



Case Study

Stanford University: A Case Study in Commitment

Donald L. Caruth
Independent Management Consultant

Gail D. Caruth
Texas A&M University-Commerce

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore events to determine why Stanford succeeded. This historical look into the founding of Stanford is important to higher education, and to management in general, because we need some idea of key success factor that enable a new enterprise to survive. The theme of commitment continued to emerge throughout data collection and analysis. There was commitment on the part of the founders, the Board of Trustees, the President, the faculty, the students, and the citizens of California. The commitments may have varied from time to time and from stakeholder to stakeholder but the concept of commitment held strong. This case study has implications for higher education, and management in general, because we need some idea of key success factors that enable a new institution (or a department, or a program, or a service offering, etc.) to survive. Armed with the knowledge for a need for commitment institutions will be better prepared to make informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

Keywords: Commitment, Stanford University, The Leland Stanford Junior University, Leland Stanford, Sr., Jane Stanford, David Starr Jordan.

Stanford University: A Case Study in Commitment

In the mid-1880s Leland and Jane Stanford began putting their entire fortune into the building of The Leland Stanford Junior University (Robinson & Edwards, 1960). After the devastating death of their only son the Stanfords found a purpose for their fortune (Snow, 1987). They discovered a way to memorialize their son, Leland Jr. (*History: Stanford University*; Koppman, 2009; Rudolph, 1990). Leland and Jane Stanford decided that all "the children of

California shall be our children" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 33) and set about the work of helping to educate the children of California as they had been trying to do with their own son.

History provides the opportunity to look back and evaluate events. Looking back to the founding of Stanford University provides the opportunity to learn from decision made and actions taken in the early years. It is apparent that both good and bad actions were taken during the founding of Stanford. Despite mistakes that may have been made in what was thought to have been in the best interest of the University, those involved--the community, student body, faculty, and alumni--maintained fond appreciation and were committed the founding of Stanford University.

The purpose of this paper is to explore events to determine why Stanford succeeded. This historical look into the founding of Stanford is important to higher education, and to management in general, because we need some idea of key success factor that enable a new enterprise to survive. We ask the following exploratory questions: What happened during the founding of Stanford University? What themes emerged during the founding of the University?

Method

This was a qualitative study using a case study method. Case Study is an appropriate method for this study because it attempts to explore one are of concern (why did Stanford succeed) through one case (the founding of Stanford University) or bounded system (Creswell, 2007). Stanford University was selected because today it is one of the world's leading universities. It is prominent in both research and teaching. Currently there are over 15,000 graduate and undergraduate students and in excess of 1,900 faculty members. Stanford University faculty members have been awarded 26 Nobel Prizes. The University awards 18 types of degrees in over 80 fields of study (Stanford University). How did Stanford University achieve its greatness? Its beginning did not foreshadow what the institute is today.

Research Design

This study was a single instrumental case study designed to emphasize a detailed contextual analysis of why this one University succeeded during its formative years (Creswell, 2007). This study was designed to take the reader into the setting of the early years of the University with a clarity not provided in a more reportorial account (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to gain a clear understanding of the context of the founding of the University, the goal of the research was to focus on details that might not otherwise be detected or considered. The forms of data collection are often so interconnected in qualitative research that researchers compare the relationship of the techniques to a tree with branches extending from its trunk. In a sense the researcher climbs into the tree to gain a better perspective of the lived experiences (LeCompte et al., 1992).

The information for this study was derived from: articles, books, and online sources. "Case studies rely on historical and document analysis . . . for data collection (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p.267). This study is limited to the written material available. There are a number of documents and artifacts available for review from online libraries and other sources; such as, the death mask of Leland Stanford, Jr., The act of the Legislature of California, The Grant of Endowment, The Address of Leland Stanford to the Trustees, and The Minutes of the first meeting of the Board of Trustees. These were examined in the research.

Data analysis included a holistic analysis of the entire case study to identify themes that emerged during the collection process. Naturalistic generalizations were developed from the

emerging themes as a result of analyzing the data. These generalizations are implications or suggestions for management to apply to a population of cases (Creswell, 2007).

The Findings

Much attention and enthusiasm was associated with the 1891 opening of Stanford University in Palo Alto, California (Robinson & Edwards, 1960). Leland Stanford, Sr. had been a successful businessman with the Central Pacific Railroad (*History: Stanford University*; Snow, 1987), he had played a large role in keeping California in the Union while governor of California (elected in 1861). The Stanfords were well respected because of the life they had been providing for their only son until his early death at the age of 15. They had been preparing him to handle responsibly the fortune he was to inherit one day (Robinson & Edwards, 1960). Leland Stanford, Jr. died of typhoid fever in 1884 during a family trip to Italy (*History: Stanford University*). There was widespread empathy for the family because of the tragic death of the Stanfords' young son and the soon to be namesake of Stanford University (*The Leland Stanford, Junior, University*).

The endowment act for Stanford University was approved by the State of California on May 9, 1885 (*Souvenir of the Leland Stanford Junior University, 1891-1892; Souvenir of the Leland Stanford Junior University*). On November 14 of that year, the Trustees were called together for the first meeting. They received and accepted the grant which had been executed by Mr. and Mrs. Stanford for the purpose of endowing the University (Davis & Nilan, 1989; *Souvenir of The Leland Stanford Junior University, 1891-1892; The Leland Stanford, Junior, University*). On October 1, 1891, the University held its opening exercises in celebration of the first collegiate school year (*Souvenir of the Leland Stanford Junior University, 1891-1892*).

Leland Stanford, Sr. sought a particular kind of person to be the first president of the University. He wanted someone who embodied what he, Leland Stanford, thought education should represent, the "direct usefulness in life" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 34). Stanford found Dr. David Starr Jordan to be that man and selected him as President. In recognizing the uniqueness of the new University, President Jordan stated in his inaugural address ". . . [the University] is hallowed by no tradition. It is hampered by none. Its finger posts all point forward!" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 33).

To educate Leland and Jane Stanfords' "boys" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 43), Dr. Jordan assembled a faculty consisting of "a set of young men such as has never before been gathered together in America" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 43). Together faculty and president worked to establish "the major-department system" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 43) which would eventually become known as Jordan's contribution to education. Organization in all phases of university life was underway, there was energy, and many things were happening. All involved looked to the future with anticipation (Robinson & Edwards, 1960).

There were many plans in the making and there was much work to be done. They were building de novo and as with every new adventure there is trial and error. Some new beginnings became traditions, others lasted a short time, and still others ended just as soon as they began. While there were some people who wanted to do what other colleges and universities had done, there were those who stood firm to "do it the Stanford way; perhaps it will be better than anything done elsewhere" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 44).

As stated by Harvard's President Charles William Eliot "the personal presence of a living benefactor is apt to be troublesome in the management of an institution of learning" (Veysey, 1965, p. 350). This may be further problematic since the Stanfords refused additional monies from strangers for the benefit of the University, according to Veysey (1965). President Eliot also

stated that "the attaching of a family name to an institution may be a great hindrance [*sic*] to it for generations" (Veysey, 1965, p. 350).

The dollar amount of the Stanford Founding Grant, a potential endowment in the "twenty millions" (Elliott, 1937, p. 251), was considered an outstanding amount for the establishment for a university in 1885. It was fated to put Stanford University in the forefront. The Stanfords' legal counsel cautioned them against giving such a large sum. It might damage the fond sentiments the University was experiencing and cause some to take issue with Stanford University. For example, an Eastern editor complained of the potential waste of money. Word had spread that Charles William Eliot, Harvard's 21st President, had informed the Stanfords that building a university could not be done for anything less than five million dollars for a plan that offered a tuition-free education for its students (Elliott, 1937; *The Leland Stanford, Junior University*). After all, the students of the University were ". . . indeed children of the Stanfords, their heirs, sharing in the benefits of their vast fortune" (Robinson & Edwards, 1960, p. 44).

While the Stanfords indicated a great deal of their fortune would be available for the building of the University, no specific amount was set aside. The University budget was, as stated by Mr. Stanford, "all the money that could be wisely used, and that a modest beginning was expected and desired" (Elliott, 1937, p. 252). In general, the handling of the University's finances according to Rudolph (1990) was "sloppy" (p. 353). Furthermore, the University was acquiring no possessions of its own other than buildings and unproductive land. President Jordan was operating in anticipation of needs. This was controlled by Mr. Stanford's idea that growth would come slowly. In an 1892 letter from Mr. Stanford to Dr. Jordan was a caution for hiring without sufficient work to be done and an appropriate student to faculty proportion (Elliott, 1937).

Stress due to current business conditions and the panic of 1893 contributed to the financial unsteadiness of the early years of Stanford University. Furthermore, Stanford, Sr. had a habit of relying on borrowing money. Continued borrowing was becoming more and more complicated. At the same time enrollments were increasing and departments were being added. This required the hiring of additional faculty. The budget of \$175,000 for the third year was approved (Elliott, 1937; Rudolph, 1990).

Sadly, two weeks after the annual Commencement Stanford, Sr. died. Then the financial crisis occurred. Now the estate of Leland Stanford, Sr. was in probate and the money was tied up until the debts and large bequeaths could be settled. The estate consisted largely of holdings in the Southern Pacific Railroad. To make matters worse the railroad was also in a time of financial distress. Mrs. Stanford did not feel that she could ask favors of the railroad even if it was likely to grant them (Elliott, 1937).

During this period of time Mrs. Stanford did not appear to be too concerned with the great responsibility she had inherited. In a confident statement to an *Examiner* reporter she stated that she fully intended to continue with the Senator's plans and wishes. Meanwhile she was advised by a number of those close to her to close the University until the financial conditions could be worked through. Mrs. Stanford demonstrated unexpected strength and courage. She decided that Stanford would remain open and operational. The University would fulfill its mission (Elliott, 1937). According to Thelin (2004) Jane Stanford was able to attend to the day-to-day details and as well as focus on the overall operations of the University.

In an interesting decision, the probate judge determined that technically the faculty were personal servants of Mrs. Stanford. With the ruling of the Judge her allowance from the estate would be \$10,000 a month. That money in combination with a forgotten life insurance policy, cutbacks, a halt on all expansion plans, reduction in salaries, and generally watching expenses

closely they were able to get through the financial hurdle without shutting the University doors. Eventually all debts were paid. Student activities had continued at the University and it is doubtful that the stressful times were ever felt or realized by the student body (Elliott, 1937)

Mrs. Stanford was familiar with her husband's plans and wishes. She had not been, however, involved in the matters pertaining to money. Jane Stanford, as well as those observing from outside, thought that she had inherited a great estate. In reality she had inherited a number of problems to be dealt with. The debt from the estate, the condition of the Southern Pacific Railroad, the financial responsibility of the University, not to mention her own personal circumstances and living conditions had to be worked through. She was also concerned that the state of her husband's financial affairs would negatively affect his reputation. Her new life of lonely hardship was definitely a change of lifestyle for the woman who made the crucial decision one day--to keep the University open--that ultimately determined the fate of Stanford University (Elliott, 1937).

During the 1893-1894 academic year the contracts for professor and assistant salaries remained the same and the budget for the Quadrangle (the rectangular plan of the main campus) was \$12,500 per month. In order to meet the budget some faculty and staff were released, some were granted leaves of absence, and a 12% salary cut was imposed on others. A registration fee was implemented to help cover expenses which could not be avoided. All public appearances and communications, however, made by Mrs. Stanford and President Jordan attempted to convey a sense of confidence in the future of Stanford University (Elliott, 1937).

In Spring of 1895 the first graduating class of the University, named "the Pioneer Class of '95" (Elliott, 1937, p. 264), was preparing for Commencement exercises. Word was that Stanford was enjoying a strong reputation in both the community and in the world of education, but, there was a pending legal question that again threatened to close the University. Mrs. Stanford forewarned the graduating class and other guests in her home during the reception following graduation of the current situation. A decision in her favor came soon thereafter. Again fortune was on the side of the University. With much relief the University was able to survive another crisis. Jane Stanford continued to advise words of caution pertaining to the circumstances and the future struggles yet to come (Elliott, 1937).

They were to face new discoveries which would burden Jane Stanford, the surviving founder. The Founding Grant had legal problems that were brushed aside originally (Elliott, 1937). Under normal circumstances a new university applies to the state for a charter. The charter typically outlines the scope of the operations of the college, names the trustees, describes the control and management of the university, etc. However at the time of the Universities founding, Mr. Stanford was not able to do this in California. Instead he was able to continue with his plans by the passing of the Enabling Act and 8 months later the Grant of Endowment thus providing for the founding and Endowment by a deed of trust. The exact wording of the Grant, unfortunately, left the University open to potential litigation and serious questions pertaining to the endowment for the University (Elliott, 1937).

Leland Stanford, Sr. was eager to get the University open and ready for operation as soon as possible. He thought "administering upon my own estate" (Elliott, 1937, p. 309) made perfect sense. However, questions with the Grant left the Endowment unsecured and open to litigation. Without an appropriate charter, there were questions concerning the authority of the University to confer degrees. Because the legislature met biennially the issues could not be addressed until 1899. A campaign began with the General Alumni Association calling attention to the problem and other matters pertaining to taxing concerns during the 1898 Commencement activities in May. Finally the matter was addressed in the Legislature with a 66 to 1 vote in the Assembly and

29 to 7 vote in the Senate to amend the Constitution of the State of California. The resolution provided for the powers of the Trustees and the exemption of certain property taxes (Elliott, 1937).

As the problems jeopardizing the Endowment were being addressed Jane Stanford was deeding property, transferring stocks and bonds, etc., all in an effort to strengthen the financial position of the University (Elliott, 1937). Unfortunately the amendment did not resolve the problem. Mrs. Stanford's legal counsel appeared neutral on the matter and she was somewhat disinterested. There was concern, however, that the courts would not accept the financial position of the University in spite of her recent attempts to improve conditions. Mrs. Stanford was concerned that because of her efforts to help she may have exposed the issues. Should a second amendment on behalf of the University not pass it could lead to doubt and long legal battles. Fortunately, once again, Stanford prevailed and the amendment eventually passed resulting in the passage of two bills in February 1901. The questions of the power and the tax exemption were resolved at last (Elliott, 1937).

In the meantime, upon the deed of a gift of her railroad properties to the University during the endowment travails, President Jordan on June 8, 1899, was quoted in the *San Francisco Cal* as saying that the gifts, "will insure the prosperity of the University forever, and will enable us to immediately go ahead with the work of expansion in the different departments and in the equipment of the University" (Elliott, 1937, p. 282). However, Mrs. Stanford did not agree with his ideas of expansion. She thought he had been too hasty. She replied with expressions of pleasure over the work he had done on behalf of the University but suggested to him that he continue in the same path without any further expansion plans (Elliott, 1937).

Jane Stanford had other ideas in mind. She was interested in carrying out her husband's dreams to round out the Quadrangle group. This became her goal rather than leaving it to the trustees who she thought would slow it down. In her mind all other plans could wait. On February 11, 1897, she addressed the Trustees. In her address she suggested the University not work to increase enrollment from 1,100. Rather, it was time to build additional buildings, such as a chapel, library, chemical building, and additions to the museum (Elliott, 1937).

Mrs. Stanford was comfortable with Dr. Jordan's handling most of the administrative duties of the University. However, she was still involved in any major decisions. Moreover, anything pertaining to responsibilities that belonged to her had her full attention. It was important that she be close to and a part of the students, continue with the dreams of the Founders, and be an active part of the growth of the University (Elliott, 1937). Especially since the death of her son inspired the founding of the University she often focused her attention on building buildings in spite of other needs. In addition, she would not accept other funds raised since this was "her monument to her son" (Rudolph, 1990, p. 353). Following the construction of a building one member of the faculty mused:

A new twenty-five thousand dollar stone entrance to the grounds is replacing the old sphinxes. . . . It is too bad that the men can't feed their families buff sandstone; it seems to be the one plentiful thing (Rudolph, 1990, p. 353).

In the following years Dr. Jordan and Mrs. Stanford would come to an agreement with the annual budgets. He would request and she would approve. Each year she held to her plans of not increasing student enrollment and expansions. He, in turn, would encourage expansions and growth. In 1905 the Board of Trustees was beginning to move forward cautiously with Dr. Jordan's requests. Mrs. Stanford was at that point too ill to attend the Board meeting. She did endorse Dr. Jordan's report to the Board. Unfortunately, the damage from the 1906 earthquake

made it impossible to move forward with the growth and expansion requests made by Dr. Jordan. Repairs were needed first (Elliott, 1937).

The 6 years following Leland Stanford, Sr.'s death in 1893 were hard and stressful. A number of lawsuits had to be settled, debts had to be paid, and all the while the University was in need. By April of 1906 \$2.5 million was handed to the University. All debts had been paid and the Leland Stanford, Sr. estate was released from probate court. The amendments were resolved, Dr. Jordan was respected for his role, the University maintained its reputation and standards, and it looked as though things were finally in place (Elliott, 1937).

The responsibility of the appointment of president and faculty fell under the jurisdiction of the Board of Trustees. They, in turn, were able to assign the responsibilities of hiring and removing of faculty, assign faculty duties, determine the course of study including the teaching modes, and assign other powers to operate the University. Mr. Stanford in the early years communicated that he had no interest in such duties and confidently left those decisions entirely up to Dr. Jordan. Upon the death of her husband, Mrs. Stanford echoed those same sentiments (Elliott, 1937).

On November 14, 1900, the Stanford community was taken aback when it read in the paper that morning how Professor Edward A. Ross's employment had been terminated by Mrs. Stanford. This decision was made without approval from President Jordan. Moreover, it was made in spite of the disapproval of Dr. Jordan. Ross had been terminated based on two reasons cited in the paper. He had expressed views he held and he expressed controversial economic questions (Elliott, 1937; The Case of Professor Ross, 1900). Mrs. Stanford stated that Professor Ross had violated a directive of Mr. Stanford's that the University should not in anyway engage in any partisan political opinion or movement. For this reason she felt that Professor Ross should not be associated with the University (Elliott, 1937).

After numerous communications regarding the incident she finally gave in to the President and Professor Ross was reinstated. There was one stipulation however, that he tender his resignation to be accepted at some point in the future should it be needed. Ross provided a letter of resignation to Dr. Jordan to free the University from any embarrassment (Elliott, 1937).

Professor Ross repeatedly tendered his resignation to Dr. Jordan and finally, with reservation, Dr. Jordan accepted it. Ross immediately notified the paper that he had been fired. He made a statement to the press stating Mrs. Stanford's lack of tolerance and interference with University affairs were to blame. He also criticized Dr. Jordan for allowing Mrs. Stanford's interference. This created a great deal of negative attention from the community, student body, and faculty on Mrs. Stanford, President Jordan, and the University in general (Elliott, 1937).

All might have eventually blown over had the incident stopped there. Unfortunately another member of the faculty exacerbated the situation. Professor Howard, from the Department of History, provided his class with a well prepared address regarding the Ross event entitled, "Commercial Absolutism and the Place of Teacher in the Discussion of Social Questions" (Elliott, 1937, p. 361 & The Case of Professor Ross, 1900). He later gave the following statement concerning the incident in the classroom that "it was as earnest a protest against interference with academic freedom as I was capable of making" (Elliott, 1937, p. 361).

The Ross scandal became one of the greatest academic freedom cases in the history of higher education (Samuels, 1991). Professor Frank A. Fetter, a member of the faculty in the Department of Economics had the responsibility for hiring faculty at that time. He demanded from President Jordan that a formal statement in writing be offered to faculty giving "as large a measure of academic freedom as is enjoyed in any university" (Casper, 1995). Furthermore, the faculty in the Economics Department was to be "free to teach and discuss any question within

the range of their studies" (Casper, 1995). Moreover, faculty "shall not be called to account for any opinion on social questions which they may hold, or for the public expression of their views . . . they shall not be limited by the university in the exercise of any political rights . . ." (Casper, 1995). President Jordan declined the request and stated that only the standard contracts would be used (Casper, 1995).

Jane Stanford's actions were at times odd such as; she directed the board of trustees in 1897 "that the students be taught that everyone born on earth has a soul germ, and that on its development depends much in life here and everything in Life Eternal" (Starr, 1973, p. 329). At other times she did such things as; forbidding students from sketching nude models in life-drawing class, banning automobiles from campus, and not allowing a hospital to be constructed on campus for fear that the community would think that Stanford University was unhealthy. Then, she spent \$3 million on a grand construction scheme building lavish memorials to the Stanford family between 1899 and 1905, while university faculty and self-supporting students were living in poverty (Starr, 1973).

Events often cast long shadows. For example, the University motto "*Die Luft der Freiheit weht*" which means "The wind of freedom blows" was originally thought to have been selected by President Jordan. Unfortunately, it was later considered controversial during World War I because of its German origin (1914-1918). The University disavowed that it was ever the official motto of Stanford University (Casper, 1995). While this was not necessarily a mistake during the founding of the University, it was an action during the early years that later had unfortunate consequences.

Letters and expressions of support were offered by others looking in and observing the strain of the 6 years following the death of Leland Stanford, Sr. On July 13, 1895, Mrs. Stanford received a letter from Andrew D. White, the ex-President of Cornell University, which he wrote that "Stanford University will be all the better for this storm" (Elliott, 1937, p. 272). Dr. Jordan wrote on August 4, 1896, to Mrs. Stanford that "Every effort you have made to keep the University alive will count a thousand fold in the future . . ." (Elliott, 1937, p. 273). He went on to tell her of the affection and loyalty the student body had for her because of; ". . . what you have done for them in personal interest and sacrifice" (Elliott, 1937, p. 261). "In the end, a mood of loyalty toward the institution widely prevailed" and this loyalty "could save a Stanford University from collapse during crisis" according to Veysey (1965, p. 418). For example, Charles K. Field a member of the Pioneer Class read on May 23, 1899, at an Alumni banquet, a four verse poem he had authored expressing appreciation for the sacrifices made by the Stanford family on behalf of the students of the University (Elliott, 1937).

As a result of those sentiments and others surrounding the events of the founding of Stanford University, traditions were established. Each senior class, for example, since March of 1905 has placed flowers by the bronze door of the mausoleum (Robinson & Edwards, 1960) erected in 1893 by Mr. and Mrs. Stanford. This mausoleum provides a beautiful resting place for the Stanford family (Robinson & Edwards, 1960). In addition, during each Commencement another treasured tradition occurs at Stanford University. The graduating class makes a pilgrimage to place a wreath on the tomb of the Stanford's as a reminder that out of their suffering a university was born (Robinson & Edwards, 1960).

Conclusion

How was Stanford University able to overcome the problems and adversities that beset it in its early years? How was the University able to rise above its troubled beginnings? What factors were responsible for sustaining Stanford in its early years? The theme of commitment continued to emerge throughout data collection and analysis. There was commitment on the part

of the founders, the Board of Trustees, the President, the faculty, the students, and the citizens of California. Here are some examples of commitment demonstrated by the various stakeholders: the founders were committed to the establishment of a university to “memorialize their son” in perpetuity; the Board was committed to the needs of the University in spite of the “financial unsteadiness” during the founding; the President was committed to a University that “its finger posts all point forward” and a faculty “such as has never before been gathered together” to educate students; the faculty was committed to doing things “the Stanford way” because they believed it would prove to be the best way; and the citizens were committed to the a university that was for “the children of California.” The commitments may have varied from time to time and from stakeholder to stakeholder but the concept of commitment held strong.

The findings suggest that commitment from all parties involved was the overarching reason for Stanford University’s survival and ultimate success during its formative years. This finding is supported by a study completed by Latta (2010) on the survival of Ohio Wesleyan University. The researcher contends that commitment played a role in the survival of one antebellum university (Latta, 2010). Commitment of founders often transfers to organizational members (Vallejo, 2009) and this commitment leads to increased performance (Stephens, Dawley, & Stephens, 2004).

During the later part of the 20th century considerable research was conducted on the role of organizational commitment (Stephens, Dawley, & Stephens, 2004) however, there has not been much research conducted on the role commitment plays in the success of start-up institutions. The former were studies done on on-going institutions. This case study of Stanford University is important because it deals with the creation and nurturing of a start-up institution.

Implications and Recommendations

This case study has implications for higher education, and management in general, because we need some idea of key success factors that enable a new institution (or a department, or a program, or a service offering, etc.) to survive. Armed with the knowledge for a need for commitment institutions will be better prepared to make informed decisions and take appropriate actions. Recognition of commitment as a key factor suggests the need to develop means to assure such commitment.

Recommendations for further study include examining other start-up institutions--both inside higher education and outside higher education--to see if similar findings are discovered across industries. A second recommendation would be to conduct a longitudinal study of commitment over an institutions life stages to determine if commitment is as vital over the life of an institution as it is in the institution’s infancy.

References

- Casper, G. (1995). *Die luft der freiheit weht - on and off*. Stanford University Office of the President. Retrieved September 21, 2010, from <http://www.stanford.edu/dept/pres-provost/president/speeches/951005dieluft.html>
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Davis, M. & Nilan, R. (1989). *The Stanford album: A photographic history 1885-1945*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. Retrieved September 29, 2010, from <http://books.google.com/books?id=oe0qpzomMwkC&printsec=frontcover&dq=nilan+roxanne&source=bl&ots=D8Ulyg7E19&sig=SGCZOcMMieZ660HZOEsuGdPpsw0&hl=e>

- n&ei=8jqqTOiyK4S8lQeNwMmZDQ&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=2&sq
i=2&ved=0CBQQ6AEwAQ#v=onepage&q&f=false
- Elliott, O. L. (1937). *Stanford University: The first twenty-five years*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- [History: Stanford University](http://www.stanford.edu/about/history/). (n.d.). Stanford.edu. Retrieved September 21, 2010 from, <http://www.stanford.edu/about/history/>
- Koppman, D. (2009). Splendid grief: Darren Waterston and the afterlife of Leland Stanford, Jr. *Artweek*, 40(2), 6. Retrieved October 1, 2010, from http://proxy.tamu-commerce.edu:13360/tamus?sid=metalib:L_CO_OCLC_WSPL&id=doi:&genre=&isbn=&issn=0004-4121&date=2009&volume=40&issue=2&spage=6&epage=&aulast=Koppman&aufirst=%20Debra&auinit=&title=Artweek&atitle=%27Splendid%20Grief%3A%20Darren%20Waterston%20and%20the%20Afterlife%20of%20Leland%20Stanford%2C%20Jr%2E%27%2E&sici=&__service_type=&pid=<metalib_doc_number>008008276</metalib_doc_number><opid></opid>
- Latta, B. C. (2010) Focus on the survival of Ohio Wesleyan University: An antebellum institution of higher education [Electronic version]. *Christian Higher Education*, 7 (4), 279-297.
- LeCompte, M. D., Millroy, W. L., & Preissle, J. (1992). *The handbook of qualitative research in education*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2011). *Designing qualitative research* (5th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CS: Sage Publishing, Inc.
- Robinson, E. E., & Edwards, P. C. (Eds.). (1960). *The memoirs of Ray Lyman Wilbur*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Rudolph, F. (1990). *The American college and university: A history*. Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press.
- Samuels, W. J. (1991). The firing of E. A. Ross from Stanford University: Injustice compounded by deception? *Journal of Economic Education*, 22(2), 183-190. Retrieved September 30, 2010 from <http://proxy.tamu-commerce.edu:8436/ehost/detail?vid=1&hid=14&sid=c67a1188-75c0-4dcb-a555-be27b7cd40f2%40sessionmgr10&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=eh&AN=5420782>
- Snow, R. F. (1987). The biggest of the four, *American Heritage* 38 (8), 90-91. Retrieved October 1, 2010 from <http://proxy.tamu-commerce.edu:8436/ehost/detail?vid=1&hid=14&sid=e4b57499-478a-4ba4-9182-1fe5e2525e11%40sessionmgr15&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=10120781>
- Souvenir of the Leland Stanford Junior University*. (1891-1892). San Francisco, CA: Frank V. Merrill Manufacturing Stationer. Retrieved September 10, 2010, from http://openlibrary.org/works/OL4299972W/The_Leland_Stanford_Junior_University._The_act_of_the_Legislature_of_California._The_Grant_of_endowment._Address_of_Leland_Stanford_to_the_trustees._Minutes_of_the_first_meeting_of_the_Board_of_trustees
- Stanford University*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 17, 2011, from <http://www.stanford.edu/about/facts/>
- Starr, K. (1973). *Americans and the California dream*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Stephens, R. D., Dawley, D. D., & Stephens, D. B. (2004). Commitment on the Board: A Model of Volunteer Directors' Levels of Organizational Commitment and Self-reported Performance. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 16(4), 483-504
- The Case of Professor Ross, (1900) *The Literary Review*, 21 (22) 641-642 Retrieved September 11, 2010, from http://books.google.com/books?id=03QAAAAMAAJ&pg=PA641&lpg=PA641&dq=mi+stakes+on+the+founding+of+stanford+university&source=bl&ots=-J-dc0uuO2&sig=JF90r3H89SvRXYOGMLcBupqyI74&hl=en&ei=0KyOTKHQCIXGIQehmomCBA&sa=X&oi=book_result&ct=result&resnum=1&ved=0CBEQ6AEwADgU#v=onepage&q&f=false
- The Leland Stanford, Junior, University*. (n.d.). Retrieved September 8, 2010, from <http://www.archive.org/details/lelandstanfordju00stanrich>
- Thelin, J. R. (2004). *A history of American higher education*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Vallejo, M. C. (2009). The effects of commitment of non-family employees of family firms from the perspective of stewardship theory. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 87, 379–390
- Veysey, L. R. (1965). *The emergence of the American university*. Chicago, Illinois: The University of Chicago Press.

About the Authors

Donald L. Caruth, Ph.D., is an Independent Management Consultant. He is a Senior Professional in Human Resources. His articles have appeared in numerous academic and professional journals.

Gail D. Caruth, MS, plans to complete her doctoral studies in Educational Leadership at Texas A&M University-Commerce in May, 2013. She is a former human resource manager and a Senior Professional in Human Resources. Her articles have appeared in a number of academic and professional journals.