



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

by Maury Seldin LLC  
with John Lillibridge



# Emily E Press<sup>1</sup> of the Motivated Learner Enterprise (MLE)

Part of the Research and Publication Division of the Maury Seldin LLC

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You have accessed a digital version adaptation of a review and comment paperback version of *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*. The coronavirus interrupted the production and distribution of the hard copy. But events keep unfolding, and calling for updating.

We are using the website for some modifications, generally by referring to additional material posted on the website. Direct contact with Maury Seldin is available for you at [MaurySeldinLLC@gmail.com](mailto:MaurySeldinLLC@gmail.com) or by phone at (704) 605-5566.

Dear Author,

(and other recipients of this paperback prepublication of a not-for-sale copy of *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*)

This book is a gift. However, all the rights of the Maury Seldin LLC to the book are reserved.

This book is being published by the Emily E Press, of the Motivated Learner Enterprise (MLE) division of the Maury Seldin LLC; a division planned to be spun off to a not-for-profit organization yet to be formed. That organization, tentatively titled Emily Reap (an acronym for Motivated Learner Enterprise: Research, Education, and Publication), is to receive as a gift from the Maury Seldin LLC, the MLE division that will publish (or contract for publishing), in hardback copy and digital format, the timely trilogy titled *American Democracy Endangered*, consisting of the following (1) *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*; (2) *Perspectives for a Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*; and (3) *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*.

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<sup>1</sup> The Emily E Press, as the publication unit in the Research and Publication Division of the Maury Seldin LLC, is designed to be spun off as a gift to a to-be-formed not-for-profit organization when the publication of the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*, becomes self-supporting and an appropriate Board of Directors is assembled.

This motivated learner enterprise is an outgrowth of an exploratory wiki described in the epilogue to the book. Please see page 137. A one paragraph abstract for the book is in the front matter on page iii in the shaded box. Excerpts from the front matter of the other two books of the trilogy are in production, and when completed, will become available upon request.

The prologue takes you where this particular book is going. The epilogue takes you to where the trilogy is going. The four chapters constituting the body of the book are designed to foster a substantial rise in an understanding the nature of our nation's current condition as part of contributing to increasing the public's level of consciousness of reality, especially in contrast to being misled by representations that are simply not true and interpretations that have not kept pace with the development of science.

In short, this letter is about your sharing your contribution to education through development and dissemination of knowledge beyond the citation(s) that initiated your being contacted with this gift of a review-and-comment-only copy of the first book of the trilogy. **If you believe that the book's use of your copyrighted professional work exceeds fair use, please respond with such an indication so that adjustments may be made before the hardback copy goes to press.** A brief statement as to where the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*, is headed is provided in a postscript in the form of an end note to this letter.<sup>1</sup>

The back cover of the paperback has been allocated so as to permit space for authors whose work is been cited to make comments about the book. Of course, after their signature for the comments they may choose to identify their most current book or whatever book or role they chose for identification purposes.

Your interest in further participation is also being explored. The use of the paperback as a prelude to the hardcover is provided to you with a variety of opportunities. You may propose revisions to the narrative and/or additions in the form of endnotes for the first edition of the first book of the trilogy. Also, you may propose additional appendices to be added to the first digital edition of the first book. We may also explore providing links to digital versions of your other writings, hopefully at discounted prices. Appropriate authorship attributions will be provided.

A website is under development that is being designed for the education innovation that was explored with a wiki site. The shift has been made to utilizing apps in order to develop paths facilitating motivated learners

delving deeper to satisfy their critical thinking. You will be provided with a link to that website so that you may get further information about the educational innovation approach beyond what may be provided in the form of a booklet that provides an overview of the trilogy.

Your response by email may be sent to MaurySeldinLLC@gmail.com and/or sent in hard copy by using the UPS prepaid *shipping document* for returning written comments. (For your convenience, the shipping document charged to the Maury Seldin LLC is attached to the inside back cover of this paperback.)

The comments may be in the form of a letter and/or marking up one of the limited number of prepublication copies of *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution* produced for review and comment by authors such as you. Your work that is cited is in a listing designed to include all others cited in this first book of the trilogy. That listing is provided in the next set of pages of this comment and review copy. **It is a temporary listing of cited works provided in the form of an alphabetized bibliography, but with pages noted so that you could quickly read the item(s) triggering your inclusion among the recipients.** The first edition of the hardback version of the book will have a normally placed bibliography containing the traditional information, but the books may be clustered by discipline, or some form of common interests instead of alphabetized by author.

**Your response may be acknowledged in the hardback version of the book that will contain what will evolve from the starter acknowledgments section (the third item in this pre-front matter cluster), and an autographed copy that first edition may also be provided in appreciation of your contribution.**

If you choose to make your comments by marking up the review copy in the margins and returning it using the UPS shipping document, please place a staple on the pages marked up so that your comments are easily accessible. If you choose to keep the review and comment copy, but want to send comments, the email address is MaurySeldinLLC@gmail.com. (Emails are not case sensitive.)

It is with fond hopes of fostering the evolution of an interdisciplinary team that significantly contributes to innovation for higher education and improving the quality of decisions in our society that this invitation for participation is sent. We are especially concerned with justice — a key value that transformed our nation's start as a confederation to become a federation. **That federation, United States of America, turned out to be a Great Experiment. It is now endangered, and we must not let it fail.**

Sincerely Yours,

Maury Seldin, on behalf of the personhood of the Maury Seldin LLC  
and the Emily E Press

The Maury Seldin LLC is a company endowed with corporate personhood. As such it has some of the same rights that are possessed by natural persons. Included in such rights are the rights to enter into contracts and the rights to author and publish educational material. The Maury Seldin LLC is such a company, the nature of its business is to serve as a vehicle for innovative education by integrating development and dissemination of knowledge that would contribute to societal self-organization so as to lead to the evolution of the societal structure to better facilitate progress toward the ideals espoused in the Declaration of Independence.

P.S. The following is the end note as part of this postscript.

---

<sup>i</sup>A better understanding of reality is the vehicle being used in this effort to assist in returning American Democracy to its path towards the ideals expressed in the Declaration of Independence. Contemporary American counterparts to inhabitants of Plato's allegorical cave, seeing shadows on the wall and mistaking them for reality, would be well advised to consider some literature that is more enlightening than the shadows on the wall. There is a humongous amount of literature available, and it deals with the multiplicity of disciplines that are best blended into a line of reasoning that can be presented as briefly as is feasible (but with guidance to motivated learners as to delving deeper).

A step in that direction is proposed in the trilogy's main treatise that advocates a Declaration of Reform that might start off along the lines of the following:

Whereas in the course of events the injustices of a free democratic society erode the political rights of the populace, depriving the majority of equality of representation through a malstructuring of abilities to effectively achieve representation; and whereas equitable distribution of the fruits of economic distribution is denied through a structuring of the regulatory system that is deficient in balancing the natural forces of the market, now therefore it is resolved to assemble an array of scholars from a variety of disciplines that by being blended can provide a better understanding of the organic functioning of society in its evolutionary process, and along with enablers and practitioners with abilities to foster societal change enhancing social justice as envisioned in the Declaration of Independence and facilitated by the Constitution and Amendments thereto, along with such appropriate changes as are necessary for the ideals of liberty and justice for all.

The culture is changing, and the question is the nature of adjustment. The evolutionary process can be gradual. But it can also have major disruptions. The first book of the trilogy is a start on identifying some potential paths as to what may unfold. The selection of potential paths may be improved by using a framework that includes blending nascent disciplines of the twenty-first century with mainstream disciplines which we became familiar with in the twentieth century.

This first book of the trilogy is inspired by Thomas Paine's pamphlet *Common Sense*; but as noted this book goes beyond common sense to include an interdisciplinary approach blending nascent disciplines with 20th century mainstream disciplines. Some of what you have written is in that blend, and you are being invited to explore developing relationships with others alluded to in what might start off in articulating a quest a Declaration of Reform, as just noted.

This letter is intended to help in identifying thought leaders that are interested in participating with other thought leaders in what will be a somewhat self-organized enterprise.

# Sample Page

# WORKS CITED

## BOOK ONE

### COMMON SENSE REVISITED: RESTRUCTURING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

BON01 Allen, Danielle. *Our Declaration: a Reading of the Declaration of Independence on Defense of Equality*. New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2015. See pages 30, 119, 162, 192, 208, 283.

BON02 Axelrod, Robert M. and Michael D. Cohen. *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier*. New York: Basic Books, 2000. See pages xxvii, 54, 111, 180, 187.

BON03 Barrett, Lisa Feldman. *How Emotions Are Made*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017. See page 249.

BON04 Bar-Yam, Yaneeer. *Making Things Work: Solving Complex Problems in a Complex World*. Cambridge, Mass.: Knowledge Press, 2004. See page 14.

BON05 Beinhocker, Eric D. *The Origin of Wealth: the Radical Remaking of Economics and What It Means for Business and Society*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2006. See pages 14, 15, 177, 178, 179, 185.

BON06 Berlin, Isaiah. *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015. See pages xl, 109, 123, 164, 262.

BON07 Berreby, David. *Us and Them: the Science of Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. See pages 89, 255, 256, 257, 285.

BON08 Blackmore, Susan. *Consciousness: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005. See page 252.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Maury Seldin, the principal author of the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*, of which this book is a part, has transferred his authorship rights to the trilogy and a vast amount of supporting material to the Maury Seldin LLC. That company is designed to be a self-supporting entity capable of continuing the development and dissemination of knowledge that emerged in more than a half-century career of personal contributions to the arena of education development and dissemination, in which he frequently worked with others. Such cooperative efforts were not only in co-authorships and teams for research projects, but also through stimulating the self-organization of institutions.

The Maury Seldin LLC has a personhood under the same logic as do corporate organizations. That personhood provides some of the same rights as are possessed by natural persons (human beings). Included in such rights are the rights to enter into contracts and the rights to author and publish educational material. The nature of the business of the Maury Seldin LLC enables the enterprise to serve as a vehicle for innovating in education by integrating development and dissemination of knowledge that may contribute to improved societal self-organization so as to lead to the evolution of the societal structure to better qualified to facilitate progress toward the ideals espoused in the Declaration of Independence.

A couple of major institutions — the Homer Hoyt Institute (HHI) and the Maury Seldin Advanced Studies Institute (MS ASI), of which he was the founding president — have continued after his retirement in leadership. The first (HHI) has thrived for over half of a century; and the second (MS ASI) has thrived for over a quarter of a century. The first two groups of individuals to which acknowledgments are hereby made are to other members of the leadership teams of those two entities.

Another leadership team hereby acknowledged is that of the Seminar on Strategic Decision-Making, an interest group of the Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College. A special acknowledgment goes to Dr. Jack Lillibridge who became the co-leader of the seminar, and is now the leader and co-authored four of the appendices to the trilogy.

The pivotal project (leading to this trilogy) in which some participants from HHI and the ASI were involved started off in the fall semester of 2007 with a Research Roundtable co-sponsored by the Homer



Hoyt Institute (HHI), University of Pennsylvania Urban Research Institute, the Hudson Institute, and the Institute for Public Policy at George Washington University. Both the newsletter and supplement are reachable on the web at Fall 2007 (<https://tinyurl.com/y3rdlzjc>) Supplement (<https://tinyurl.com/y4wsf7vs>) — “*Don’t Panic Yet...*”.

That project evolved over the next five years to produce some of which is reported in newsletters and supplements titled (1) Fall 2011 (<https://tinyurl.com/y2y76b28>) Supplement (<https://tinyurl.com/y62gm84n>) — “*Hoyt Institute; Research Initiative...*”; (2) Spring 2012 (Supplement — “*Influencing Outcomes in Housing Policy*”; & (3) Fall 2012 (<https://tinyurl.com/y2yjrzm>) Supplement (<https://tinyurl.com/y66yo8ox>) — “*HHI-Sponsored Sessions on Complexity Economics...*”.

So what started off with research on the subprime crisis and the capital market freeze led to a better understanding of the causes of the Great Recession, a debacle was not only unnecessary but that was not just a real estate finance issue, it was a societal issue best understood through the lens of complexity science, especially complexity economics.

There are others in the link to the use of the lens of complexity to better understand the organic nature of American Democracy, going beyond the understanding of real estate markets, the focus of at least the first few decades of a half-century career trying to understand the nature of systems in order to improve the quality of decisions. Some additional acknowledgments are embedded in the epilogue to the first book of the trilogy.

Now for some additional acknowledgments, especially to authors who have commented on the review and comment paperback pre-publication version of this book, the LLC is pleased of acknowledge contributions of the following:

- [name of the author commented on the paperback version]  
author of [name of book]
- [name of the author commented on the paperback version]  
author of [name of book]

**[Your name will be added after you respond with helpful comments.]**

Some of these authors may become involved in the creation and operation of the planned 501c (3) targeting motivated learners using the lens of complexity to better understand organic systems especially related to urban development and democracy.



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**Perspectives for a Sense of Place:**  
**Voter Empowerment**  
Maury Seldin LLC  
Charlotte, North Carolina

# PERSPECTIVES FOR A SENSE OF PLACE VOTER EMPOWERMENT

by Maury Seldin LLC<sup>1</sup>  
with John Lillibridge<sup>2</sup>

## INTRODUCTORY NOTE FOR THE TRILOGY.

This the second book of the trilogy is designed to shed light on processes that have a chance to improve outcomes. America is losing its leadership of Western civilization developed over the last three quarters of a century in part because rivals seek to undermine it, but a great measure because we are doing it to ourselves.

The trilogy shares an understanding of process and structure that blends nascent disciplines with mainstream disciplines in an interdisciplinary approach to improve outcomes. The books are titled as follows: (1) *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*; (2) *Perspectives for a Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*; and (3) *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*.

The first book of the trilogy seeks to raise the level of consciousness in the tradition of Thomas Paine's pamphlet, *Common Sense*. The second book, *Perspectives for a Sense of Place*, seeks to empower the electorate in order to contribute to a self-healing process of American Democracy. It is divided into three parts: Part I - *An Overview of the Trilogy*; Part II - *A Sense of Place in Perspective: Science and Religion*; & Part III - *A Sense of Progress*.

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<sup>1</sup> The Maury Seldin LLC is a company endowed with corporate personhood. As such it has some of the same rights that are possessed by natural persons. Included in such rights are the rights to enter into contracts and the rights to author and publish educational material. The Maury Seldin LLC is such a company, the nature of its business is to serve as a vehicle for innovative education by integrating development and dissemination of knowledge that would contribute to societal

The main treatise is in the third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*. It calls for a Declaration of Reform that could have the potential to lead to the emergence of a third revolution of American Democracy as an encore to the Second American Revolution, the Constitution of the United States of America.

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self-organization so as to lead to the evolution of the societal structure to better facilitate progress toward the ideals espoused in the Declaration of Independence. Maury Seldin, the author of the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*, of which this is a part, has sold his authorship rights in the trilogy and the vast amount of supported material which he has authored to the Maury Seldin LLC that is designed to be a self-supporting entity capable of continuing the development and the dissemination of knowledge that emerged in more than a half century career of personal contributions to the arena of education development and dissemination, in which Maury Seldin as a person contributed working with others. Such cooperative efforts were not only in co-authorships and teams for research projects, but also through stimulating the self-organization of institutions.

Dr. Seldin, a chaired professor emeritus of the American University School of Business Administration, was the founding president of the Homer Hoyt Institute created to serve as the research arm of two of the schools programs. He is Chairman Emeritus of the Homer Hoyt Institute (HHI), founded in 1967 and Chairman Emeritus of the Maury Seldin Advanced Studies Institute (ASI), founded in 1982. Dr. Seldin served as leader and then co-leader of the Seminar on Strategic Decision-Making at ASPEC (Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College), an interest group that he founded in 2002 and that in recent years has focused on applications of complexity science to a variety of strategic decisions ranging from personal health to organizational management and societal issues.

<sup>2</sup> John Lillibridge has a Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Western Reserve University, with postdoctoral work at the University of Michigan and Cornell University. He was an Assistant Professor of Management, School of Business, State University of New York at Albany, where he taught behavioral science (1970-1975). Most of his career was as an Associate Psychologist for the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, providing services to learning disabled adults and brain injury survivors. He retired in 1996 and has done some volunteering since that time helping intellectually challenged adults. As a member of ASPEC (Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College) he is co-leader of Complexity Matters, previously named the Seminar on Improving Strategic Decisions.

## A PRELUDE TO THE CONTENT OF THE SECOND BOOK

This Prelude provides an overview of the second book of the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*. It consists of three parts and a series of appendices. The first part uses two chapters to provide an overview of the trilogy.

The first chapter, *Restoring Your Rights in American Democracy* is about empowerment through critical thinking. It is supplemented with an appendix titled *Empowerment through More Effective Learning*. That appendix is intended to assist motivated learners in their pursuit of getting a better understanding the system, and to more effectively participate in it. In essence, it takes one chapter for two purposes; the first is a second attempt at raising the readers level of consciousness (the first attempt being in the first book of the trilogy) as to the character of the problem that is affecting their quality of life and that of their progeny, and the second is to identify a path towards empowerment that would facilitate their making a difference through their education and civic engagement.

The second chapter, *Plato's Cave as a Prolegomenon*, provides an introduction to the remaining content of the trilogy, *American Democracy Endangered*. The Plato's Cave analogy refers to the quality of knowledge used to guide behavior. As a prolegomenon, it is an education in itself, but a guide to the concept and ideas that are useful for better grasping the realities of American Democracy as a complex adaptive system, and the role of the individual in the systems. It is a perspective of sense of place.

The second book in the trilogy provides a perspective of a sense of place. It does so as a background for the main treatise contained in the third book in the trilogy. That treatise applies the same concepts of nascent disciplines to the holistic system of American Democracy as are applied for better understanding of the individual's role in the system.

The second part of the second book of the trilogy is the heart of the book. It is provided in only three chapters, but it is supported by appendices and substantial references designed to guide the

reader to delve deeper. That second part is titled *A Sense of Place in Perspective: Science and Religion*.

That three-chapter cluster uses the concept of emergence to link science and religion. This is drawn from nascent disciplines dealing with self organization that is at the foundation of complex adaptive systems such as democracy. The first chapter in the section is titled *Emergence Links Science to Religion*.

The second of the three-chapter cluster is titled *Denominations in Science and Religions*. It builds the case that societal structure in which one learns to live her or his life is a key variable in the process of flourishing. An individual may approach flourishing within a paradigm starting with the initial premises of science and/or religion.

The third of the three-chapter cluster is titled *The Sciences and Religion Matter*. Although the quality of life individuals may be led by individual choices, the societal's structure and other environmental conditions exert heavily impact on the individual's ability to thrive. This sets the stage for the main treatise presented as the third book of the trilogy.

The third part of the book is only one chapter. Part three is titled *A Sense of Progress*. The single chapter is titled *Third Wave Education Innovation: Fostering Democracy as a Pilot Case*. It is designed as a transition to the main treatise by focusing on education innovation as applied to fostering democracy in America.

A significant difficulty in higher education may be ameliorated with an innovation in apps as a part of the third wave of the internet. The potential is discussed using the case of the endangerment of American Democracy. The focus is on empowering the motivated learner and facilitating thought leader contributions that foster the return to the path of democracy, and away from the prevailing path toward autocracy. The interdisciplinary approach includes nascent disciplines in a process fostering critical thinking. The use of apps is intended to leverage the use of notes as made when reading. The innovative approach increases learning productivity and reduces education costs, and capitalizes on cognitive science extending the mind. The message is to innovate in education so as to foster a process that leads to the enlightening of self-interest that is essential to the survival of American Democracy.

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This version of Chapter 6 - Third Wave Education Innovation is preliminary in that it is designed to serve one or more of the following purposes:

- (1) the closing chapter of the trilogy second book;
- (2) the basis for promotional article for the trilogy; and
- (3) as part of an offer to Davidson College of a gift in-kind of an open source license to the trilogy along with the ideas and progress made in an innovative approach to foster their interdisciplinary digital innovation in higher education.

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### APPENDIX 1A

#### EMPOWERMENT THROUGH MORE EFFECTIVE LEARNING

#### INTRODUCTION

The Relevance of This Essay

Disenchantment by Many Americans

Eligible Voters Who Want to Protect Their Rights

The Way the Brain Works

The Learning Process in Perspective

Learning is a Subset of Thinking

Thinking is Beyond the Brain

Effective Ways of Learning

An Evolutionary Perspective

This Essay is Part of a Larger Project

#### BRAIN OPERATION AS A PREDICTIVE PROCESS

The Proactive Nature of Brains Provides Expectations

Statistical Hierarchical Predictive Learning

Contextual Effects in Early Processing

Human Brains Are Proactive Systems

The Process Needs to Deal with Reality  
Brains Are Complex Adaptive Systems That Self-Organize  
Self-Organization: A Key Cognitive Process  
The Extended and Embodied Mind  
Webs of Communicating Individuals  
Humans Help Construct Their Worlds

## **FOSTERING EMPOWERMENT THROUGH EFFECTIVE LEARNING**

The Thinking Process as a Feedback System  
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# PREFACE TO PERSPECTIVES FOR A SENSE OF PLACE



## *The Self and the Connections to Others*

Americans have a sense of place in which they perceive their role in the American democratic system. Part of that is their participation in political activities at various levels of political structures. But part is in their participation in economic activities, not only in earning a living, but also in the use of their income and wealth. And part is in the social arena, not only in sociable activities, but also in community activities which may relate to the political and/or economic, but also religious activities, even if only in the sense of civil religion.

The sense of place may arise out of reason and/or religion. The use of reason is widely based on a paradigm built upon cause and effect relationships. That is heavily rooted in the centuries since the Scientific Revolution and is built upon science generally using linear models. However, society as a complex adaptive system has a dominance of nonlinear relationships resulting in outcomes based on interactions producing emergent properties rather than just the direct cause and effect relationships assumed in linear models.

Thus, the sense of place in a societal structure has to do with the self and the connections to others as individuals and to groups at various scales of organization. These connections are built upon a foundation of the evolution of primordial biological forces that produce survival and other motivations, including sustenance at various levels of preference. Included in the process is some level of spirituality, sometimes minimal and not in the form of religion, but often manifested in faith, frequently associated with religion. On top of this comes reason, the major instrument of science, but closely associated with a broad range of activities, and sometime trumped by emotion.

This sounds complex, and it is. So, use of nascent disciplines will aid to a better understanding of the condition of the world. Furthermore, an objective view of the world may lead to the conclusion that civilization is not doing very well. Although, some people will assert that we are doing amazingly well. It depends on the standard used. For the purposes of the book to which this preface is addressed, the standard is the ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence in that 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.”

### *A Fork in the Road*

This takes us to a fork in the road. We may discuss the self in relation to the community, with an emphasis on the resolution of seeming conflicts between science and religion (or reverse the sequence and call it faith and reason). Or, we may discuss the institution of American Democracy and its endangerment from the internal injustices that have evolved. Actually, we are going to do both, it is only a matter of sequence. They both lead to the same place, a call for a *Declaration of Reform*; a 243 year later *Encore Declaration*. Okay, maybe it will take longer, so it will be closer to two and one-half centuries after the major inflection point leading to The Great Experiment.

The call for a *Declaration of Reform* is in the main treatise, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*. It is ensconced in the trilogy’s third book consisting of six chapters (originally drafted as essays) and supplemental material, all of which started off as a pilot project called *The Declaration and Transformation*. That project was the centerpiece of an exploratory wiki approach to an educational innovation now modified to start with a series of three books published in hard copy as well as in digital format. As a quick orientation, an excerpt from the preface to the third book of the trilogy is at the end of the fifth chapter of this book, *Perspectives for a Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*. It is the last subsection and titled “*An Excerpt from the Preface of American Democracy.*”

## *Blending Science and Religion*

The main body of this book (the second of this timely trilogy titled *American Democracy Endangered*) is in Part II: A Sense of Place in Perspective: Science and Religion. Its core is three chapters (originally drafted as essays) supplemented by appendices. The structure of these books is designed to facilitate the reader to pursue the discussion to whatever depth that seems appropriate.

Chapter 3, the first chapter in Part II is titled “Emergence Links Science to Religion.” It identifies a linking of science to religion based on nascent disciplines dealing with self-organization and emergence in complex adaptive systems. It has done so by shedding light on the nature of the process known as *emergence* from self-organization that was represented by the metaphor of *the invisible hand*.

In the next chapter, “Denominations in Science and Religions,” some nascent disciplines are used to build the case that the societal structure within which one learns to live her or his life is a key variable in the process of self-fulfillment. Additionally, the collective choices of the community through its interactions generate emergent properties, or characteristics that influence the changing character of the societal structure and the well being of the general population. Furthermore, through a better understanding of nature impacting the mind and societal structure, faith and reason may be used to impact societal structure so as to improve the general quality of life, but especially liberty and justice for all, not just some.

The penultimate chapter of the main body of the trilogy’s second book is titled “The Sciences and Religion Matter.” The basic premise is that the quality of life of individuals starts with individuals, but is greatly impacted by the societal structure and other environmental conditions in which the individual seeks to thrive. The environment, including the societal structure, is a complex adaptive system in which interactions produce emergent properties in the form of characteristics of the evolving environment.

The three chapters that provide the core the second book of the trilogy titled *American Democracy Endangered* serve to link science to religion using the nascent discipline of complexity science along with philosophy. The thinking and writing Rabbi Morecai M. Kaplan led to the creation of Reconstructionist Judaism, a

minor denomination in the smallest of the three Abrahamic based religions. Kaplan, with an exceptional interdisciplinary education, sought to find a sense of place in America for the immigrant Jewish community in the early 20th century.

Kaplan was an American thinker heavily focused on the flourishing of the individual. His concept of salvation was rooted in human potential fulfillment of the individual. His thinking was influenced by both American and European literature, especially Romanticism and going back to include Aristotle. Additionally, his view was of an orderly universe that tied nature and religion is reminiscent of Spinoza who may have been a great inspiration for him.

### *Missed Opportunities in Blending Science and Religion*

Under consideration at the time of this writing is the addition of an epilogue that would include a discussion of missed opportunities for a timely blending of divergent thoughts into the mainstream of the other two Abrahamic-based religions. For the Muslims, it would include the Mu'tazilites whose scholars called for a rational theology, arguing that God has a rational nature and that moral laws and free will were part of the unchangeable essence of reason. This is discussed in the third book of the trilogy.

More regarding reason and faith is discussed in the third book, especially that the lack of balance in the sense of attempts to control belief altered the course of events in Islam. Had the Mu'tazilites been tolerant as in pluralism, and/or had the Traditionalists accepted the concept of pluralism, events might have unfolded differently. But, "Ibn Hanbal [a leading Traditionalist] refused to countenance any rational discussion about God."<sup>i</sup>

Islam missed a great opportunity early in its Golden Age. Had events unfolded differently it would not have taken more than twelve centuries until events in Tunisia started another embryo of enlightenment. That embryo, the so-called Arab Spring, starting with Tunisia "...found a way to balance the aspirations of secularists and Islamists and agree on the most progressive Constitution in the history of the Arab world."<sup>ii</sup> Egypt made a start with the Arab Spring approach, but the election of a leader from the Muslim

Brotherhood who apparently took a “winner take all” approach brought his regime down. It is uncertain how far back democracy in Egypt has been set, but “winner takes all” is cancerous to a democratic society.

In Christendom, the scholastics were the obscurantists of the Middle Ages. They operated in a narrow range of ideas that delayed the Scientific Revolution and the Age of Reason. This speaks to a perspective of reality akin to shadows on the wall. Descartes rejected the Scholastic method that started with the basic assumptions of faith and applied reason only from the selected premises of received religion.

An inflection point came with the work of Descartes. His approach was not restrained by the paradigm of received religion. He missed the boat on dualism, but as far as I know the case has yet to be made the challenge to his idea that mind and matter are two separate *varieties of substance* has not taken the form of *rejecting the idea that the mind is a substance*, and simply identifying it as an emergent property; except maybe I just made that case based upon science having included that mind is the brain at work generating an emergent property, but not a substance.

In the century before Descartes there was a superb opportunity for fostering humanism which for Fundamentalists may be viewed as atheistic. Humanism was already underway for a century by the time of Erasmus, but the attacks on Erasmus not only retarded humanism, but also the integration of the classics into religious thought giving short shrift to good deeds as a route to salvation.

Hopefully, we can progress further in the 21st century benefitting from the advances that were made in the 20th century leaning towards the concepts involved in the nascent disciplines. Applying those concepts would help in pursuing justice. The basic tripod in this argument is that the pursuit of justice starts with knowledge, that is achieved through the process of learning, and moves through the quality of caring, which is at the foundation for the pursuit of justice. It was the pursuit of justice that was the spine upon which the colonists in America united leading to the Declaration of Independence. Had King George III been responsive to the

grievances espoused by the colonists, independence would not have been pursued.

A strategy for pursuing justice, in order to obtain liberty, is for science to do a better job in understanding complex adaptive systems in human societies, and to work with those who have the power to effect implementation. That calls for the knowledge to be transferable in a usable form. That nascent discipline is called *translational research*, commonly referred to as “bench to bed.”

The obscurantists of the Middle Ages, the Scholastics, operated in a narrow range of ideas that delayed the Scientific Revolution and the Age of Reason, also known as the Enlightenment. All of this speaks to a perspective of reality. Descartes set the framework for the Scientific Method, focusing *how* we know what we think we know. His approach was not restrained by the paradigm of received religion. He missed the boat on dualism, but as far as I know the case has yet to be made to challenge to his idea that mind and matter are two separate varieties of substance by using the concept of emergence. That would take the form of rejecting the mind as a substance, and simply identifying it as an emergent property; except maybe I just made that case.

The series of thought leaders generating the new era included Francis Bacon (1561-1626), Rene Descartes (1596-1650), John Locke (1632-1704), and Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677). It may take the better part of a century for the ideas discussed to coalesce and generate a substantial change in the status of enlightenment. Or, perhaps the acceleration of the pace of change can arrive in a new age of enlightenment in only a generation or two.

### *Making the Case for Blending Science and Religion*

The cluster of the three chapters, collectively titled *A Sense of Place in Perspective: Science and Religion*, provides only one perspective for a sense of place. Let us first consider how this relatively young philosophical perspective of science links science and religion. We can then open discussion of the relationships of philosophy of science to religion

The use of the lens of some nascent disciplines, especially complexity science, considers American Democracy as a complex

adaptive system built on a foundation of American citizenry as the source of authority for the governmental structure. This work is particularly focused on educating those in the millennial generation, and the generation to follow, because the future of American Democracy heavily depends on their understanding of reality. If contemporary leadership potential does not rise to the occasion, the wisdom challenged decisions based on 20th century analytics will continue to endanger American Democracy. That will further result in the erosion of the quality of life for many Americans.

That governmental structure, and its administration in the three branches of government, has a tremendous impact on the societal structure, including the operation of the political-economy. The core values expressed in the Declaration of Independence were ideals towards which progress was made over America's first two centuries. Then the societal structure as an organic system, plagued by injustices, especially in the last few decades, has reversed its progress toward the ideals.

The American citizenry is the foundational network in the series of networks responsible for what emerges as the nature of the quality of life in America. The individuals are heavily influenced by science and/or religion. The greatest threat is the rejection of reality because of the lack of knowledge of what it takes to fulfill responsibilities of the individual in a democracy. If the sense of place is unrealistic, or unfulfilled, by a sufficient portion of the electorate resulting in foolhardy decisions, democracy will fail. What is called for is an enhanced understanding by the citizenry, and their representatives, in and out of government. It is a matter of caring and knowledge so that the pursuit of justice can blaze a path to institutional reform.

From science we learn that individuals have a tendency to engage in immoral acts when they are directed to do so by proper authority. Such seems to be the case when parents and children were separated and immorally treated when they were seeking asylum. The whole approach of so-called zero-tolerance was more than wisdom challenged, it was immoral. The following item from the web set forth a multiplicity of responses that said *we care*.

I Don't Care Web Item posted on JUNE 21, 2018, 11:58AM PT  
"Melania Trump Wears 'I Really Don't Care' Jacket  
During Immigration Trip"

By Alex Stedman @a\_sted ([https://twitter.com/a\\_sted](https://twitter.com/a_sted))  
Alex Stedman News Editor, *Variety.com*

Alex's Most Recent Stories:

"Melania Trump Wears 'I Really Don't Care' Jacket During  
Immigration Trip" (<https://tinyurl.com/y8aeqyuq>)



*Credit: Zara, Rex/Shutterstock*

**UPDATED:** First Lady Melania Trump (<https://tinyurl.com/ru2z9ck>) wore a military jacket with the words "I really don't care, do u?" while she boarded a plane to visit a detention center for immigrant children in Texas on Thursday.

The path to institutional reform that is advocated in the third book is a call for a Declaration of Reform. What was concluded in the design of an innovational educational project that started off as the *Transformation* part of *The Declaration and Transformation* project was that a more productive approach would be to start with hard copy and digital publications for a timely trilogy of books, adding a first book designed to raise the level of consciousness of the targeted readers.



As is being discussed in this section of the preface, there already is substantial indication that the level of consciousness is being raised. The first book of the trilogy suggests that there will be a dramatic change, possibly in the form of a discontinuity, but may be in an evolution of culture. The second book of the trilogy is speaking to the evolution of the culture through an education that would enhance behavior of individuals.

This second book focuses on the series of essays that deals with science and religion as elements in how individuals as principals in the American citizenry can better understand their decision-making processes, and the role of their resulting affiliations with institutions and institutional arrangements that affect the quality of social capital essential to a productive functioning of a free society that pledges liberty and justice for all, not just some.

There is no silver bullet. But there is a new generation, the millennials, some of whom are well attuned to understanding their sense of place in American Democracy, as demonstrated by a group of Florida high school students and numerous other groups of high school students throughout the nation.

The immediately preceding generation, whose perceptions of self-interest overshoot the previous balance experienced from time to time in the first two centuries of the Great American Experiment, has contributed to erosion of the societal structure essential for democracy.

As appendices to the penultimate chapter in the main body of this book, two essays were added to delve deeper into a psychological approach. The first is titled “Sense of Place and Empowerment.” The second is titled “Empowerment of a Society.” After the first book of the trilogy was drafted, a third essay was added: in the form of an appendix to the opening chapter of the second book in the trilogy. It is titled “Empowerment through More Effective Learning.” Delving deeper into the psychological approach was continued in the addition of an appendix to the six chapters of the book. The appendix is titled “Adapt to Change a Reality: Restore American Democracy’s Resilience.” All four appendices take a cognitive science approach, with a special perspective of psychology. The lead co-author for all four of the aforementioned appendices is Dr. John Lillibridge, a

psychologist who joined me as co-leader of the ASPEC Seminar on Strategic Decisions, currently focusing on applications of nascent disciplines to complex adaptive systems. Now that I am no longer a Floridian, he continues to lead the seminar focusing on complexity matters.

Each of the three books can be read independent of the others; and fit well into a specialized context. However, there is a synergistic effect in reading all three. The best sequence depends upon the interests of the reader.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> The quote from Armstrong on page 165 continues as follows: Thus when the moderate Mutazili al-Huayan al-Karabisi (d.859) put forward a compromise solution — that the Koran considered as God’s speech was indeed uncreated but that when it is put into human words it became a created thing — Ibn Hanbal condemned the doctrine, ... [The quote continues but the traditional was firm on the point that] Reason was not an appropriate tool for exploring the unutterable God.

<sup>ii</sup> The quote is from Thomas L. Friedman’s June 15, 2014 *New York Times* op-ed piece.