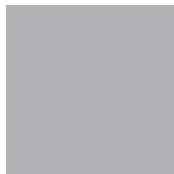


**PERSPECTIVES  
FOR A SENSE  
OF PLACE:  
VOTER  
EMPOWERMENT**

by Maury Seldin LLC  
with John Lillibridge





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## Abbreviated Form of Chapter 1 of BOOK TWO

The end notes have been removed; and most of longer quotes have been excluded.

In BOOK TWO, only the first chapter has been transformed from Word to InDesign for hardcopy publication in review and comment format.

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PART I  
AN OVERVIEW OF THE TRILOGY



CHAPTER 1  
RESTORING YOUR RIGHTS IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

EMPOWERMENT IN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

*The Erosion of Your Rights as an American*

If you are unaware of the erosion of your rights as an American, then you have not thought enough about what has been impacting the quality of your life. If you are aware of the shifts in the distribution of wealth and income that have occurred in recent decades, and the shifts in power that have impacted the rules governing American Democracy, then it is time to focus on restoring your rights in American Democracy.

As an American, what do you consider to be your most important rights? Whatever they may be, have you considered what you need to do to protect them? We are discussing a matter of justice. It was the pursuit of justice by the colonists that led to the Declaration of Independence. And, it was the pursuit of justice that led to progress towards the ideals articulated in *The Declaration*...

...If you feel powerless, then you have already given up on one of the rights to equality embedded in *The Declaration*; the right of equal access to the tools of government. If that is the case, you would do well to learn more about American Democracy and the empowerment process. Abrogation of the right to equal access to the tools of government may be in impeding your pursuit of being fairly treated by the establishment. That right to being fairly treated is a matter of reciprocity as a right for all Americans. It is a matter of justice.

The unfair treatment arises by virtue of the rules that are made in the operation of government and in the regulation of businesses and other enterprises. The power of wealth and unequal access to the tools of government have enabled

gerrymandering and biasing of voting rules to favor those with great wealth and impede the functioning of government for the public good. The inadequate regulation of business has facilitated unethical practices and the lack of reciprocity in the compensation structures of major corporations.

These two ideas, one being the right to equal access to the tools of government, and the other being fairly treated as a matter of reciprocity, are two aspects of equality that are engendered in that key sentence from the Declaration of Independence. Take note of the word *equal* in the key sentence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.”

### *Democracy is Being Undermined Internally*

Democracy is being undermined internally by the rich and powerful in order to further their personal self-interests as well as by ideologies rooted in the misunderstanding of the reality of processes engendered in fostering the evolution of democratic structures suited for the pursuit equality of rights to life and liberty, including the individual’s right to pursue one’s own happiness...

...Make no mistake about it, the distribution and abuse of power is a matter of injustice that is cancerous to American Democracy. The societal structure has facilitated and limited whatever quality of life it is that you enjoy; and even what remains after injustice is in grave danger. It will take a reform movement of some sort to put American Democracy back on track towards the ideals articulated in *The Declaration*. Failure to put America back on track would likely lead to a further diminution of the rights of individuals and would likely be recorded in history as a failure of *The Great Experiment*.

### *American Democracy as The Great Experiment*

American Democracy began as *The Great Experiment* in Western Civilization with the Declaration of Independence. Its occurrence was a matter of justice in that King George III was not responsive to the grievances of the colonists; a clear case of lack of reciprocity. The

revolution was a middle course compared to the approaches earlier taken by Scotland in its relationship with Britain and later taken by France. It was an aversion to the concentration of power and was dealt with when the Confederation became a federation via the Constitution that provides for the three branches of government.

Our discussion necessarily focuses on the distribution of and exercise of power. Since your mindset already has some preconceived notions of the motivations of elected political leadership that is a reasonable place in which to start in assessing the current condition of American Democracy. However, in the process of exercising your own critical thinking, consider some historical perspectives regarding concern for the viability of democracy. The issue is, what does it take to make democracy work?

Once you have formed a reasoned position with regard to what it takes for American Democracy to work for others, as well as yourself, the next issue is, given your sense of place, what are you going to do about it? If you abdicate your rights, and if you are accompanied by enough others, the democratic system will simply not function properly and its continued existence is endangered. And if you and enough other Americans make poorly reasoned decisions, the democracy will also fail. So, if you value living in a free society, you would be well advised to pursue a reasoned position with regard to what it takes for American Democracy to work for others, as well as yourself. It then takes adequate civic engagement, the quality of which is significantly affected by extent of understanding of what it takes for a democratic system to work effectively. This trilogy is designed to help the motivated learner.

In developing a reasoned position, Plato is a good place to start. Please consider his view on democracy in the context of his view on justice. A really brief summary is in a combination of a two-sentence excerpt from a paragraph about Socrates and the full paragraph about Plato that follows. The quotes are from the book by Victoria C. Gardner Coates, *David's Sling: A History of Democracy in Ten Works of Art*. The excerpt is as follows:...

...Fast-forward to the Enlightenment era and you have views that included doubts about the public's competence for wise decisions as

an electorate, and a preference for reliance on the benevolence of the head of the hierarchal structure. At the other end of the spectrum, you have the rise of movements espousing the source of authority being the individual rather than royalty or other persons at the head of the hierarchal structure.

In the extreme case of the French Revolution, the Enlightenment era was said to have come to an end with the death of Condorcet who was among those who provided the intellectual strength of the French Revolution. It ended as a result of the efforts to deny the right for an individual to think independently and express those thoughts. It was rooted in the concept of the “*general will*.” Edward O. Wilson, in his book *Consilience*, puts the end of the Enlightenment as March 29, 1794, the date of the death of the Marquis de Condorcet. The imposition of “the general will” had left no room for reasonable differences.

At the time of the Declaration of Independence, there were substantial reasonable differences among the colonists on some key issues; however, there was a commonality of interest in the societal justice that necessitated throwing off the yoke of the tyranny of King George III. It led to a revolution that established a confederation, but the process of uniting the operation of the thirteen states led to a federation with a constitution that contained a First Amendment that spoke to the rights of freedom of thought and expression. The rights of freedom of thought and expression were part of the roots of the Enlightenment era that facilitated *The Great Experiment* in Western Civilization, the United States of America.

When Alex de Tocqueville wrote *Democracy in America* he expressed concern that there would be a tyranny of the majority. The centerpiece of the discussion of Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* considers America as a complex adaptive system, viewing its dimensions with an interdisciplinary perspective. His concern was with equality in democracy leading to the danger of tyranny of the majority. That was early in the 19th century when de Tocqueville visited the United States in order to glean some ideas for France.

Late in the previous century, voting rights in the United States were vested only in white males of age who also owns property. Given the scale of governmental organizations, that was workable. Over

time the voting rights were extended, and it took about two centuries to make major progress, the extent to which is being reversed in cases of gerrymandering and unreasonable voting rules.

What de Tocqueville was concerned about, the potential tyranny of the majority, seems to be what the late James McGill Buchanan was concerned about according to the book review quoted earlier. The review was titled “Minority Rule,” with the subtitle “How the economist James McGill Buchanan laid out the game plan for the radical right.” What the radical right was doing to the Democratic administration in its Barack Obama led years seemed to be the doing to the Republican legislature. Then it continued during the start of its Donald Trump led years. But it didn’t take long for some legislators with moderate views and the willingness to cross the aisle to retire, particularly by not running for reelection. The threat of heavily financed Republican contenders was a force to consider. That force continues to contaminate the democratic process.

Pursuit of the ideal in the extreme, left or right, has according to the writings of Isaiah Berlin, not ever worked out well. Diversity is at the heart of an evolutionary process. It took two centuries for great progress in moving towards the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence, but in recent decades that progress has not only faltered, but is endangered by what could result in extreme loss of individual rights, and could endanger the wealth at the high-end of the distribution along the lines of a Russian Revolution. Not only is their concentration of wealth endangered, but a major disruption that would destroy the extreme in balance is a threat to the continuation of the *Great American Experiment*. It will take an evolutionary process of reform to enable a capitalistic democracy to continue; income and wealth distribution does not even need to be close to equal, but the unalienable rights to equality referred to in the Declaration of Independence need to evolve closer to some semblance of justice.

The first and the third books in this trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*, each has a summary or interpretation of five points engendered in an interpretation by Danielle Allen in her book *Our Declaration: A Reading of the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality*.



## A ROLE FOR EDUCATION FOSTERING VIABILITY OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Business organizations, as key societal institutions of our time, have a dominant effect on the qualities of our lives. They rely on the franchise from government to enable them to pursue their interests, and to various extents they are regulated in the public interest. There is a broad-spectrum of views as to what constitutes their appropriate behavior. But, there is a rising disgust with what is seen as outrageous misbehavior in the selfishness in the pursuit of profits without regard to the interests of other stakeholders in the operation of business enterprises.

An example of rising disgust with what is seen as outrageous misbehavior is noted in the United Airlines case in the article titled *United Airlines' Analytics and Algorithms Can Help to Save American Democracy*. At one time the airlines industry was highly regulated. It is not a big stretch of the imagination to see restoration of a highly regulated system, even though a reduction of the concentration of power in the industry would be a better solution providing competition at hubs rather than domination by a single provider.

There are better examples in other industries in which competition has been eroded, and great wealth has accrued to a very small proportion of the populace. Capitalism can perform a lot better for society than it has done in its current development, and the capitalists would find it in their interests to consider the continuity of the system of democracy as a matter of high priority rather than simply endangering it by their exploitation through rigging the system with a regulatory structure not in the public interest, but which benefits them personally; but may turn out to be only for the short-term.

The rules matter for process and structure; thus, the rich and powerful are not exempt from needing a better education as to what is essential to the continuation of the democracy that has enabled them to fare so well. The concentration of power and exploitation of interests of others, as it has been evolving in recent decades, is leading to a discontinuity; somewhat akin to the restructuring of the power of business enterprise a little over a century ago. That was in the age of the *Captains of Industry*, or *Robber Barons*, if you prefer.

Behavior is heavily influenced by beliefs, and beliefs are heavily influenced by experience. Whatever the starting place, education can improve the quality of decisions. Of particular importance is the ability to think critically and of the right of the individual to think for herself or himself and to express those thoughts. The idea that our higher education system has not been doing well at its job will be discussed in the context of viability of American Democracy.

The case has just been made that the education of the electorate is critical to a viable democracy. We now turn to the education of the leadership. Our first concern is with educating the leadership of business organizations. Later we turn to a few comments about political leadership, and finally to the education of leaders in the philanthropic arena and in community service organizations, including religious institutions. But, given the focus of this chapter, the predominant discussion will be in the roles of the business enterprises that are critical institutions in impacting the quality of life the vast majority of Americans, not only from what is understood as negative liberty, but also positive liberty.

### *The Education of Business Leadership*

In recent decades the education of business leadership has led to a dominant view that the function of the business enterprise is to make money for its owners. An early clue was the statement by the head of General Motors that they were in business to make money not cars [See page 348 of *The Golden Passport: Harvard Business School, The Limits of Capitalism, and the Moral Failure of the MBA Elite* by Duff McDonald]. A recent clue is in the actions of United Airlines in physically forcing a paid passenger to deplane because they had oversold the seats and needed additional seats for airline employees, as discussed in the article, *United Airlines' Analytics and Algorithms Can Help to Save American Democracy*. [How United Airlines' Analytics and Algorithms Can ... - Sciedu Press, <https://tinyurl.com/spezvec>]

**Corporate Responsibility.** Corporate responsibility may be viewed from the vantage point of the function of business; but also from the vantage point of the objectives of the enterprise. Understanding the difference makes a great deal of difference.

In the mid-20th century the prevailing view of the function of business was to produce and distribute goods and services of benefit to the consumers. The quest for profit was simply an incentive for that production and distribution with the discipline of the market sorting out those firms that were not profitably performing the function. Since that time, it appears that prevailing view has picked up on the ideology of profit for the owners and their agents who are the top executives of the enterprises. That approach is endangering the future of American Democracy.

There is, however, even early in the 21st century, a minority view with excellent logic. In the 2017 book by Duff McDonald, *The Golden Passport: Harvard Business School, The Limits Of Capitalism, and the Moral Failure of the MBA Elite*, Rakesh Khurana makes the point "...that the School actually had a responsibility that it has failed to live up to. [p.440]." What follows is a long quote presented in the book as follows:...

...[The endnote sites Ed Butler BBC September 10, 2010 and a web link.]

...The stakeholders go well beyond the owners, and their agents. Included are employees, the customers, and those affected in the community, especially by the changes in the environment. When the externality costs are considered, the operation of some firms producing a profit is substantially a trade-off of external costs to the community for profit to the firm.

**Environments Change.** What occurred since the mid 20th century was a variety of culture changes. World War II united Americans for survival as a free society. The role of government changed in order to recover from the Great Depression. Later, after World War II, Congress fearful of an economic downturn passed legislation pursuing high levels of income, employment, and output. It provided a G.I. Bill of Rights that fostered education. And the economy resumed a period of substantial growth based upon the production of goods and services.

Aside from the erosion of a commitment to communal interest, there was a structural change in the nature of goods and services

produced and consumed in the domestic economy. What grew was a commitment to self-interest, especially in the consumption of goods and services. Substantial segments of industry shifted from focusing on quality and service to focusing on the bottom line. Foreign competition was having more than one kind of impact.

When regulations arose to economize on consumption of fossil fuels, American industry hired lawyers; Japanese industry hired engineers. The General Motors debacle with the ignition switch came about because of the silo organizational structure utilized to drive down costs, but not working as networks with a common purpose that included safety for the consumers of the products.

Not only did the structure of production shift because of foreign competition; the *Information Revolution* significantly altered the nature of organizational operations. As a result, many people employed in middle management lost their jobs. Additionally, jobs on the production lines were lost because of structural changes in the economic base of many local economies; and there were no national strategic policies for dealing with the evolutionary process in the interests of the workforce.

After developments late in the 20th century came the 21st century with the subprime crisis and capital market freeze that led to the Great Recession. The net result was deterioration in the quality of life for the vast majority of Americans losing relative position in income and wealth, while a small proportion of the population was getting increasingly wealthy and powerful.

**The Costs of Ignorance and Greed.** The costs of ignorance and greed are very high. Some of the costs are borne by those who simply have a lack of knowledge of the consequences of their choices. And, some of the costs are born by the greedy. But, a great deal of the costs is borne by innocents. Take the case of The Great Recession.

That Great Recession was preventable. Scarcity of morality was remarkable. When a mortgage underwriter complained to his manager that the loan was bound to default, he was still instructed to make the loan. It was going to be sold so someone else would be stuck with it and if their firm did not make it another firm would. Borrowers were making loans with no intention of repaying,

simply getting close to free rent until they were dispossessed. Loan packagers were diversifying bad loans and getting risk ratings on the packages that bore no relationship to the reality of risk of repayment. In the movie, *The Big Short*, after interviewing two participants in the mortgage banking industry, one of the interviewers commented to the other that the two participants were readily revealing their business secrets, to which the other interviewer responded, “They were bragging!”

Congress legislated pressures for greater amounts of subprime mortgage loans, and intermediaries created to foster national housing finance markets exacerbated the situation by contributing to creation of mountains of debt so far out of proportion to the underlying security of the property pledged to secure the loans that the burst of the housing bubble and the freeze in capital market caused losses not only to borrowers and the providers of the funds, but innocent people in the public who had not participated in the process. That was not only from the loss of jobs because of the recession but because the federal deficit had grown so large in earlier decades that sufficient fiscal policies were unavailable for dealing with the recession; and so the monetary policies drove rates so low that retirees, and would be retirees, wound up with retirement income that for great many people was reduced by as much as one-half of what would have been but for an unnecessary Great Recession.

Some participants in the highly leveraged system simply took their profits out unloading what they knew to be assets that were valueless, except for trading to the investor victims. Financial institutions experiencing great losses received bailouts from the federal government. Homeowners, and those who became unemployed in the recession, got short shrift.

Legislation was passed in an attempt to deal with the issues, but over time its implementation has faltered. And with the change in administrations, there has been a substantial reduction in the regulation. There are lots of villains, and a great shortage of understanding of what it takes for the economic system to properly function.

The extent to which capitalism and its democratic environment can endure under a continuation of the trend is highly uncertain.

Part of the problem is that the nature of the free market and invisible hand is misunderstood, and part of the problem is that the balance between short-term self-interest and an enlightened self-interest appreciating the values obtained through community interest is either not grasped or ignored.

**Free Markets.** Free markets may simply mean that market prices are free to adjust in order to get matches between supply and demand. That is in contrast to a regulated market in which a governmental or other authority is setting the price. Conspiracy among suppliers in an attempt to regulate prices is domestically called *monopoly*, the conspiracy in restraint of trade; and it is illegal. On the international basis the conspiracy is called a *cartel*.

The diamond cartel works pretty well. The oil cartel, does not work quite as well. The idea is to band together in order to enhance profits even though it exploits others. It requires cooperation and an ability to enforce the cooperation. Domestically, business firms may form associations for their commonality of interests and get some of the benefits which could border on conspiracy in restraint of trade. However, the trade associations lobby and get rules that provide regulation favorable to their business interests. The proper balance between the benefits to the consumers and benefits to the producers, as well as other stakeholders depends upon the fairness of markets and business practices. Regulations have a role to play.

The power law of economics provides a distribution of income heavily skewed to the high-performing few as in sports and business. It has in the *Information Revolution* produced a handful of corporate enterprises with exceptional profits and dominance in markets. The freedom in the markets has not done well when viewed from a broader perspective of community interest. There is more to community interest than simply the lowest possible price.

One might argue that there is a responsibility for government to deal with these issues, and we shall shortly turn to that perspective. The point here is that if the business sector does not do what is necessary to assure the democratic environment they rely on, their failure to properly observed their social responsibilities could lead to the destruction of the democratic environment that provides their opportunities. The concept of free markets as envisioned in

the operation of the invisible hand *does not mean totally unfettered markets*. In contemporary economic theory one would expect a level playing field for the market to perform the functions envisioned by Adam Smith in his use of the term the invisible hand. The invisible hand is further discussed in the trilogy's third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration Pursuit and Endangerment*.

**Fostering a Culture Change in Business.** Before turning to discussion of the education of government leadership, it is well to consider the nature of the power structure as it relates to culture. The book by William Deresiewicz in 2014, *Excellent Sheep: The Miseducation of the American Elite and the Way to a Meaningful Life*, notes on the book jacket the following:...

...Since I believe there is hope for cultural evolution, I am sharing much of the start of a draft of a self-explanatory letter that was never completed or sent, but shows some hope for the evolution of culture. The opening part of the draft is provided in an endnote.<sup>vi</sup> The endnote also indicates some research planning.

This chapter is a potential vehicle for fostering further efforts to do something about the issue of the shortage of critical thinking that is rampant, not only in business but especially in government starting with the electorate all the way up to the President of the United States who apparently is not grasped the progress made in Western civilization in recent centuries and has a greater comfort in aligning with autocrats than with leaders of free societies.

The *Wall Street Journal* had a story on June 6, 2017 titled “MANY COLLEGES FAIL IN TEACHING HOW TO THINK.” The subtitle is “A test finds students often gain little ability to assess evidence, make a cohesive argument.” Some excerpts are as follows:...

### *...The Education of Government Leadership*

The education of government leadership might be looked at as starting with knowing the right thing to do. In the case of the Great Recession, it was clear on some counts that government did not know the right thing to do. For one thing, the push to foster homeownership through subprime lending, while well-intentioned, had disastrous effects, in part because of the regulation in the capital markets was totally inadequate.

Doing the right thing, may be looked at as a separate issue. When legislators trade integrity for security in political office or personal gain, the wrong person has been selected to represent the constituency whom they are supposed to represent. The result in the favor of the donors who supported their election carried to the extreme is at the expense of those whom they supposedly represent. When districts are gerrymandered so that representatives are so secure in their election that they can hold hostage the nation's welfare as a price for ideology, they scuttle the process of resolving reasonable differences. The education and ethics of government leadership is no small matter.

What is apparently missing in the prevailing representation by political leadership is the knowledge of what it takes for complex adaptive systems to evolve without undesirable discontinuities in the process. That is what led to the financial crisis in 2008 and the ensuing Great Recession; and it is likely to lead to the next disruption.

In a democratic system, the diversity is an asset in the evolutionary process. It leads to opportunity for selection of paths to deal with the nature of a changing external environment as well as approaches to dealing with injustices that are adversely affecting the societal structure. That diversity calls for compromise and results in a better representation of the interests of the electorate. What is leading to the next major disruption, a crisis of sorts, is the tribalism producing a polemics with little across the aisle cooperation. In essence, compromise is an essential element of democracy. Concentrations of power from aggregations of safe seats and used to blackmail legislation bringing the suspension of normal government operations to a halt, as with recurring shutdowns in recent times, is an unhealthy functioning of the system.

A great part of the problem is that the evolution process provides changes in options dealing with costs and benefits, and while benefits may outweigh costs, there needs to be some sense of equity as to who is bearing the costs and who is achieving the benefits. The distribution of power has it skewed so far to the right that a very small proportion of the population is endangering the success of the democratic Great Experiment through their concentration of power. The mass of the population, when it fails to



understand what it will take for the democratic system to properly function, facilitates the operation of the system that turns out to be dysfunctional because it is manipulated for the benefit of the few at the expense of the many.

*Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*, first book in this trilogy, starts with a focus on the so-called tax reform and leads to a discussion of exposing economy to again being unable to sufficiently utilize fiscal policy to combat the next recession without the extraordinary reliance on monetary policy as was required to deal with the Great Recession. There was a great lesson not learned by many in the current political leadership.

What began brewing in 2018 and is metastasizing in 2019 is an international trade disaster. There are analytical systems for identifying patterns of behavior leading to undesirable outcomes. The approach being taken by the administration is being built upon a series of linear strategies not connected into a holistic system. It is analogous to the bridge player who may know how to play a suit, but not understand how to play the hand.

**Structural Failure of the System.** This brief discussion of the education of government leadership almost has the tone of advocating Plato's approach to developing Philosopher Kings, if interpreted as not having faith in the wisdom of the voting public in electing responsible leaders. Plato ranked democracy low among the options for organizing a political structure in part because of distrust for the wisdom in the election process. In the 2016 elections there was a distrust of the establishment. **So maybe the educational failure of the political leadership lies in the quality of the education of those elected, as a reflection of the wisdom of the voters who elected them.**

The survival of American Democracy is dependent upon the knowledge of its leaders and the underlying values that are used to employ that knowledge. The first bit of value-based knowledge is the understanding that the leader is there to do good not to do well. The second bit of value-based knowledge is the understanding that American Democracy is a pluralistic system in which the principle of peaceful succession is critical to its survival.

As discussed in the first book of this trilogy, the seeds of shifting from doing good to doing well began getting nourishment in the

post-World War II era. The plant has bloomed sowing a great deal of injustice because of the failure to adequately deal with the environmental changes faced by the political economy since structural shifts in the nature of economic production. The big issue is power!

Power can produce the economic rewards for the leaders and/or the population. But when the name of the game is to stay in the game, elected leadership is playing the wrong game. The name of the game is justice and compassion; and it can be generated by faith and/or reason. But without justice and compassion the organic nature of the political economy will decay. So there needs to be an education to understand how the *Great Experiment* of American Democracy could flourish.

**Shortfall in the Process.** American Democracy is not flourishing now because the cancer of injustice has metabolized in recent decades as a result of the political leadership on both sides of the aisle falling short in their understanding of evolution. Since the inception of the Information Revolution, it appears that leadership has not been well educated enough to understand that the political economy was not geared to retraining of a workforce, suitable for industrialization, to be able to transition to the shifting demand for different production skills. Additionally, the character of the economic growth provided a distribution of income concentrated at the high-end, with a concentration of business enterprise that became so powerful that a great many potential competitors were either acquired, or driven out of business by competition designed for that purpose. The result is that the evolution of the process has given us a structure that that has the capability to destroy the democracy.

There has been an ongoing deterioration not only in the shortfall in the knowledge and ethics of business leadership but also in the political leadership. An inflection point that will go down in history is the election of a president in 2016 not at all suited for the job. The market is being flooded with literature that indicates that the analytical systems used by President Trump, although perhaps suited for real estate business enterprises, fails to meet the standards expected of the leader of the free world.

As discussed in the first book of the trilogy, common sense distrusted the concentration of power. And yet the processes

being employed in designating the leaders of the three branches of government are being skewed towards retention of power without regard for appropriate representation of the diversity of interests in a pluralistic society. Not discussed in the first book of the trilogy because the Mueller report had not been completed, but what has evolved since then, is that President Trump's stonewalling the Congressional pursuit of its oversight responsibilities is an ingredient fostering an impeachment by the House of Representatives not likely to produce a conviction by a Senate dominated by a Republican majority which as yet has had too few Senators to emerge with a favorable result from a crisis of conscience when they really believe that the right thing to do under the circumstances is to take a position that has the danger of retaliation from President Trump or his supporters

The use of *truth* and *reason*, elements of the Enlightenment that led to the Declaration of Independence, are being trashed in favor of use of the Putin approach of being a "Redeemer" in a victimize society and disregarding facts and norms that have provided the foundation of America's progress. The Grand Old Party that had contributed to America's progress going back to the Civil War evolved to being co-opted by the president and diminishing the percentage of senators those would cross the aisle when they saw it as appropriate by the issues. The issues may be viewed as the mix of Senators with conscience and the percentage of those who can appropriately deal with their crisis of conscience. The Grand Old Party morphed into the Trumpian Party, but in the 2020s it may become a *Grand New Party (GNP)*.

The Democratic Party has started to undergo some restructuring, but with uncertain outcomes. It could go so far to left with a result of a tribalism battle of the two major parties; a battle that would contribute to a dysfunctional system of polemics. If that led to a tyranny of the left it could be as destructive as a tyranny of the right. It might not resemble the Russian Revolution, but it could produce a jolt that some at the far right of the income and wealth distribution would have preferred to avoid; and would in retrospect have wished that they had focused on repairing the shortcomings that produced a

dysfunctional so-called democracy. Recovering from cancers of having gone too far is no easy matter.

In the complex adaptive system of the American political economy how far the cancer goes may relate to what is going to evolve from what used to be the GOP. What seems to be most likely in avoiding the tribalism battle is a Democratic Party that utilizes capitalism as the vehicle for social programs, and the discipline of the market so that companies do not become too big to fail. Regulation for market structure and market discipline fostered by restructured Democratic Party would bring a *Grand New Party* crossing the aisle with a restructured Democratic Party that focused on justice, a fairness in the system that has been gamed to benefit the few and the powerful. Giving up the gaming of the system may well have some similarities recovering from addiction. Power is an ephemeral thing when there is accountability. Some people feel compelled not to play fair. It is time to hold all elected representatives accountable.

Tyranny is not consistent with democracy. As it looks now in the mid-2019s, the likelihood of the bigger tent for the Democratic Party is such that it will bring in some of the electorate that fell for the misrepresentations by the presidential candidate who may not even have a nodding acquaintance with the truth. A great deal depends upon what various portions of the electorate really believe as to how their interests will be taken care of; and how over time they come to realize what evolved came about. Learning really counts.

The future is going to hinge upon the education at all levels of the networks that enable a free society to function. There are high hopes for some who have done well enough that they are able to provide resources for doing good at a scale that will rival what emerges from government.

This was prepared for the website as part of a January 2020 preview the trilogy. It serves as part of set of first chapters that serve as part of a further introduction to the trilogy. The plan calls for updating before the entire second book will be available for review and comment in hard copy.

As an interim measure, this note is being inserted so as to facilitate linking to other parts of the trilogy. The major discussion to which this is to be linked to is an updated version of an appendix that appears in the trilogy's first book. That appendix, Appendix 1E – *The Integrity of American Democracy Undermined*, will be provided in some form as an a Appendix B26B – *The Integrity of American Democracy Undermined*. It will also be provided at a later date as a standalone item on this website as additional events unfold.

### *The Education of Other Leadership*

The other leadership in society is quite diverse. In recent decades great personal wealth has led to the formation of many private foundations, some with great concentrations of wealth. Some are part of the problem of excessive power over the political structure with the result of endangering democracy. Others however, are picking up on the support of activities that in an earlier era may have been supported by government.

Additionally, some of the private foundations are responding to newer issues and are being innovative in the responses. At this time, they may be the greatest hope for fostering progress towards the ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence. Their greatest challenge is moving into the 21st century in developing and disseminating the knowledge of the nascent disciplines that are taking us from an excessive focus on linearity at the expense of better strategies for nonlinear situations. An appendix on complexity in nascent disciplines provided for this book [Appendix 2 A – *Evolution in Higher Education*], providing some insights as is our additional appendices. They and the third book in the trilogy have more on this topic.

American Democracy is a political structure with the source of authority being the individuals who have the power to elect its leadership. The exercise of that authority is influenced by the structure of the political-economy in which the stratification of wealth and power produces the political agenda.

That stratification has been increasingly dominated by the concentration of wealth and power into smaller proportions of the population, and has been buttressed by a Supreme Court ruling facilitating humongous expenditures by business corporations in influencing the political agenda. [\[insert a link\]](#)

In primitive societies, the political structure evolved to where the balance between individual and community interests was discernible in terms of competition and cooperation within the small scales of societal structure. Competition could enhance the relative position of the individual, but at the small-scale it was clearly obvious the cooperation would advance the benefits of the group as a whole. The process was similar in the relationships among groups. Competition among the groups would advance the welfare of individual groups but cooperation would advance the welfare of the cluster of groups. The unity of groups was common for matters of self-defense, and remains so today.

What has dramatically changed from hunting and gathering economies to the contemporary transnational capitalistic class structure is that within the sovereign nations the key societal institution is a business organization wielding power in the political structure. The forms of the relationship vary from democratic structures to totalitarian structures, with the major differences being with the rights of the individuals and their quality of life. A striking example is between North Korea and South Korea.

A better balance of power moves toward equality of rights is articulated in the Declaration of Independence may be achieved in a capitalistic system if the leaders have a better understanding of the nature of the political economy as a complex adaptive system in the context of democracy as a complex adaptive system.

## SOME CONCEPTS IN THE CONTENT OF THE EDUCATION

The viability of American Democracy is heavily dependent on The viability of American Democracy is heavily dependent on the business enterprise as an element in the societal structure. The globalization of business has adversely affect affected some segments of the economy while benefiting other segments. The third book in

the series is designed to lead to a Declaration of Reform that would help in blazing the path back towards the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

For the readers of this chapter, the first thing that should be obvious in exercising any semblance of critical thinking is that if one does not exercise one's right of equal access to the tools of government, then at least go out and get kissed, because you know what's happening to you.

If you voted, and your candidates won, but have not delivered any semblance of what was promised as it affected your vote, then two things should be obvious. One is that your options were not very good. The other is that while the alternatives may not have been good, you missed with some view as the lesser evil. You need better civic engagement in order to get better options in choosing leadership of whatever political party with which you choose to affiliate.

In the United Airlines case, the trade association was supportive of United Airlines rather than taking a position of reducing future difficulties. In the Wells Fargo case there were regulatory imposed penalties, as well as some restructuring; and yet Wells Fargo was again called on an abuse of stakeholders' interests. The level of ethics makes a significant difference in the avoidance of unfavorable outcomes for stakeholders, although the top management and/or stockholders seem to get away with quite a bit.

### *Empowerment of the Individual*

The evolution of changes in the outcomes of business policies has not been attractive for employees' compensation and for some serious treatments of communities as well as consumers. Perhaps it is worth reassessing the mix of policies that you could have reasonably expected in recent decades. The problems are great, because to some extent, both of the major political parties are dysfunctional. In essence, the structure of the political economy has evolved so as to lessen the progress towards the ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence.

The short answer to what it takes to make a difference is (1) a better education of the voters so as to empower them to get better representatives, and (2) a better education of the representatives

to better understand the system and to better represent all of the people who reside in the districts that they are legally obligated to represent. Political service at the expense of morality seems to have some analogous characteristics to prostitution. If getting elected is the only thing that counts, then Plato was correct that democracy ranks pretty low as a form of government. A not so short answer relates to the elements of the education including really caring about outcomes for all the people; in essence social justice.

An appendix to this chapter is titled “Empowerment through More Effective Learning.” That essay starts off noting that many Americans are greatly disenchanted with conditions that have emerged in the last few decades. There has been an erosion of the movements toward the equality of rights; including obtaining a fair share of societal production. Obtaining a fair share of societal production requires an equitable structure of the political-economy. Another erosion of the equality of rights is equal access to the tools of government.

The first element in understanding of what it takes for American Democracy to be viable is to get a more realistic perspective of the nature of democracy. That perspective uses the lens of complexity which recognizes that the structure of the system is that of a complex adaptive system in which the processes alter the structure and the structure influences the choices made in the subsequent processes. If the reader is enthralled with cause-and-effect, and believes the pundits when they give a simplistic answer to the cause of an event as though it were a linear cause, when in fact there were sets of nonlinear relationships which emerged as a consequence of the interactions, then they are looking at shadows on the wall as though they were in Plato’s allegorical cave.

Under these circumstances, the best that most people can do is to look for patterns that appear to be more likely to produce the outcomes that they prefer compared to patterns of greater uncertainty or less desirable results. The short answer is in doing the right thing. It is like running a red light, most of the time a collision will not result; but sometimes it does and that pattern does not produce outcomes as desirable as patterns that respect the regulations.



Some people do well at *working the system* and pick up advantages. But the second element in understanding of what it takes for American Democracy to be viable is to understand that people are working in groups of various complexities. In the smaller groups, such as small teams, competition (including unfair competition of *working the system*) will provide advantages for the individual, but disadvantages for the group. Cooperation within the team will work to the advantage of the group as well as for the whole. The reciprocity within the structure will impact how the individual fares. Unfair reciprocity will discourage cooperation.

My favorite football story is about the quarterback who became so enchanted with himself without credit to his offensive line that his offensive line decided to weaken their contribution. When the quarterback complained to them, they responded that he should show the opponents his newspaper clippings. The productivity of the team is increased if each player gets his due. Some may be viewed as contributing more than others, and their rewards may properly differ. Another analogy is in the movie *The Replacements*.

Teams compete with each other and the same concepts apply. The classic case is now from the book *Team of Teams* by Stanley McChrystal and others. The thrust of the book used teams from a variety of agencies each in opposition to ISIS. The book also discusses the ignition debacle with General Motors when the lack of interaction of teams failed to deal with what could have been a problem fixed at a minor cost, but instead resulted in deaths and major financial costs.

American business is facing great difficulty in balancing the interests of its various stakeholders. Two new cases (likely to become classic cases) include the United Airlines and Wells Fargo. Early in the last century, for American industry, it took labor unions to get reasonable equity in compensation and working conditions. It took a Great Depression to restructure the political economy so as to avert a similar debacle. But, after the turn-of-the-century there was a Great Recession that was unnecessary and unfavorably impacted a great many people, many innocent of misdeeds. In each of these cases there were many contributing causes, but a lack of understanding of the operation of a free society and fair markets was a contributing cause.

The shortfalls in understanding of what it takes for a democracy to be successful, and the shortfalls in morality, are setting the stage for the next debacle. Such an event could lead to a tyrannical regime, or could lead to a revitalization of American Democracy.

Enhancing the power of individuals to make better decisions in the choices they make as to how they choose to live, and the choices they make as to whom they elect to represent them, make a great deal of difference in how the structure of the political-economy will evolve. It depends in some degree of what we do with our educational systems.

Education starts at an early age with infants' adapting behavior to follow what they see. Some learn sharing at a very early age. In primitive societies children learn sharing in the games that they played. Contemporary children play games focused on competition. As they get older have opportunities to play in team games. These are opportunities to learn about sharing and justice. But when professional football coaches brag about being able to get away with cheating, something is amiss in that somewhere along the line the coaches and players have bypassed what could have been learned with a liberal education.

### *Empowerment through Liberal Education*

A liberal education liberates the mind from outmoded practices; practices that are ill-suited to the societal structure that has evolved as result of multiplicity of forces. These sources of impact on the evolution of the societal structure generate an impact on the human experiences as they affect the quality of lives throughout the populace.

The case is being made that the vast majority of the electorate is falling short of having their interests represented because their lack of knowledge and civic engagement is permitting the power of well-funded small groups to enlist support of the unknowledgeable voters and the single issue extremists who are willing to hold hostage the functioning of the system in order to impose their values. That willingness is contrary to the fundamental concept that American Democracy that was founded on the pursuit of justice. That pursuit of justice produced a revolution that formed the Confederation as a means of facilitating a pluralistic system in which compromise

would evolve from diverse interests. Their commonality of interest in fighting injustice produced a social capital that enabled them to band together to be free from the tyranny of King George III.

The confederation form was too weak to function as a sovereign entity, and so it evolved to become a federation which utilized a governmental structure in three parts as a protection against the tyranny from a concentration of power. The system of checks and balances was designed for justice in the system. Violation of the norms of behavior is cancerous to the system. [\[insert link\]](#)

The absence of compromise and the ability for successive governments to be empowered leads to a tyrannical structure. American Democracy has been going down the path of winner take all — a path that will lead to the destruction of democracy.

The role of a liberal education has traditionally been to advance the quality of life of those so educated; however, the process is expected to contribute to the emergence of better results in an evolving societal structure. Such an education includes the concept of caring about others in the system and the pursuit of justice as it is defined the time and culture in which it exists. In the shift from a hierarchal structure of society to an egalitarian system in which the source of authority is the citizenry, it is essential to have networks in which there is sufficient education to go beyond the 20th century thinking of linearity of systems to include an understanding of the nonlinearity present in complex adaptive systems such as democracies.

That lens of complexity as a perspective liberates the mind from outmoded practices; practices that are ill-suited to the societal structure that has evolved as result of multiplicity of forces. The elements of that lens of complexity, for the discussion at hand, certainly include the necessity to provide economic structures that enable a workforce to produce goods and services, values added sufficiently to enable the people involved to earn a living. Public policy has done a miserable job of being able to adapt the nation's production inputs from labor to the changing global environment.

What has fallen short in the evolution of the economic system starts with the cost-benefit relationships from globalization. Globalization and the information revolution produce great benefits

for the very few with their high concentrations of power. The benefits in the form of high concentrations of wealth were received by relatively few; with the costs being born by those losing their jobs without adequate preparation for emerging opportunities. Business organizations as well as other organizations rely on the contribution of production participants at all levels. Not caring about fairness in the system is destructive of the system. It is cancerous. It all starts with individuals. Obviously, the vast majority of people need to be in the workforce or part of a family or other type network where there is a division of labor.

The early evolution of mankind was triggered by division of labor in which there were people who stayed at home while others could venture out to obtain the necessities of life. Advancements in technology enabled agricultural development in neighboring communities would help each other in times of disaster. Trade enhanced the economic development and sophisticated relationships developed. Understanding of the complexity of relationships among different economies led to a variety of systems of cooperation.

While some have cheated in the business of international trade, use of trade wars is based on wisdom challenged decisions based upon linear thinking of zero-sum games. A better understanding of the shift in the economic base of communities with policies that would prepare the workforce for transitions would better serve national interests.

Trade educations are excellent for those who can find jobs in those trades. But, when the nature of jobs available because of economic evolution call for adaptation for new skills; the nature of education makes a difference. Public policy for assuring an equitable democracy requires a strategic approach that understands teams of teams at all levels. Many companies have switched from calling members of the workforce employees to calling them team members. Many companies work closely with their communities exercising good citizenship. By way of contrast, some companies exploit the externalities and make the profits at the expense of the destruction of the environment. A great deal depends on commitments to the preservation of a free society in that it all starts with individuals.

This trilogy's second book, *Perspectives for A Sense Of Place: Voter Empowerment*, focuses on the individual taking responsibility for her or his role in a democratic society. Individuals have diverse perceptions of sense of place, not only in the workforce, among family and friends, but also among political organizations that in a democratic republic rely on faithful representation of constituents' interests. About whether we are indeed entering crisis, we have a problem about our frequently blaming of our problems on others rather than recognizing our responsibilities, the efforts of too many powerful Americans to focus on protecting themselves rather than working to protect the Democratic system not just for themselves but for all; and our unwillingness to learn from the models of other countries, presents a problem. If you believe there is a correlation between what you get and what you deserve, then it would be wise to consider the responsibility of civic engagement and what it takes to be an intelligent voter.

The founder's personal formal higher-level education in business administration was heavily focused on intelligent investing that included the classic book authored by Benjamin Graham, *The Intelligent Investor*. It was a delight to be in a class taught by such a leading authority, but the writing of my first book, *Real Estate Investment Strategy*, was inspired by a collateral reading book in a boring class in business management. (The professor lectured from his book, and since I could read, I only needed to attend the class to meet the attendance requirement; which meant showing up during the break because attendance was taken for the second half of a three-hour class.) The collateral book was optional reading. It was authored by John McDonald and is titled *Strategy In Poker Business and War*. It is an adaptation of an understanding and application of ideas discussed in detail in another book; *The Theory of Games and Economic Behavior*, by John von Neuman (a mathematician) and Oskar Morganstern (an economist), that I did not choose to read. This is noted to make the point that education is

the responsibility of the learner, and it is essential to pursue quality knowledge to a reliable depth, and to think about what is important relevant to the paradigm being utilized. The principles presented in the management text were easy enough to understand, but what was really interesting was to delve deeper to get an understanding of strategy.

Taking that initiative to pursue understanding is important to the concept that what one needs to learn relates to one's own sense of place in many dimensions. It is one's own responsibility to pursue that education, and reading is a superb vehicle. Tweets limited to 280 characters may be emotionally reinforcing, but does not count for reliable knowledge. Although I did not read the Neuman and Morganstern book, there was enough in the McDonald book to grasp the idea of uncertainty depending upon what others were going to do as influenced by what one chooses to do. That and thinking about the concept of applying the principles of strategy applicable from one activity to another; in the case of McDonald book dealing with strategy in poker, business, and war was important. Decades later I read the book *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge* by Edward O. Wilson that validated the concept of commonality of principles among disciplines.

After this chapter was drafted, Jared Diamond came out with a new book, *Upheaval: Turning Points for Nations in Crisis*. In his discussion of predictive factors relative to national crises he wrote the following: "Factors that stand in the way of a good outcome are our current lack of consensus about whether we are indeed entering a crisis, our frequent blaming of our problems on others rather than recognizing our own responsibilities, the efforts of too many powerful Americans to protect themselves rather than working to fix their country, and our unwillingness to learn from the models of other country, and our unwillingness to learn from the models of other countries [page 382]."

The preceding boxed material [alternatively an extended endnote] makes the point that the approach of this trilogy is operating on a commonality of principles among disciplines and turns out to be supported by Jared Diamond's most recent book, *Upheaval: Turning Points for Nations in Crisis*. As noted, the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*, starts off with a book designed to raise the level of consciousness, an awareness that we are in or at least approaching a crisis in our American Democracy. The second book, *Perspectives for A Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*, deals with taking responsibility for learning about and fulfilling civic responsibility. It is the cornerstone for the success of a democratic society. The third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration Pursuit and Endangerment*, use a biological analogy for discussing American Democracy as a complex adaptive system, an organic structure beset by the cancer of injustice. It calls for a Declaration of Reform as an approach to restoring health to the system.