

CHAPTER ONE

CHARTING A COURSE

Chapter One sets forth the organizational structure of the dissertation and informs the reader of the background of the problem prompting the study as well as the purpose of the study. The researcher delineates the questions that guide the inquiry, and explains the significance of the study.

Challenging Adult Education

As the millennium nears, knowledge of the interconnectedness of life arises from diverse fields and affords adult education the opportunity to re-examine its role in society. Society has expanded beyond the borders of the United States or even North America. Today's society is global in scope and offers increased possibilities and increased problems, as cultural values and economic practices compete for dominance worldwide. Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh see the world as getting smaller, but not coming together. "Instead," say Barnet and Cavanagh, "As economies are drawn closer, nations, cities, and neighborhoods are being pulled apart. The processes of global economic integration are stimulating political and social disintegration."¹ Henry Kissinger blames an unregulated global market for allowing an economic crisis to develop that he says threatens to become a crisis of political institutions.² A new understanding of the interconnectedness of countries economically, politically, and ecologically grows throughout the world, but Barnet and Cavanagh point out, "No world authority exists to define global welfare, much less to promote it."³

In addition to a new understanding of the interconnectedness of countries, an interesting awareness of the interconnection and interdependence of all things currently arises from both scientific fields and religion. Once only proclaimed by mystics, the recognition of this interconnectedness now emanates from many sectors and is accompanied by increased attention to a global common good. The field of transpersonal psychology studies those who recognize human inseparability from all life and who see humankind's intersubjective role in the universe. These people have an expanded knowledge of self that transcends ego and stems from an inner wisdom. From this wisdom within comes a collective rather than an individualistic perspective. Adult education stands on the threshold of new opportunity. Education of adults, based on our expanded understanding of the human potential and the problems that accompany globalization, could make an impact on the common good of the world.

A look at one who for years has championed the common good, has acknowledged a sanctity and interconnectedness among all things, and has educated in response to globalization seems timely and of valuable import to adult education. Catherine Pinkerton recognizes global societal problems and calls forth from others an awareness of potentially disastrous effects of a global economy that ignores a global common good. Who is this Catherine Pinkerton? From whence comes this education for the common good, and what is the common good? This

¹ Richard J. Barnet and John Cavanagh, *Global Dreams* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994), 13.

² Henry Kissinger, "Perils of Globalism," *Washington Post*, 5 October 1998, A21.

³ Barnet and Cavanagh, *Global Dreams*, 419.

chapter will chart an exploration of Pinkerton, the roots of her commitment to the common good, and her efforts to educate others in this realm.

Capsulizing A Champion of the Common Good

Catherine Pinkerton, a Roman Catholic Sister of Saint Joseph, has a vita filled with honors: Woman of the Year Award, 1975; The American Catholic Who's Who, 1976; Cleveland's Ten Most Influential Women, 1983; Cleveland's 100 Most Influential Women, 1984; Ohio Women's Hall of Fame, 1984; and recipient of John Carroll University Centennial Medal, 1986; to list a few.⁴ Pinkerton, profiled in the Washington Post Magazine and dubbed "Our Lady of the Lobby," currently lobbies members of the U. S. Congress on behalf of social justice legislation.⁵ As a representative of Network, a Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Pinkerton provides congressional members with an awareness of the impact impending legislation will have on all segments of society. Additionally, she calls forth from citizens an awareness of the reality of their lives at the present and in the future should particular bills get passed. Even more importantly, Pinkerton educates and advocates citizen participation in notifying their elected representatives of important issues not currently being considered in Congress.

Pinkerton may be regarded as radical but not in the conventional sense of the term. Radical is often thought of as revolutionary or extremist, but the etymology of radical is *root*. When approached about studying her commitment to the common good, a dialogue emerged around the term "radical." Pinkerton smiled and exclaimed, "Radical . . . yes . . . back to the root. I like it!"⁶ Pinkerton does have an uncanny ability to see beyond circumscribed arguments to the systemic root of the problem, an achievement that enables her to create cognitive dissonance or "teachable moments."⁷ Such teachable moments foster in the audience awareness of possibilities for change in systems many previously thought to be "set in stone." To envision better systems and know the reality of one's life necessitates going beyond the current political discourse to the root of the problem or conflict. The root of good legislation to Pinkerton is legislation based on the common good. U. S. Congress members who haven't expressed an interest in the common good, or, at least, whose voting records on Capitol Hill do not appear to Pinkerton to be indicative of a concern for the common good, often find themselves on the receiving end of Pinkerton's probing questions. Questions of how to secure just access to economic resources, reorder federal budget priorities, obtain universal health care, and transform global relationships for the common good are the focal point of her lobbying efforts.

Like radical educators in the field of adult education, Pinkerton is concerned with education and politics, is committed to action, and uses education to engender change.⁸ Across the nation, in large and small gatherings, formal ceremonies and informal settings, Pinkerton

⁴ A.E.P. Wall, editor in chief, *The American Catholic Who's Who* (Washington, D.C.: N.C. News Service, a division of the U.S. Catholic Conference, 1976).

⁵ Kerry Danner, "Our Lady of the Lobby," *Washington Post Magazine*, 23 May 1993, 8.

⁶ 1994 conversation with researcher in Arlington, VA

⁷ Leon Festinger developed theory of cognitive dissonance. Robert Havighurst referred to instances of cognitive dissonance as teachable moments. Leon Festinger, *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (1957); Robert J. Havighurst, *Developmental Tasks and Education* (New York: David McKay Co., 1961).

⁸ This is Richard Johnson's definition of a radical educator. Richard Johnson, "Really Useful Knowledge 1790-1850: Memories for Education in the 1980s," in *Radical Approaches to Adult Education: A Reader*, ed. Tom Lovett (London: Routledge, 1988), 5.

educates, *calls forth*, from others an awareness of the interdependence of all of creation and a particular need in this time of a “global commons” to understand the importance of this interdependence.⁹

In 2000, Pinkerton celebrates sixty years as a member of the Congregation of Saint Joseph (CSJ), a Roman Catholic community of “women religious.” Women religious, sometimes shortened to just “religious,” is a relatively new term for nuns or sisters and is the term Pinkerton prefers. Technically, cloistered women religious are referred to as nuns and apostolic women religious (those out in the world) as sisters, but most people, unaware of this distinction, use the terms interchangeably. Throughout this study, women religious or simply religious will be used except in places where its newness seems awkward. In those instances, the word *sister* will be substituted. The terms are used interchangeably.

To study the shaping of Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good apart from her religious community would be impossible because her whole adult life has been lived in community. Social justice and systems-change form the roots of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Founded secretly in 1650 in LePuy, France, Jesuit Father Jean Pierre Medaille gave six women permission to live and minister among the people at a time when the hierarchy of the church struggled to have all women in religious communities cloistered away from the world.¹⁰ In what today we would call a needs assessment, the women went into the four quarters of the city to determine what help was needed and then developed their plan of assistance. The following year, Bishop de Maupas recognized the plan as the vision of Saint Francis de Sales, gave official recognition to the women, and granted them permission to do their works of charity. St. Francis de Sales (1567-1622) had envisioned a community of women devoted to the love of God and the service of their neighbor; religious whose community would balance the contemplative and the active life.¹¹

A religious community in the Roman Catholic tradition develops when its founder(s) recognize a need. Theologian, Johannes B. Metz, notes that religious communities often came into being as movements that started on the fringe or margin of society: “at the point where social change first became noticeable and began to establish itself.”¹² Thus, Metz believes that religious communities have a corrective role: to redress imbalance within the church: “They are a kind of shock therapy instituted by the Holy Spirit for the Church as a whole.”¹³ The mode of response to a recognized need is referred to within the church as a charism--a divinely conferred gift of the Spirit for the community. The charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph is reconciliation, the act of bringing together or uniting again. Reconciliation has a two-part focus: reconciling

⁹ Daloz, et al. coined the phrase 'global commons' to indicate a change from the commons of the town hall, ballfields, or bodega where people met and talked to the commons of a 'shrinking world', a world in which people daily communicate globally. Laurant A. Daloz, Cheryl H. Keen, et al., *Common Fire* (Boston, Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 1996), 3.

¹⁰ Jo Ann Kay McNamara, *Sisters in Arms* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1996), 491.

¹¹ Patricia Byrne, "French Roots of a Women's Movement: The Sisters of St. Joseph, 1650-1836," diss, *A 46/12, p. 3752, June 1986* (1996) (Boston: Boston College); Mary Lucinda Savage, SSJ, "The Congregation of Saint Joseph of Carondelet," diss (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America, 1923), 1-15; Margaret Quinlan, "Sisters of Saint Joseph of Cleveland" (Cleveland, 1963), ii.

¹² Johannes B. Metz, *Followers of Christ the Religious Life in the Church*, trans. Thomas Linton (NY: Paulist Press, 1978), 12.

¹³ *Ibid.*

people to God and reconciling people to people. After the close of Vatican II, a group of Sisters of Saint Joseph with expertise in French returned to research and probe their roots. Along with Father Maurice Nepper, S.J.¹⁴, the sisters examined the early documents of the congregation in LePuy, France, to rediscover who they are and who they are called to be. From that research, the women religious developed a Consensus Statement containing the concepts that Fr. Medaille most frequently and consistently expressed about the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Stimulated by the Holy Spirit of Love and receptive to the Spirit's inspirations, the Sister of Saint Joseph moves always toward profound love of God and love of neighbor without distinction, from whom she does not separate herself and for whom, in the following of Christ she works in order to achieve unity both of neighbor with neighbor and neighbor with God directly in this apostolate and indirectly through works of charity.

in humility – the spirit of the Incarnate Word (Philippians 2: 5-11)

in sincere charity (cordiale charite) – the manner of Saint Joseph whose name she bears in an Ignatian-Salesian climate: that is, with an orientation towards excellence (Le depassement, le plus)

tempered by gentleness (douceur), peace, joy.¹⁵

Pinkerton's religious community shaped and honed a concern for the common good into an indefatigable action. This movement into action, Pinkerton calls conversion. According to Pinkerton, conversion is a three-part process: (a) intellectual contemplation "fed with new insights and ideas and challenges;" (b) reflective conversion, "the process of making the truth one's own and changing attitudes and behavior to accord with new insights;" and finally (c) the conversion of action, "the going forth to create with others the structures, processes and systems that are authentic for what is life-giving."¹⁶

One of Pinkerton's conversions prompted her to work with others for change within the institutional church; in particular, on the exclusion of women from the clergy and other leadership positions. Pinkerton treasures her Roman Catholic faith but believes there needs to be systemic change in an institution of faith that expands and limits opportunity solely on the basis of gender. Pinkerton courageously and unashamedly states she is a feminist, a label that is subject to many interpretations often accompanied by strong feelings ranging from support to condemnation. Many, particularly those disdainful of feminism, think all feminists are angry men-haters. Perhaps some are; however, feminism has many facets. Pinkerton's feminism is inclusive and offers a value for the entire world. Woman religious Joan Chittister, O.S.B.,¹⁷ best describes Pinkerton's type of feminism.

Feminism is a new world view . . . Feminism is not simply about femaleness.

¹⁴ Society of Jesus, members of which are known as Jesuits

¹⁵ Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, *Constitution and Complementary Document* (Cleveland: Congregation of Saint Joseph, 1984).

¹⁶ Catherine Pinkerton, "Untitled," Commission Tenth Anniversary (Akron, Ohio, 1995), 5.

¹⁷ Order of Saint Benedict (Benedictine Sisters)

It is about another way of looking at life, about another set of values designed to nurture a dying globe and rescue any people too long ground under foot, too long ignored, unseen, invisible...Feminism is about getting a better world for everybody.¹⁸

Pinkerton's advocacy of a better world for everybody and a power relations change arises from a commitment to a set of values and perceptions, a necessary foundation for changing the world according to Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt.¹⁹ The values set forth in the gospel of Jesus Christ, particularly as expressed in the social teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, ground Pinkerton's feminism, radical views and concern for the common good. In the gospels, Pinkerton sees Jesus Christ as turned against inequality and injustice. Richard Johnson calls this the view of a radical educator who sees Christianity "as a morality of cooperation among equals."²⁰ Johnson contrasts that with philanthropic educators who view God as a kind of policeman in the sky and human nature as finite, limited, and flawed. Radical educators, according to Johnson, hold the view of empowering each other to change the world for the common good and reject the view that "crime, riot, pauperism, vice, and even epidemic diseases are moral at root, and moral and religious education are the answer."²¹

Pinkerton's urgent belief that we can and we must champion the common good stems from the roots of her spirituality. This spirituality is not mere adherence to doctrinal tenets of a particular denomination. Religious beliefs may indeed be a part of one's spirituality, but spirituality, to the researcher, has greater depth and breadth. It encompasses and permeates one's being. Spirituality is more a way of being, a way of embracing life and the world. Pinkerton's spirituality was nurtured in educationally significant ways by events, experiences, institutions, and relationships in her life, and is made manifest in her speeches, conversations, and actions. This dissertation examines that education and illuminates Pinkerton's educative outreach for the common good.

Examination of the educative influences of a variety of institutions, events, experiences, and relationships in the shaping of a life requires a broad definition of education. This dissertation uses Robert D. Leigh's 1930 definition.

[Education] is a lifelong process beginning at birth and ending only with death, a process related at all points to the life experiences of the individual, a process full of meaning and reality to the learner, a process in which the student is active participant rather than passive recipient.²²

While there are, of course, more recent and equally broad definitions of education, Leigh's definition is particularly congruent with a Deweyan conception of education as experiential, continuous, and interactive, the same lens through which the researcher will view

¹⁸ Joan Chittister, OSB, "Heart of Flesh: A Feminist Spirituality for Women and Men," Call to Action (Detroit, Michigan, November 15, 1997).

¹⁹ Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt, "Introduction," in *Feminist Criticism and Social Change*, ed. Judith Newton and Deborah Rosenfelt (New York: Methuen, 1985), Introduction.

²⁰ Johnson, "Really Useful Knowledge," 5.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Malcolm Knowles, *The Adult Learner: A Neglected Species*, 4th ed. (Houston: Gulf Publishers, 1990), 33.

the data.²³ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, who examined the lives of five nineteenth century women reformers through a Deweyan lens of education, described in theoretical terms this notion of education: “. . . education is a process of interaction by which individual potential (instincts, propensities, talents) is activated, shaped, or channeled and a change (an observable or consciously felt difference) thereby produced in the self.”²⁴

Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good and desire to educate others regarding the importance of the common good evolved continuously through the social, spiritual, economic, and political experiences of her life. Within these multiple contexts, Pinkerton’s journey to justice had its genesis in childhood, its ongoing gestation and birth into action within a religious community, and its continuation in 1999, as an educator for the common good and a Congressional lobbyist for Network, a social justice membership organization of lay and religious women and men who put their faith into action. This study illuminates Pinkerton’s educative outreach for the common good and examines the continuous, experiential, and interactive education that called forth a commitment to the common good. To use Stephen Brookfield’s description of the exploration of the life and writings of Eduard Lindemann, this study will explore “that contradictory nexus where the private and public, the person and the political meet” to understand the connection between Pinkerton’s “individual biography and socio-historical forces.”²⁵

Components of Educator Catherine Pinkerton’s Commitment in Context

Chapter Two provides a contextual background for Pinkerton’s understanding of the common good. The construct, the common good, has been in the philosophical literature for centuries with a multiplicity of interpretations over time. Chapter Two examines the relationship of this construct to its incarnations throughout history. Also, in Chapter Two, the literature of transpersonal psychology describes the ability to transcend one’s ego and live for the common good and provides a contextual background for understanding Pinkerton’s extraordinary commitment to the common good. The common good commands attention in some eras more than others. Its neglect in one period seems to provoke calls for a return to the common good in succeeding periods.

Contemporary Calls for the Common Good

Pinkerton’s philosophy of life is so oriented toward the common good that hardly a conversation takes place without evoking this construct. No one, however, has illuminated Catherine Pinkerton’s educational outreach for the common good or studied the development of her commitment. Pinkerton, though often honored for her work in social justice and keynote speaker at many functions, is virtually unknown in contemporary literature on the common good.

Numerous contemporary writers express concern for the common good and the need for its return to a role in public policy. These books, written from various professional perspectives,

²³ Lagemann used a Deweyan lens of education to view the lives of 19th century women reformers Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *A Generation of Women* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1979).

²⁴ Lagemann, *A Generation of Women*, 6.

²⁵ Stephen Brookfield, *Learning Democracy: Eduard Lindeman on Adult Education and Social Change* (London: Croom Helm, 1987), preface.

cite multiple causes for the loss of the common good today and offer particular solutions for its return. Martin Marty, author of more than two dozen books on culture and religion, urges a change in communication focus for the common good. Marty believes factionalism has developed in the United States as a result of a heightened awareness of civil rights and the voices of many diverse cultures and groups protesting exclusion from equal opportunity. Rather than strident factionalism, Marty urges a celebration of this diversity, a refocusing of communication. As all our various communities continue to protest their victimhood and keep naming the oppressor, “blaming the dominant elites,” Marty says they all begin to sound alike.²⁶ According to Marty, their stories need to be told without focusing on victimization and blame, but accenting “what gave integrity to their group and their achievements;” “the advice for every citizen who wishes to participate in American life and its necessary arguments [is to] start associating, telling, hearing and keep talking.”²⁷

Marcus G. Raskin, Co-Founder and Distinguished Fellow of the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., urges us to find ways of stimulating empathy and a caring sense.²⁸ According to Raskin, “Our writ as human beings” of lowering human suffering cannot be heard until we “have an empathic awareness of the Other, whether nature, animal, or the person.”²⁹ Raskin sees a need in our modern democracy to raise and resolve political and ethical questions for reconstructive change in a movement for the common good.

John M. Bryson and Barbara C. Crosby of the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs urge policy entrepreneurs and advocates of policy change to recognize the necessity of shared power in confronting today’s public problems. Bryson and Crosby encourage motivation of others to pursue the common good.³⁰

Christopher Lasch, George Lodge, and Amitai Etzioni detail the costs to civil society of radical individualism and call for a rebalancing of individualism with a communal focus and civic participation.³¹ George Rupp also claims we must criticize and counter “the pervasive and corrosive individualism of our prevailing culture” for it is rationalizing “indifference to the plight of others.”³²

Rupp addresses the two communities of religious and academics and advocates going beyond the stereotypes of religious communities as appealing only to authorities they believe are infallible and also as producing propaganda aimed at engendering blind convictions. The other stereotype to surpass, Rupp adds, is that of academia as guardian of objective, value-free inquiry. Instead, Rupp urges collaboration by the two communities to acknowledge academia’s underlying values that shaped a preoccupation with technical and bureaucratic solutions to social

²⁶ Martin Marty, *The One and the Many* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997), 224.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 225.

²⁸ Marcus G. Raskin, *The Common Good: Its Politics, Policies, and Philosophy* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), 327.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 326.

³⁰ John M. Bryson and Barbara C. Crosby, *Leadership for the Common Good* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1992).

³¹ Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism* (New York: Norton, 1978), George C. Lodge, *The New American Ideology* (NY: Knopf, 1976), Amitai Etzioni, *The Spirit of Community: Rights, Responsibilities, and the Communitarian Agenda* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994).

³² George Rupp, *Commitment and Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 77.

problems, and for religious communities, an unapologetic refocusing from priority of salvation beyond this world to a spirituality concerned with corporate historical life.³³ Lawrence Daloz, et al., also recognizing a need for the common good, recently studied the lives of several people with a long-term commitment to the common good and uncovered common themes: community, compassion, conviction, courage, confession, and commitment.³⁴ Daloz, et al. found that “an awareness of the connections among things—of interrelatedness, broadly construed—is a key sensibility among those whose lives are committed to the common good.”³⁵

While these authors expressed a concerned need for the common good, none examined the work of educator/lobbyist, Catherine Pinkerton. None examined ways in which Pinkerton’s education shaped her commitment to the common good or how life as a woman religious honed a commitment into an educative action. Yet, Pinkerton lives in community, is a woman of courage and conviction, urges dialogue, action, and shared power, and witnesses a concern with corporate historical life – all qualities for which these authors call.

Catholic Communities of Women Religious in Metamorphosis

Pinkerton was born into a Catholic family, was educated in Catholic schools, and in 1999, has been a Sister of Saint Joseph for fifty-nine years. Background knowledge of the culture of religious life in general, in the United States, and specifically of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Cleveland, is foundational to understanding the context of Pinkerton’s development as an educator for the common good. Throughout Pinkerton’s community, one finds the resonance of adult education.

When Pinkerton entered the Sisters of Saint Joseph in 1939, all learning was instrumental. It was received knowledge parroted back in rote fashion. The sisters wore voluminous, floor-swirling black habits with starched brow-binding white bands and black veils on their heads.³⁶ Dutiful, unquestioning obedience and almost total separation from family and the world was demanded. Today, these same sisters don colorful blazers, blouses, and skirts, earrings and even make-up. You can find them anywhere and everywhere educating, ministering, advocating, and becoming agents of change in the world. To understand this transformation, one must turn the pages of history.

Joan Chittister, OSB,³⁷ wrote that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, whole populations, many of whom were Roman Catholics, immigrated to the primarily Protestant United States. Religious orders came from Europe with them, and other new orders formed to meet the needs of the immigrants. Soon Catholic neighborhoods, schools, orphanages, and hospitals existed – a “Catholic cocoon . . . a world within a world, a world unto itself.”³⁸ This cocoon existence was fostered by the church’s rejection of the world and Protestants’ often

33

George Rupp, *Commitment and Community*, 65-81.

³⁴ Daloz, Keen, et al., *Common Fire*.

³⁵ Daloz, Keen, et al., *Common Fire*, 17.

³⁶ Jacqueline B. Magness, "Transformation" (Va. Technological Institute and State University, 1995), 1.

³⁷ Order of Saint Benedict (Benedictine Sisters)

³⁸ Joan Chittister, "An Amazing Journey: A Road of Twists and Turns," in *Religious Life: The Challenge of Tomorrow*, ed. Cassian J. Yuhaus, CP (New York: Paulist Press, 1994), 77.

hostile reception of Roman Catholics,³⁹ but also by a desire to preserve the faith and eventually to provide sufficient education for Catholics to fit into the Protestant society. According to Chittister, Roman Catholic sisters, although often ridiculed for the Old World customs, dress, and rigidity of life they brought with them to the New World--through their hard work--enabled the eventual assimilation of Catholics into American society. The rigidity of authority, discipline, and ritual, while not appropriate in today's understanding of the person and spirituality, at that time, "made achievements commonplace that might otherwise have been impossible:"

In military fashion, objectives were set, commands were given, and results were achieved with sometimes great cost to the individuals involved. With nuns to spare, religious congregations built up a network of schools and social service agencies at the lowest possible cost and the highest possible quality. In less than one hundred years this network would challenge the best periods of church history for scope and public effectiveness.⁴⁰

Adrian van Kaam, CSSp,⁴¹ writes that the behavioristic focus on the outer world of rules and conditioning of behavior began a gradual change in the conduct of religious life in the United States with the rise of psychotherapeutic thought.⁴² What van Kaam referred to as psychotherapeutic thought was the emergence of humanistic psychology which emphasized the whole person and the nurturing of each person's potential.⁴³ Psychotherapeutic thought, according to van Kaam, stressed the inner world of "being at home in the life of experiences, conscious and unconscious."⁴⁴ Van Kaam says the changes in religious life were not without conflict with some members rejecting psychotherapeutic thought as mere theory, others rejecting all rules and regulations if they didn't fit with their personal experience, and a third group in the middle trying to reconcile the two. From this turmoil, continues van Kaam, an integrative spirituality began to emerge that "used the truth of both behaviorism and experientialism" and has been called "incarnational, existential, personalistic, or anthropological."⁴⁵

Coming Into One's Own Through Dialogic Learning

The nurturance of potential encouraged some women religious to explore ministries other than those in which they had been placed. Through contemplation and the dialogic process of communal discernment, individuals often chose alternative ministries. Currently, women

³⁹ Anthony S. Bryk, Valerie Lee and Peter B. Holland, *Catholic Schools and the Common Good* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1993); Neil G. McCluskey, *Catholic Viewpoint on Education* (New York: Harvard University Press, 1959).

⁴⁰ Chittister, "An Amazing Journey," 77.

⁴¹ Congregation of the Holy Ghost and the Immaculate Heart of Mary

⁴² Adrian van Kaam, "Introduction," in *Sisters for the World* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1966), 8.

⁴³ Descriptions of humanistic psychology can be found in the following: Marcie Boucouvalas, "Transpersonal Psychology: Scope and Challenges Revisited," in *Embracing Transcendence: Visions of Transpersonal Psychology*, ed. E.M. McNeill and S.I. Shapiro (Stafford Heights, Australia: Bolda-Lok Publishing and Educational Enterprises, 1995), 1-25; Anthony Sutich, *Transpersonal Psychology* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1969); Charles T. Tart, "Introduction," in *Transpersonal Psychologies: Perspectives on the Mind from Seven Great Spiritual Traditions*, ed. Charles T. Tart (San Francisco: Harper, 1991 (2nd. ed.)):

⁴⁴ van Kaam, "Introduction," 8.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

religious, no longer relegated always as groups to nursing, teaching, social work, or a cloistered life, are involved in many ministries focusing on numerous aspects of the common good. In 1999, these women continue to discern and “listen for” (*obey*) the current expressions of charisms in ministry. Pinkerton described the process of taking responsibility for discernment as: “It’s like being pilgrims in a reality that is adrift itself and being missioned for that reality and its conversion/transformation [while at the same time], needing that reality to show us who we are and have become – to mirror us to ourselves; in a sense to be an instrument of our conversion/evangelization.”⁴⁶

The broad range of ministries reflects vast changes in the Roman Catholic church in the United States and, even more so in religious life in the past 60 years. Prior to Vatican II (1962-1965) convened by Pope John XXIII (1881-1963), the church rejected modernity and all its “errors.” During Vatican II, however, “the windows were thrown open” to see all the good in the world.⁴⁷ The Vatican II changes were well documented for all the world, but Vatican II changes didn’t happen in a vacuum. Many other changes less well known had been taking place in the Roman Catholic Church, particularly among communities of women religious, many years prior to Vatican II.

Interestingly, higher education after World War II had a significant influence on preparing the sisters for Vatican II by indirectly changing the isolation of women religious from each other and from the world. The passage of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, commonly known as the G. I. Bill (1944), designed to reintegrate veterans into society without totally disrupting the economy,⁴⁸ brought a renewed emphasis on education in the United States. Thousands of military veterans accepted the free education provided by the government. So many literacy classes, vocational schools, and colleges “sprang up” to compete for these students that a means for quality control had to be instituted. Eventually, this quality control spilled over into the public schools, and the National Education Association began a process of standardization to professionalize teaching. Catholic schools, at that time almost totally staffed by religious sisters, in order to be accredited, would necessarily have to adhere to the same training requirements as teachers in public schools. Prior to this push for professionalization, according to Patrice Noterman, with a few exceptions, sisters who were educators began teaching with only enough education to prepare them for immediate classroom needs. They would then complete their education in summer schools over so many years that their education was commonly referred to as “the twenty year plan.”⁴⁹

Educated women religious who were college administrators in the 1940s had been urging religious communities to educate their sisters. However, many years passed while working through the National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) before a bachelor’s degree became the norm for sisters beginning teaching careers.⁵⁰ The 1954 NCEA convention in Chicago gave

⁴⁶ Handwritten notation by Pinkerton on 1997 iteration of this dissertation

⁴⁷ Michael Creal, "Introduction," in *In the Eye of the Catholic Storm: The Church Since Vatican II*, ed. Michael Creal (Toronto, Canada: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992), 2.

⁴⁸ Harold W. Stubblefield and Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994), 244.

⁴⁹ M. Patrice Noterman, "An Interpretive History of the Sister Formation Conference, 1954-1964," diss, *UMI Dissertation Services* (1988) (Chicago: Loyola University of Chicago).

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 6,15.

birth to a new education plan, the Sister Formation Conference. The sisters chose the word *formation* to emphasize a holistic education. All further education must supply more than the professional needs of sisters. Noterman explains, "Convinced that the formation of religious should include the intellectual, social, and psychological aspects of the person along with the spiritual, the leadership sought a process that would form effective and healthy ministers."⁵¹ Women religious who previously followed cloister traditions whereby "sisters had to travel together, study together, eat together, dress differently from the laity and read only certain books,"⁵² now began a collaborative process with other religious communities to educate American sisters - many with master's and even doctoral degrees. Lora Ann Quinonez, CDP,⁵³ and Mary Daniel Turner, S.N.D.deN,⁵⁴ note that this higher education and the planning of it by the women religious themselves allowed the sisters to use their vision in planning their own future.

In short, prior to Vatican Council II the SFC had produced a cadre of educated American sisters with the knowledge and the skills to take charge of a planned change process. Equally important, it had facilitated the transmission and internalization within and among women's communities of 'new' ideas, which were slowly affecting the image American nuns held of themselves.⁵⁵

Also, during this period, Pope Pius XII--believing that religious communities should work together to make the changes needed within their structures to become powerful agents of change in an ailing world--called a meeting of all Major Superiors, heads of religious communities. As a result of that call in 1956, the heads of over two hundred American communities of women religious met in Chicago and formed the Conference of Major Superiors of Women (CMSW), later called the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR). "This represented a new form of dialogue at the leadership level," according to Pinkerton.⁵⁶ The women, leaders of their communities, determined to actively plan the directions for change. The focus of both LCWR and SFC was on the complete restructuring of the formation plan. Eileen Duffy, CSJ,⁵⁷ says the work was supported by the Vatican, but, more often than not, was opposed at the local level as bishops and pastors, reluctant to hire lay teachers, realized they would not have enough sisters to staff their rapidly growing parochial schools.⁵⁸

Addressing this resistance, Father Emilio Gambari spoke out about past abuses and defended the reform.

We have today great need in the complex circumstances of our lives today of being on guard against a certain false sacramentalism. We cannot say to the candidate, "You will now do this work for which you are not trained and in reward for your humility and

⁵¹ Noterman, "An Interpretive History," 38.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 14.

⁵³ Congregation of Divine Providence

⁵⁴ Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur Noterman, "An Interpretive History," 191.

⁵⁵ Lora Ann Quinonez, CDP and Mary Daniel Turner, SNDdeN, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1992), 10.

⁵⁶ Catherine Pinkerton, "NAWR: A Vision for the Future," NAWR (San Francisco, 1975), 142.

⁵⁷ Congregation of Saint Joseph

⁵⁸ Eileen Duffy, "American Women Religious Since Vatican II" (Cleveland, Ohio, 29 October, 1997), 3.

obedience, the Holy Spirit will make up for all you do not know. This might occasionally happen, but usually the work is very badly done and there is serious injustice done to other people and to the Sister herself, for we do not have authority over the Holy Spirit, and God does not work miracles for frivolous reasons. The vocation is like a seed that must germinate. Unless it is put into a soil in which it finds all the proper nutritive elements; it will not grow unless it has the proper climatic conditions; it will not bear fruit without proper pollination.⁵⁹

The reform continued. Sister colleges formed, and the studies began. St. Mary's College at Notre Dame in Indiana offered the first graduate program in theology available to women. Betty Moslander, CSJ, president of her congregation at that time, reminisced with the researcher in a 1995 conversation: "The campus in the 1950s would be flooded with women who had come to earn their Master's in Theology. Women were taking advantage of this new opportunity. It was an exciting time. They had been deprived of it, and they were hungry for knowledge."⁶⁰ Moslander and other women religious repeatedly refer to the Sister Formation Conference as the Sister Formation Movement. Indeed, it did have the characteristics of a social movement, which, according to Sara Evans and Harry Boyte, arises out of community and fosters the common good and cooperation.⁶¹ The Sister Formation Conference was a source of empowerment and gave women religious a new understanding of their ability to enact change.

When the Vatican II document *Perfectae caritatis*, (On the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life), was issued on October 28, 1965, communities of women religious obeyed (listened) and began the process of renewal of religious life for which the document called. *Perfectae caritatis* stressed harmony: harmony among manner of life, prayer, and work with the physical and psychological condition of its members and the needs of the apostolate. The mode of government, "constitutions, directories, books of custom, of prayers, or ceremonies and such should be properly revised, obsolete prescriptions being suppressed, and should be brought into line with conciliar documents."⁶² The Council left the determination of changes needed and the means of accomplishment to the Superiors of the religious communities with the admonition to consult and listen to all its members.

Creating Emancipatory Knowledge

The self-reflection, critical reflection, and dialogue in this period of examining structures eventually brought emancipatory knowledge. The process was similar to Paulo Freire's consciousness raising, but it went a step further than learning to be an autonomous being.⁶³ Theological reflection, encounters with God, fostered a homonomous⁶⁴ understanding of

⁵⁹ Elio Gambari, SMM, *Religious Apostolic Formation for Sisters* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1964), 29-30.

⁶⁰ Conversation with researcher at the Windham Hotel, Philadelphia, PA on July 4, 1995. The occasion was a Federation Meeting of the Congregation of Saint Joseph.

⁶¹ Sara M. Evans and Harry C. Boyte, *Free Spaces* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), Chapter 6.

⁶² Vatican Council II, *Vatican Council II the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, second, 1975, ed. Flannery, Austin, O. P., trans. Ambrose McNicholl, O. P. (Northport, NY: Costello Publishing Co., 1965), 611-23.

⁶³ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1990).

⁶⁴ Marcie Boucouvalas picked up the term *homonomous* originally from a footnote in Abraham Maslow's work, then read the original 1941 Angyal publication, and related the term to transpersonal psychology and adult learning: first in 1980, then 1988, and later in 1991 and 1999. Marcie Boucouvalas, "An Analysis of Lifelong Learning and

the uniqueness of each individual in its relational being.

Among religious women in the United States, change took place at what seemed to be an extremely rapid pace, but change was, for the most part, carefully planned with inclusion of all communities in the process. Even so, women religious experienced the tension of being caught between two worlds. As changes were instituted, Doris Gottemoeller, RSM,⁶⁵ noted that women religious often experienced “misunderstanding from without/polarizations within, loss of membership, lack of resources and pastoral disappointment,”⁶⁶ but along the way they developed skills in group participation and calling forth leadership. Many new national organizations were founded. Pinkerton was among the founders in Cleveland, (1970), of grassroots organization, the National Assembly of Women Religious, (NAWR), which linked women religious with social activism, and she became its second chairperson, serving from 1973-1975. NAWR eventually became the National Assembly of Religious Women (NARW), the name reflecting inclusion of non-vowed associates, co-members of religious communities, and other lay women. Network, the organization for which Pinkerton now works, was founded during this period and registered as a lobby for social justice in Congress.⁶⁷

Religious communities continued a return to their roots to reassess their missions, and in the process, according to Jo Ann Kay McNamara, histories were recovered and women developed “a raised consciousness of their relationship with the male hierarchy” and became aware of their own integrity.⁶⁸ Twenty-five years later, Pinkerton reminisced about that period, “Those gathered there knew they were standing on the threshold of what could be characterized as a new era in the history of religious life and the Church. We were claiming our role as women of the Church, calling for a voice in its decision-making.”⁶⁹ Chittister says women religious had brought themselves “to new ways of seeing new things and new ways of seeing old things as well.”⁷⁰ They perceived the importance of a spirituality which unifies economic, social and political realities that shape people’s lives, and saw themselves moving from maintaining

Transpersonal Psychology as Two Complementary Movements Reflecting and Contributing to Social Transformation," diss (Tallahassee, Florida: Florida State University, 1980); Marcie Boucouvalas, "An Analysis and Critique of the Concept of Self in Self-Directed Learning: Toward a More Robust Construct for Research and Practice," Transatlantic Dialogue Among Standing Conference on University Teaching (SCUTREA), Adult Education Research Conference (AERC), and the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE) (University of Leeds, 11-13-July, 1988); Marcie Boucouvalas, "The Transcultural Self: An Issue Area for Comparative Adult Education Research," World Conference on Comparative Adult Education (University of Ibadan, Nigeria, 7-11 October, 1991); Marcie Boucouvalas, "The Transpersonal Orientation as a Framework for Understanding Adult Development and Creative Processes," in *Art, Science, and Spirituality in the Context of Maturity*, ed. M. & Cook-Greuter Miller, S. (Greenwich, CT: Ablex, 1999), in press; A. H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 2nd (New York: Reinhold, 1968); A. Angyal, *Foundations for a Science of Personality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press for the Commonwealth Fund, 1941).

⁶⁵ Sisters of Mercy Noterman, "An Interpretive History," 191.

⁶⁶ Doris Gottemoeller, RSM, "Befriending the Wind," Leadership Conference of Women Religious (August 29, 1994), 2.

⁶⁷ Quinonez and Turner, *The Transformation of American Catholic Sisters*, 142.

⁶⁸ McNamara, *Sisters in Arms*, 632.

⁶⁹ Pinkerton, "Untitled."

⁷⁰ Joan Chittister, "Climbing the Eight Mountains of Religious Life," *National Catholic Register*, February 20 1998, 30.

existing structures to creating alternatives within these realities.⁷¹ This spirituality did not neglect direct service, healing the wounds of societal injustice, or advocacy, but expanded to include work for systemic change, getting at the roots of responsibility for those ills.⁷²

Although the ministries of women religious have expanded, religious communities still suffer from dwindling numbers. Members are aging, and fewer women are choosing to enter religious life. Researchers have studied religious orders and women's religious life in general and have favorite theories for the demise of religious life. In a recent book, Ann Carey blames radical feminists who managed to get into leadership positions and push their agendas. Carey names Pinkerton as one of these feminists.⁷³ Pinkerton and other women religious on the staff of Network, when shown Carey's book, responded that the sisters were only being obedient to the urgings of the Vatican. George Weigel of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, a think-tank in Washington, D.C., defended Carey's book. Patricia Lefevere cites Weigel who "termed renewal in religious life as 'the last pure exercise in Leninist politics in the 20th century' carried out by 'purges, re-education, self-perpetuating leadership cadres,' whom he claimed were deployed to deconstruct religious life."⁷⁴

Pinkerton and others have documented vast changes in religious life. Some, like Pinkerton, acclaim the changes; others decry them and point fingers of blame at those whom they see as the cause of declining numbers of women religious. No one has examined, however, the ways in which these changes might have affected Pinkerton's championship of the common good. No one has written about the development of this commitment or illuminated Pinkerton's educational outreach for the common good.

Five years of reading Pinkerton's speeches, conversing with her, interviewing her, and attending Congregation of Saint Joseph workshops, meetings, and conventions convinced this researcher that Pinkerton is an excellent topic for timely research in adult education. Cries for a return to the common good, for a civil society⁷⁵--even a global civil society--increase daily. At the same time, some adult educators worldwide urge the field to activate social responsibility,⁷⁶

⁷¹ Leadership Conference of Women Religious of the USA and Conference of Major Superiors of Men of the USA, "Apostolic Religious Life in a Changing World and Church," Fifth Inter-American Conference of Religious (1986), 9,41.

⁷² Handwritten notation by Pinkerton on 1997 iteration of this dissertation

⁷³ Ann Carey, *Sisters in Crisis* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1997), 180, 245, 249, 255.

⁷⁴ Patricia Lefevere, "Bishop Sacks Liberal Column, Diocesan Priests Fight Back," *National Catholic Reporter*, February 13 1998, 7; George Weigel, *Catholic Sun*, Jan. 29-Feb. 4 1998.

⁷⁵ The idea of a civil society is quite important globally. It was an integral part of the 1997 UNESCO Agenda for the Future in the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning. A civil society contains many elements, but, borrowing from the work of Scott Peck, it begins with "the ethical consciousness of other people, individually and collectively, as precious beings." M. Scott Peck, *A World Waiting to Be Born* (New York: Bantam Books, 1993), 53.

⁷⁶ Matthias Finger, Theo Jansen and Wildemeersch, "Reconciling the Irreconcilable? Adult and Continuing Education Between Personal Development, Corporate Concerns and Public Responsibility," in *Adult Education and Social Responsibility*, ed. Danny Wildemeersch, Matthias Finger and Theo Jansen (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 1998), 1-26; Richard Edwards and Robin Usher, "Modern Field and Postmodern Moorland: Adult Education Bound for Glory or Bound and Gagged," in *Adult Education and Social Responsibility*, ed. Danny Wildemeersch, Matthias Finger and Theo Jansen (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 1998), 27-56; Peter Jarvis, "The Education of Adults as a Social Movement: A Question for Late Modern Society," in *Adult Education and Social Responsibility*, ed. Danny Wildemeersch, Matthias Finger and Theo Jansen (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 1998), 57-72; Michael Welton, "Civil Society as Theory and Project: Adult

the field of transpersonal psychology illuminates a human potential for a wisdom of interconnectedness and interdependence. These pleas from society and adult educators coupled with the human potential to draw from a wisdom of interconnectedness is of great import for adult education.⁷⁷

At age seventy-seven, Pinkerton, a woman of numerous achievements and recipient of many accolades, still works zealously for social justice. Pinkerton describes this work as evangelization, “the call to become inserted into a community of transformation.”⁷⁸ This call, Pinkerton continues, requires “not only accepting the difficult and onerous task of changing those structures and systems which stifle and oppress the human spirit, but to create anew – to envision a different reality and to take steps to cross over to that new way of being.”⁷⁹

Centering on the Unknown

Catherine Pinkerton’s educational outreach for the common good in political, religious and societal arenas is essentially unknown except by those with whom she has worked, those whom she has educated, and those whom she has led in religious life. Also unknown are the educational experiences that brought about that commitment. This historical inquiry illuminates Catherine Pinkerton’s educative outreach for the common good and examines the historical events, experiences, institutions, and relationships that shaped in Pinkerton a philosophy of life oriented toward the common good.

Much has been written about the historical events, such as the Great Depression, the social upheaval of the 1960s, the revival of the Women’s Movement in the 1960s and ’70s, and liberation theology, that occurred within Pinkerton’s lifetime. Books and dissertations document the vast changes in religious life that took place in the 1950’s and ’60s including the Sister Formation Movement, the rise of Sister Senates, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, and the changes brought about by Vatican II (1962 -1965). None, however, has examined Pinkerton’s educational efforts for the common good within these contexts. Recent books call for a return to the common good in the United States and even a broadening of the construct to embrace a global common good, which Pinkerton also advocates. Lawrence Daloz, et al. uncovered common themes within a group committed to the common good but did not examine specifically one life for educationally significant events, experiences, relationships and historical times that shaped this commitment.⁸⁰

Pinkerton’s life is an unexplored contemporary example of a life committed to the common good and to the education or calling forth from others: (a) the ability to look beyond

Education and the Renewal of Global Citizenship," in *Adult Education and Social Responsibility*, ed. Danny Wildemeersch, Matthias Finger and Theo Jansen (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 1998), 187-220; Cees Klaassen, "Empowerment and Social Responsibility in the Learning Society," in *Adult Education and Social Responsibility*, ed. Danny Wildemeersch, Matthias Finger and Theo Jansen (Frankfurt am Main, Germany: Peter Lang GmbH, 1998), 221-36.

⁷⁷ Marcie Boucouvalas, "Social Transformation, Lifelong Learning, and the Fourth Force-Transpersonal Psychology," *Lifelong Learning: The Adult Years*, March 1983, 6-9.

⁷⁸ Catherine Pinkerton, "Evangelization: The Call to Become Church" (Chicago, ILL, October 8, 1988), 10.

⁷⁹ Pinkerton, "Evangelization," 10.

⁸⁰ Daloz, Keen, et al., *Common Fire*.

popular discourse for the root of social problems, and (b) the desire to become part of a community of transformation. This transformation is both process and product and, Pinkerton says, has both individual and collective dimensions. “Individually, a person becomes aware of his/her own participation in systems of injustice, experiences conversion, and then works collectively to develop a ‘community of new consciousness.’”⁸¹ According to Pinkerton, this conversion and development of a community of new consciousness link faith and citizenship, and Pinkerton continues, “If we love our nation, we will critique it, challenge it to become what it is called to be. In so doing, we will carve out the relationship between what it means to be a person of faith and what it means to be American.”⁸² Pinkerton’s longtime commitment to the common good and her uniquely structured life of discipline, reflection, education, and action within a religious community provide a singular opportunity for study.

Changing the Unknown to the Known

This study’s purpose is to illuminate Catherine Pinkerton’s educative outreach for the common good and to examine events, experiences, institutions, and relationships for educational significance in shaping that orientation. Like examination of the life of Mahatma Gandhi, (1869-1948), Lucretia Coffin Mott, (1793-1880), or other advocates of non-violent agitation on behalf of the common good, this study of Pinkerton’s life, mission, and commitment can inspire and lead others in her orientation. The study will also provide valuable information to adult educators interested in ways the field can activate social responsibility.

Coaxing the Answers

This study, then, specifically addresses the central question: What historical events, experiences, institutions, and relationships were educationally significant in the shaping of Catherine Pinkerton’s philosophy of life oriented toward the common good, and how has this commitment to the common good manifested itself in Pinkerton’s life?

One’s life commitment doesn’t develop in a vacuum; hence several subsequent questions were developed to gain insight into educationally significant events, experiences, institutions, and relationships in Pinkerton’s life. These questions give direction to the study and establish a framework for examining the development of Pinkerton’s championship of the common good.

1. How did family as an educational institution contribute to Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good?
2. Did Pinkerton’s formal education have significance in the development of this commitment?
3. In what ways did daily life as a Sister of Saint Joseph hone Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good into an educative action and facilitate Pinkerton’s knowledge of self in its intersubjective role?
4. In what ways might historical events during Pinkerton’s lifetime, such as the Depression, the rise of feminism, Vatican II, and others, have helped shape Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good?

⁸¹ Pinkerton, "Evangelization," 16.

⁸² Ibid.

Citing the Meaningfulness of the Study

Our society exhibits a continuing need for research into the process and results of education. In 1943, the philosopher William James decried the generalization of the particular to make the universal and wrote that theories need to come *from* experience rather than *about* experience.⁸³ Forty years later, in 1983, Henry C. Johnson, Jr. maintained that James' statements were applicable to educational history.

If we need thickened educational theories, only a thickened history can be of much help in providing them: a history which takes full account not simply of trends and forces, but of particular events and places and singular persons, including the thoughts, words, and deeds, which are the conclusion to their beliefs and values.⁸⁴

Other educators, too, have noted the importance of studying human experience both to better understand education and to add a richness to educational history.⁸⁵ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann noted that extending "education beyond the walls of a school" can add to the knowledge of how psychological and social circumstances can combine to produce education.⁸⁶

Harold W. Stubblefield and Patrick Keane, adult education historians, write that a maturing, socially-oriented field such as adult education needs to go beyond an "institutional, inspirational and celebratory" history to include "questions of ideas and purposes, questions of the relationship between segments of society, and questions of the social questions that adult educators seek to redress...."⁸⁷ In addition to studying the process of education to better understand learning and to add a richness to educational history, Adrian Blunt lists socially responsible research as one of the goals for a dynamic and productive future of adult education research.⁸⁸

Currently, concern about society's problems of violence, inequitable distribution of wealth, unjust access to resources, and environmental destruction is increasing. Researchers accompany this concern with a call for an education that nurtures social commitment and an

⁸³ William James, *A Pluralistic Universe*, Essays in Radical Empiricism, vol. 2 (New York, 1943).

⁸⁴ Jr. Johnson, Henry C., *Historical Inquiry in Education: A Research Agenda*, ed. John Hardin Best (Washington, D.C.: American Education Research Association, 1983), 30.

⁸⁵ Lawrence Cremin, *The Family as Educator*, ed. Hope Jensen Leichter (New York, 1977), 76-91; Geraldine Joncich Clifford, "The Life Story Biographic Study," in *Historical Inquiry in Education: A Research Agenda*, ed. John Hardin Best (Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1983), 66; III Cutler, William W., "Asking for Answers," in *Historical Inquiry in Education: A Research Agenda*, ed. John Hardin Best (Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 1983), 99; Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, "Looking at Gender Women's History," in *Historical Inquiry in Education: A Research Agenda*, ed. John Hardin Best (Washington, D.C.: American educational research association, 1983), 260.

⁸⁶ Lagemann, "Looking at Gender Women's History," 261.

⁸⁷ Harold W. Stubblefield and Patrick Keane, "The History of Adult and Continuous Education," in *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*, ed. Sharan B. Merriam and Phyllis M. Cunningham (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989), 26.

⁸⁸ Adrian Blunt, "The Future of Adult Education Research," in *Research Perspectives in Adult Education*, ed. D. Randy Garrison (Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Company, 1994), 168.

ability to “build new connections” in an “increasingly diverse, complex, and interconnected world.”⁸⁹

This study takes a step in response to those stated needs. An examination of the educationally significant events, experiences, institutions, and relationships of Catherine Pinkerton, an educator of adults and a radical thinker with a philosophy of life oriented toward the common good, can (a) serve to better understand education, (b) enrich educational history, (c) better understand how historical and social circumstances can combine to produce education, (d) provide an analysis of the shaping of a life committed to the common good, and (e) offer some insight into developing an education that nurtures social commitment and an ability to build new connections.

Choosing an Appropriate Method and Creating a Comprehensive Plan

The historical method of inquiry guides this research of Catherine Pinkerton as champion of and educator for the common good. The research began with a curiosity about the evolution of an extraordinary commitment to the common good and the expression of that commitment in education of adults in political, religious, and secular arenas. As such, the research has a biographical focus anchored in a larger social context of contemporary national and global problems. Adult education for social responsibility and knowledge from the field of transpersonal psychology regarding human potential come together in this research to provide adult educators an example of an educator who challenges unjust social, political, and cultural practices.

According to Sharan Merriam and Edwin Simpson, historical research in applied fields should inform the field in ways significant to the practice of that field.⁹⁰ This research has the potential to broaden the current adult education focus on human resource development for business to include human resource development for affirmation of all life as expressed in the common good.

Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff credit history with moving minds by what it inspires, but “If other human beings are to enjoy and use the knowledge gathered from records by the searcher’s critical methods, the breath of life must be in the product.”⁹¹ It is the researcher’s sincere hope that “the breath of life” is in this product. This historical method of research includes determining meaningful categories of evidence, collecting the evidence, arranging it into some order and interpreting the data to bring insight and coherence to the facts.⁹² The historical evidence is subjected to external criticism to verify authenticity and internal criticism to determine accuracy.⁹³

⁸⁹ Daloz, Keen, et al., *Common Fire*.

⁹⁰ Sharan B. Merriam and Edwin L. Simpson, *A Guide to Research for Educators and Trainers of Adults*, second edition (Malabar, Florida: Krieger Publishing Co., 1995), 76.

⁹¹ Jacques Barzun and Henry F. Graff, *The Modern Researcher*, Fifth edition (Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich College Publishers, 1992), 38-39.

⁹² Merriam and Simpson, *A guide to research*, 82.

⁹³ John W. Best and James V. Kahn, *Research in Education*, Seventh edition (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1993); R.J. Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method*, Revised edition (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1974).

In light of a personal acquaintance with Catherine Pinkerton, the researcher must guard against uncontrolled bias. Bias can never be eliminated, but it can be minimized by self-awareness of preconceptions, triangulation or consideration of alternatives, and the weighing of all evidence both pro and con.⁹⁴ An acquaintance with Pinkerton does have advantages. The personal relationship allows the researcher to view Pinkerton as subject rather than mere object or form. The personal perspective provides the advantage of understanding the person beneath the form. Being connected to a person while also trying to be a researcher capable of describing aspects of a person objectively without making judgments on those aspects is a complex issue. It requires living in the tension created by a need for self-awareness and a desire to truly see the inner and outer world of the person being researched rather than settle for the public appearances of a commitment to the common good.

Combing the “Catacombs”

The researcher accessed the archives of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Cleveland, Ohio, for the institutional histories, minutes of meetings, newspaper articles, tape recorded interviews, some LCWR and NARW papers and Pinkerton’s speeches. The archivist, Sister Ruth Rodgers, graciously gave hours of assistance, and the Sisters of Saint Joseph generously opened their homes to lodge and even feed a traveling researcher. Dissertations and other secondary sources used are found in the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.; Newman Library, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA; the Northern Virginia Center Library, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Falls Church, VA; Marymount University, Arlington, Va.; and the Episcopal Theological Seminary in Alexandria, VA.

Calling Forth and Examining the Data

Primary sources include Pinkerton herself. Semi-structured interviews of Pinkerton provided some educationally significant events, experiences, institutions, and relationships and some ways in which they were significant. The interviews provided an opportunity to guard against what Commager calls “present mindedness” by understanding events from Pinkerton’s perspective.⁹⁵ Additionally, the open-ended interviews and subsequent informal conversations with Pinkerton allowed the researcher to clarify data, probe and seek amplification as needed.⁹⁶ With Pinkerton’s consent, earlier interviews were recorded and transcribed. As Pinkerton’s schedule became more chaotic, field notes taken of brief conversations replaced lengthier recorded and transcribed interviews. Notes were recorded on the computer with academic software known as Citation 7. Primary documents such as Leadership Conference of Women Religious *Occasional Papers*, the Sister Formation Conference *Bulletin*, and community meeting records served as reminders for interviews and dialogue, provided the researcher with an historical perspective, and verified Pinkerton’s recollections. Speeches given by Pinkerton between 1963 – 1998 were a priceless resource.

⁹⁴ Barzun and Graff, *The Modern Researcher*; R.J. Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method* (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1980).

⁹⁵ H. S. Commager, *The Nature and the Study of History* (Columbus, Ohio: C. E. Merrill, 1965).

⁹⁶ M. Q. Patton, *Qualitative Education and Research Methods*, 2nd edition (Newbury Park: Sage, 1990).

In addition to interviews, informal conversations, and document research, the researcher attended the Sisters of Saint Joseph 1995 Federation National Event in Philadelphia, the 125th Anniversary Celebration in Cleveland, and numerous workshops held at the mother house in Cleveland to learn the culture and concerns of the Sisters of Saint Joseph.

Secondary documents include dissertations on the Sister Formation Conference, Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), the history of the Sisters of Saint Joseph, Catholic summaries of Vatican encyclicals, historical accounts of changes of direction in the American Roman Catholic Church in its interaction with society-at-large and of changes of direction in the Sisters of Saint Joseph community. Throughout the study, Pinkerton reviewed the data. Merriam and Simpson call this process “member checks – taking data collected from study participants and your tentative interpretations of the data back to the people from whom they were derived, asking if the data ‘ring true.’”⁹⁷

The events, experiences, institutions, and relationships that were educationally significant in the development of Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good are viewed through a Deweyan lens of education. That is, the researcher is conscious of experiential and interactive aspects of Pinkerton’s formal, non-formal, and informal education in this realm and attempts to organize data to illustrate the continuity of education – that all learning builds on prior learning. Examples of Pinkerton’s speeches and observances of her actions in daily life are used to illuminate her educational outreach for the common good.

Additionally, the data are organized by elements of the common good: dialogue and action, inclusivity, and by the deep, strong roots of spirituality which grounded Pinkerton’s commitment. Upon completion of the review of philosophical literature concerning the common good, the researcher examined the findings for key elements of the construct and noted: dialogue, action or participation, and inclusivity. Having read copies of Pinkerton’s speeches given between 1963 and 1998, the researcher intuited that the same elements were in the speeches. To verify, she re-read all the speeches and determined that dialogue, action, and inclusivity were themes that run throughout Pinkerton’s life. Pinkerton’s ethical consciousness of others is rooted in her spirituality, her way of embracing life and the world, so the researcher felt it was an integral part of Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good and needed to be included in the research.

Channeling Confusion into Order

This illumination of Pinkerton’s commitment to the common good and analysis of educationally significant events, experiences, institutions, and relationships in the shaping of that commitment is structured thematically. Chapter Two includes a review of the philosophical literature on the common good, to provide both knowledge of this construct’s changeable operationalization since ancient Greece and enriched understanding of the evolution of Pinkerton’s longstanding commitment.

The breadth, depth, and duration of Pinkerton’s engagement with the common good attests to extraordinariness. Indeed, Pinkerton recognizes a sanctity and interconnectedness

⁹⁷ Merriam and Simpson, *A Guide to Research*, 102.

among all humanity and creation that transcends ego in living for the common good. Ego transcendence is a phenomenon found in the literature of transpersonal psychology. A review of transpersonal literature is also included in Chapter Two to assist readers in understanding the inner wisdom from which an ego-transcending orientation to the common good arises.

The remaining chapters focus on themes present in the scholarly philosophical and transpersonal literature, Pinkerton's speeches, and documentation of religious communities in the United States, with one chapter illuminating historical social movements of significance that occurred during Pinkerton's life. Dialogue and action, elements of every operationalization of the common good since ancient Greece, permeated Pinkerton's life and are reflected throughout three decades of speeches. Chapter Three, "Dialogue and Action," traces and illuminates these elements. Chapter Four, "A Holistic Inclusivity" based on inclusion, the common denominator of all operationalizations of the common good, includes a look at concurrent streams of social thought such as the feminist and ecological movements, liberation theology, and non-denominational spirituality for impact on the development of Pinkerton's advocacy for the common good. Pinkerton's penchant for "going to the root" for understanding and wisdom necessitates a section on the root of Pinkerton's championship of the common good. Chapter Five, "An Incarnational Spirituality," examines a foundation that is at once solid and mutable, solid in Pinkerton's belief in a God present throughout history and within all creation and mutable in confident expectation and acceptance of new revelations. Individually and together, these movements affected Pinkerton's integrative worldview of a global common good. Chapter Six, "Reconciliation," uses the charism of the Sisters of Saint Joseph as theme in the concluding chapter to unite all the data.