based on career achievement and advancement.

As previously stated, few of the studies found addressed the impact of single-sex education on leadership. The lack of such studies and the contradictory nature of those that do exist indicate that further research as to the advantages or disadvantages of single-sex education and its long-term effect on self-efficacy and leadership development is needed. The number of studies and positive results reported from single-sex schools may hold promise for the future of education and those who are most in need of it, especially those studies indicating its empowerment of girls and minorities to overcome certain social-psychological barriers (Lee & Marks, 1990; Riordan, 1990; Tidball et al., 1999) as well as those indicating advantages for students with lower prior achievement (Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Spielhofer, 2002; Younger & Warrington, 2005).

Summary of the Literature Review

This review has attempted to include those studies that have found an association between single-sex education and factors that seem to nurture leadership development. The studies of leaders included in this review (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Locke et al., 1991; Rhodes, 2007) indicate that such factors as competence, confidence, effective communication, vision for the future, perseverance, and willingness to accept challenges are attributes that are common to successful leaders. Therefore this study, for lack of research specifically associating leadership with single-sex education has reviewed literature that indicates an association or correlation between single-sex education and academic or career achievement and success (Riordan, 1990; Tidball et al., 1999; Wolf-Wendel, 1998) as well as studies that that indicate social-emotional advantages associated with both single-sex education (James, 2003; Lee & Marks, 1990; Watson et al., 2002) and attributes of leadership such as competence, confidence, vision for the future, and perseverance. While only one study specifically investigated, and found, a correlation between leadership and single-sex education (Fox, 1993), several studies and indexes indicate an association between people in positions of leadership and attendance at a single-sex institution (Biographies, 2006; Brown, 2000; Eaves, 1999; Global, 2008; Governors, 2008; Kantrowitz, 2007; Phillip, 1993; Rhodes, 2007; Senate, 2008).

The theoretical framework of this review is partially based on Wolf-Wendel's (1998) work on the nature of single-sex institutions. There is some argument that an association between leadership attainment and single-sex education is due to the elite nature of traditional single-sex schools (Maxwell & Maxwell, 1995). To understand if

that indeed is true, this review included studies of single-sex schools serving disadvantaged populations (Agnew-White, 2006; Eaves, 1999; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Phillip, 1993; Riordan, 1994; YWLF, 2008). They all found factors in single-sex education that served to instill attributes of leadership stated above and indicate that the role modeling of peers and staff contributed to the success of the students. Wolf-Wendel (1998) along with Tidball (1999) found a strong correlation between the post-baccalaureate success of the graduates of women's colleges and the number of female faculty members at the given college. This would indicate role modeling as one of the factors that contribute to the success of the graduates. Therefore the theoretical framework of this review also includes the studies of the nature and influence of role modeling on self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997) and on academic and career choices (Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004; Zirkel, 2002).

Although studies were found that indicate no significant differences between single-sex and coed education, very few were found that showed advantages for coeducation. Dale (1976) in a study conducted in England regarding student preferences found that most students preferred coed schools. Dale conceded that purely on academic achievement, single-sex schools had scored better. McEwen and Knipe (1997) in a study conducted in Northern Ireland found that 12th grade boys in coed schools are more likely to score better in science. Marsh (1998), in an Australian study of two schools, found academic and social-emotional advantages for coed schools over single-sex. These studies are in contrast to the many cited above and others such as Parker and Rennie (2002), Spielhofer (2002), and Younger and Warrington (2005) who finds a significant

association between single-sex schools and academic achievement or improved social-emotional development.

This review also includes recent studies of sex-differences (Cahill, 2005, 2004, 2003; Gurian & Stevens, 2005; Gurian et al., 2001; Sax, 2006). Our knowledge of the brain and sex differences is growing at a rapid pace. Information that was not available to us just a decade ago is now increasing our understanding of how we learn. Differences that were previously attributed to socialization are now understood as genetically based (Cahill, 2005; Deak, 2002; Sax, 2006). When Dale (1976) rationalized that coed schools were better suited to the real world he did not have the advantage of brain imaging and genetic mapping that exist today nor the studies of Tidball (1999, 1986, 1985, 1980, 1976). Reports by Cahill (2005, 2004, 2003), Gurian and Stevens (2005), and Sax (2006) indicate that there are very real differences and that environmental factors that are advantageous for one sex are not always advantageous for the other. As we begin to understand more about these differences, we may understand more about either the advantages or disadvantages of single-sex education.

Rationale for this Study

As stated previously, compared to other studies in the field of education such as reading strategies, or disadvantaged students, there is a lack of studies concerning single-sex education. There is especially a lack of studies concerning single-sex education and its impact on leadership development. Considering that the development of leadership skills would provide an advantage for any young person, especially an underprivileged one, this study seeks to provide greater understanding in the area of single-sex education

and how it might help disadvantaged, adolescent boys. It is beyond the scope of this investigation to be a psychological study but it is evident that in order to lead others, to be in control of a situation or in charge of others, one needs to be able to lead one's self, to have a sense of control of situations and of their own life. It is just such a lack of control that puts so many disadvantaged children at risk. Through observations, interviews, focus groups, the collection of school documents, aggregate scores on standardized tests, school brochures and mission statements, and a short survey, this study seeks to understand specific factors of a boys' high school serving underprivileged youth that may provide a locus of control and foster leadership skills. It will seek to sort out those factors that are unique to single-sex education as well as those that it has in common with coeducation to help us understand how we might best educate boys to develop skills and attributes that will provide them with a sense of self-efficacy, a locus of control, the competence and confidence to become effective leaders, positive role models, and productive citizens.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Brief Overview of the Purpose of Study

As stated in Chapters One and Two, there seems to be an unusually strong association between being in a position of leadership and having attended a single sex-school, be it a boys' or girls' high school or a men's or women's college. Only a generation or two ago many of the elite New England prep schools and Ivy League colleges were single-sex (DeBare, 2004). There are claims that high status communities produce both a disproportionate number of people who go to single-sex schools and people in leadership; that it is the influence of the high SES that is truly the mitigating factor and that single-sex education is not a relevant factor (Marsh, 1989; Maxwell & Maxwell, 1995). Historically, most single-sex schools have been religious schools, found as often in working class and immigrant neighborhoods as in wealthy ones (DeBare, 2004; NCEA, 2008). It is unlikely that there is a single factor in leadership development (Jaworski, 1996; Wheatley, 1999) but rather a combination of variables, single-sex education being one possible influence among many. Whether or not coming from a high status background is a significant factor in leadership development is not within the confines of this study. The association between receiving a single-sex education and leadership formation is what is of interest here.

In order to understand the association between leaders and single-sex education I did a case study of an inner-city high school where the student body was entirely African American boys. According to the administration about 65% of the boys come from low-income homes and 60-70% are being raised by a single parent or relatives such as an aunt or grandmother. The reason for doing the study in a boys' high school is because so much has already been done with girls and women (DeBare, 2004; Rhodes, 2007; Streitmatter, 1999; Tidball et al., 1999) and there are so few men's colleges to be found in the U.S.; none within a practical distance. Though the interest of my study is single-sex education in general, having spent 34 years teaching high school Spanish, my area of interest is primarily secondary. The reason for doing the study in an urban setting is because it is where we will readily find a boys' school serving an underprivileged population. As the number of single-sex schools has declined, there are few boys' schools with such a student body outside of the urban centers (Archdiocese, 2008). The reason for doing the study in a school serving an underprivileged minority is to take out the elitism factor, the criticism that the success of single-sex schools in producing a disproportionate representation among career high achievers (Astin, Tsui, & Avalos, 1996; Riordan, 1990; Tidball et al., 1999) is due to the high SES and privileged connections of those who attend (Marsh, 1989; Maxwell & Maxwell, 1995). It will also shed light on Riordan's findings (1990, 1994) that single-sex schools made a positive difference in academic achievement for minority boys but seemed to make no significant difference academically for boys from middle class European American homes.

Research Questions

1. How is leadership defined at this school?
2. How is leadership modeled in this school?
 - a. Who in this high school, either adult or peer, serves as a leadership role model in the school?
 - b. How do these role models impact or influence leadership development?
 - c. To what extent do these role models influence leadership development?
3. To what extent do students and graduates exhibit leadership?
 - a. What evidence is there that graduates from this school attain positions of leadership as defined by this school?
4. What environmental and institutional factors encourage or nurture leadership development?
 - a. What factors in the instructional or curricular structure of this school encourage or nurture leadership development?
 - b. What factors in the extra-curricular structure of this school encourage or nurture leadership development?

Research Design, Including Justification for the Methods

The research design is an instrumental case study of an institution, a boys' high school. Previous quantitative research indicates a strong correlation between such things as attainment to leadership and career success, and graduation from a women's college (Riordan, 1994, 1992; Tidball et al., 1999; Wolf-Wendel, 1998). In a study of 39 Catholic high schools controlled for academic ability and SES, Riordan (1994b, 1990) found that

single-sex education was academically and socio-emotionally advantageous for women and minority boys while Wolf-Wendel's quantitative study concludes that graduation from a women's college is advantageous for minority women in career achievement. Wolf-Wendel in particular calls for a case study follow-up as she asks which institutions and which institutional types graduate the largest proportion of successful women and what institutional factors are associated with their success. This study is a response to that call, in that it is a study of an institutional type and the factors that are associated with its success.

“A case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case” (Stake, 1995, p. xi). In order to understand the factors and complexities associated with the success of a minority boys' school, I needed to do an on the ground qualitative study. I needed to interview and observe what goes on in order to understand what it is about a single-sex school that might nurture leadership achievement and career success. According to Yin (2003), a case study is preferable “when how or why questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context” (p. 1). The questions in this study ask why the single-sex educational experience might be a critical factor in development of leadership potential and how leadership is defined and modeled in the school. Both “why” and “how” questions are being posed here. I had no control over the events that go on in this high school and the focus of my research was on a contemporary phenomenon, single-sex education, within the context of a real-life boys' high school.

Case Selection Process

The purpose of this study was to understand what it is about the single-sex environment of a boys' high school that might contribute to the leadership development of its graduates. Placing the study in a school and community that is underprivileged eliminated the element of socio economic status or privilege as a factor in the leadership development. There were a handful of boys' schools in the city that served primarily African Americans. I spoke to the principals of three of those schools about doing a case study in their school. One of the schools was yet have its first graduating class and so had not yet established a tradition of leadership formation although they aspired to it according to the principal (Personal conversation with principal, 2007). The second, principal of a school that has a long history in the city, said that he had too much going on in the school right then and they wouldn't be able to help me. His school had undergone a somewhat difficult transition as it changed with the neighborhood. Whereas it once served primarily the Irish and Eastern European Catholic boys from the south side of the city, it now served African American non-Catholics. The third principal I spoke to had served an all-boys' Catholic high school that since its inception in the 1950s had served primarily African American boys. This principal was interested in my project and invited me to the school to discuss my research. He was particularly interested in developing a mutually beneficial relationship with the university. His hope was that the university might provide staff development opportunities for the faculty while the school might serve as a teaching laboratory for education students.

Description of Case, Including How the Case and Context are Bounded

The school is set in the south side of the city in an area that has long been African American, going back before WWII. It is of the Franciscan tradition, an order known more for its work with the poor than with education unlike the Jesuits, Dominicans, or Christian Brothers, who founded most of the city's Catholic high schools for boys. Many of the high schools founded by those orders have become coed in the past 30 years. Since its inception the case school's purpose has been to serve the African American community and so has never served a diverse population nor experienced the throws of racial change. The school is committed to college preparatory education, and the Franciscan traditions of spirituality and service to the poor while reflecting pride in the African American context of the school (Assisi Franciscan, 2007).

I first became familiar with the case when I did a pilot study there for my advanced qualitative research class. I drove into the city to make my first visit and as I turned off the expressway and headed east toward the school I was struck by the number of signs of urban blight that I saw. Boarded up buildings and abandoned storefronts dotted the street. The buildings and stores that were in business, unisex hair salons, pawn shops, laundromats and others all had iron grates over the doors and windows or roll down metal doors poised to cover the storefront at closing time. As I came into the neighborhood surrounding the school, I saw a few more signs of prosperity; an impressive new cultural center on a broad boulevard and brighter shinier businesses dotted the landscape. There were some newer buildings and proud older ones here and there, a McDonalds and a Popeye's Chicken along with a few other more prosperous

looking businesses were evident. Signs of urban blight had not totally disappeared however.

As I turned south toward the campus I noted that the neighborhood was marked by impressive old stone three-flats as well as some large new government subsidized, senior housing, apartment buildings. Unfortunately many of the stone three-flats were boarded up and iron bars over the doors and lower story windows marked those that weren't. As one looks east of the campus the buildings seem to be nicer. An inviting little park with a playground sits kitty corner from the school. Drexel Avenue, a beautiful, unusually broad boulevard with stately old buildings lies a block east of the school. Lake Michigan and its adorning lakefront parks lie less than two miles east. The campus seems sandwiched by urban blight and despair to the west and cosmopolitan beauty and hope to the east.

The campus itself seems open and spacious compared to the crowded nature of the surrounding neighborhood but probably a little tight for the variety of high school sports teams that most high schools aspire to have at all levels. The building is a standard rectangular box, four stories of efficient sameness, flat and unadorned like so many school buildings built since the 50s. The windows of the first two stories facing the street were covered with chain link fence, just one more reminder that all is not safe in this neighborhood. The interior seems spacious with wide marble hallways, nice high ceilings and good, natural lighting at both ends of the corridor. Underneath the fresh off-white paint the walls seem tired and the rows of brightly painted green lockers were dotted with aged and damaged sections that needed to be replaced.

The central office was a busy place, staffed by two secretaries sitting under a wide bank of windows. Other staff members came and went out of different doors to my left. The customary long counter separated the staff from those who entered. The carpet was threadbare and in need of replacement. The walls and windows cried for updating. Significant remodeling was to be done that spring and summer thanks to the very generous donation of a well-known professional athlete, commercial benefactors and others.

The principal's office where I did some interviewing evidenced a very busy man who was running hard to keep up with all of the demands placed upon him. The past two years he had served not only as principal but also as president and chief operating officer of the school. Boxes of school shirts and left over physics lab equipment crowded the office. On the opposite wall was a framed magazine cover with a portrait photo of the principal. Sundry papers, books, and other requisite academic and administrative paraphernalia abounded in the room. As would seem to befit an all African American boys school, the new president, the principal, assistant principal, business manager, dean, admissions counselor, and part-time athletic director were all African American men. The full-time social work counselor, the half-time college counselor, and the part-time after school social work counselor are likewise African American men. The clerical staff and director of development are African American women. Sixteen of the 20 faculty members were African American, 13 men and 3 women. The rest of the faculty was European American, 2 men and 2 women.

The school is an accredited college preparatory school with most of the honors and college prep classes found in a typical suburban high school: four years of English and math ranging from freshmen algebra to Calculus, three years of science including biology, chemistry and physics, three and a-half years of social studies including African American History and American Government, three years of Spanish and four years of religion. Only two semesters of PE are required but most of the boys are involved in after-school athletics and many can be found in the gym after school playing basketball when not out for a sport. There are no tech classes other than computer science and no fine arts offered other than music (music appreciation, chorus and drum-line, which the boys love), and communication arts. Until recently the school offered three Advanced Placement courses but the principal says that the students were not taking the test and he saw no value in continuing to offer AP classes. The school is in the process of transitioning to the International Baccalaureate program for the 2009-2010 school year. During junior and senior year the boys are in class seven of eight periods each day with a full academic schedule six of the seven periods.

Due to the enrollment of just under 150 (49 freshmen, 34 sophomores, 30 juniors and 32 seniors) the school could offer only a limited number of extra curricular activities. There were two levels of football and one soccer team. Those two activities alone included over 100 boys. Three levels of basketball plus baseball, track, cross country, wrestling, and bowling rounded out the athletic department. Academic Decathlon, Chess club, national Honor Society, Robotics, service clubs, student newspaper, yearbook,

chorus, and drumming were typical after school activities. There was also an active student council.

The student teacher ratio at the school was 16:1. The mean ACT score was 18.3. The mean ACT score for City Public Schools was 17.7. The mean ACT score for the sub-region in which the school is located was 16.8. ACT scores for some of the public schools in adjoining neighborhoods were lower than 15 (Interactive Illinois report card, 2009). The principal described the school as a third-tier school in the Catholic school system, that is it would usually be the third choice for a student after the more prestigious Catholic schools or traditional athletic power houses in the system (interview with Principal) yet the school counts many graduates who have gone on to prestigious careers in medicine, law, and business. Among its graduates in its 47-year history it has a mayor, a superintendent of a big city police department, a fire chief, attorneys, including the first African American President of the Chicago Bar Association, judges, physicians, television broadcasters, engineers and entrepreneurs of all kinds. One-third of the boys tended to make honor roll. Only about 10% had less than a 2.0 out of 4.0 grade point average, the lowest was a 1.7 (Interview with college counselor). By comparison in Chicago Public Schools 56% of African American boys graduate with a GPA of less than 2.0 (Harms, 2006). Since 1996, 100% of the Assisi graduates have been accepted to colleges ranging from junior colleges to top tier universities such as Yale and the University of Chicago (Assisi Franciscan, 2009). Thirty of 31 graduates of the class of 2009 went on to college, from four-year to junior colleges, to several on to top

universities and colleges such as The University of Illinois, USC, Bowdoin, and Morehouse (Interview with college counselor).

There is no exact figure on the number of boys being raised by single parents but most of the faculty and administrators agree that it is between 60 and 70% (interviews with faculty and administrators). Several of the boys among that number are being raised by fathers, grandmothers, or aunts. According to the college counselor about 65% of the boys come from low-income homes, 25% from middle-class homes and about 10% from upper middle-class homes. About 20% of the boys enter designated as at-risk due to being significantly behind grade level in reading and math. The average at-risk student is reading at the fifth grade level when he enters at the beginning of freshman year. Within two years almost all are at-level. The teacher attributes this to the hard work of the staff (interview with faculty member).

Generally about half to two-thirds of those who start as freshmen transfer out before senior year, most due to finances but many because they don't want to accept the discipline or structure of a single-sex Catholic school. The decreasing enrollment at Assisi parallels a national trend. Over the past 30 years, numerous single-sex Catholic schools have either simply closed, or have joined together with the local opposite-sex Catholic school to form one coed school out of two single-sex ones (NCEA, 2008). About 10% of each class is dismissed for discipline reasons. Almost none are dismissed for academic failure. The school provides special education support for students with learning disabilities and those who are failing are required to attend evening classes or summer school to make up the deficiency. Several students have been pulled out by

parents in the past few years due to the instability of recent administrations. In the ten years before the current principal received his position, the school had gone through ten different principals. That situation seems to have been rectified as the current principal is beginning his third year and has no plans of leaving in the near future (Interview with college counselor).

The case is bounded to the school and especially those elements that are unique to leadership formation and its single-sex nature. I looked for those elements that tended either to nurture or discourage leadership development, especially those that are unique to a single-sex environment. I also looked for those elements that might inhibit success in an adult world requiring cooperation between the sexes. I interviewed administrators and faculty members. I also interviewed students, parents, and alumni. In order to better understand the school I interviewed a broad spectrum of students, those who had experienced little success such as underclassmen receiving special services for learning disabilities, as well as leaders from the senior class who had experienced much success.

Data Generation Tools

Included in the appendices are six data generation tools; four interview protocols (see Appendices A-D), one each for students, parents, faculty, and alumni, an observation protocol, and a student survey. The interview protocols purposely avoid asking questions regarding leadership development. I believed it would be important to see if the students or alumni initiated the topic to understand if it was an important element in the culture of the school. The survey focuses generally on the students' perceptions of single-sex education: Why they chose it, what their perceptions of it were as well as the perceptions

of friends who did not chose it, how it affected them in regard to relationships with the same-sex as well as the opposite, and how it influenced their academic and career choices. I developed the interview questions with the goal of understanding the nature of the single-sex culture at Assisi and to find if, and where leadership development arises in the single-sex environment. The interview protocol consists of 25 questions and is guided rather than entirely open ended. This was not to lead or look for specific answers but rather to have plenty of prompts for teenage boys to respond to. Thirty-four years of teaching high school, growing up with five brothers, and raising two sons have taught me that adolescent boys' reputation for reticence is fairly earned.

The observation protocol (see Appendix E) was developed from notes and ideas taught in my first qualitative research class as well as ideas from Elliot Eisner (2002). Part 1 of the protocol calls for a physical description of the school and community. As I observed, I sought to render "thick description" (Stake, 1995, p. 39) of both the school and its context, the surrounding community. Part 2 of the protocol is for class observations. To understand the class it needs to be described in its physical as well as emotional and cognitive context. The protocol provides for description of the room setting and decor as well as participant interactions. It also provides a list of some of the qualities of leadership that might be observed. I will be looking for signs of intellectual tenacity, response to challenges, and other elements that might contribute to leadership development such as commitment, effective communication, confidence, creative inspiration, and vision (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Locke et al., 1991; Rhodes, 2007).

The protocol also calls for observation of the explicit, implicit, and null curriculums observed in the school and classes (Eisner, 2002). Although the choice to be a single-sex school is an explicit choice and an evident part of the curriculum, I hoped to understand if and how a curriculum designed for African American boys was formulated and taught. I also hoped to find out what is implied by being a single-sex school. What does it imply to exclude the opposite sex? What curricular and instructional choices are made when only boys are taught and girls are not included? I also intended to identify the null curriculum, what is not taught in a boys' school. What is excluded from the curriculum when the girls are? How might the implied and null curriculums of this school nurture or inhibit leadership development? Last of all the protocol provides for general classroom observation with timed sweeps of the class to observe specific behaviors that may help identify patterns or behaviors that will aid my understanding of the all boys' classroom and school culture.

The third tool for data generation is a student leadership survey (see Appendix F1) that seeks to identify those elements that influence leadership development at the school. I developed the survey based on typical high school experiences that provide opportunities for leadership development such as participation in clubs and athletics as well as academic and socio-emotional formation using 17 Likert items scaled from 0 to 3. Zero indicates that in the student's opinion the activity had no influence on his leadership development. A score of 3 indicates that he believes the identified activity definitely contributed to his leadership development. The students were asked to identify specific activities or experiences in the school that contributed to their own leadership

development. This anonymous survey gave a voice to the upper classmen who were not interviewed and helped validate the findings of the interviews and observations. The use of the survey was not intended to make the study a mixed-method but rather aid in triangulation of the data and add to the understanding that we seek from this case study.

Procedures for Doing Data Generation

My role as a researcher was that of an observer and interviewer. I was present at the school on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from early morning to late afternoon for three consecutive weeks during the spring of the second semester. I also attended the graduation mass and ceremony the last Saturday of that period. Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays were used to cull and organize material, tie up loose ends from the previous day, and journal and analyze while observations were still fresh in my mind. I observed everything from early morning arrival to after school clubs and athletics. My major source of data generation was interviews (see Appendices A-D). I interviewed administrators, faculty members, students, parents, and alumni. In the case of students, parents, and alumni, I conducted focus groups, three with students, one with parents and one with a group of alumni. I also conducted a limited number of individual interviews with students, parents and alumni who were not able to attend the focus group sessions. The purpose was to conduct interviews with a range of participants, those who represented the main stream of the student body as well as those who were considered leaders of the student body. Being on site allowed me opportunity to conduct interviews with the students and faculty. I was able to interview faculty members and administrators

who have taught at the school for some time ranging from teachers who have been at the school just a few years to the Franciscan priest who has taught there for 45 years.

The major part of my time at the school was spent observing student life and classes (see Appendix E), looking for examples of leadership development, repression of leadership potential, and data that validated information gleaned from the interviews. Interviews with faculty members and administrators were conducted during their free time at their convenience. Interviews with students were held after school. Interviews with alumni and parents were at their convenience. Much insight was gleaned from informal chats during the day as well as formal interviews. I also returned for interviews with alumni and parents and an administrator on a few occasions over the summer.

Partially through focus groups and partially through individual interviews, I was able to interview 20 students, six faculty members and two administrators, six parents, and seven alumni. I attempted to gather data making sure to include all sides of the issue regarding the merits or demerits of attending a boys' school. Participants were recruited and selected by the school counselor. I informed him that I hoped to interview a group of proven leaders who had experienced all that the school has to offer and one group of students who had experienced less success, from both the top and the bottom of the totem pole. We set up three focus group sessions, one with senior leaders, one with a mixed group of junior boys, some leaders and some more representative of the average student, and one with a group of sophomores and freshmen who were receiving special service for diagnosed learning disabilities and were ranked in the bottom half of their class grade wise. The school counselor also set up the faculty and parent interviews selecting faculty

members who had the most experience in the school. Seven parents were called and invited to a focus group after school. Only two came. I went looking for a teacher who I knew was a mother of one of the students and she was kind enough to join us. I individually interviewed another faculty member who also has a son at the school, a father who was waiting around for his son to finish playing basketball after school, and a mother of a recent graduate who had come to pick up groceries for a Saturday morning market day. The alumni were selected from members of the alumni association who were willing to hang around for an extra hour on a Saturday morning after the association meeting. They represented graduates from the classes of 1962 through 1998.

Field notes and interviews were recorded by hand on the protocol sheets as I did the observations and conducted individual interviews. The field notes were revised and written up the following morning. I recorded the focus groups electronically and made transcriptions. According to Stake (1995), "Getting the exact words of the respondent is usually not very important, it is what they mean that is important." (p. 67). I was able to check back with the faculty, three of the parents, and all of the alumni to verify that I had correctly understood the intent of their responses. Because school ended as I finished my research I was not able to check back with some of the parents and students as they had dispersed all over the city. I was not able to check back with those students and parents because according to policy the school does not give out private student information such as phone numbers and addresses to third parties. In addition to field notes I kept a journal for summation and reflection at the end of each day of observation. Journaling helped me step back and look at each day with a clearer perspective. Daily observations and

interviews are akin to collecting sundry pieces of a puzzle and connecting a few here and there. Journaling helped me see patterns and connections between the varied events of the day. It also helped me connect the experiences from week to week. Reviewing my journal entries before I began a new observation at a later date helped refresh my memory and give me a clearer context with which to begin my next round of observations and interviews.

At the end of the semester after I completed my interviews, 23 of 30 juniors and 30 of 31 seniors filled out the leadership development survey. I did this at the end of the study rather than the beginning so that the students would not take part in the interviews concerned that I was looking for factors that contribute to leadership development. I feared that if I introduced that theme at the beginning of the study it would lead students to give me what I was looking for rather than what they truly thought. The survey was administered to junior and senior students, upperclassmen who have had enough experience at the school to deal knowledgeably with the topic. The English teachers administered the surveys to whoever was present on the appointed day. The intent was for the survey to be a population study rather than a random sample. I also decided to give the survey to sophomores to see how their opinions might differ from upper classmen. Feeling that he did not have adequate class time to survey all of the students in the final days of the semester, the Sophomore English teacher simply gave it out to a handful of boys (10) who had finished an in-class assignment early. The surveys were returned to me for tabulation.

Ensuring Validity

I validated the data through multi-triangulation. First I triangulated my data by interviewing a variety of stakeholders such as parents, students, faculty, and alumni. The interviews revealed patterns that are distinct or unique to each group as well as perspectives that are common to all. I sought out both positive and negative perspectives among the groups to allow for greater understanding from both sides of the issue. I sought to understand what individual or family factors influenced the choice to attend a Catholic boys' high school and whether the reasons for the decision had been confirmed over time. I also sought to understand experiences and memories that were important to the students. To ensure greater validity, I attempted to describe the results of the interviews using the language of the participants, describing the experiences as much as possible through their senses and personal perspectives. In many cases, especially among the students, the language was almost dialect, using idioms and vocabulary unique to certain sub-cultures. To avoid confusion or embarrassment to the individual I transcribed the words in Standard English. While my perspective as a white, middle-class, cultural outsider limited my understanding of the lived experiences of the participants, it allowed me to interpret data and contribute to understanding from the perspective of one who had 60 years of experience in the broader world and who might be able to interpret the data from a much broader perspective. Considering my limited experience in the culture I also sought a cultural insider with long experience in the school to help me understand and interpret the data more effectively. The Franciscan priest who had spent 45 years at the school and some of the teachers were very helpful in this.

Secondly I triangulated my data by collecting school publications such as the school mission statement, values statement, case statement, and history as well as demographic information regarding student SES. I attempted to better understand the school and students by investigating the schools academic status in aggregate form through results on a standardized test, the ACT exam, the percentage of students continuing on to four-year colleges and universities, and North Central accreditation reports. I also collected school documents and artifacts such as classroom handouts, the school mission statements, brochures, and pamphlets including a history of the school from which I was able to glean data. I triangulated this data with the results of the interviews and observations. My hope was that the kinds of tests and information provided on class handouts and assignments would validate the school mission, to see if the aggregate scores on standardized tests and the number of students going on to four-year colleges and universities would provide evidence that the school is accomplishing its mission as a college preparatory school, and that these in turn validated the students' reasons for choosing to attend this school, and their opinions of it.

Thirdly I triangulated the interviews and records with observations of school activities and classes to understand if they in turn would confirm what I heard in the interviews and saw in the artifacts mentioned above. The purpose was to see if the classroom activities and instruction lined up with the school mission statement and opinions expressed by the alumni and parents. The student survey serves as another form of triangulation, checking to see if the results of the survey confirm the results of the interviews and focus groups as well as the information gleaned from artifacts. I also

attempted to validate the interviews through participant feedback, checking back with several of the interviewees to clarify statements made and had them read the interview notes to verify their responses.

Data Analysis

Regarding data analysis in a case study, Stake (1995) passes on excellent analyses advice from Harry Wolcott:

The critical task in qualitative research is not to accumulate all the data you can, but to “can” (i.e., get rid of) most of the data you accumulate. ... Because we can accommodate ever-increasing quantities of data – mountains of it – we have to be careful no to get buried by avalanches of our own making” (as cited in Stake, 1995, p. 84).

Having mountains of evidence as predicted, after an initial pass through my data I attempted to set aside whatever did not seem pertinent to the study. As Stake (1995) says, “It is important to spend the best analytic time on the best data” (p. 84). As I have four research questions I culled the data for instances that help inform my questions, whether affirmatively or negatively. I coded each bit of information for which research question it pertained to and compiled the information accordingly.

After culling the data for what was most pertinent, I followed Stake’s (1995) procedures for data analysis; “categorical aggregation and direct interpretation” (p. 74), “correspondence and patterns” (p. 78), and “naturalistic generalization” (p. 85). I first analyzed through direct interpretations those instances that spoke to my questions. There were a number of instances that spoke for themselves; instances that stood out on their own and served as examples of the culture of a boys’ school and its impact on leadership formation. Secondly as I looked at those specific instances I began to see an aggregate

picture. Much as a composite of test scores will give me an average or a range for a class, composite instances and events added up to a broader picture of the school that could be seen in an aggregate form, a larger picture. Looking at the aggregate, I began to notice specific parts that stood out alone and spoke for themselves just as one character or item in a work of art might stand out from the others around it.

Having culled the data for specific instances of interest, I began to see patterns of behavior or instruction that were meaningful to my quest. This is an instrumental case study, one intended for the purpose of understanding the influence of single-sex education on leadership development in a boys' high school. As I interviewed and observed, I began to hear or see certain things repeated many times, stories of a certain coach, class, or ritual that were influential in developing the boys leadership skills. Such repetitions formed meaningful patterns that aided in understanding the culture of the school. I then looked for patterns that corresponded to other patterns. Patterns and the correspondence between them gave shape and structure to the study. The last element of qualitative analysis is what Stake (1995) calls "naturalistic interpretation" (p. 84). As instances and events in the case are described and related, the reader forms interpretations and conclusions about a boys' school and its influence on leadership development based on personal life experiences. One who attended a single-sex high school may understand events described in a different light than one who has never set foot in such a school. My quest is to describe the events and incidents in the school so that the conclusions drawn will be natural. It was necessary as stated before to maintain the amount of data analyzed and interpreted to a realistic amount. Therefore I needed to describe those events and

observations that best represented the school and its influence on leadership development rather than try to describe all that went on in the school.

The survey was intended purely to triangulate the data collected from the interviews, observations and school documents. Part 1 of the survey consists of five questions that ask whether or not the school was influential in helping the student develop qualities that are identified as attributes of leadership (see Appendix F1). Using a Likert scale of 0 to 3, it asks the student to what degree he agrees or disagrees. Part 2 of the survey consists of 13 items asking which elements or activities of the school were influential in the student's leadership development, again using a Likert scale of 0 to 3. I categorized those elements of the school that the students identified as influential in their leadership development from most to least influential. It is a rather simple analysis using a breakdown of most influential to least, yet another channel for the students' voice to help triangulate the qualitative findings and interpretations (see Appendix F2).

Description of the Final Report—

Plan for the Organization and Format of the Final Report

As I looked at the results of my study I saw that research question II, *-How is leadership modeled at Assisi*, really worked best as a subset of question IV, *-What environmental or Institutional factors encourage or nurture leadership development*, leadership modeling being one of the institutional factors that encourage and nurture its development. I organized the results of the study around the research questions focusing mainly on my findings in three key areas: How leadership is defined at Assisi, the

institutional factors that encourage and nurture it, and the extent to which it is exhibited by students and alumni both in and beyond the school.

With help from Stake's (1995) suggested format: 1.) I open each section with a "short vignette" (p. 123) that hopefully arouses interest in the theme. 2.) I identify the issue; how it informs the given question, and explains what methods I used to explore the issue. 3.) I use thick description of events that respond to each issue as seen both through my eyes and the eyes and words of the interviewees. 4.) At this point I refer to any pertinent research from the literature that will help inform the issue. 5.) I then explain how I have validated the data through triangulation and take into account the data that may be contrary to my findings. 6.) I summarize what I believe to be true about the case and the "level of confidence" (p. 123) that I have about my findings. 7.) I close with a vignette that exemplifies my findings regarding the issue.

Strengths and Limitations of the Study

Being a beginning researcher, I sense that this study will not be to the research world what Raphael's masterpieces are to the art world. Nevertheless I trust that it will have some strengths. The first strength lies in the case. The school is one that lends itself well to the study of single-sex education and its possible influence on leadership development because of its uniqueness. Serving an underprivileged segment of the population, it should cut out the elitism factor, the charge that leadership is easy to inculcate in students who come from homes of privilege; whose parents are high achievers and leaders in their own right. Secondly the case is a good example of a traditional boys' school because the faculty is overwhelmingly male. As more and more

single-sex schools have become coed, so have the faculties of boys' schools become more and more feminine. At the same time that educational costs have risen, the number of priests and religious brothers who traditionally taught in the boys' school has diminished. Female faculty members have replaced them for a variety of reasons that are not within the scope of this study (unpublished interviews with two principals of boys' Catholic high schools, 2007, 2008). Nevertheless the presence of a large number of female teachers dilutes the single-sex nature of such schools. This school maintains a very strong majority of male teachers and administrators enhancing the single-sex nature of the environment.

A qualitative case study adds to the strength of this investigation as it allows me to study the school in depth. It goes beyond just interviews or test data interpretation and adds observation of all facets of the school. This study also triangulates the qualitative findings with the survey that will confirm or reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the qualitative findings. Hopefully, the findings won't lie. The study also went beyond the statistics and plum the humanity of the school as a broad range of students, faculty, parents, and alumni are interviewed. Such a broad range of interviewees along with the observations, document verification and all school survey provided multi-triangulation and validation.

The limitations of this study are that it is a study of only one school. If we had the time and resources it would be wonderful to replicate this study in a number of schools of all sorts; to understand how leadership is encouraged and developed in schools of all kinds: boys' schools of all classes, religious and secular, girls' schools and coed schools

of all kinds. This case represents a limited focus, that of one urban, African American, boys' high school. Another limitation of this case is that it may not be able to tell us what percentage of these grads actually attains leadership positions after graduation. One of the greatest limitations of this study is that it does not include interviews with a greater number of alumni nor does it include any interviews with students who left Assisi before graduation. Although the school reported that the majority of students who transfer out do so because of finances, we have no way of knowing if those who left graduated from high school or joined the ranks of the drop-outs. It would be helpful to know more about why students leave from the perspective of those who have done so.

This case is also difficult in that its strength, an in-depth look at one school, may also be its weakness, an absence of perspective of similar schools. Considering that the vast majority of the students in this school come from an underprivileged background, they are already starting behind on the road to leadership. Will a lack of leadership development be due to the education format, or the socioeconomic status of the homes the boys come from? On the other hand if there is strong leadership development among these students it will be evident that it is not due to a head start from a privileged background. As stated previously, the variables in leadership development are numerous. This study focuses on only one of those variables. Another limitation of the study is the researcher's limited experience in an inner city African American culture.

As an Anglo-Saxon suburbanite, the researcher may not always understand the intentions or interpretations of the students and their actions. As objective as I will attempt to be, the cultural divide between myself, and the students will force me to

interpret observations and interviews through the limited lenses of an outsider, an outsider who is under the impression that single-sex education has a positive impact on leadership development based on observations, discussions and readings I have done since beginning this course of study. It is my intent to temper that impression by being as open and objective as possible. Hopefully, as I include the perspectives and insights of the students, parents, and alumni of the school, their words will speak for themselves and the readers will be able to draw their own objective conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The mission of Assisi Franciscan High School is to produce leaders who embrace academic excellence and embody wisdom, character, and moral values. The goal of Assisi is to develop young men consistent with the school's motto *In Virum Perfectum*, i.e., "Unto Perfect Manhood." This goal is accomplished by providing a competitive college preparatory education and character-building program in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions (Assisi, 2009, Mission Statement, see Appendix M).

It may be important here to clarify that while the *goal* and the *mission* of Assisi are in harmony, they are not the same. The mission of Assisi "is to produce leaders who embrace academic excellence and embody wisdom, character, and moral values" (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 4, see Appendix M). "The goal of Assisi is to develop young men consistent with the school's motto ... "Unto Perfect Manhood" (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 4). While the *mission* is to produce leaders, the *goal* is to produce a certain kind of man, one that is more than simply a leader, one that embodies the qualities of "Unto Perfect Manhood." While the two are interrelated and intertwined, they are not the same. As I read through the one page School Profile (Assisi, 2009) the mission of developing leaders was mentioned six separate times. The goal of *Unto Perfect Manhood* was mentioned once. Nevertheless as I walked the halls and interviewed stakeholders, I consistently heard *Unto Perfect Manhood* mentioned in conjunction with leadership. In this document I have attempted to define those qualities of leadership that are consistent with the literature on leadership (see Appendix K) and are part of my theoretical

framework. While many of the qualities of *Unto Perfect Manhood* are consistent with the qualities of leadership found in the literature, it is not limited to those qualities. Many fine qualities may contribute to the success of a leader that are not in themselves attributes of leadership. As this is an instrumental study intended to research leadership formation at Assisi, it will focus on the data as it is attributed to leadership formation; recognizing that one of the strongest forces driving that formation is the school's goal to bring young men *Unto Perfect Manhood*.

We understand that an institution's stated mission isn't always an experienced reality within the institution. I taught in a school for several years where a significant portion of the students didn't even know the school had a mission statement much less what it said. As I searched documents, observed classes, interviewed stakeholders, and surveyed students at Assisi, I found significant data to indicate that leadership formation is both intentionally and unintentionally a part of the daily life of the school.

How is Leadership Defined at this School?

Leadership is the ability to speak to others and encourage them to better themselves. A leader won't look down on others. He leads by example. The seniors here take the freshmen aside respectfully and speak to them when they are out of line. They might tell them to tighten up their tie or keep their shirt tucked in, things like that (interview with Sc).

When we attempt to understand how an institution defines a certain term there is bound to be a certain amount of subjectivity and differences of opinion among the various stakeholders. What may have seemed a clear act of leadership to a senior boy might have been considered harassment by a freshman. Not all stakeholders placed the same value on the different attributes mentioned here but my interviews and observations

indicate that the majority among each group of stakeholders agrees that the qualities used to define leadership here are qualities that are important to the school. As I attempted to understand how leadership is defined at Assisi I found a variety of reoccurring interpretations, most of them being variations of distinct themes, none of them conflicting. The theme that seemed to overarch all the rest was leadership as *Unto Perfect Manhood*.

“Unto Perfect Manhood” is the school motto and seems to embody all the other qualities of leadership and manhood as defined by the school literature and stakeholders: leadership as service, leadership as being a man of strong character and moral values, leadership as perseverance, as academic and career success, as wisdom and foresight. Some of the themes such as service and being a man of strong character and moral values reoccurred constantly. Others such as wisdom and career success wove in and out, reoccurring only now and then; but often enough or succinctly enough to understand that they are considered by many stakeholders to be the mark of a leader.

Definition 1: Leadership and Unto Perfect Manhood

“Unto Perfect Manhood”... doesn’t necessarily mean that one has to be an eminent leader over multitudes. The goal of “perfect manhood” is one who is a leader in his family and community, one who works every day to take responsibility for his actions, who strives to be the best that he can be (Interview with Assisi administrator).

Every student and parent that I spoke with knew the school motto, “Unto Perfect Manhood.” It adorns the front of the school brochure, the main entrance lobby and several other places around the school. Both students and adults quoted it many times during interviews and conversations with me. It is taken from the Apostle Paul’s letter to

the Ephesians in which he explains that God has set leaders in different positions of authority over the church for the purpose of building up the believers and doing the work of the church, “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, *unto a perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (as cited in Zacharia, 2006, p. 1). The passage seems to indicate that to be a perfect man, to experience perfect manhood, is to be like Christ, considered by millions to be one of the most influential leaders of all time, no small task. A history of the school states that, “Success at Assisi meant fulfilling the school’s mission of achieving manhood” (p. 35).

While Christ is the model, the expectations of *unto perfect manhood* are not unrealistic at Assisi. It would be good to remember that while the word *perfect* suggests completion, *unto* suggests only direction toward rather than arrival. The motto suggests that the successful Assisi graduate is one who continues to move toward the goal of perfect manhood rather than one who has arrived. From the philosophy of the Franciscans who founded the school we learn that success at the school, “unto perfect manhood” was not counted by the number of graduates who became successful professionals but by the number that became good family men and contributors to the community. Perfect manhood meant being a man of character, of strong moral values (Zacharia, 2006).

The theme of manhood and developing men is replete throughout the school. At the main entrance to the gymnasium, one of the most public and well-known places in this school that attributes great importance to athletics, is prominently displayed *The African American Manhood Pledge* (anonymous; see Appendix L). It offers a glimpse into the culture of the school and what it believes *unto perfect manhood* to be. The pledge

consists of a vow to be righteous, religious, respectful, responsible, redeemed, restrained from wrongful behavior, and living in the rhythm of oneness with the environment and universe. The pledge closes with the thought that those who take the pledge are men of destiny who will take their people to the shores of victory. The pledge, displayed boldly on an oversized poster, sat prominently between two large posters; one of Jesus Christ, the *perfect man* alluded to in the Assisi motto, and another with photos of eminent African American men such as Martin Luther King and General Colin Powell. Across the hall, facing the gymnasium entrance was a display case with a portrait photo and write-up of Donald Hubert, a school alumnus and the first African American president of the Chicago Bar Association. It was evident that these were the models of *perfect manhood* the students were to move *unto*.

While *unto perfect manhood* is closely related with leadership at Assisi, like leadership it suffers from a variety of interpretations. While the interpretations differ, none of them seem to conflict. I observed an English class where the students recited and discussed a poem, *The Man in the Glass* (anonymous). In the poem, to be a true man means to be a man of character who is honest with one's self. An Assisi freshman declared, "I came to Assisi because I think this is the school in which to *become a man*, to prepare myself for the coming battle with life" (Zacharia, 2006, p. 24, italics added).

During interviews I heard a number of variations on the school motto, which pieced together, give us a larger sense of what "unto perfect manhood" means to the various stakeholders at Assisi. A senior speaking of what leadership means at the school said, "Our school model is *Unto Perfect Manhood*. To be a leader means to be successful,

to have a career or business and a family” (interview with S1). One of the coaches, speaking of the qualities that are developed at Assisi, the qualities of *unto perfect manhood*, said that it means to have “pride... a sense of family, relationships.” A mother stated that she expects Assisi to make a man out of her son putting special emphasis on the word *man*. She explained that to her it meant having goals and expectations. Another mother, who is also a faculty member, defined *Unto Perfect Manhood* as, “The quality of being a godly man who will reach down and help others without ridiculing.”

The idea of “unto Perfect Manhood” embodies and overarches all other aspects of leadership and manhood at Assisi. *Unto perfect manhood* is an idea comprised of many different elements but essentially means moving toward completeness, of bringing all of the parts together into one. The idea itself is of such singular importance to the school that it has to stand as a singular element of the definition of leadership at Assisi encompassing all the elements of leadership and manhood at the school; the leader or perfect man is one who serves his family and community, has character and moral values, succeeds through perseverance, and embodies wisdom and foresight. Summing up what the idea of perfect manhood means to the school, a well-known member of the board of directors states, “The motto “Unto Perfect Manhood” is really what it is *all* about” (Assisi, 2007, Video, italics added).

Definition 2: Leadership as Service

My first encounter with the school's philosophy of leadership was at a preliminary meeting with the faculty in the small school library. As I discussed my plans for an instrumental case study looking for factors in the school that might encourage leadership formation, the lone remaining Franciscan priest, who has been teaching at the school for 45 years, nearly since its inception in 1962 and 35 years longer than any of the current faculty, remarked that they didn't really focus much on leadership there, that their main focus was on service. I can almost hear Greenleaf (1977), one of the founders of the modern servant-leadership movement, exclaim *Yes*, with an enthusiastic fist pump as I recall his precept that the true servant-leader chooses to be a servant first.

The school values statement (see Appendix M) declares that,

[The] School is committed to a rigorous program of ... community *service* ... instilling the Gospel of Faith, Justice, Spiritual Discipline, and Respect for others, which form the foundation for *leadership through service*; ... for students to grow in self-worth, self-discipline, and *service*... addressing the needs of *under-served* communities (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 5, italics added).

The School Case Statement (see Appendix M) declares that the school is “dedicated to the Franciscan tradition ... to develop ... confident *leaders* in the community... committed to social justice” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 6, italics added). A well-known alumnus adds, “Your success means that you have an obligation ... to reach out and help others” (Assisi, 2007, Video).

Assisi is a Franciscan school, founded by a Catholic order whose tradition of service is based on the Christ's admonition to a young man, "If you wish to be *perfect*, go, sell what you have and give to (the) poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then

come, follow me” (Matt. 19:21, NAB, italics added; Oliger, 1909). When we talked about leadership at Assisi, service, or elements of a servant attitude came up more than any other as a mark of leadership. When coding for service in my notes, I also included those elements that would mark a servant-leader as described by Greenleaf (1977) or that were equated with service in the school’s mission, values, or case statement. I included under servant-leader such nurturing traits as respect, compassion, caring, and encouraging, along with the school’s expectation of a leader’s commitment to social justice. A commitment to social justice would require service on its behalf.

Evidence that the school considers service as one of the prime attributes of leadership goes beyond its values statements. Service is a part of the curriculum of the school. Community service is required for graduation. Scriptural admonitions on service to the poor and readings on the life of Saint Francis are required study. Washington’s *Up From Slavery* (1901) is also required reading. It is the autobiography of an African American slave who became a very successful, national leader who never lost his servant’s heart. It is the story of overcoming great difficulties through hard work, patience, and respect for all, being forthright and generous in spirit. I sat in on a class as it read the chapter on a 2,000-mile journey to make a five-minute speech. The chapter speaks of the sacrifices Washington made for the good of people everywhere, white as well as black. He was held up as an example of a leader who served.

I sat in other classes where the value of service was extolled. In one senior English class the teacher read a touching letter from an elderly widow thanking the boys for the service they had provided in cleaning up her yard and making some simple repairs

to her home. I sat in on an entrepreneurship class where the teacher expounded on the importance of serving one's clientele well. In another class I heard a respected teacher remind the boys that many of the teachers at Assisi could be teaching in public schools where they would be making significantly more money but that they were at Assisi because of the importance of serving a higher calling. This may have seemed like boasting to some but the teacher came across as sincere and at a focus group some days later, when I asked the boys about examples of leadership around the school, one of the boys referred to the example of teachers sacrificing better pay to serve the mission of Assisi.

The definition of service is not just written in school documents or found in the instructional and curriculum design; it is experienced in the day-to-day reality of the school. I regularly observed service in action at Assisi. Although I did see examples of teen-age surliness, arrogance and disrespect upon occasion, I found that the students in general were respectful and courteous, thoughtfully holding doors and greeting strangers in the halls, exemplifying a spirit of service in their day-to-day actions.

One day in the cafeteria I saw two boys at different tables, thoughtfully cleaning up the garbage that was left by others at their tables. I checked with a teacher to find out if it was an assigned task; it was not. It was simply an act of thoughtful courtesy as they got up and noticed that trash was left on the table. I mentioned how thoughtful this was to another student the next day. He asked me if that didn't happen at the school I came from. I responded that it would be a minor miracle if it did. He responded that it was not unusual at all at Assisi. I asked him why and he replied that that is just the way things are

at Assisi, it's the way they do things. Students have respect for the school and want to take care of it. On more than one occasion I witnessed boys picking up paper that wasn't theirs or pushing in the chairs of classmates who had exited hastily at the end of class. This fits with what I saw in the cafeteria. The fact that I witnessed these events when I was only at the school for 10 days leads me to believe they are not uncommon at Assisi. The qualities of servant-leadership, of serving others, are an evident part of the culture of the school.

To have a clearer insight into how the students defined leadership, I asked the students who they considered to be leaders around the school. They repeatedly identified teachers they considered to be helpful and encouraging, saying things like "...he was one of those people I could come to after school and he helped me out a lot of problems..." (interview with J1). "...if I'm havin' a bad day, Mr. H asks me am I ok, or he'll pull me to the side or he'll give me some advice or the things that he experienced ... that we can relate to..." Speaking of another teacher the same student said, "...he call me his godson and that makes me feel like that I belong and that's important to me cuz like I said I don't have a father figure so I could go to these two for anything" (interview with F1). Another said, "I picked Mr. M ... he'll sit down anytime and he will talk to you. He'll take out from his time to help you out, he'll even go as far as to trying to help you get a job for the summer, or help get you a mentor" (interview with F5). I could easily fill an entire page with quotes identifying teachers the boys considered leaders because they were caring and helpful. I could fill another page with quotes from parents who find the teachers as helpful, caring examples of servant leadership.

One of the methods I used to triangulate my findings was to survey the upperclassmen regarding what influence attending Assisi had on their leadership formation. The survey was consistent with the data collected from observations, interviews and documents. Ninety-two percent of the students surveyed and 100% of the juniors and seniors believe that their experience at the school has contributed to their potential as leaders (see Appendix F2). Of the 12 choices offered on the survey as experiences that contributed to their leadership formation, the number one response was the community service requirement.

Definition 3: Leadership as Character and Moral Values

Fr. Charles measured success not by the percentage of students who went to college and became professionals, but by his ultimate goal of producing students with character. “Everyone who goes to school did not have to become a lawyer,” he says. “As long as they’re a good father and a good family man. Then we succeeded” (Zacharia, 2006, p. 56).

As I searched my data looking for patterns that explained what leadership means to the various stakeholders at Assisi, I found that being a man of character and moral values arose consistently among school documents, my class observations, and interviews. Searching school documents we find that the school’s mission is “to produce *leaders* who... embody wisdom, *character, and moral values*... by providing a... *character-building* program in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 4, italics added; see Appendix M). Evident of the kind of morals valued at the Assisi, the school Values Statement declares, “Assisi Franciscan high School is committed to ... instilling the Gospel of Faith, Justice, Spiritual Discipline, and Respect for others, which form *the foundation for leadership*” (Assisi, 2009, School

Profile, para. 5, italics added). The Case Statement speaks of the school's intent to train "well-educated *leaders* committed to social justice, personal excellence, and *moral integrity*" (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 7, italics added).

As I observed classes I regularly saw the importance of strong character and morals emphasized. In the senior literature class I observed a discussion of the virtues of the Knights of the Roundtable, to do no evil but to be merciful, respectful, and helpful, especially to women. The teacher contributed to class discussions emphasizing the virtues of morality, self-honesty and strength of character as exemplified in the poems and the stories read in class. He also regularly shared examples from his own life of the importance of good morals. Coach S's class is all about service, virtue and doing the right thing. I also observed similar talks in other classes with other teachers; most notably the English and History classes, which tend to lend themselves to such discussions, but upon occasion in other classes. The female Spanish teacher regularly reminded the boys of the importance of their reputation as young African American men who do the right thing.

Several of the classrooms had posters or displays of famous African Americans such as Martin Luther King who are known as individuals of character, principle, and integrity. There seemed to be continual reminders that the students are to be men of strong character with high moral values, men who make sacrifices for the good of all concerned epitomized in *The African American Manhood pledge* (anonymous) mentioned above reminding the boys that they are to be righteous and religious men who always seek to do good, to take responsibility for their conduct and restrain themselves from doing wrong.

While most of the students I shadowed, met, and talked to, seem to be young men of character and strong morals indicated by their conversation, the value they placed in hard work, the men of principle that they admired, and by their actions, they seldom spoke directly to that issue in interviews. One senior boy said, “A leader is humble. ...He speaks out and stands up for what he believes” (S2). Despite their reticence regarding character and moral values, when asked to indicate which experiences at Assisi had contributed to their potential as leaders, 92% of the juniors and seniors indicated that the initial enrollment experience in which they *committed to conduct themselves as a man of integrity and faith, who believes in the values of truth, unity, and compassion, and will never be afraid to show and live out those values in his life*, was an important influence in their leadership formation. Eighty-four percent of the juniors and seniors indicated that the values and beliefs taught at Assisi were important to their leadership formation.

As I observed classes I saw many examples of good character and moral values, but occasionally I saw examples of young men exhibiting a lack of character and moral values. Although it was not common, a few times I saw young men cheating during exams and displaying insolent behavior. While such behavior was not tolerated in most of the classes I observed, it seemed that some of teachers coddled the students, that they were afraid that if they were a little too hard on them, or didn't let them fudge a little on an exam, that they might have to fail them. It is hard to think how such behavior might build character and morals. Fortunately such behavior was uncommon.

While the students interviewed seldom spoke directly to the importance of character and moral values as a quality of leadership, the adult stakeholders mentioned it

often. During an interview, Coach L spoke of how important character development and honesty are at the school adding that those qualities are stressed and emphasized at Assisi. During the parent interviews one mother said that she sent her son to Assisi to “teach him how to be a good man, that’s all I’m looking for” (interview with P2), explaining that she wanted him to have good values and expectations. Another mother proclaimed her belief in the school motto, “Unto Perfect Manhood”, explaining that it is one of the qualities that the boys develop at Assisi, that they become good men (interview with P3). “My son is a leader. He is kind...” (interview with P6) meaning that kindness is a quality that she values in a leader. It was the alumni who spoke to the importance of character and moral values most. Alumnus 4 said, “I think Assisi has developed young men into leaders in two bases; one has to do with making us aware of having a moral core, having a moral standard...” Alumnus 5 explaining how character attributes such as responsibility, courage, and a moral core were formed at Assisi added,

The Franciscans were very good at putting students in positions of leadership... you were prepared to assume the role of being a leader or being responsible, that’s the other key thing, that one of the... advantages of going to a small school is the fact that there’s a level of responsibility that’s placed on you, you know you’ve got to just go out and get it done. ... So when we got to college or whatever our profession is we didn’t shy away when it was our turn to be a team leader if it was an ad hoc committee or you know if we were in the military, whatever our profession was we weren’t afraid... (interview with A7).

Family Man: An Essential Element of Character

As would be expected of the Franciscans, the founders of Assisi did not set out to establish a school for great leaders but rather for great servants, and a man was not a true servant who was not first of all faithful to his family. As Father H. initially told me, the school's main focus was not on leadership but on service. The founders believed that their success was not predicated on the number of successful professionals they produced but by the number of graduates that became good family men and contributors to the community (Zacharia, 2006).

It is evident from what I saw and heard around Assisi that one would not be considered a man of character if he were not above all a good family man. The head of the school stated, "The goal of "perfect manhood" is one who is a leader in his family and community, one who works every day to take responsibility for his actions" (interview with A1). A senior speaking of what leadership means at the school said, "Our school model is *Unto Perfect Manhood*. To be a leader means to be successful, to have a career or business and a family" (interview with S1). One of the coaches, speaking of the qualities that are developed at Assisi, the qualities of *unto perfect manhood*, said that it means to have "pride... a sense of family, relationships" (interview with Coach S). Several of the students spoke of the sense of family at Assisi that is so important to them. A couple of them mentioned how the faculty and administrators at Assisi have become like the fathers that they never had. At Assisi one would not be considered a good leader if he were not a good father and husband. As Fr. Charles, one of the founding Franciscans

stated, “Everyone who goes to school did not have to become a lawyer. As long as they’re a good father and a good family man, then we succeeded” (Zacharia, 2006, p. 56).

Definitions 4: Leadership as Success Through Perseverance

But what Assisi developed in us is leadership...in the late 1970’s we were looking to run an African American for mayor in the city We put together a committee, I got on the board of that organization, ... we did reapportionment, we did redistricting for the wards, state reps and the congressional districts that allowed us to unify the community to elect [the city’s first African American mayor]. They instilled that in us at Assisi. ...When we put together a computer system, we won court case after court case, to give the African American community a final say on what would happen. And that was instilled in me at Assisi (interview with A3).

While not every successful man is considered a leader, at Assisi success through perseverance is considered to be one of the qualities of a leader. The attributes of perseverance, success (both academic and vocationally), wisdom and foresight were not mentioned as often as the qualities of service, strong character, and moral values, but they were cited as the marks of a leader often enough and succinctly enough to make it clear that they are part of the definition of leadership at Assisi. As one of the first seniors that I interviewed said, “To be a leader means to be successful, to have a career or business and a family” (interview with S1). The school takes great pride in fact that in the past twelve years 100% of the graduates had gone on to college. The graduation program not only reports which college each graduate is going to, but each college the graduate has been *accepted to* (Assisi, 2009). Mrs. S, who works in the development office and has been involved in the school for over 40 years, spoke with pride of the number of graduates who go onto college and become professionals. She said that graduates of Assisi “desire to further their education, to improve themselves” (interview with Mrs. S). Another

faculty member remarked that among the qualities the students develop at Assisi that would contribute to leadership are “perseverance, steadfastness in studies” (interview with Coach L).

As an indication that Assisi defines academic and career success as marks of a leader, the school literature states that its mission “is to produce leaders who embrace academic excellence” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 4), become productive citizens, and develop the academic skills “to be confident leaders in the community” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 6). The literature further indicates that Assisi expects its graduates to become competent, well educated leaders who are committed to personal excellence (Assisi, 2009).

The theme of success through perseverance and hard work is carried forward in the curriculum as the students read *Up from Slavery* (Washington, 1901), mentioned earlier, and *Makes me Wanna Holler* (McCall, 1994), an autobiography dealing with the difficulties of growing up African American in the south in a time of great prejudice and racism. McCall spent 3 years in jail but went on to finish college, and become a successful journalist, author, and lecturer, persevering against the odds and experiencing much success. The sophomore English class reads Obama’s *Dreams From My Father* (1995), another story of persevering against adversity and achieving great success.

I often heard the message of persevering and experiencing success around the school as I observed and interviewed. An English class recited a poem entitled *It Couldn’t be Done* (Guest, 1976), extolling the virtues of persevering against discouragement. One morning as Father Hogan read the daily prayer over the P.A. system

he prayed concerning leaning on the Lord in order to overcome discouragement, to work through it and not give up. Several of the classrooms are decorated with posters and pictures of African Americans who have achieved great success, from athletes and authors, to politicians and entertainers. When I asked the boys whom they considered leaders, one of them, referring to the class valedictorian, said, "I was gonna say like, a special student that stood out to me was J. He worked hard. He became valedictorian. Now he's going away to USC" (interview with J2). Other students chose teachers who work especially hard and push them to do their best. One teacher, Father H, spoke of graduates that had gone on to become successful, serving in large corporations and especially of one who had become a Vice President of a Big Ten university and another who had become the president of a small Midwestern college. One alumnus, loosely equating success with leadership stated, "I consider us to be successful. We have uh, business executives, high school principals, teachers, policemen, lawyers, doctors, so we run the gambit of success" (interview with A1).

When I asked the students to speak of an experience at the school that was especially meaningful and might be an example of leadership at the school, several of them, both seniors and juniors, spoke of the importance of Senior Signing Day, a ceremony in which the seniors who have received scholarships ceremonially sign a letter of acceptance for the scholarship. They remarked how meaningful it was to see students rewarded for their hard work in academics. Some who had received the scholarships spoke of how hard they worked for them and how good it felt to get recognition for it because usually it's only the athletes who receive such recognition. Doing well

academically and going on to college seems to be a source of pride at Assisi and considered a mark of leadership in a community where slightly over a third of the young men even graduate from high school (Jackson, 2008).

Definition 5: Leadership as Wisdom and Foresight

“A leader is humble. He sees what is needed and takes care of it. Leadership is attained by *insight*” (interview with Sc, italics added). The school mission statement declares that their mission “is to produce leaders who... embody *wisdom*...” (Assisi, 2009, italics added). The School Values Statement includes foresight as one of the values it intends to inculcate in students by stating that “Assisi Franciscan High School is committed to ... fostering a safe environment in which students ... learn to excel in all aspects of life, prepare for a successful college experience, and become productive and socially responsible citizens; addressing the needs of under-served communities” (Assisi, 2009).

Wisdom and understanding are an important part of the religion curriculum at the school along with the literature read in the English and American history classes as evidenced by the reading selections and the lessons I observed as well as my conversations with the teachers. The wisdom of decisions made by Antwone Fisher was discussed in the religion class. The wisdom of decisions made by Booker T. Washington and Nathan McCall was discussed in the African American History class. The wisdom of literary characters was regularly discussed in the English class. In all three classes I heard several applications of the examples in the books or movies made to real life situations affecting the students’ lives. The teachers shared examples from their own lives of the

positive results of wise choices and forward thinking. Coach S. shared stories from his family life on behavior that leads to a successful marriage. Mr. I. shared stories about the consequences of decisions from when we was in college and about young men he knew who had made unwise decisions leading to incarceration.

Greenleaf (1977) calls foresight one of the essential qualities of leadership. Other than the reference above to insight, the students did not refer to the quality of wisdom or foresight as attributes of leadership. The faculty, on the other hand, told me that wisdom or attributes of it such as foresight, was among the qualities developed at Assisi that define leadership. Though they rarely used the word “wisdom” or “foresight” they spoke of qualities that indicate that one is wise or has foresight. Coach S said that as a result of being at Assisi, the boys learn “that life is full of change.” Mrs. S stated that they develop “understanding of situations and people, *wisdom*.” Coach L said that the students learn to “appreciate the sacrifices that their parents make.” Mr. H believes that the boys develop “a strong sense of who they are, self-identity” and Mrs. C stated that at Assisi the boys develop “*vision for the future*.”

Summary of the Definition of Leadership at Assisi

The above sections have provided data that serves to define leadership according to the literature and the observed experience at Assisi as well as the views of the stakeholders. Based on the data gathered I have concluded that the definition of leadership can be fairly summarized as essential elements of the school motto, “Unto Perfect Manhood.” That *perfect man* is one who embodies strong character and moral values in service to his community. He perseveres in the face of adversity, is successful

in his pursuits, and practices wisdom and foresight.

While I observed many teachers at Assisi who would be good examples of servant leadership, the one who seemed to most embody the ideal was coach S. As the boys identified teachers that they considered leaders around the school, his name popped up far more than any other. Many of the boys spoke of him as a model of leadership, who brings out the best in people, sets high expectations, pays attention to detail, and treats everyone with respect. One of the boys said, “Coach was a special teacher to me, because ... he’s one of the people who offered words of encouragement to me all four years, ... who kept me going and mentored me and contributed to my success as a student” (interview with S4). I had the opportunity to observe this teacher’s class several times. Instead of finding the fiery, inspirational football coach that I was expecting, I found an athletic but soft-spoken man who was marked by humility and compassion for the boys, who respected them and was respected by them in turn. One day in class Coach S. shared how he had been one of the first African Americans to attend an all European American Boys high school. He shared how it took a great amount of hard work and wise decisions to be successful at the school. He shared this in a spirit of optimism as an example to the students of what is possible to achieve in through hard work and perseverance. I never saw any evidence of arrogance or pride when he shared stories of his successes, only a spirit of hope under-girded with humility.

What Environmental or Institutional Factors Encourage or
Nurture Leadership Development?

When I interviewed a small group of freshman and sophomore boys, I heard across the board what I heard in the previous focus groups; that most of the boys didn't want to attend Assisi originally because of its reputation as an all boy, uniform required school. Now that they had been there for a year, six of the seven believe that a single-sex school is best for them. The dedicated, helpful teachers, the small school environment, and the lack of distractions from girls, have helped them to do their best academically. Several reported they were struggling in junior high but are doing much better now that they are at Assisi.

According to Wolf-Wendel (1998), "the nature of the learning environment produces important differences in students' aspirations, self-confidence and career potential" (p. 143). The account above identifies four factors relevant to the nature of the learning environment at Assisi: single-sex, the discipline of a uniform dress code, dedicated and helpful teachers, and a small school environment. The only factor above that is not part of the instructional or curricular make-up of the school is the small school environment. It is a fact that every year the school begins with a class of a hundred or more freshman hoping to see every one of them graduate. Over the past several years they have generally lost close to two-thirds of the freshmen by the time they graduate resulting in a much smaller school than intended. In the following sections I will discuss seven institutional factors that encourage or nurture leadership development at Assisi.

Institutional Factor 1: The Number of Positive Male Role Models

I was on the road to getting kicked out, and my mom was like, you need to go somewhere where you'll be around men, because, I didn't have no father. ... And I came here and I seen how they would act towards the kids. It felt like, it was like a cruelty at first, cuz they would like discipline them and tell them you can't do this, you can't do that, stay on this or stay on that. I thought it was like a discipline, but as I got more into the school year, it started to be like, this like your fathers, these all your dads, so you gotta listen to them, cuz if you don't listen to them you could end up on this road that you was on (interview with F4).

As I conducted interviews and asked what was the reason for attending Assisi or for students' success at the school, the most common answer given was the faculty. Around Assisi, the teachers and administrators model many of the qualities of leadership. They are seen as people who exemplify the qualities of character, moral values, wisdom and foresight mentioned both in the Assisi and leadership literature. The majority is viewed as having succeeded through perseverance for having graduated from college and finding success. They are understood to be servant-leaders who have influence both in the school and their communities. As discussed in the theoretical framework of this paper, the greater the similarity between a role model and observer, the more likely the observer is to believe that he can accomplish the same things as the model (Bandura, 1997). As stated previously all of the administrators at Assisi are African American men and three-quarters of the teachers are men, all but two of them African American.

For many of the boys, having so many male teachers is different. Many of them grew up in a world of women. One student explained,

I've never been in a school where there's all male teachers; like that was a surprise; they're mostly an all male staff. ... most of the school's I've attended it's been mostly all female teachers and the male were few, you might get one in first, another one in sixth grade, and

always the gym teacher was a male teacher for some reason, but at Assisi, every teacher is a male teacher (interview with S6).

Since most of the students grew up without fathers around, many of them really don't know what it is like to be around male authority figures that care about them (interview with Mr. H). One teacher explained, "... [at Assisi] they have lots of good role models. Sixty to seventy percent of the boys come from single mother homes. This is the first time many of them have positive male role models" (interview with Coach L).

In interview after interview I heard how important the teachers were to the success of the students. In observations I saw how they manifested qualities of servant-leadership. One day in a senior literature class I observed a very meaningful discussion. The topic of Obama's election came up. This was a very personal discussion by the African American teacher/varsity football coach of how meaningful it was for his father to see Obama elected; how his father broke down and cried saying he, "never thought he would see the day." The boys asked the coach if he had ever thought he would see an African American elected president. He said that he always thought that he might. This discussion seemed to allow the boys to dream dreams of greatness tinged with the understanding that a man can cry.

A common theme among the interviews was the need for the students to be taught by men in order to develop and understand how to work with men. One student expressed it this way,

Coming from a single parent household, I've never experienced having a father. Assisi Franciscan has provided male role models I can emulate. Assisi Franciscan has equipped me with the tools I need for the world, but also, taught me how to become a man (Assisi, 2009).

A senior said,

I'd have to say with the faculty, being an almost all male faculty; that helps a lot with developing leadership skills. Because sometimes at home you may not get that attention from the male that you need. Sometimes, that's the most important part (S6).

Another parent added, "I like the fact that there are a lot of male teachers, and they do spend time addressing the issues that you know boys are concerned with" (interview with P1). The science teacher, an African American male summed it up this way,

Many of the boys enter not knowing how to interact with men other than what they see in the street. At Assisi they learn how to interact with men in a whole new way, a much more respectful, civilized way with men. At Assisi the boys see another side of men, men that are compassionate, that serve their community. It takes a village to raise a child and they, as men, need to be part of that effort taking an interest in the children of the community as they see there teachers doing (interview with Mr. H).

Another way in which Assisi provides positive male role models for the boys is the speaker series, a program in which successful alumni, community leaders and noteworthy African Americans speak to the boys about contemporary issues or careers. Several of the boys mentioned the speaker series as a factor that helped them think about and make decisions regarding their future. One senior, explaining how leadership development is nurtured at Assisi said, "We have male teachers as role models. We have a speaker series where we bring in successful leaders to speak to us and we read books like *The Pursuit of Happyness*" (interview with Sa). Another senior also mentioned the influence of the speaker series saying, "...men like Jesse Jackson Jr. and Chris Gardner (author of *The Pursuit of Happyness*) come in and speak to us. I think that encourages us" (interview with Sc).

It is not just the fact that Assisi has role models that serves to influence the boys; it is the caliber of the role models that seems important. Both in my observations and interviews the quality and commitment of the servant-leader models was evident. Many of the students and alumni attribute their success to both the teachers and the student leaders at Assisi. The valedictorian of the class of 2005, winner of a Northwestern University scholarship said, “Teachers [at Assisi] do everything they can to make sure you can be a success” (Assisi, 2007, Video). One alumnus said, “Each [teacher] had a significant impact on me” (Assisi, 2007, Video). When surveyed regarding what elements of the school contributed to their leadership development, 84% of the upperclassmen surveyed indicated former graduates who were held up as examples and models of leadership and success as a contributing factor; 82% indicated the examples and modeling of fellow students in leadership, 80% indicated the influence of an almost entirely male faculty; and 71% agreed that the examples and modeling of faculty and staff in general including females (see Appendix F2).

Of the many teachers I observed at Assisi, not all were great role models. A few had difficulty controlling their classes or were too easily taken advantage of. A couple of teachers seemed to control through threats and intimidation. These were only a handful. In the majority of classes I visited a mutual respect was evident between the teacher and students. The boys were generally well-behaved and attentive, quiet and focused when the teachers talked, active and enthusiastic during discussions. Life applications from the literature read seem to be a regular part of the lessons. The teachers made personal applications to the boys’ lives from their own. Although I noticed coddling in some

classes, I also saw teachers challenge the boys to take responsibility for their learning and find things out through their own investigations. One senior who had transferred to Assisi after two years in public schools compared his more poorly paid parochial school teachers to the better-paid teachers from his former school saying,

The teaching here is actually more quality than the teaching at the public schools because the teachers take time to talk to you; they take time to explain their work, ... they can actually give you real world scenarios that you can apply ... give you lots of bridges where you can take this knowledge to, so the quality teachers are here, contrary to popular belief (interview with S1).

Mr. P, an administrator said that the change seen in the students over the four years at Assisi is not simply a matter of maturation. “The impact of the school on the individual is real. The modeling of caring teachers and administrators makes the boys feel both independently and collectively significant” (interview with Mr. P). The ongoing guidance and nurturing that Mr. P. received from counselors and teachers influenced his decision to make education a career (interview with Mr. P).

The data indicates that the presence of so many male role models at Assisi, administrators, faculty, visiting speakers, and student leaders, has a positive effect on the students at Assisi. Although in this case the role models and student observers are males, this would seem to confirm the theory of Wolf-Wendel (1998) and the seminal researchers in single-sex education who preceded her (Tidball, 1986, 1985, 1980, 1974; Riordan, 1994, 1992, 1990) who posit the theory that women’s colleges are more successful in producing a greater number of high achievers because of the number of same-sex role models on campus.

One particularly inspiring class that I observed, among many, was a freshmen English class taught by a European male who is also the soccer coach. The class was inspiring not only for how the teacher conducted it, but for how he personally had decorated the classroom; it was evident that he had put much effort and care into it. The room was brightly decorated, colorful and inspirational. The class had the latest technology, a smart-board; and class work was done on the class's own website set up by the teacher. The ceiling was painted like the sky, a soft blue with puffy clouds against an outline of the city painted on the back wall with key vocabulary words interspaced between the buildings. Beautiful large photos of Chicago architecture lined one wall and part of the front. Posters of the Blues Brothers and Cary Grant, newspaper pages of Chicago sports championships and President Obama as well as other Chicago heroes dotted the classroom. The omnipresent TV up front was covered in yellow "caution" tape. The classroom seemed to say that we take time to do things well here.

The class environment was firm, disciplined, encouraging. As throughout the school African American men of accomplishment were held up as role models. High academic expectations were evident. The teacher was encouraging, firm, and upbeat. He challenged the students about sloppy or shoddy work, pushing them to do better, to support with details, to investigate and examine thoroughly. He occasionally tossed a football to boys who had hands raised for a question. The one with the football had the floor.

The boys were respectful and responsive, attentive and engaged in the class. The students only spoke after they have been called on. The students seemed totally fixed on

the teacher, there was no side chatter. When the teacher paused a moment to deal with a technical issue there was a short hubbub, which ceased the moment the lesson began again. There appeared to be total attentiveness. The boys waited patiently and respectfully to participate until a classmate finished his comments.

With just a few minutes left in the class one boy wanted to read some poetry he had written. The teacher encouraged him to go ahead and the boys all clapped when he was done. The teacher asked him about his writing process, what feelings he had when he wrote. The student explained to the class the feelings or situation that inspired his poetry. Poetry was cool and respected there; a man's man writes and reads poetry. The teacher discussed how writing poetry could be an effective, positive outlet for negative feelings.

How do the Different Role Models Impact Leadership Development at Assisi?

We had a lot of male teachers that had wonderful careers but they decided to come back and teach us, and they shared their life stories and you kind of felt that you wanted to follow in their footsteps (interview with A1).

The role models at Assisi influence leadership development in a variety of ways but most importantly by modeling it. The impact of the role models starts when the boys see African American men in positions of authority modeling the attributes of a leadership. To explain how role models impact leadership formation at Assisi I will provide available data on what each role model group, religious, faculty, students, alumni, and models in the curriculum, does to teach and model leadership behaviors.

How the Religious Role Models Impact Leadership Formation

The Franciscans are a group of religious men who follow the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi. Founded in the 13th Century, Franciscans dedicate their lives to poverty, chastity, obedience, and the good of their fellow man. St. Francis' example included giving up everything, even the clothes he was wearing, to help others (From the school website, Assisi, 2007).

Pictures and symbols of Christ and the Franciscans are found throughout the school. Prayer is read over the public address system every morning at 9:00. Religion is a required course every semester for every student. The example of Christ as a servant-leader is taught in the religion classes. The prayers of St Francis are read and his service to the poor is held up as an example for the students to follow both in the curriculum and in the schools' mission and values statements (Assisi, 2009). The examples of Christ and the Franciscans have been lived out from the founding of the school to the present day in the lives of the priests who founded it and have taught there. The lone remaining Franciscan has taught at the school for 45 years. He is well into his 70s but remains vigorous and enthusiastic. With no plan to retire in the near future he is an example of perseverance. All of the students know that he works at the school, not for money, but out of a sense of ministry and service to his Lord and his fellow man.

Five of the six parents I interviewed spoke of the importance of having their sons in a school where Christian values are modeled. Were the values taught but not modeled by the faculty, it is unlikely that they would have much impact. From what I observed in the school they are, and their impact is evident in the spirit of service and caring that is seen in the lives of the administrators and faculty members. As one student said,

One thing that stood out for me is the sacrifices that the teachers make, because I know that working at a catholic school, a private school, here, especially here, they don't get paid as much as they would working in a public school system, so they ... sacrifice pay, in order to make a positive impact on a young man's life, and that really stood out to me, the sacrifice that they make (interview with S1).

How the Faculty Role Models Impact Leadership Formation

The Assisi faculty models servant-leadership. The Title 1 teacher reported that about 20% of the boys enter Assisi designated as at-risk because of being significantly below grade level in reading and math skills. The average at-risk boy is reading at fifth grade level when he enters at the beginning of the freshman year. Within two years, by the end of sophomore year, almost all are reading at-level. The teacher attributes that improvement to the hard work of the faculty that stay after school on a regular basis to help boys who are struggling (reported by faculty member).

In interviews with students, alumni, and parents, the number one reason cited for student growth and success at Assisi was caring and helpful teachers. When surveyed, 71% of the students indicated that one of the factors that contributed to their potential as leaders was the example and modeling of the faculty and staff (see Appendix F2). During my ten days at the school I randomly observed teachers staying late after school to give students extra help. They also lead in service as many of them go out with the boys on the community service projects.

The faculty models success through perseverance. The administrators and teachers set examples as African American men who have persevered by graduating from college. As a group less than 50% of African American men graduate from high school nationally, and less than 40% locally; fewer still attend college (Jackson, 2008;

McKeough, 2006). In classes they teach of men who have succeeded through perseverance against great hardship. They challenge the boys to find answers through their individual or group efforts, reminding them that it will take hard work to overcome the difficulties of the future. They celebrate the boys' successes in the academics and athletics with examples of the boys' accomplishments displayed in various rooms. They also celebrate their successes with recognition ceremonies such as Academic Signing Day and special recognition during the graduation ceremony. By choosing to study the lives of men who have persevered through difficulties, by setting high standards, and celebrating significant accomplishments achieved through hard work, the faculty is modeling the importance of perseverance as one means to success.

The faculty models strong character, morals, wisdom and foresight. When I asked the students which teachers they saw as leaders, they seemed to pick teachers who weren't afraid to hand out consequences but also tended to be encouragers, who tended to find something positive or showed that they believe in the students. As one boy said,

Coach S was a special teacher to me, ... he's one of the people who offered words of encouragement to me all four years, he is one of the people who kept me going and mentored me and attributed to my success as a student, where I am right now (S4).

One parent expressed her impression of the strength of character and morals of the faculty saying that she sent her son to Assisi because she needed him to be taught how to be a "good man" (P2). The teachers challenge the boys to become men of excellence. On a number of occasions I observed teachers taking time out of the lesson to talk to the boys about the importance of exemplary behavior, about the example they set for others, about the importance of punctuality and work ethic. One student said of his teachers,

Our English teacher pays attention to details. He has high expectations. Dean M is a community leader. He bears himself in a leadership fashion. Dresses in a leadership fashion and articulates. He demands good posture. Sit straight! Speak clearly! Walk tall! Follow the dress code! Use proper language! He sets strict rules and has high expectations. ...They appreciate rules and standards at this school (interview with S2).

A freshman boy said,

It does help you become leaders ...when I came here they put me on the right track. They taught me how to conduct myself...you have people that mentor you like a father. They're around you every single day, ... letting you know what's right from wrong (interview with F4).

The influence of the role models seems to be making an impact. Several of the boys I interviewed report they have changed career aspirations as a result of the influence of the teachers at Assisi. One boy said,

When my grandfather passed it felt like I lost everything because he was the only male figure I had. ... When I came to Assisi Franciscan high school it felt like I had a lot of male figures now that I am in an all boy school. Teachers here can give me advice and be my mentors (interview with F1).

That student went on to explain that as a result of the mentoring he has had at the school he is becoming more responsible, trying to get a job so that he can help with the bills at home. He also stated, "I see Assisi ... makes me a better leader and it feels like that I could be a mentor to a little boy one day, and give advice like the teachers gave me" (interview with F1).

One morning I observed a wonderful example of modeling character, moral values, wisdom and foresight. The teacher was a bit upset with the boys, something he had not displayed during my previous observations. He was chiding boys about the lack of effort on research papers. He challenged and chided them but still found a way to

encourage them about the future and give them hope, something he often does. He spoke to them about the importance of punctuality, caring and pride in one's work and school. As he simmered down he also spoke about the importance of humility, of learning from mistakes and having expectations and goals for the future as well as the importance of service to their fellow man. After what seemed a bit more like a thoughtful sermon than an English lesson the class returned to their reading, which included scenes of disgusting abuse and prejudice. Rather than focus on the symptoms of evil, the terrible acts; the teacher turned the discussion to the root emotion of the evil, the hatred, asking, "Why do we hate? How and where do we direct our anger?" As the discussion continued he included applications from his own life as an African American growing up in the 60's and 70's. He is usually very practical and affirming in his applications helping the boys take a positive approach to life. The discussion is impressive because this man who evokes sincere humility in his demeanor does not come across as a wide-eyed idealist. He evokes a quiet confidence and strength. He was an award winning college football player and is highly respected by the students.

How the Student and Alumni Role Models Impact Leadership Formation

I think Assisi challenges you in a different way than other ... schools, because when I arrived at Assisi I noticed that the students challenged other students ... Instead of ... trying to meet the teacher's standards, other students kind of challenge you, which is something you don't get in every other school. So like if you make a mistake or you make an error or do something that is wrong, the students will correct you but it would be constructive criticism, ... and I think that's healthy, that you can sit in classrooms with your peers and tell them, you know, you need to work on this, you do this, you don't do that. And ... when they leave here, they're ... not perfect, but they watch themselves and they been critiqued by not someone who's above them, but at their same level. I've never seen that happen anywhere else really (interview with S1).

The students and alumni model service. Four of the members of the board of directors, an unpaid position, are Assisi alumni. Seven of the members on the board of trustees are Assisi Alumni. I often saw the President of the board around the school, busily coordinating activities and meeting with contractors and others about school business. These are men who freely contribute their time and talents to the school. When interviewed, the alumni all spoke of the importance of community service and the time they have dedicated to it.

I observed students, like the alumni; regularly take time to help others. One boy remarked, “The student leaders treat younger students in respectful ways, helping them learn” (S2). In science class there were boys who finished their labs quickly and easily who would go around helping students who were struggling or off task. The boys serve the school in a variety of ways that occur at most schools, leading in clubs and organizations, working at school events, helping with fundraising. One Saturday morning when I returned to interview some alumni, school had been out for a couple of weeks already. I was surprised to see that there were several students around the school. Some were working on a car wash, raising funds for a community organization. Others were helping with Market Day, another way for schools to raise funds, busily helping moms carry their groceries out to their cars.

The students and alumni model success through perseverance. Many of the alumni are successful professionals who have graduated from college and gone on to become successful executives and entrepreneurs. The students model perseverance and success as they excel in the classroom. There is evident peer pressure at Assisi to get

good grades and go to college. About one-third of the boys make honor roll and only about 10% have less than a 2.0 out of a 4.0 grade point average. A recent study found that over half of the African American males who graduated from the local public schools had less than a 2.0 out of 4.0 GPA (Harms, 2006). At Assisi 31 of 32 graduates of the class of 2009, are going on to college. When I asked the boys to identify student leaders around Assisi, no one mentioned the captains of the athletic teams; they chose the valedictorian and salutatorian, students who had worked especially hard. They spoke of the competitive spirit and standards to do well set by other students. One senior remarked, “We have lots of competition here in academics as well as clubs and organizations” (interview with S2). A junior said, “...you see certain people with certain attitudes, it... makes you want to like, get better than them. And since they already had a goal going for themselves it makes you like want to overlap their goal” (interview with J2).

The students and alumni model character, moral values, wisdom and foresight. Certainly doing well academically and going to college models wisdom and foresight in contemporary culture. Helping and serving others also seems to model character and wisdom, as it tends to build relationships and community. Taking the initiative to constructively criticize your peers would build character and require wisdom to do it well. It would seem that the alumni who come back and talk to the boys about careers and opportunities in life beyond college help contribute to the boys’ foresight and understanding of the world.

How the Role Models in the Curriculum Impact Leadership Formation

African American Studies is woven into the curriculum and its influence is evident in almost every classroom. African American history is a required course taken junior year while African American literature and influence are read and studied throughout the 4-year curriculum. Posters, displays and photos of leading African American men and women of accomplishment are seen throughout the school as ancillaries to that curriculum. Autobiographies of great African Americans are read and their lives and accomplishments are extolled. These are men and women who have made great sacrifices in the service of mankind, people such as Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, and Rosa Parks. These are people known for strength of character, moral values, wisdom, and foresight who persevered in the face of adversity and eventually experienced success in their struggles. Not only are the great leaders held up as role models in the curriculum, but also leaders of lesser note whose achievements have been on a smaller or more personal scale; men such as Antwone Fisher and Nathan McCall who were living self-destructive lives until they turned themselves around and became models of success and perseverance.

One morning I observed a junior Religion class. In my other visits to this class they seemed like a pretty active bunch. The boys like to get into the discussions, which were usually lively. Other mornings they were antsy and took a while to settle down. This morning they were all very quiet and attentive. They were watching a film called *Remember the Titans*, based on the true life experiences of Herman Boone, an African American football coach who showed the state of Virginia that blacks and whites can

work together in harmony and experience great success. Boone is a great example of a servant-leader. Through strength of character, with strong moral values, wisdom, foresight, and perseverance he experienced great success. It seemed that the film was having an affect. Instead of their usual restless behavior the boys were watching with rapt attention. Watching the story of a man of character accomplishing great good, a man very similar to the boys in that room, if Bandura (1997) is correct, the boys were becoming believers that they too might someday accomplish something of significance.

Summary of How Leadership is Modeled at Assisi

Summarizing the data on how leadership is modeled at Assisi we have seen that the leadership is modeled by the historical and contemporary religious leaders who founded the school, the faculty and administrators who work there, the students who take on peer leadership roles within the school, and the historical and contemporary African Americans of accomplishment such as Booker T. Washington and President Barack Obama. We have seen that these models influence leadership by modeling attributes of leadership such as service to ones community and fellow man, by being people of strong character and integrity, by modeling success in their pursuits, perseverance in the face of adversity, wisdom and foresight. We have seen the extent of the models influence in leadership development in that the students, parents, and alumni interviewed consistently attribute much of the growth and development of their leadership skills to the influence of Assisi Franciscan and its faculty. We have observed many examples of leadership displayed by the students as well as documented by the administration and others, (Assisi, 2007, 2009; Zacharia, 2006). Finally we have triangulated the reports of how

leadership is modeled with the results of the student survey (see Appendix F2), which confirm the findings of the interviews, observations, and school documents.

While not everyone at Assisi lives the motto “Unto Perfect Manhood” and I witnessed some disgrace that motto by cheating on exams, acting cruelly toward fellow students and being insolent and disrespectful with teachers, such incidents happened among a very small percentage of the students. For the most part, the teachers and students that I observed consistently did their best to exemplify the school motto. While there are many teachers and student leaders who exemplify the motto of “Unto Perfect Manhood” I found no one that embodied it more than Coach S. One Saturday morning as I arrived to interview alumni, I saw students holding up signs advertising a car wash to raise funds for a community organization. As I pulled into the parking lot I noticed Coach S busily washing cars with the students. I talked to him for a moment and found out that he was in charge of the car wash. He wasn’t on the sidelines collecting the money. He was in the midst of the suds, energetically washing down the cars.

Institutional Factor 2: The Values Taught and Modeled

Assisi was my first experience with prison work. If someone got arrested, it was not uncommon for me to be in the police lockup or in the county jail at two in the morning to see what we could do to get the situation straightened out. If somebody died, a parent or grandparent, or somebody got shot... we were there: at the jail, the hospital, in the funeral homes. That’s the way we lived.” (Fr. Christian Reuter, Assisi principal 1972-1982 as cited in Zacaharia, 2006, p. 35).

It is not merely the presence of the role models that has impacted leadership development at Assisi, but the values that they live and teach. All of the values taught at Assisi are qualities of “Unto Perfect Manhood”, values that point the boys toward the

kind of service to the community displayed by servant-leaders like Father Reuter above. According to Greenleaf (1977), service above leadership is the first quality of a legitimate servant-leader. As seen by the lives of men like Father Reuter and Assisi documents, the school is founded on and continues a tradition of service. The Assisi Values Statement declares that the school is committed to leadership through service. It states in part,

Assisi Franciscan High School is committed to a rigorous program of ... *community service* ... which [forms] the foundation for *leadership through service* ... fostering a safe environment in which students ... become a productive and socially responsible citizen; *addressing the needs of under-served communities* (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 5, italics added).

Models of servant-leadership are seen in the faculty, upheld on the walls and in the literature read at Assisi. A former board member said, Assisi was “a place where people cared, took an interest in the individual. There was a support system to insure that no one fell between the cracks (Assisi, 2007, video). One of the students said,

[At] Assisi they are actually way more concerned then I ever thought, ... it’s like I thought I got enough of my mom talking to me at home, now I come to school, and it’s another set a people waiting to say something to help me out (interview with J4).

Service is not just observed among the faculty and read about in the books. It is regularly experienced through the community service requirement and service opportunities. One student commented, “We do volunteer work beyond just community service. We have to do 35 hours of community service a year. People are praised for doing volunteer work” (interview with Sb).

Seeming to go hand in hand with the commitment to servant-leadership at Assisi is its commitment to faith. Observing the religious life of Assisi I saw that much of the

value put on service grows out of the religious roots of the school. The community service hours are a direct assignment of the religion class. The religious nature of the school is not limited to the service aspect of leadership. The students are taught to use the resources of faith and spirituality. The religious teachings I observed embody the qualities of perseverance, character and moral values, wisdom and foresight through the models of Christ and the lives of the Apostles and the Saints. Prayer for guidance, perseverance and wisdom are daily a part of school life.

Also growing out of the religious roots of the school and its commitment to service are the values of compassion and acceptance. One of the early purposes of Assisi was to provide a religious education for African American boys who were not being admitted to the other Catholic High Schools in the area (Zacharia, 2006). As one alumnus put it, “a huge reason why parents sent their kids [to Assisi], there’s accountability. . . . Such accountability was also backed up with compassion and an openness to students other schools might have turned away” (Assisi, 2007, Video).

The morals that are taught at Assisi are tied into its religious roots as well. As one parent said, “Religion is a big component in becoming a well-rounded person. Developing moral values broadens your intellect” (interview with D2). Besides service, character, justice, and respect for others are part of the religious mission of the school (Assisi, 2009). Regarding the morals taught and their relation to service and leadership, one alumnus remarked,

I think Assisi has developed young men into leaders on two bases; one has to do with making us aware of having a moral core, having a moral standard in which we have to hold ourselves accountable to our lives and that is how we are supposed to hold ourselves accountable to our

community (interview with A5).

Tied into the moral values and another aspect of “Unto Perfect Manhood” is the value of character. The Assisi Mission Statement states that its purpose is “produce leaders who ... embody ... *character* ... in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 4, italics added). At Assisi *character* seems to mean being a man of strength, courage, and self-discipline, a man who can be proud of his accomplishments rather than ashamed. One student when asked what is best about Assisi answered,

Well, the small classes which help for better learning and individual attention, the athletic programs which help with *building character*, cause around here they also enforce that not only do you have good grades but also great *character* in order for you to accomplish a lot around here (interview with J2, italics added).

Effort to instill character might be seen in the words of one of the teachers I observed when she was scolding her students about a lack of effort. She stressed the significance of a work ethic telling them that it was so important, “especially for African American males” as “nobody was going to give it to [them] out there,” She went on to say that they needed to be “warriors, and not punks” being very explicit about the importance of hard work and that she expected them to go on to college. In an English class when they recited poems about being able to look your self in the eye and read stories of the *Knights of the Round Table* they were speaking of men of strength and virtue, men of character.

One of the qualities of leadership found in the literature and recognized at Assisi is the ability to persevere in the face of adversity (Locke et al., 1991). Through the lives of such men as Booker T. Washington, Nathan McCall, Antwone Fisher, Herman Boone,

and Martin Luther King along with the Assisi alumni who have gone on to college and had successful careers, the value of overcoming is regularly and consistently taught at Assisi. As Coach S explained, “Many of the boys doubt themselves when they first come but learning inspirational poems like *It Couldn't be Done* helps them believe that they can accomplish things, become somebody of significance” (interview with Coach S). In Coach S’ classroom not only are the accomplishments of great African Americans lauded but also the accomplishments of the students who have overcome. In his classroom, as well as in others I observed, the exemplary work and successes of the students were publicly praised and celebrated. Academic signing day was a very public recognition and celebration of the rewards of persevering over four years and achieving success, of overcoming.

Wisdom is one of the essential qualities of leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). Assisi stresses the values of wisdom in its Mission Statement and the values of wisdom and foresight in the teaching and activities of the school. The need of preparation for college and life, and the wisdom to deal with both, are regularly imparted in the classrooms of Assisi. In one class I observed a lively discussion on the consequences of life choices, of criminal activity and life in prison. The class had been reading the biography of a man who had suffered the consequences of choosing a life of crime but had turned it around through redemptive choices. In another class I listened as the students and teacher discussed an Elizabethan fable about the consequences of allowing someone to talk you into something you believe to be wrong and the consequences of unwise choices.

Although I never saw any teachers directly teach poor values, I did see some in practice upon occasion. Some teachers seemed to coddle students and in one case I saw a teacher ignore cheating. Another time I saw a teacher ignore direct insolence seeming hesitant to confront a misbehaving student. Such cases were the exceptions rather than the rule. Even in the classrooms where such behavior went on I observed that the values of servant-leadership were regularly if not consistently modeled. In surveying the upperclassmen I found that 84% indicated that the values and beliefs taught at Assisi had contributed to their leadership development (see Appendix F2).

One morning in a junior English class I listened as the teacher interjected real life applications of wisdom and moral values into the lesson. The class was reading *The Bluest Eyes* (Morrison, 1970), the story of a dysfunctional African American family affected by abusive pasts and inferiority complexes set off by the belief that white features are beautiful and black are ugly. The reading was interspersed with discussions on topics raised in the book, virtues and vices, references to Proverbs 31 and what it means to be a virtuous woman, the importance of respect for mothers, the importance of validating their wives when they are married, and the need that we all have for validation.

Institutional Factor 3: High Expectations and a Strong Academic Environment

Studies on leadership have found that effective leaders are competent (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Rhodes, 2007) and knowledgeable (Locke et al., 1991). The students at Assisi take a heavy academic load, which would contribute to the development of those qualities. Freshmen and sophomores have 5 academic classes: English, Social Studies, Science, Math, Religion, and a semester each of Introduction to Business, Computers.

Upper classmen are in class seven of eight periods each day with a typical college preparatory schedule, plus religion, requiring the study of philosophy and theology. The curriculum requires only two semesters of physical education, an indication of the priority given to academics. No industrial arts or shop classes are offered.

Further indication of the importance of academics at Assisi is found in the schools Mission and Values Statements, declaring that the school is committed to a “rigorous program of academics” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 4). One student testified, “Assisi Franciscan allows us to develop, while removing distractions from our lives. We earn respect at Assisi, and move toward career goals through a challenging curriculum and a school-wide code” (Assisi, 2009, The Assisi Experience, para. 9).

I observed many academically rigorous classes in which the expectations were high. I watched as boys successfully did quadratic equations and complex calculus problems in front of classes. At times in math classes they would become very competitive, trying to outdo each other in solving equations. I observed class discussions on chemistry, British literature, history and theology. I saw samples of student writing celebrated and critiqued. Several of the boys mentioned how meaningful academic signing day was to them.

It was evident that Assisi has high expectations and a strong commitment to a competitive college preparatory program. Regarding the focus on college preparation one alumnus stated, “There was intense pressure to go on to college, it was almost unthinkable not to go on to college” (Assisi, 2007, video). A junior boy commented,

Assisi ... still has that certain thing of discipline within it like kind of hard to explain... the kids that I meet they like, put Assisi high up on

the pedestal, I mean, they just automatically assume that ... I got a bright future. ... I guess because Assisi has a good reputation of sending people to college (interview with J2).

It was clear from the interviews I conducted that doing well academically is important to the students as much as the administration. One boy said that he chose Assisi over another school because it seemed to be more focused on education. Another stated, “you wanna do real good in grades because I mean that’s what’s ultimately looked at the end of the year, or sports” (interview with S3).

Not all of the boys who begin at Assisi adapt to the rigor and discipline of the school. I heard from administrators and teachers that over half of every freshman class leaves Assisi before graduation. While most seem to leave for financial reasons, many leave because they don’t want to accept the rigorous requirements (interview with faculty members). The students who do stay seem to find a rewarding and encouraging academic environment. Responding to the only question on the student survey that might be included in the category of academics, 92% of the upperclassmen indicated that their experience at Assisi had contributed to their becoming an effective communicator (see Appendix F2). One student who transferred to Assisi after his sophomore year compared Assisi to his former school.

No student [challenged] another student, especially amongst the males. ... it was like, you did sub-par work man, that’s what you did, sub-par work, but ... in Assisi, if I was to do bad on a test or a quiz, Allen, or Jabari, Chris or somebody be like, dude, step it up; or, you can do better than that (interview with S1).

Institutional Factor 4: The Single-Sex Environment

I sat in the cafeteria and observed the juniors at lunch one day. They must have been really feeling their oats; they were wild in the cafeteria. While some sat and chatted others were running about tackling each other and roughhousing to the point of three or four boys chasing and tackling one into a table knocking it asunder. They kept this up for the better part of 15 to 20 minutes until the period ended, almost as if they were playing football without a ball. All this was done as 3 faculty members, a teacher, the college counselor and the assistant principal sat and watched. The faculty members didn't seem the least bit perturbed that the boys were acting like this, just mentioning in casual conversation that maybe the gym should be open during lunch periods so that the boys would have something to do. Such roughhousing seemed totally acceptable. Twice when it got a little too boisterous they got after them, but the boys continued their roughhousing laughing and smiling all the while as though it were great fun. Although I have witnessed and been a part of such roughhousing out on athletic fields or in a men's college dorm, I have never seen such roughhousing in school during the school day in 49 years in coed schools both public and private. Fighting at Assisi was never tolerated but I often observed knock-about roughhousing in the halls as school let out, usually only between a couple of boys here and there. It seemed part of the life of the school. On the other hand, teachers were always quick to admonish the boys for being out of uniform if their shirts were un-tucked, threatening to give them a detention if they didn't get them tucked in.

What about the above might be conducive to leadership development? Among the qualities of leadership are the ability to accept a challenge (Kouzes & Pozner, 2000),

tenacity and perseverance (Locke et al., 1991), the ability to deal with controversy, the ability to create ones own voice (Rhodes, 2007), and being relational (Greenleaf, 1977). In the playful donnybrook I witnessed in the cafeteria, all of the above were going on. The boys were challenging and accepting challenges; they were tenacious and perseverant in their play; they were dealing with controversy with each other as they pushed, chased, and tackled each other; they were being allowed by the faculty members present to create their own voice, the roughhousing being a form of self-expression that boys often participate in. They were being relational. Although it can have negative connotations, such behavior is often part of self-development and a form of bonding (Baadh, 2006).

We might expect typical male behavior in an all-boy school but what about the single-sex environment might nurture or encourage leadership development beyond that mentioned above? In her study of women college presidents, Rhodes (2007) found that among the qualities of leadership was the ability to create ones own voice. When I asked the stakeholders at Assisi what the advantages of an all-boy school were, one of the answers I was given was that it allowed the boys to be themselves, to create their own voice so to speak. One senior said, “With no girls around there is no need to show off or compete for them or with them” (interview with Sb). Another boy agreed, saying, “In a boys’ school you can be yourself. There is no reason to show off. There is a lot of good sportsmanship in the school with just boys around” (interview with Sa). A third senior, described his initial experience at Assisi saying,

The first few weeks, the guys were so cool, ... there was no arguing; the female, you have to argue when you around females; you

have to prove something when you around them. No, we just play, have fun, and focus on our work. And then after the first marking period and I saw my grades were better, now here in high school than they were in grammar school, and I kind of felt it was because of the females weren't around. Then I started to like the school (interview with S3).

The senior boys seemed to agree that the brotherhood formed at Assisi was one of the best things about the school and seemed to doubt that it would be as strong if it were a coed school. One boy said, "I think the sense of camaraderie and brotherhood amongst the students and the faculty members has been very special for me and a lot of my classmates" (interview with S3). Another stated that he believed that the brotherhood was the most important part of developing leadership skills. Another, asked if the brotherhood would have been as strong if the school were coed, said, "maybe it wouldn't be as strong, um, I think it could've caused some conflicts or something along those lines" (interview with S5). The others all seemed to agree, assenting with nods of their heads.

We have shown that academic success is considered one of the signs of leadership at Assisi. In interviews, the number one reason the stakeholders gave for the advantages of an all-boy school was that it allowed for less distraction and greater focus resulting in greater academic success. Across the board, from students, parents, alumni and faculty I heard that the boys could focus better and perform better without the girls around. One senior explained, "I didn't know it was all boys until a couple days before school started, ... but, it just made me concentrate better and focus more and I think that played a great role in becoming valedictorian of the class" (interview with S5). Of the 20 boys I interviewed in focus groups there were only two dissenters. There was consistent agreement among the rest of the boys that they performed better academically without the

girls around. One boy giving a typical response to the question regarding advantages or disadvantages of being at an all boys school said, “I believe that it wasn’t bad not having girls around. It is actually good for you, an advantage. I could concentrate better and get better grades” (interview with Sa).

All of the adults I spoke with agreed with the boys. The parents agreed that the boys were better off without the distraction of the opposite sex, but what they believed was most important was the presence of so many male teachers. One of the teachers reported that he and the principal as well as others on the faculty were the products of single-sex Catholic schools and all believe that it was the best environment for them, one that afforded them advantages; that gave them the background they needed to go on and be successful in college and careers. One alumnus speaking of his time at the school stated,

I was disappointed that it went all boys, I was looking for a coeducational opportunity, but now that I look back upon it, it was probably one of the best things that happened to me; I was able to concentrate in class (interview with A2).

An administrator reported that, “when the boys are separated from the girls they accomplish more. They concentrate better and focus more. They become more productive” (interview with Mr. P).

As shown in Chapter Two of this study, one of the seminal researchers on single-sex education found that girls in general and minority boys in single-sex schools outperform their counterparts in similar coed schools (Riordan, 1994). He found that the students in the single-sex schools experienced significant growth with regard to personal responsibility, initiative, industriousness, cooperation, praise, and maturity (p. 106).

Other researchers have had similar findings regarding minority students (Agnew-White, 2006; Eaves, 1999; Wolf-Wendel, 1998). When I surveyed the upperclassmen, 68% agreed that the single-sex classroom environment was a factor that contributed to their leadership potential; 80% agreed that the influence of an almost entirely male faculty was a contributing factor in their leadership development (see Sppendix F2). One senior boy explained,

I came to this school because I didn't want distractions. I would be able to focus better and have better influences. A boys' school helps focus on grades and sports. I was a little nervous about coming here originally but really came with a positive attitude... There is more time to find yourself and figure out who you are when there are no girls around (interview with Sc).

Institutional Factor 5: Small School/ Family Environment

I think one of the key things that people start realizing was, wow, this is a small school but it's competing on levels with schools that got thousands of students. ... It's just the level of involvement in a small school you tend to wear multiple hats, you tend to do multiple things, so you're prepared once you go out into society to do a number of different things (interview with alumnus 7).

Because it is a small school the students at Assisi have many opportunities to practice leadership as they officiate in clubs, student council, and captain teams. In order to have a competitive athletic program they need strong participation. Almost 90% of the boys are involved in competitive athletics in one-way or another (interview with administrator). "The clubs are student run. There is a lot of student involvement, opportunity to learn from your mistakes" (interview with Sb).

While being a small school promotes greater opportunity for involvement and leadership in activities, the limited number of students results in a limited number of

activities. Due to the limited number of students and resources, beyond choir and drumming, Assisi has been able to offer very little either curricular or extracurricular programs in the arts for some time. As one teacher pointed out,

We have super talented kids here in dance and art that could accomplish much but we have a limited fine arts program at Assisi. No art, theatre or dance. They just began band this year after a long time without it” (interview with Mr. H).

In spite of the fact that some opportunities are limited, there seemed to be much opportunity for involvement and leadership in extracurricular activities. One alumnus summed it up saying,

The other way Assisi develops into leaders was that the Franciscans were very good at putting students in positions of leadership throughout the school. I mean the students assisted in the bookstore, the student council was responsible for running, scheduling the student dances or all the student activities (interview with A5).

In accordance with Wolf-Wendel’s (1998) theory that the characteristics of an institution influence its graduates’ successes, the stakeholders interviewed attributed most of the student success at Assisi to the small school environment, the positive influence of a caring faculty and the quality relationships developed with other students. They declared that Assisi is like family, a brotherhood where fellow students encourage one another to do and act their best, are friendly, accepting, and show respect for each other. As one boy is reported to have said, “When you see the same small group of people for four years, it has that effect. It does amount to a powerful experience” (Zacharia, 2006, p. 30). Another student testified, “Assisi Franciscan is my second family. Assisi has helped me build character development toward manhood” (Assisi, 2009, *The Assisi Experience*,

para. 7). A well-known alumnus has said, “Assisi experience creates long-lasting intense friendships” (Assisi, 2007, Video).

Much of the literature on leadership reports that effective leaders are relational; they have the ability to collaborate and work well with others (Greenleaf, 1977; Jaworski & Flowers, 1996; Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Rhodes, 2007). My observations and interviews indicate that a student steeped in Assisi for four years will have been influenced by many positive relationships in its small, familiar setting. Through the years the student population at Assisi has fluctuated between 600 and 150 students. Although the classes I observed ranged from a low of 11 to a high of 22 students, the average class had less than 15 students. The numbers tended to be smaller in the upper grades, especially in the honors classes. The students seemed comfortable with each other, the teachers, and the overall school environment. There was a lot of smiling and cheerful banter in and out of the classrooms. The boys tended to treat teachers with a friendly respect and value the relationships that are developed in the school. One junior boy said, “if there’s anything that I could say that I really cherished that I got at Assisi it would be the friendships” (interview with J3).

Many of those interviewed stated that the small school atmosphere contributes to better relationships and enhances the learning environment. One junior boy, when asked what was good about Assisi, said, “[The] small classes, which help for better learning and individual attention” (interview with J2). Another agreed saying, “it’s a smaller school; you know pretty much everybody that’s in the school, and it’s a good learning environment” (interview with J1). One student reported, “[It’s] like a family

environment, there are teachers here that I consider like aunties and uncles, I call one teacher Pops, ... I call another one my grandfather; ... it's a real family environment" (interview with J3). Many of the students and alumni attributed their success to the spirit of family and camaraderie that is fostered at Assisi. An alumnus who has gone on to leadership at the highest levels of a big city police department said, "It's amazing how a feeling of belonging and how that can enhance your motivation to try to achieve and try to excel" (Assisi, 2007, video).

The data from the interviews and observations conducted indicate that the small school environment at Assisi is conducive to a better learning environment, a sense of belonging or family, and to building relationships. Although on a few occasions I witnessed displays of animosity, I witnessed far fewer than I would have expected among a large group of adolescent boys with so many from at-risk backgrounds. The positive effects of the sense of camaraderie and family referred to in the interviews seemed evident in the observed life of the school. One senior boy commented that the small school environment builds leadership skills saying,

I think ... the brotherhood; I think that's the most important thing, developing leadership skills. At larger schools you might not be able to interact with your fellow students, you might not even know some of them. At a smaller school you see the same people everyday, you have the same classes with them, and ... you're forced to interact within a smaller school because you're going to see the same people everyday. You're going to see them in class; you see them outside of class, so.

Institutional Factor 6: An All African American School

Because it was all black, it instilled in me tremendous confidence... It was nice to have a time in my life when race was not an issue. I was just a student doing the best I could. There were others who were smarter. I didn't think they were smarter because they were white. They were smarter because they were smarter (Hubert as cited in Zacharia, 2006, p. 19).

While Assisi has never sought to exclude anyone, one of the most unique factors in the life of Assisi is that it is purposefully African American. This fact is important to many of the current stakeholders. Three of the parents I interviewed said that one of the reasons they chose Assisi for their son is that it is an African American school and that they wanted their son to be around positive African American male role models. Two students, neither sons of parents interviewed, also said that it was a factor in their coming to Assisi. One student said, "I came to Assisi because I didn't get accepted to De La Salle, and my father didn't want me to go to Mt. Carmel. He wanted me to be around more people of my race" (interview with S4).

According to Riordan's (1994) study of 1,251 minority students from 39 coed and single-sex Catholic schools, giving a single-sex education to minority boys can provide them with significant advantages. Riordan found that for minority students, all from urban Catholic schools, after controlling for initial ability, race, and home background variables, the average test score advantage for boys in single-sex schools increased to 0.7 [tenths of a school year]. Furthermore he found that minority boys who attend single-sex schools have a significantly better locus of control than minority boys who attend coed schools. He found no such difference for European Americans or minority girls. Riordan maintains that, "the single most important determinant of occupational status is

educational attainment” (p. 114). If Riordan’s findings are correct, establishing a single-sex school for minority boys should have a positive influence on their leadership potential. Bandura’s (1997) theory of reciprocal determinism would also lead us to this conclusion. The fact that African American boys are seeing African American men and boys in positions of authority and leadership should enhance their belief of personal efficacy, a major source of self-confidence, hope, and aspirations.

When asked what qualities are nurtured at Assisi, one teacher said, “Pride – Because of Assisi uniqueness as a private, all male, African American institution. They are constantly reminded of that. The school is a unique, special place” (interview with Mr. L). Another staff member said, “Assisi reinforces the African American identity. The students have a better self-identity about being African American” (interview with Mrs. S).

Summary of Institutional Factors that Encourage or Nurture Leadership Development

We have seen that a number of factors encourage or nurture leadership development at Assisi; among these are the number of positive male role models and the values modeled and taught there. The values nurtured at Assisi that correspond to the qualities of leadership cited in the literature are: servant-leadership nurtured by faith, compassion, and acceptance; good morals, character, success through perseverance, wisdom and foresight. Also cited by the stakeholders as factors that nurture leadership development are: high expectations, a strong academic environment, and the camaraderie, enhanced self-expression, and lack of distractions in single-gender classes. Many of the stakeholders also indicated the small school, family environment, enhanced

opportunities for involvement in activities, and the all African American environment as factors that contribute to leadership development at Assisi.

One of the more enlightening experiences I had while observing at Assisi was attending the graduation. I believe the graduation mass and ceremony were a symbolic summation of many of the values taught at Assisi and in themselves are experiences that encourage leadership development in the graduates. The graduation took place in a large, beautiful, ornately decorated, middle-class church in a diverse but mostly European American neighborhood just a mile or so from the school. The rich interior, the large stained glass windows, the ornately carved wood paneling, the three story high ceiling with the beautifully carved canopy over the alter on 15 foot high stone pillars, all spoke of wealth and power. There was nothing humble or disadvantaged about this church. It fit in with the beauty of the broad boulevard and the surrounding neighborhood full of beautiful stone architecture as well as the influence of the prestigious university and its magnificent architecture only blocks away. Into this splendid setting, keeping step with the rhythm of *Pomp and Circumstances* marched 32 boys. Leading them were over 20 faculty members in the caps and gowns of scholars, over three quarters of them African American males.

To What Extent do Students and Graduates Exhibit Leadership?

In the summer of 1985 Assisi gained national recognition as one of the 65 Exemplary Private High Schools in the United States. That fall, in a local recognition ceremony Bishop William E. McManus, the Superintendent of Chicago Catholic schools when Assisi was founded, admitted to the crowd “twenty-five years ago I was afraid Assisi would be a big mistake; it would retard racial integration; it would be a school for gangs, all the more so because it wasn’t co-educational; it would fall apart if the Franciscans pulled out. ... I was dead wrong.” Instead Assisi became

a haven where “young black men, with the odds all against them ... have made a great success of their lives” (Zacharia, 2006, p. 44).

Considering that most Assisi students come from disadvantaged backgrounds, the testimony that they in general “have made a great success of their lives”, as stated above is indication that they do exhibit leadership. Students exhibit leadership formally as they officiate in clubs, captain teams, and serve on the student council. They demonstrate servant leadership informally throughout the school as they help students and teachers, and take personal and collective responsibility for their selves and the school.

Coach S (interview) told me that in the ten years he has taught at Assisi, not one of his students had been murdered and that nearly all of them went on to college. In the 20 years that he had taught in the local public schools 18 of his students had been murdered and few of the students went on to college. Mrs. C (interview) reported that the only Assisi student that she could recall getting killed was 17 years ago, this in a city that has averaged more than 30 student killings per year for the last three years (I know, 2008; WLS, 2009). It seems that Assisi students steer clear of destructive influences while gravitating toward the acquisition of knowledge and wisdom, qualities of a successful leader (Greenleaf, 1977; Locke, 1991).

Assisi students exhibit qualities of leadership in a variety of ways. They exhibit character when they display acceptance and welcome to strangers. Two of the boys who transferred in at the beginning of their junior year from large coed schools, one suburban Catholic, and one from a large urban public school, reported that it is usually difficult to transfer to a new school in the middle of your high school years. They were expecting to be treated as outsiders at first but the students at Assisi were very friendly and made them

feel accepted and welcome from the beginning. Another sign of character is displayed by the fact that this is a school full of unmarred, old wooden desks. I have taught adolescents for 36 years. I have found that the combination of old wooden desks and adolescent boys is often a recipe for graffiti and woodcarving. At Assisi I saw none. Nor did I observe a janitorial force busily keeping everything polished. What I saw was boys exhibiting character, caring for their school, like the boys I witnessed picking up after others and sliding in other students' chairs on their way out of class.

In my observations I saw boys take leadership in classrooms by helping boys who were off task get started on their work. In science labs I saw boys who finished early wander over to tables where others were goofing off and start showing them how to set up their experiment. In another class I watched as one boy took leadership of the rest of the class reminding them to settle down and start taking the review seriously so they could do well on an upcoming test. In yet another class I watched as a student playfully admonished his classmate, who was doing nothing, to join him and get to work. He slid his chair next to the one goofing off and the two of them began to work.

The Assisi students exhibit leadership as they excel academically, take the initiative to encourage and push their classmates to do well, and go to college en masse when so many from nearby schools do not (Jackson, 2008). They exhibit academic leadership when they earn college scholarships as two-fifths of the senior class did this year. A number of them received full rides. An alumnus from the class of 65' stated that most of the graduates went on to college back then, an era when far fewer African Americans attended college than now (NCES, 1996). One alumni stated, "[Even] though

the education wasn't at the same level as... some other private school[s], I came out of there very confident that I could compete in the wider world and more immediately at a university" (Blakely as cited in Zacharia, 2006, p. 27).

My survey of the Assisi upperclassmen indicates that they believe that they currently exhibit leadership qualities identified in the leadership literature (see appendices K and F2), or will in the future as a result of attending the school. One hundred percent of the 53 upper classmen surveyed indicated that they believe their experience at Assisi has contributed to their leadership potential; 98% indicated that their experience at Assisi has contributed to their ability to formulate a vision for the future and pursue goals; 92% that Assisi has contributed to their becoming an effective communicator; 91% that their experience at Assisi has contributed to their ability to accept challenges and persevere in the face of adversity, and 87% that their experience at Assisi has contributed to their ability to work with and encourage others.

The data collected indicates that leadership development at Assisi is enhanced and influenced to the extent that students are safer, involved in more productive activities, experience growth in career aspirations, in their desire to serve and help others do their best, and in their general ability to lead. As one student reported,

... I've chosen the right decisions while I've been here and that's why I feel that I'm successful; going to college, going to own my own business when I come out of college, hopefully come back to give back to Assisi; so that's my plan (interview with S6).

Regarding growth in his career aspirations another student reported,

...because the teachers, they like take the time to like help you with all your problems and I hope one day I could like do that for a kid who wants to come to Assisi, like maybe I can like help him ease his pain,

(interview with F6).

Evidence that Graduates Exhibit Leadership Beyond Assisi

“For 50 years Assisi Franciscan High School has dared to achieve greatness. ...[It] has provided and must continue to provide leaders to an increasingly complex society” (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 7).

Based on the data collected from documents and interviews, the essence of leadership in *unto perfect manhood* is first of all personal leadership, having the qualities of perseverance, wisdom, and self-control; qualities that impact ones own life as well as the lives of those around him for good. During interviews the faculty members spoke to the personal qualities that they see in the graduates of Assisi. They mentioned such things as compassion, brotherhood, character, honesty, perseverance, a sense of family, understanding, respect and acceptance of differences, a strong sense of who they are, and strength of spirit. One graduate who went on to become the interim superintendent of a large city police department stated, “There are specific aspects [of Assisi education] that made me a person of great perseverance” (Assisi, 2007, video).

What data I did collect, from interviews with administrators, faculty, and alumni (examples below), and documents (see Appendix M), seemed to confirm that most Assisi graduates do live up to the expectation of personal leadership. As stated in *In Virum Perfectum*, “Most of the students grew up to be good family men, community citizens, and were parishioners you could count on” (Zacharia, 2006, p. 35). I did not find evidence to the contrary. The administrator cited earlier, who has been affiliated with the school in one way or the other since he entered as a freshman in 1973, affirmed that Assisi has had many graduates go into leadership in all kinds of professions but added,

“More importantly, Assisi grads do live up to the motto of perfect manhood. They become good family men, responsible leaders in their homes and communities” (interview with A1).

While the Assisi definition of leadership includes areas of personal or inner leadership, it also includes qualities of public or outward leadership such as academic and career success, positions of influence or supervision, as well as service. Most who spoke of the school motto spoke of graduates being successful in outward leadership, touching more on examples of service and academic or career success. This is the area that most people spoke to when talking about Assisi graduates and leadership. According to school documents, Assisi has produced doctors, lawyers, business executives and elected officials (Assisi, 2009, School Profile, para. 3).

When I asked students if Assisi graduates attain positions of leadership, they seemed to equate it with career success. One student said, “It seems that most of the alumni are successful, like they get good jobs, have good careers” (interview with S1). Another student responded, “Lots of alumni have gone on to prestigious schools and careers (interview with S2). A third added, “All the alumni that come back have a reputation for having accomplished good things. Assisi is a respected and prestigious school in the city” (interview with S3). Father H spoke of two graduates who have gone on to university leadership. “[M]any of our students outdo themselves” he said (interview with Father H), explaining that they become overachievers, men of accomplishment. Mrs. S, who has been involved with the school in one way or another since she was on the cheerleading squad 40 years ago said,

Since its inception Assisi has opened its arms to the average student and given them a good foundation. Many have not taken advantage but many others have gone on to become doctors, lawyers, judges; we have had many judges, prominent physicians. Large numbers have become successful. Phenomenal numbers have gone on into upper echelons (interview with Mrs. S).

She told of one of the Assisi graduates that is a Chick Evans Scholar and president of the Chick Evans House at a very large, upper tier university, stating, “He is the only African American president of a Chick Evans House in the country” (interview with Mrs. S).

The first African American president of the Chicago Bar Association is an Assisi graduate (Zacharia, 2006). A member of the alumni association, equating success with leadership as so many of the interviewees did, said, “I consider us to be successful. We have business executives, high school principals, teachers, policemen, lawyers, doctors, so we run the gambit of success” (interview with A2). Another alumnus added,

College was not an option for me ..., but the education that I got at Assisi allowed me to go on and compete in the business world, in competing for employment jobs and so forth with people that had graduated from college (interview with A4).

One of the alumni summed it up by saying,

I’m not, not quite sure how you determine leadership, but I think the people who came through [this school], whether it was a single class, or prior to that if you look at successful people in the United States and in [this] city ... you’ll see a lot of them came from Assisi (interview with A2).

Although almost all Assisi graduates attend college and many go on to prestigious careers, many of them do not graduate from college. According to Father H, who has been at the school for 45 years, a number of students leave college before graduation. He could not tell me how many or what percentage. I checked with other faculty and

administrators who confirmed this. No one could tell me how many. According to Father H they drop out mostly for lack of finances but in some cases it is because the chose colleges that they were not suited for.

Summary of the Extent to Which Students and Graduates Exhibit Leadership

We have seen that Assisi students and graduates exhibit formal leadership by serving as officers in everything from school clubs and athletic teams to large city organizations such as the Bar Association and Police Department; that they have served in small ways by accepting and welcoming new students and caring for their school, and in big ways as judges, business executives, and university leaders. We have seen that Assisi students and graduates exhibit personal leadership through strength of character, moral values, perseverance, wisdom and foresight, taking responsibility for their actions, and striving to be the best that they can be. We have seen that they exhibit public leadership through service to their school, families and communities, by excelling and performing successfully both in school and beyond in their careers; that they lead in their community by going on to college en masse in a community where only a minority of African American males do so.

At the end of my site visits to Assisi I attended graduation. As the diplomas were awarded a couple of mothers cried out repeatedly for all in the large sanctuary to hear, “Thank you Jesus” and “Hallelujah” along with the more common applause and cheers. My first thought was a chuckle at overly emotional mothers, but later as I reflected on it, I pondered the graduation rate of African American males in our nation (less than 50%) and in the local public schools (37%) (Jackson, 2008). The number of public school

students who were murdered last school year was close to 36 (I Know, 2008). These mothers must have thought it a minor miracle that their sons were graduating from high school. Their sons were out in front, leaders in a community in which the odds were against them being so.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The Problem and Purpose of this Study

This study came out of a discovery. As I began my doctoral studies I began to come across either in reading or in person, evidence of a disproportionate number of people in leadership who were graduates of single-sex schools. What was especially intriguing to me was the number of eminent women and minority men in leadership who were graduates of such schools (see Appendices G and H). At the same time I was aware that the number of single-sex schools had been in sharp decline since the 1960s, first among colleges and universities and later among high schools. In 1966 45% of all private secondary schools and a hand-full of public high schools were single-sex. By the end of 1999, only 9% of all private secondary schools and only two public high schools in the United States were single-sex schools (DeBare, 2004).

At the same time that I was becoming aware of the above, I was also concerned about the number of at-risk and disadvantaged children in our schools. Researchers have found a strong correlation between growing up in poverty and being at-risk for poor achievement both in and out of school (Amato, 2005; McLanahan & Sandefur, 1994). Currently it is estimated that 13,000,000 children live in poverty in the United States (NCCP, 2008). Since 2000 there has been a significant increase in the number of children living in low-income families (NCCP, 2008). So we have an increase in the number of

disadvantaged children at the same time that we have a half-century decline in an educational format that might be of help to them (Agnew White, 2006; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Riordan, 1994). Among at-risk and disadvantaged children, boys seem most overtly troubled (Amato, 2005; Garbarino, 2000; Mortenson, 2006). According to a host of governmental statistics boys are 20% more likely to drop out of school, two to three times more like to be suspended or expelled from school, two to three times more likely to be diagnosed with a learning or emotional disorder, more than five times as likely to kill themselves, and over 10 times more likely to be incarcerated (Mortenson, 2006). One of the chief reasons that I set out on this study was concern about the situation of at-risk and disadvantaged children and to find out if single-sex education might help them develop a greater sense of self-efficacy, a sense that they can live stable and fulfilling lives, and lead others to do the same.

The Case and Theoretical Framework

To understand how a single-sex school might encourage and nurture leadership development, I set out to do an instrumental case study of an inner city, boys' high school serving a disadvantaged population. The theoretical framework for the study was three pronged: a framework "that examines institutions and institutional characteristics as a means to explain student post-baccalaureate success" (Wolf-Wendel, 1998, p. 142), a framework for leadership, and a framework that examines the effect of role models on observers. One of the unique aspects of a single-sex school is the number of role models with whom an observer can more closely identify.

According to Wolf-Wendel (1998), “Research on the [school] environment shows that the nature of the learning environment produces important differences in students’ aspirations, self-confidence and career potential” (p. 143). If the school environment is having such an effect, what is it about the environment that might be causing it? Wolf-Wendel maintains that much of the disproportionate success of graduates of single-sex institutions is due to the greater number of same-sex role models in positions of achievement and leadership found at such institutions. Based on a composite of faculty and student interviews, the typical student at Assisi is a young African American male, most likely being raised by his mother with few positive male role models. This student finds himself in an all male environment with males as stable leaders in every aspect of the school. He begins to see a different aspect of males than he has seen previously. The nature of the learning environment is one where African American males lead and serve in all aspects of school life. This new view of African Americans enhances his “aspirations, self-confidence and career potential” (p. 143). Rather than identify with the African American males that he has only known from the street, the young Assisi student can now identify with men who both serve and lead.

Bandura (1997) maintains that the environment, in this case the single sex institution, would have an effect upon the student in it. He states that “seeing or visualizing people similar to oneself perform successfully, typically raises efficacy beliefs in observers that they themselves possess the capabilities to master comparable activities” (p. 87). It would follow that if one were in an environment rich with role models similar to oneself, their successes would lead the students to believe that they too

can experience similar success such as complete college, have a successful career, and attain positions of leadership. In the case of Assisi, the number of successful African American men who serve as role models is not limited purely to the faculty. The administrators, the men on the boards of directors and trustees, the historical and contemporary leaders studied, the literary figures evoked, the high achieving students, and alumni also serve as role models. The typical Assisi student, surrounded by all of these role models begins to believe that he too can graduate from college and accomplish what these role models have accomplished. During interviews, several of the stakeholders at Assisi agreed that the male faculty members were important role models and played a significant positive role in helping the students' achievement and career aspirations.

Using Greenleaf's work on servant-leadership as the third leg of my theoretical framework, this investigation reviewed four studies that sought to identify the essential qualities of effective leaders (Greenleaf, 1977; Kouzes & Pozner, 2000; Locke et al., 1991; Rhodes 2007). Although the terms used to describe the essential qualities varied, each of the studies found that effective leaders are honest, competent, visionary people of integrity who are committed to their goals, effectively communicate their vision, accept challenges and persevere in the face of adversity. This study found data indicating that a number of institutional factors at Assisi Franciscan including the single-sex nature of the school encourage and nurture those qualities.

Our exemplary Assisi young man experiences a convergence of the influences of Wolf-Wendel, Bandura, and Greenleaf. He has a greater awareness of all that an African American man is and can be. In this environment he begins to develop a self-awareness

of what he is and can be as he plays off all the African American males that fill every role in the school from student leaders to top administrators who serve their families and communities. He has begun to believe that he can aspire to a college education and even leadership in a number of fields based on the quantity of role models (Wolf-Wendel, 1998), and similarity, or quality, of role models (Bandura, 1997). At Assisi he sees that the most common aspect of leadership is service. As a requirement of his Religion course and following the examples of teachers and student leaders he begins to serve around the school and community. He begins to equate service with leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). As he continues through Assisi, he becomes a servant-leader, goes to college and begins to play a role as a leader and a stable influence in both his family and community.

Discussion of Findings

The definition of leadership at Assisi can be fairly summarized as living up to the school motto, “Unto Perfect Manhood.” At Assisi the student or graduate who is moving *unto perfect manhood* is one who embodies strong character and moral values in service to his community, perseveres in the face of adversity, is generally successful in his pursuits, and practices wisdom and foresight. He is above all a committed father and family man.

A major source of hope and aspiration is one’s efficacy beliefs. Those efficacy beliefs are greatly based on who one’s role models are (Bandura, 1997). Leadership is modeled at Assisi by the historical and contemporary religious leaders who founded the school, the faculty and administrators who work there, the alumni who are lauded for their achievements, the students who take on peer leadership roles within the school, and

numerous historical and contemporary African Americans of accomplishment. These models influence leadership by modeling attributes such as service to their community and fellow man, by being people of strong character and integrity, by modeling success in their pursuits, perseverance in the face of adversity, wisdom and foresight. We have seen that the extent of the models influence on leadership development in that the students, parents, and alumni interviewed consistently attributed much of the growth and development of their leadership skills to the influence of Assisi and its faculty.

Assisi students exhibit public leadership by serving as officers in school activities and setting positive examples for their peers. They model leadership as they excel academically, as they push and encourage their classmates to “step it up” and work harder, and as they participate in service projects around the school and community. Students and alumni have served in small ways by accepting and welcoming new students and caring for their school, and in big ways as judges, business executives, and university leaders. They lead in their community by going on to college en masse in a community where only a minority of the males does so. Several of the alumni, who have exhibited leadership by serving in everything from community organizations to large city bar associations and police departments, attributed their spirit of service and leadership to the values instilled and leadership opportunities provided while students at Assisi. They would seem to agree with Wolf-Wendel (1998) “that the nature of the learning environment [at Assisi has produced] important differences in [their] aspirations, self-confidence and career potential” (p. 143).

Greenleaf (1977) maintains that one of the chief marks of a true leader is that his followers are better people for having followed him or her. As Assisi administrators, faculty, alumni and students have modeled servant leadership; it is evident that those who watch and follow them are better people and greater potential leaders for having done so. Assisi students and graduates have grown in leadership through taking responsibility for their actions, and striving to be the best that they can be. They exhibit personal leadership as they excel academically, and become faithful family men. They exhibit servant-leadership as they place their priorities on service to their families, take responsibilities in school functions and volunteer in their communities. Most of the alumni that I read of and spoke with attributed much of their leadership formation to the example of the Franciscan fathers who founded the school and the dedicated faculty that maintains it. All I spoke with seemed to agree that they are better people for having followed the values modeled by the leadership at Assisi.

Other factors that were cited for encouraging or nurturing leadership development at Assisi beside the number of positive role models (Bandura, 1997; Wolf-Wendel, 1998) were: the values taught there, high expectations, a strong academic environment, and the camaraderie, enhanced self-expression, and lack of distractions in single-gender classes (Riordan, 1990). Many of the stakeholders also indicated the small school, family environment, the all African American environment (Wolf-Wendel, 1998), and involvement in athletics and school activities as factors that contribute to leadership development at Assisi.

Many of the factors that nurture leadership development at Assisi can be found at coed schools. In coed schools there are positive role models, good values taught, high expectations and strong academic environments. There are small coed schools with family environments and plenty of opportunities for leadership in school organizations and teams. There are also many schools where the overwhelming majority of the students are African American. How then is leadership formation different at Assisi than it might be at a typical high school?

Conclusions

The two factors that set Assisi apart from a typical high school are first that it is a single-sex school and secondly that it is a faith-based school, specifically Catholic and Franciscan. We will discuss how the faith factor might impact leadership development first. There are elements of faith taught in the Christian Scriptures that encourage believers to persevere and achieve success; that a believer is empowered by God and that he can accomplish great things through God (Joshua 1:8, Acts 1:8, Philippians 4:13). The Scriptures are replete with stories of men and women who became leaders overcoming great adversity through the power of God working in them. The Christian faith both explicitly and implicitly inspires and inculcates leadership qualities such as strong character, moral values, and service to mankind. It teaches perseverance in the face of adversity by relying on a power greater than oneself; promises success in pursuits when one obeys scriptural principles, and calls upon its followers to seek wisdom and understanding. Teaching that one has recourse to a power much greater than human

strength and intellect instills confidence (faith) that one can accomplish things beyond their normal abilities.

The same things are taught in coed classes in religious schools, so what might be the difference here? Although there are definitely female heroes in the Bible, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, and the two Marys to name a few, the great majority of the heroes of the faith are men. The boys consistently receive a double dose of manly examples and virtues in this school, among them the virtues of Biblical heroes who accomplished much as they were led by faith and devoted their lives to serve their fellow man. The idea of an African Jesus as a role model is not far fetched either. He was born on the cusp of Africa and spent his early childhood in Egypt. Some forensics scholars who have studied the Semitic features of the era declare that Jesus could very likely have had a bronzed complexion and dark curly to kinky hair (Fillon, 2002).

Reliance on an ancient faith is not merely the holding of an opinion. There is contemporary medical evidence that faith and religion have an effect on quality of life and mental health (Dew, Daniel, Armstrong, Goldston, Triplett, & Koenig, 2008; Ljubicic, Peitl, Vitezic, Peitl, & Grbac, 2007). A review of 115 articles studied the link between religion and faith and teen pathologies. The researchers report that 92% of the articles reviewed found a significant link between faith and stronger mental health (Dew et al., 2008). Although this might be debated in the face of extreme violence and acts of terror committed in the name of religion, we are speaking here of faith in its normative practices as opposed to rash acts and extreme forms practiced by a few. If it is true that the practice of faith and spirituality enhance mental health and the quality of life, the faith

taught and practiced at Assisi might be considered a factor that both enhances leadership development and sets it apart from leadership development at a typical high school.

The factor that most sets Assisi apart from a typical high school, and therefore its framework for leadership development, is that it is single-sex. Several studies have found that minority students experience greater achievement in single-sex schools (Able, 2000; Agnew-White, 2007; Gurian, 2001; Hopkins, 1997; James, 2001; Parker & Rennie, 2002; Riordan, 1990; Wolf-Wendel, 1998; Younger & Warrington, 2005; YWLF, 1998).

Bandura's (1997) work on role modeling in reciprocal determinism is part of the theoretical framework of this investigation. Regarding role models Bandura states,

“... the attainments of others who are similar to oneself are judged to be diagnostic of one's own capabilities. Thus, seeing or visualizing people similar to oneself perform successfully, typically raises efficacy beliefs in observers that they themselves possess the capabilities to master comparable activities. ... The greater the assumed similarity, the more persuasive are the models successes and failures. If people see the models as very different from themselves, their beliefs of personal efficacy are not much influenced by the models' behavior” (p. 87).

The fact that Assisi is full of excellent African American role models, from peers and faculty members walking the halls, to portraits and photos of poets and presidents, will raise the efficacy beliefs of the boys who are watching according to Bandura (1997).

At Assisi the stakeholders identified five benefits of attending a single-sex school. They stated that there were fewer distractions, a greater ability to focus on academics, the ability to be oneself, to create one's own voice, without the perceived need to show off in front of the opposite sex, and the camaraderie that develops between the boys. The adult stakeholders identified the number of adult male role models as a particular need for boys and the greatest benefit of an all boys' school. We also identified the male slanted

curriculum as factor that encourages leadership development in that it holds before the boys a curriculum with which they more readily and more consistently identify. One of the benefits of being a single-sex school is having a curriculum that is responsive to the particular interests of the student body, one that can motivate the students to dig deeper and build a stronger foundation for his or her studies.

One of the administrators I interviewed remarked that one of the experiences that had the greatest positive impact on him when he was a student at Assisi was being addressed as mister. Studies have shown that gender identity is an important part of child and adolescent development (Jackson & Warin, 2000; Shuvo, 2009). It is likely that in a single-sex school a student feels a greater sense of identity and of completeness. In a boys school like Assisi a young man is never emasculated in front of the opposite sex. Instead he becomes more aware of who he is as a young African American male. He is given opportunity to identify more strongly with his manhood. He is not recognized as simply human, but more fully as a young man. He is more complete when recognized as a male, a young man, rather than just a person. In a girls school there is likely to be a similar experience. The girl would have a fuller sense of completeness when respectfully recognized as a female, a young woman rather than an androgynous student. While such recognition can and does happen in coed schools, it is more likely to happen more often and more consistently in an institution in which the curriculum and instructional environment are designed for the benefit of a particular sex. This sense of completeness as not just a student, but as a young man or woman, can have a very positive and empowering effect upon a student as evidenced by the testimony of Mr. P.

This research owes much to those who have gone before me and paved the way in the study of single-sex education, especially pioneers such as Elizabeth Tidball and Cornelius Riordan. It supports their work as well as the work of several other researchers to whom I am indebted. Based on the data gathered at Assisi and the foundational work of Agnew-White (2007), Holland (1991), Hopkins (1997), and Riordan (1990) it seems evident that single-sex schools such as Assisi are advantageous in fostering achievement among African American boys. As shown in the results the boys at Assisi tend to excel academically and attend college in greater proportion than African American males from coed schools both nationally (Jackson, 2008) and in the surrounding area (Harms, 2006). A recent study (Edmonds, 2006) found that only 40% of African American males between the ages of 18 and 24 attend college. We know that in the Midwestern city in which Assisi is found fewer than 40% of African American males graduate from college, most of them with less than a 2.0 grade point average (Harms, 2006). Comparatively, 100% of Assisi graduates attend college, confirming the work of Agnew-White (2007), Holland (1991), Hopkins (1997), and Riordan (1990).

The data gathered at Assisi also seems to support the work of Bandura (1997), Eaves (1999), Tidball et al. (1999), Wolf-Wendel (1998), and Zirkel (2002) among others in that it finds an association between the success of the graduates and the number of same-sex role models in the school. Most of the stakeholders interviewed attributed the success of the students to the hard work and example of the faculty in general, and especially to the fact that it a mostly male faculty, one that the boys can relate to more readily. The data also supports the work of Bandura (1997), Eaves (1999), Karunanayake

and Nauta (2004), Wolf-Wendel (1998), and Zirkel (2002) among others in that it found an association between success and the similarity of both the gender and race or ethnicity of the role models. Several of the stakeholders at Assisi, especially parents, attributed part of the success of the students and the school in general to the fact that it is both single-sex and African American with an African American faculty.

The data gathered at Assisi also supports the work of Rhodes (2007), and Wolf-Wendel (1998) in that it focuses on the characteristics of the institution to explain the success of the graduates and finds that a small school environment provides more opportunities for participation in leadership and enhanced relationships with, and accessibility to, the faculty along with the increased number of same-sex role models. It also provides for greater visibility of role models and their behavior. In a small school everyone not only knows who the leaders are but what they are doing. Such visibility not only allows for enhanced observation by the observers, but also for greater accountability by the role models. The class treasurer or president of drama club can often disappear at a large school but at a small school everyone knows who he or she is. Several of the stakeholders at Assisi attributed their success and leadership formation in part to the small school environment and accessibility to the caring and committed faculty. It also supports the work of Greenleaf (1977) in that it finds that the chief factors in leadership formation at Assisi include its focus on service, moral values and wisdom, service and morals that are much more readily observed due to the nature of a small student body.

As a midget standing upon the shoulder of a giant may increase the giant's reach, so this fledgling work might extend our understanding of single-sex education. Based on

a Boolean search of the topics, the study of single-sex education has been quite modest when compared with educational research in such fields as reading development or educating at-risk children. This study provides added research in a field that could use much more. Most of the pioneering and seminal research in the field has been quantitative analysis of large collections of impersonal data on achievement (Astin et al., 1996; Riordan, 1990; Tidball et al., 1999; Wolf-Wendel, 1998). Of the qualitative work found on single-sex education, most of it was at the elementary school level (Agnew-White, 2007; Holland, 1997; Hopkins, 1991), or the college level (Anderson, 1988; Eaves, 1999; Rhodes, 2007). Almost all of the studies found on single-sex education to date have focused on academic or career achievement. While some may be interpreted as finding an association between leadership and graduation from a single-sex institution (Anderson, 1988; Tidball et al., 1999; Wolf-Wendel, 1998) very few actually focus on the enhanced leadership formation as a result of a single-sex education: one of leadership formation in Catholic girls schools (Fox, 1993) and the other of leadership formation in a small women's college (Rhodes, 2007). I found only one study that investigated urban, Catholic, boys high schools (Riordan, 1990). This study extends the our understanding of the field of single-sex education in that it is a qualitative, more intimate study of an urban Catholic boys high school focusing on leadership formation. It includes a theoretical framework for leadership (Greenleaf, 1977) and looks at specific factors that enhance leadership development within the single-sex institution (Wolf-Wendel, 1998).

Alternative Explanations

While there is indication that the single-sex environment at Assisi impacts leadership development, it is certainly not the only factor. Stakeholders cited a number of other factors that were also instrumental in the development of leadership qualities at Assisi. This study also recognizes that there will be Assisi graduates that will develop little in the way of leadership qualities. While there is research that indicates that a disproportionate number of leaders come out of single-sex schools (Astin & Oseguera, 2005; Brown, 2000; DeBare, 2004; Eaves, 1999; Hardwick-Day, 2008; Morehouse College, 2007; Rhodes, 2007; Tidball et al., 1999; YWLF, 2008) it is also true that there are a great numbers of effective leaders who never attended a single-sex school.

What other factors might play a role in leadership development beside the single-sex environment and those factors already mentioned by stakeholders? One argument is that the students come from homes where leadership values and qualities are taught by their parents. According to the college counselor about a third of the students at Assisi come from middle-class and upper middle-class homes. The parents in those homes may very well be people in leadership positions and have inculcated the qualities of leadership in their children. The preponderance of Assisi grads that develop the most leadership qualities may come from those homes. There are also certainly economically disadvantaged families in which the qualities of leadership are valued and taught. Any number of great leaders can point to growing up in disadvantaged circumstance. If this is the case it still doesn't explain the highly disproportionate number of disadvantaged students who lead by going on to college from a community where so few do. The

question also remains as to why parents with such values send their sons to single-sex schools.

The argument is also offered that so many Assisi grads develop leadership qualities and go on to be successful because they recognize the investment and sacrifices their parents have made in paying the tuition and expenses of a private school when they could have sent them to a public school at very little cost. Such a sacrifice would indicate that education and achievement are priorities of the parents and would be passed down to their sons in the home. It might be reasonable to expect that the children from such homes, recognizing the sacrifices and importance that the family places on education might invest themselves more fully in their education and achieve greater success. However, if it were merely the factor of investment in education, we would expect to see similar results in achievement and career success from private schools in general, both coed and single-sex. This does not seem to be the case. There are a number of studies that have controlled for SES and family background that have found that the students in single-sex programs experience greater achievement than those in equivalent coed institutions, especially in the cases of females (Riordan, 1990; Spielhoffer, 2002; Tidball et al., 1999), minority males (Agnew-White, 2007; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Riordan, 1990), and low achieving males (Spielhoffer, 2002).

Another possible explanation for the success of Assisi students is that the rigorous academic environment and discipline doesn't so much develop leaders as simply weed-out non-leaders. This might be a reasonable explanation as half to two-thirds of Assisi students transfer to another school before graduation, in the case of the current classes,

before the junior year. Again the question remains as to why single-sex makes the difference. Within the urban area in which Assisi lies, half to two thirds of the boys drop out of high school before graduation. Why don't those who remain in school throughout the area go on to college and experience successful careers in the same proportion as Assisi students? Reports indicate that they do not (Harms, 2006; Jackson, 2008; McKeough, 2006). Assisi was the only school studied for this paper but it is probably safe to assume that it is not the only academically rigorous school that weeds out less successful students and that there are private coed schools that do the same thing. It would require further research to determine if indeed this is an important factor in leadership development and if it happens in the same proportion in rigorous, demanding coed schools as it does in single-sex schools.

It might also be argued that many of the boys at Assisi come from adverse situations, without one parent, usually the father, or have a father who is involved in gangs and or drugs. While research has shown that such adverse conditions place a young person at significant disadvantage (Fortin et al., 2006; Suh et al., 2007; Harper & McLanahan, 2004) those who learn to persevere under such adverse conditions have learned to persevere indeed. While we would recommend that families “not try this at home,” there are leaders who point to the adverse circumstances of their youth as factors that helped them become successful (Obama, 1995; Washington, 1901).

Implications of this Study

There is a body of evidence here that suggests a number of advantages for boys' schools, especially for minority boys (Eaves, 1999; Holland, 1991; Hopkins, 1997; Riordan, 1990). Along with the data on Assisi it would suggest that there be more boys schools rather than less, as is the current trend (DeBare, 2004; NCES, 2008). It is implicit in this study however that as important as the single-sex nature of Assisi is to leadership formation, it is not simply the influence of a single-sex education that brings about the desired results. There are several factors within the single-sex environment at Assisi that are also important in the outcome of leadership development: a number of positive role models, a focus on service, character and moral values, becoming a good family man, strong academics and high expectations, and a small school environment. It is also important that the role models be ones that the students can readily identify with as the more closely the students can identify with the role models, the more likely it is that they will aspire to be like them (Bandura, 1997; Karunanayake & Nauta, 2004; Zirkel, 2002). It is also important to remember that all of this goes on in a very unique way within a single-sex environment. Just as it is not simply the influence of the single-sex education that makes the difference, it is neither simply the nature of the values taught that influence the leadership formation at Assisi. It is the combination of the values taught and the uniqueness of the single-sex environment that influences leadership formation within the students at Assisi.

It is also important to remember that the role models at Assisi are not just good men; they are men of faith and model the values of that faith in the tradition of the

Franciscan order: service, compassion, self-sacrifice. Implicit in this study then is not simply that more boys schools be founded, but that more boys schools like Assisi Franciscan be founded; small schools that are founded on the values of Christ and the Franciscans, the values of service, character and moral values, high expectations, strong academics, respect for family and high regard for the cultural heritage of the student population.

There are those who will say that it is the values taught and not the single-sex environment that makes the difference as well as those who might maintain that the essential element is the single-sex nature of the school. The studies cited throughout this investigation cannot be ignored anymore than the numerous voices of the Assisi stakeholders that the single-sex nature of the school is one of the essential ingredients in the development of leadership formation at the school. Several of the studies referenced here have compared single-sex schools with similar coed schools controlled for SES and other cultural similarities (Able, 2000; Agnew-White, 2007; DeBare, 2004; Dee, 2006; Fox, 1993; Gurian & Stevens, 2005; Holland, 1991; Parker & Rennie, 2002; Riordan, 1994; Riordan, 1990; YWLF, 2008). Each of them has found that when comparing apples to apples, the advantage holds out for the single-sex school.

This study is not a comparative study but when we compare the reported outcomes of Assisi with the reported outcomes of the coed schools in the surrounding area of the city where the Assisi students live (Harms, 2006; Jackson, 2008), schools that are similar for SES, we find an advantage for Assisi. Many of the surrounding schools with lesser outcomes can claim to teach the values of service, character and good morals,

strong academics and high expectations. Some may even make the claim that they have a small school environment. The real difference between those schools and Assisi is that they are coed and Assisi is not. It is the one real distinction. By implication, we need to make those schools single-sex to truly compare Assisi to them. We also need to make them single-sex and see if that makes a difference in the outcomes of the graduates. It is also implicit that they cannot just be single-sex. They must be single-sex plus uphold the values and supply the proper role models to truly be comparable with Assisi.

Legal Ramifications

Just a few years ago, single-sex public schools would have been prohibited under Title IX, a 1972 law that forbids sex discrimination in schools receiving federal funds. I have spoken with several people who still believe that to be true. Contrary to that opinion, school districts are currently free to conduct single-sex classes and even open single-sex schools. Until November of 2004, in order to have single-sex classes a school had to show compelling reasons for doing so. When the No Child Left Behind law was passed in 2002, Female senators from both sides of the political aisle came out in favor of single-sex education as one possible remedy for educational malaise. Many of those senators had had the benefits of a single-sex education and believed that all should have fair access to such an education if they desired it. In October of 2004, new federal rules were passed calling for greater experimentation in public schools and allowing school districts to promote single-sex education. The legislation allows school districts to create single-sex schools as long as the enrollment is voluntary and substantially equivalent classes are available for members of the opposite sex. Since the ruling several hundred

districts have either begun single-sex classes or opened single-sex schools without legal obstruction (Schemo, 2006).

Limitations and Recommendations

In some ways the strength of this study, a deeper, sustained look into one school, are also its limitations. It is a study of only one school in an atypical setting in a limited time frame. It is also limited in the number of stakeholders I was able to interview. I would have liked to have interviewed a greater number of alumni and gather accurate statistics on the number Assisi graduates who finish college as well as the number that go on to actual leadership positions. The alumni that I did interview seemed to be in agreement about the outcomes of an Assisi education. I found almost no disagreement regarding the benefits of graduating from Assisi in those I interviewed. All had high praise for the school. I would also liked to have interviewed a sample of the students who have withdrawn from Assisi to have a more accurate picture of why they withdraw how many of them finish high school and college. As it was, I was limited to the students I could interview by the administration although they did seem to be a fairly representative group. I had no access to the names or records of students who had withdrawn. Limited in its scope and time, the case, beyond “naturalistic generalization” (Stake, 1995, p. 85) is not generalizable to elementary schools, coed schools, girls’ schools, or suburban middle-class boys’ schools. The greatest contribution of this study, that it is an in-depth look, is also its limitations, in that it is not a broad look at single-sex education.

Another limitation of this study is the researcher’s perspective as a white, middle-class, and cultural outsider, a perspective that limits my understanding of the lived

experiences of the participants. As a cultural outsider observations may have been misinterpreted. Interviewees may have tried to give me answers they thought I was seeking rather than what they truly believed. I tried to guard against this by interviewing a broad spectrum of people and triangulating the data with school documents and a student survey that was administered by a familiar teacher who is also a cultural insider. I also recognize that this is the work of an inexperienced researcher, the first flight of a novice. Hopefully my 55 years of experience in education and my perspective as a cultural outsider will allow me to interpret the data from a larger context and add some weight to the study.

In light of the limitations of this study and the limited study of single-sex education in general, a few recommendations are in order. First of all this study needs to be replicated in a variety of schools, single-sex and coed, urban, suburban, and rural. It would be helpful for such replications to include interviews of students that have withdrawn from the school for a variety of reasons. It would also be helpful to do case studies of individual leaders to determine what educational factors were instrumental in their development as leaders. Comparative studies of coed and single-sex schools are also recommended. More quantitative studies replicating such as Tidball's (1999, 1985, 1984, 1976) and Riordan's (1990) would be helpful to determine what kind of schools are instrumental in producing leaders and what it is about those schools that impact the development of leadership skills. If single-sex education provides any advantage for disadvantaged and at-risk students, it would seem important that the education community study it further as a possible resource for educational improvement.

APPENDIX A
STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

STUDENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Before beginning the interview think of something that has happened at school in the past 2 weeks that has been important to you. What is it about the school and you that make that event important?

Background Questions

1. What led to the choice of Assisi for your education? If your parents made the choice, what were their reasons?
2. What were your perceptions of Assisi before attending?
3. Given a choice between a religious coed school and Assisi, which would you have preferred? Why?
4. What activities are you involved in? Why?
5. What do you do in that activity?

Reflections:

1. What is it like to attend Assisi?
2. What role do students have at Assisi?
3. Can you tell me your story of being at Assisi? First year? Last year? Last week?
4. What are teacher-student interactions like in class? Out of class?

5. What are student-student interactions like in class? Out of class?
6. How have your feelings about Assisi changed as you have continued in school?
7. How did going to Assisi affect relationships with other kids in the community who were attending other schools? With boys? With girls?
8. How do you view Assisi over all? What has it done for you?
9. How do you think the Assisi education experience has influenced your life?
 - a. Career choices?
 - b. Opposite-sex relationships?
 - c. Same-sex relationships?
 - d. Intellectually?
 - e. Emotionally?
10. What qualities do you think you have developed as a result of being at Assisi? What is it about Assisi that has nurtured those qualities?

APPENDIX B
FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

APPENDIX C
PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

PARENT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Before beginning the interview think of something that has happened at school in the past 2 weeks that has been important to you. What is it about the school and you that made that event important?

Background Questions

1. What led to the choice of Assisi for your son's education?
2. What were your perceptions of Assisi before he attended?
3. What activities is your son involved in? Why?
4. What does he do in that activity?

Reflections:

1. What is it like to be a Assisi parent?
2. What role do students have at Assisi?
3. Can you tell me your story of being a Assisi parent? First year? Last year? Last week?
4. How have your feelings about Assisi changed as your son has continued in school?
5. How does going to Assisi affect relationships with other kids in the community who were attending other schools? With boys? With girls?

6. How do you view Assisi over all? What has it done for your son?

7. How do you think the Assisi education experience has influenced your son's life?
 - a. Career choices?
 - b. Opposite-sex relationships?
 - c. Same-sex relationships?
 - d. Intellectually?
 - e. Emotionally?

8. What qualities do you think you have your son has developed as a result of being at Assisi? What is it about Assisi that has nurtured those qualities?

APPENDIX D
ALUMNI INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

ALUMNI INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Before beginning the interview think of something that happened at Assisi that was important to you. What was it about the school and you that made that event important?

Background Questions

1. What led to the choice of Assisi for your education? If your parents made the choice, what were their reasons?
2. What were your perceptions of Assisi before attending?
3. Given a choice between a religious coed school and Assisi, which would you have preferred? Why?
4. What activities were you involved in? Why?
5. What did you do in that activity?

Reflections:

1. What was it like to attend Assisi?
2. What role did students have at Assisi?
3. Can you tell me your story of being at Assisi? First year? Last year?
4. What were teacher-student interactions like in class? Out of class?
5. What were student-student interactions like in class? Out of class?

6. How did your feelings about Assisi change as you continued in school?
7. How did going to Assisi affect relationships with other kids in the community who were attending other schools? With boys? With girls?
8. How do you view Assisi over all? What did it do for you?
9. How do you think the Assisi education experience influenced your life?
 - a. Career choices?
 - b. Opposite-sex relationships?
 - c. Same-sex relationships?
 - d. Intellectually?
 - e. Emotionally?
10. What qualities do you think you developed as a result of being at Assisi? What is it about Assisi that nurtured those qualities?

APPENDIX E
OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

OBSERVATION NOTES

School: _____ Class: _____

Class Composition _____ Age range _____

Characteristics of this class that nurture or stifle leadership development:

Physical:

Walls:

Set up:

Social/Emotional

Teacher-student

Student-teacher

Student-student

Explicit Curriculum as regards leadership development

Implicit Curriculum as regards leadership development

Null Curriculum as regards leadership development

APPENDIX F1
STUDENT LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Student Leadership Survey

Please respond to the questions below by circling the appropriate number from **0** for **strongly disagree** to **3** for **strongly agree**.

1. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my ability to accept challenges and persevere in the face of adversity.

Strongly disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

0.....123

2. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my ability to formulate a vision for the future and pursue goals.

0.....123

3. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my ability to work with and encourage others.

0.....123

4. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my becoming an effective communicator.

0.....123

5. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my potential as a future leader.

0.....123

Assuming that your Assisi' experience has contributed to your leadership potential, on a scale of 0 - 3, which of the following influenced or played a role in your development as a leader while at Assisi Franciscan?

Please circle the number appropriate number.

0 = no influence

1 = might have contributed to your development as a leader

2 = probably contributed to your development as a leader

3 = definitely contributed to your development as a leader

1. Initial enrollment experience in which you committed to conduct yourself as a man of integrity and faith, who believes in the values of truth, unity, and compassion, and will never be afraid to show and live out those values in his life.

0 1 2 3

2. Participation in athletics
0 1 2 3
3. Participation in clubs or organizations
0 1 2 3
4. Community Service requirement
0 1 2 3
5. All male classroom environment
0 1 2 3
6. All male school environment beyond the classroom (as opposed to a coed school that has single-gender classes)
0 1 2 3
7. The spiritual life of the campus
0 1 2 3
8. The values and beliefs taught
0 1 2 3
9. The examples and modeling of faculty and staff
0 1 2 3
10. Former graduates who were held up as examples and models of leadership and success
0 1 2 3
11. The examples and modeling of fellow students in leadership roles
0 1 2 3
12. The influence of an almost entirely male faculty.
0 1 2 3

APPENDIX F2
RESULTS OF STUDENT SURVEY
PRIORITIZED BY STRONGEST TO WEAKEST ATTRIBUTES

RESULTS OF STUDENT SURVEY
PRIORITIZED BY STRONGEST TO WEAKEST ATTRIBUTES

Please respond to the questions below by circling the appropriate number from **0** for **strongly disagree** to **3** for **strongly agree**.

(% Agree) (-Soph)

1. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my potential as a future leader. (92%) **(100%)**
2. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my ability to formulate a vision for the future and pursue goals. (89%) **(98%)**
3. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my becoming an effective communicator. (86%) **(92%)**
4. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my ability to accept challenges and persevere in the face of adversity. (85%) **(91%)**
5. My experience at Assisi has contributed to my ability to work with and encourage others. (83%) **(87%)**

II. Assuming that your Assisi' experience has contributed to your leadership potential, on a scale of 0 - 3, which of the following influenced or played a role in your development as a leader while at Assisi Franciscan?

Please circle the number appropriate number.

0 = no influence

1 = might have contributed to your development as a leader

2 = probably contributed to your development as a leader

3 = definitely contributed to your development as a leader

13. Community Service requirement (85%) **(88%)**
14. Initial enrollment experience in which you committed to conduct yourself as a man of integrity and faith, who believes in the values of truth, unity, and compassion, and will never be afraid to show and live out those values in his life. (84%) **(92%)**
15. Participation in athletics (*pushed to win*) (80%) **(80%)**
16. Participation in clubs or organizations (76%) **(75%)**
17. The values and beliefs taught (75%) **(84%)**
18. The influence of an almost entirely male faculty (75%) **(80%)**
19. The examples and modeling of fellow students in leadership roles (75%) **(82%)**
20. Former graduates who were held up as examples and models of leadership and success (75%) **(84%)**
21. The spiritual life of the campus (67%) **(75%)**
22. The examples and modeling of faculty and staff (66%) **(71%)**
23. All male classroom environment (64%) **(68%)**
24. All male school environment beyond the classroom (as opposed to a coed school that has single-gender classes) (61%) **(65%)**

APPENDIX G
NOTABLE AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS WHO ARE GRADUATES OF
SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS

Notable African-American Leaders who are graduates of Single-Sex Schools

- Bond, Julian (Civil Rights activist)
- Bradley, Edward (Award winning broadcast journalist)
- Cosby, Bill, (renowned humorist)
- Franklin, Shirley (noted below)
- Hubert, Donald (First African American President of Chicago Bar Association)
- Hughes, Langston (Well known poet and author)
- Jackson Maynard (former mayor of Atlanta, GA)
- Jackson, Samuel (Award winning actor)
- King, Martin Luther
- Lee, Spike (film maker)
- Marshall, Thurgood (First African American Supreme Court Justice)
- Parks, Rosa (Civil Rights leader, noted below)
- Patrick, Deval (Gov. Massachusetts)
- Pitts, Byron (chief national correspondent for The CBS Evening News)
- Powell, Colin (no S-G school but significant exp. in Army ROTC before it was coed)
- Rice, Condoleezza (noted below)
- Satcher, Dr. David (former Surgeon General)
- Sowell, Thomas (Stanford economist & award winning author)
- Steele, Michael (first African American to chair the Republican National Committee)
- Sullivan, Dr. Louis (former Health and Human Services Director)
- Thomas, Clarence (Supreme Court Justice)
- Washington, Denzel (Academy award winning actor)

APPENDIX H
NOTABLE WOMEN LEADERS WHO ARE GRADUATES OF
SINGLE-SEX SCHOOLS

Notable Women Leaders who are graduates of Single-Sex Schools

- Albright, Madeline
- Clinton, Hillary
- Faust, Drew Gilpin (First female President of Harvard)
- Feinstein, Diane (senator)
- Ferraro, Geraldine (1st female Vice-Presidential candidate)
- Franklin, Shirley (First female Afro-American mayor of Atlanta)
- Goodall, Jane
- Graybiel, Anne (1st female winner of National Medal of Science)
- Guthrie, Janet (1st women to race in Indie 500)
- Healy, Bernadine (First female head of NIH)
- McCormick, Anne O'Hare (1st women to win Pulitzer)
- Mead, Margaret
- O'Keefe, Georgia
- Parks, Rosa
- Pelosi, Nancy (1st female Speaker of the House)
- Rice, Condoleezza
- Ride, Sally
- Simpson, Joanna (NASA scientist, first women to earn a doctorate in meteorology)
- Sotomayor, Sonia (1st female Latina named to Supreme Court)
- Walters, Barbara (Pioneering women journalist, first women news co-anchor)
- Woodruff, Katherine Fanning (Editor Christian Science Monitor, 1st female president of American Society of Newspaper Editors.)

APPENDIX I

FACULTY SURVEY: SINGLE-SEX V COED GRADUATES

APPENDIX J
RESULTS OF FACULTY SURVEY USING CHI SQUARE

RESULTS OF FACULTY SURVEY USING CHI SQUARE

Chi Square Test on Association Between Leadership at New Trier High School and
Graduation from a Single-Sex School

**Chi-Square Test: Comparing Administrators, Leaders and Regular Faculty by
school type attended**

	Administrators	Leaders	Regular Faculty	Total
S-S (expected)	15 10.33	18 11.94	16 26.73	49
Coed (expected)	43 47.67	49 55.06	134 123.27	226
Total	58	67	150	275

Chi-Sq = 11.547, DF = 2, P-Value = 0.003

APPENDIX K
QUALITIES OF SUCCESSFUL LEADERS FOUND IN
THREE STUDIES ON LEADERSHIP

Qualities of Successful Leaders as found in three studies on Leadership

Greenleaf (1977)

- Articulates clearly
- Ethical
- Listener
- Persuasive
- Reflective
- Relational
- Responsive
- Seeks consensus/collaborates
- Stewardship first
- Visionary/has foresight
- Wise/understanding

Kouzes & Pozner (2000)

- Accept challenge
- Respond with good ideas
- Inspire shared vision
- Effective communicators
- Have the interest of others at heart
- Encouragers
- Committed
- Competent
- Serve as role models
- Honest
- Visionary

Locke et al (1991)

- Visionary
- Articulate the vision (effective communicator)
- Knowledgeable & skillful
- Capacity to realize vision
- Confident
- Formulate strategy
- Have drive and ambition
- Tenacious and proactive in pursuing goals
- Are honest and have integrity
- Persevere in the face of adversity

APPENDIX L

AFRICAN AMERICAN MANHOOD PLEDGE

African American Manhood Pledge

I vow to the best of my God given ability to be a Righteous African American man.

I vow to live a religious life always seeking to do what is morally right and good.

I will respect my parents, teachers, and other elders in the community and in so doing I will respect myself, and my peers.

I will take responsibility for my conduct to give of my talents, my knowledge and my skills to make the world a better place to live.

I will restrain myself from doing anything wrong that would embarrass my ancestors, my family, my community, or myself.

I will live in the rhythm of oneness and wholeness with the universe, always creating oneness, joy and peace in the environment in which I live.

I will live a life of redemption recognizing that life always offers a second chance to redeem the mistakes of the past.

I will live the seven “Rs” in my daily life because I will shape history. I will decide the future and I will take my people to the victorious shores of our destiny.

We are brothers in the struggle. We raise our palms to heaven in honor of God.
We center and focus our strength as African American men because we know we are

Men of Destiny
I am because we are
And because we are
Therefore I am.

Anonymous

APPENDIX M

ASSISI FRANCISCAN HIGH SCHOOL PROFILE

Assisi Franciscan High School Profile
In Virum Perfectum - *“Unto Perfect Manhood”*

Assisi Franciscan High School, a college preparatory high school, strives for the highest standards of academic excellence. Assisi graduates are sought after by prestigious colleges and universities nationwide.

Assisi is accredited by the North Central Association and certified by the Illinois State Board of Education. Honors classes and Advanced Placement (AP) courses are available for the most proficient students.

It has produced doctors, lawyers, business executives, and elected officials. Civic leaders and U.S. presidents have praised its accomplishments. Colleges and universities have recognized its talent. Teachers, parents, students, and staff have embodied its indomitable spirit. For 50 Years Assisi Franciscan High School has dared to achieve greatness. And the quest continues.

Mission Statement

The mission of Assisi Franciscan High School is to produce leaders who embrace academic excellence and embody wisdom, character, and moral values. The goal of Assisi is to develop young men consistent with the school’s motto *In Virum Perfectum*, i.e., “Unto Perfect Manhood.” This goal is accomplished by providing a competitive college preparatory education and character-building program in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions.

Values Statement

Assisi Franciscan high School is committed to a rigorous program of academics, religious education, community service, athletics and social activities designed to develop the mind, body, and spirit of each student; instilling the Gospel of Faith, Justice, Spiritual Discipline, and Respect for others, which form the foundation for leadership through service; open and collaborative participation with parents, the business community and civic groups to offer opportunities for students to grow in self-worth, self-discipline, and service through the exercise of critical thinking, perseverance and compassion; fostering a safe environment in which students from many backgrounds and faith traditions learn to excel in all aspects of life, prepare for a successful college experience, and become a productive and socially responsible citizen; addressing the needs of under-served communities, to provide quality educational experience at an affordable cost

Case Statement

Assisi Franciscan High School is an independent Catholic school dedicated to the Franciscan tradition of providing quality, value-centered education to predominately African-American males to develop the academic, personal, moral, and social skills needed to be confident leaders in the community.

Assisi was founded in 1962 by the Franciscan under the aegis of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Since 1992, Assisi has been financially independent. Under the ownership and direction of a lay board of trustees and three priests from the Franciscan Order, the not-for-profit school continues to be a beacon of hope for young men of promise from families of every economic background, all of whom want their sons to become competent, well-educated leaders committed to social justice, personal excellence, and moral integrity. Assisi has provided and must continue to provide leaders to an increasingly complex society.

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VITA

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Dan attended public schools in Northlake, Illinois and graduated from the University of Illinois, Chicago in 1973 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish. He earned a Master of Arts in the teaching of Spanish from Middlebury College, Middlebury, Vermont in 1977.

Dan taught Spanish at New Trier High School for 34 years where he also coached soccer and track and served as a boys' advisor to six advisories. In 2003 he received a two-year project of excellence to develop a new curriculum for the lower-level students based on the TPRS methodology of Blaine Ray, and served as a *Life Space Crisis Intervention* Instructor from 2000 to 2004. In 1997 and '98 Dan studied philosophy at the Catholic University of Ecuador and served as a consultant to Alliance Academy of Quito. For the past two years he has been teaching middle school Spanish at Christian Heritage Academy in Northfield, Illinois.

Dan has been nominated and named to *Who's Who Among America's Teachers* three times by former students. He was the recipient of a Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship in 1991 and a University of Chicago Outstanding Teacher Certificate in 1987. He has also led several community service projects to Latin America. His goal is to found

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DISSERTATION APPROVAL SHEET

The Dissertation submitted by Daniel MacKinney has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The Dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

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