

**Unity Counts**  
**Introductory Note**

This essay was started in June 2020 and completed in September 2020. It was partially done when the American Academy of Arts and Sciences published, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the final report of the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. It was the result of a two-year bipartisan study came up with six strategies and 31 recommendations. This platform contains a [book review](#) of that study and relates it to the main treatise of the trilogy.

An excerpt from that main treatise is provided in a file also posted on this platform. The link is to [Appendix D - Building a New Paradigm](#) Excerpts from Chapter Five of *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*.

Substantial background is contained in a linked article, [The Fourth Republican Revolution](#).

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## Unity Counts

### Now Hear This

#### Massive Demonstrations

Unity counts, and so does voting. But that is not enough. It will take a systemic evolution to save our freedom. That evolution may have already started. The first clue is the massive demonstrations. They are an emergent phenomenon arising in the environment containing the combined impact of the pandemic and the recession.

That deterioration of environment had already disproportionately affected the black portion of America's population. It was in this environment that the public viewed an outrageous abuse of police power. That injustice led to a needless death inflicted by a police officer who had the suspect under control, handcuffed and on the ground. The police officer, was charged with second-degree murder, having persisted with the stranglehold using his knee for more than eight minutes, while the victim was pleading, "I can't breathe." Three other police officers stood by while the crime by the police officer was being committed; and not one of them attempted to try to save the life of the suspect who was allegedly being murdered.

#### Dysfunctional Systems

All of this exists in an environment in which the dysfunctionality of the human species, and the dysfunctionality of *The Great Experiment*, American Democracy, has placed us in at least two crises. The first crisis is the pandemic. The second is the recession it has generated.

Globally, an excellent overview of how the world is doing is provided in a couple of pages in the Sunday Review section of the New York Times, May 31, 2020. It is authored by Thomas L. Friedman, and titled "The World is Broken: Greed and globalization set us for disaster." The four parts are titled as follows: (1) Sept. 11, 2001; (2) The Great Recession; (3) Covid-19; & (4) Climate Catastrophe.

The Pandemic. The dysfunctionality of *The Great Experiment*, American Democracy, as to the handling of the pandemic is in a process that is still unfolding. This administration's history of dysfunctionality started with the lack of preparation by the president's administrative appointees to get a proper orientation to the operations of the agencies he nominated them to head. The president then curtailed the activities of the epidemic unit charged with responsibility for the preparation for epidemics (and presumably pandemics). The shortfall in performance continued with disregard of information regarding the beginnings of COVID-19, and the lack of preparation for dealing with the virus. The dysfunctionality continues with President Trump's apparent focus on fostering economic activity as a political strategy for reelection, even at the expense of the health and well-being of the population.

Here is an update based upon Bob Woodward's latest book on presidents of the United States. The book has a one-word title, *Rage*. According to a Wall Street Journal article (September 10, 2020) by Rebecca Ballhaus, *Trump Says He Played Down Severity of Covid-19 in Public*. An excerpt from the article (the second paragraph) states:

"I wanted to always play down," Mr. Trump told Mr. Woodward on March 19, according to audio recordings of the interview and by CNN on Wednesday. "I still like playing it down, because I don't want to create a panic."

Later in the article, here are two more paragraphs:

On Wednesday, Mr. Biden said Mr. Trump's comments to Mr. Woodward showed he had "lied to the American people."

"He knowingly and willingly lied about the threat posed to the country for months," Mr. Biden said during a campaign event with autoworkers in Warren, Mich. "He failed to do his job purpose. It was a life-and betrayal of the American people."

The readers may make their own judgments as to motivations. However, Americans suffered for more infections per capita and higher death rates than the other advanced nations.

The Recession. The second crisis is the recession that arose earlier than expected because of the necessity of a stay-in-place approach, and other measures to constrain the spread of the virus.

The dysfunctionality of the failure to avoid unnecessary recessions and a diminution of fiscal capability for recovery started before Mr. Trump took office. In recent history, the failure to understand the organic nature of the political economy in order to prevent the Great Recession (2008-09), and provide appropriate recovery strategy goes back about a quarter of a century.

There were lots of villains in in facilitating the Subprime Crisis and Capital Market Freeze that triggered the Great Recession and associated 2008 Global Financial Crisis. They included mortgage finance companies that made loans they knew would go into default, but package them up into tranches, sold them in layers of derivatives that were erroneously risk rated to investors who wound up with assets inadequately documented for foreclosure, all in the system insufficiently regulated. There was a mixture of greed and lack of understanding on how to manage a healthy mortgage finance system.

Part of the problem was we didn't really learn much from the experience of the Long-Term Capital Management fiasco in the 1990s in which we permitted institutions to become too big to fail. We did it again the 2008 financial crisis, and rescue the institutions leaving the borrowers hanging out to dry. The damage was so widespread, that a great many innocent people were heavily damaged.

Decades of fiscal irresponsibility with the administration charged with the recovery in a position of excessive reliance on monetary policy rather than fiscal policy for the recovery. As a result interest rates were given so low that when the latest recession occurred there wasn't much that could be done monetary policy. Add to that the problem the so-called tax reform in December 2017 resulted in a huge deficit, about \$1 trillion before the \$3 trillion deficit occasioned by the pandemic as an opener to an uncertain future.

Recovery from the current recession is going to be long and hard and is going to require a unity in sharp contrast to a divisiveness that prevailed during the recovery from the Great Recession started 12 years ago. All of this is going to be the environment of climate catastrophes that will call for government assistance.

### The Voice of the People

There are substantial differences in views as to the appropriate balance of public policy in dealing with health and survival impacted by the spread of COVID-19, and the consequences of restraint in economic activity. "The voice of the people varies widely. Among the variables are the ravages in their locality, not only from the health damages and death of the people in their community, but also the hardship from the loss of employment by workers in their community and the failure of business enterprises owned and operated by others in their community. Obviously, the personal impact may affect the perspective

of the range of damages incurred by different segments of society.” That is from the booklet, IT IS TIME TO DECIDE! DO YOU WANT TO LIVE IN A FREE SOCIETY? The entire booklet is available for free download on the DEEP website which opened on July 4<sup>th</sup> for review and comment. Here are a few paragraphs:

Of specific importance for many people is the extent to which they are personally impacted, and their understanding of the potential outcomes, not only from the choices they make, but also the choices made by others. It is not only the potential impact of their becoming infected with the virus, by the behavior of others with whom they may come in contact, but also by the choices made by governmental authorities who have a responsibility to protect them.

Some of those authorities, and the intervening political operatives, are more interested in their own political power and other personal interests than they are in the well-being of the community for which they have responsibilities. The trust placed in their behavior, when not properly honored, may be cancerous to the survival of freedom for which they are striving.

In order to honor that trust, those who accept the fiduciary responsibility are obligated to act professionally using due diligence to understand potential outcomes. The depths to which they may go, start with the level of obligation for the position they hold, but proceed to the level of understanding the representatives have of the system, and its operations, as well as their own morality.

As noted earlier, Bob Woodward has come out with his book, *Rage*, in which, according to a Wall Street Journal article, President Trump was informed of the dangers and misled the public. In any different report, the daughter, of a Trump supporter who died from the virus because he had faith in the president, said her father died because he trusted President Trump. We’ll get some feel for how many of the Trump supporters appreciated his behavior with regard to the virus when we see the results of the November 3 election.

The second crisis, the recession, arose when the necessity of a stay-in-place approach reduced employment. Here is a paragraph that will be linked to the booklet, *Great Danger Emerges: Democracy Challenged* (when this essay is posted on the DEEP website):

The reality is that market discipline does not exist when businesses become too big to fail and companies are bailed out when their exploitation of the public blows up in a financial disaster. That is what happened in the 2008 crisis. The warning signal was in the Long-Term Capital Management case. The current variation, now being experienced with the contingency of the pandemic, is threatening the existence some business enterprises that used their tax cuts for repurchase of stock and increasing their dividends. They already took out their profits, but now want their assets protected. Why not let them fail, and rebuild organizational structures that will provide a competitive discipline? Consider the major airlines and the major banks.

The voice of the people is heavily influenced by their feelings as well as their reasoning in dealing with the information is available to them. The divisiveness has been increasing for decades reached the point where truth and science, for some people, have been so neglected that the quality of their lives and diminish and early deaths occurred.

#### An Evolutionary Process

That booklet that has more discussion of the evolutionary process that may well emerge, at least when recovery starts from the pandemic and/or the recession. What is happening recently is that the circumstances of the tragic death of George Floyd on May 25 has triggered a movement called *DEFUND*

*THE POLICE*. That movement may be the marker for the institutional evolution that is beginning in 2020s with at least two major cities (Los Angeles and New York) redirecting funding from police departments to social institutions more suitable for handling the nature of many of the activities currently within the police departments' portfolios.

During the months of mass demonstrations following the tragic death of George Floyd, there have been additional deaths of black men at the hands of police resulting in charges of excessive force. May 25, 2020 may go down in history as an inflection point considering the broad response to the movement of Black Lives Matter.

The process is quite complex. It depends upon a co-evolution of the electorate, and the institutional arrangements by which power is exercised in the political economy and the societal structure. The *DEFUND THE POLICE* is a simplistic phrase used to refer to a complex process that has a wide range of interpretations, generally correlated to political views. Part of it is a call for the defunding the police. Some cities have already made substantial adjustments in the budgeting of the police departments.

#### An Interpretation of the Example

Here is an academician's interpretation of what the phrase, *DEFUND THE POLICE*, means from an interdisciplinary perspective that blends the lens of nascent disciplines with a multiplicity of social sciences. It means a restructuring of the provision of governmental services, including a diminishment of the role of the police department. The reallocation of funding would be directed to other agencies or entities, better suited to provide the services.

Since you have just matched what you read with your expectations, your reactions are closely related to those expectations. Consider whether those expectations are in the context of law and order, or the role of government protecting its citizens from dangers, foreign and domestic.

If you take the first of the two views, using the context of law and order, tenants who do not pay the rent become subject to eviction, and upon lawfully obtained eviction notices, the police by force may evict the tenants. If the former tenants do not have resources for alternative housing, they follow the category of the homeless.

People arrive in that category for numerous reasons, including health related reasons as well as poverty. Once in that category, any violation of the law exposes them to discipline of law and order that may be viewed corrective measures in order to protect the rest of population at large. That can be very expensive for the government, especially if incarceration is involved. A comparison of our domestic approach to that taken by other free societies reveals an exceptionally high proportion population incarcerated. It also reveals that incarceration for crimes modest financial consequences are exceptionally high proportion relative to incarceration of people who have substantial means and have managed to violate the law and made a great deal of money of the process.

Now consider taking the second of two views in which the role of government in dealing with the pandemic and recession includes dealing with people who become homeless. Assume that there is an evolutionary process in which local government, along with social service providers, and private foundational support have an organization that is designed to assist people in the process of addressing the situation in which they are unable to pay their rent. And, assume that some temporary aid will avoid the homeless. Would you rather have the government funding used for the legal process involved in the

eviction process and the subsequent costs of the consequences, or in the program of assistance to avoid the eviction?

### The Frame of Reference

The frame of reference is a nonpartisan approach to preserving a free society that requires at least a two-party system in order to have the discipline envisioned by the founding fathers for the protection from tyranny. At that time, the existing party structure had not been formed, but there was substantial diversity among the thirteen colonies that became sovereign states. The protection from tyranny as a matter of design in the creation of what has been called America's Second Revolution, the transition from a confederation to a federation with a constitution that provides for the separation of powers.

The paradigm used for the analytics is a blend of nascent disciplines with the well-established disciplines typically use in the 20<sup>th</sup> century organizational structure of higher education, especially those in the social sciences.

### The Key Elements in the Approach

The key elements in the approach are built upon what contemporary science calls *emergence*, applied to the use of a biological analogy stemming from the human body and applied to the social sciences, especially centered upon the political economy; but integrating culture and the cognitive sciences. This approach stemmed from applications of the concepts before complexity science laid claim to being a discipline. It stems, in part, from an interdisciplinary approach to dealing with real estate and urban development in both the public sector and the private sector. A key element in understanding the operation of markets.

Markets are emergent properties of networks in which the interactions impact the structure of the environment. That environment in turn impacts the decisions made in the networks. The decisions in the network in turn alter the structure. The new structure impacts the decisions, the process goes on as an evolutionary process.

The readership is no doubt acquainted with the concept of the *invisible hand*. It was mysterious in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century Adam Smith used the concept in developing his position on free trade. Is widely misunderstood today, because the conditions for markets to produce the emergent properties that Adam Smith claimed to be the results, not existing in a sufficiency to exercise the discipline. Understanding the complexity and reality of our political economy can be significantly hands by understanding how variations in the systems produce variations in outcomes. What we are talking about is improving outcomes through the design of how we operate as a free society.

In order to facilitate the development and dissemination of knowledge, the phrase, the *other invisible hand*, has been used. It refers to the evolutionary process we have been discussing in which the lens of complexity is used understand how decisions in the various organs are societal structure impact outcomes.

Using a biological analogy, the economy, the political structure, and the societal are all organs in the body of society. It is their evolution that affects the quality of life in our society. And, in the shortfall in our understanding of the realities of the system that has significantly contributed to the dysfunctionality we are experiencing.

This approach is explained in the website, *Declaration Era Educational Press*, also known as *DEEP*. It opened for review and comment on July 4th.

### An Educational Innovation

#### A Bit of Background

This website is an outgrowth the exploratory wiki site, The Academy in the Cloud, that started in 2016. That exploratory wiki that was a follow-on from the wiki site designed for a major research project generated by the subprime crisis and capital market freeze that led to America's Great Recession following the 2008 financial crisis. The shortest description of the project is in the acknowledgments section of an article that may be reached by googling *Maury Seldin United Airlines article*. It may be downloaded for free. The excerpt is as follows:

This article is part and parcel of a new wiki site, Academy in the Cloud Enterprise that features the treatise titled *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*. That treatise calls for a Declaration of Reform. Maury Seldin concluded after research on the subprime crisis and the capital market freeze that led to the Great Recession, that the debacle was not only unnecessary but that it was not just a real estate finance issue, it was a societal issue best understood through the lens of complexity science, especially complexity economics. The focus on real estate finance and complexity economics is noted in a newsletter Supplement – “Homer Hoyt Institute Research Initiative...”, especially in the end notes. The background includes the work of Maury Seldin and others associated with the Homer Hoyt Institute. The HHI funded along with industry (including the Mortgage Bankers Association, National Association of Realtors and Freddie Mac) a pioneer research effort Spring 2008 and its Supplement – “Panic Doesn't Help – Strategy Does.” The opening program was 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 discussed in a Fall 2007 newsletter and its Supplement – “Don't Panic Yet...”

Maury Seldin's use of a societal-issues perspective for understanding real estate has a marker from the early 1960s when he gave a keynote speech at the national convention of the real estate fraternity, Rho Epsilon, as an assistant professor at University of Southern California. The approach survived beyond the three decades in academia, from which he retired from the American University in 1990 as a chaired professor emeritus. But after the subprime crisis, and the capital market freeze, it seemed time for beginning of a new paradigm. As for the couple of co-articles, still focused on real estate, the first was a *New Paradigm for Real Estate Valuation*, published in the *Journal of Property Investment and Finance* (2011). It was followed by one titled *Hidden Complexity Housing in Housing Markets: A Case for Alternative Models and Techniques*, published in *The International Journal of Housing Markets and Analysis* (2013). In both articles, David Wyman was the lead author; also included was Elaine Worzala.

After the 9/11 disaster, the lens of complexity science, that had been used for decades before it became one of the nascent disciplines, entered into the picture. It is heavily focused on nonlinear analytics: but the shift was to another venue, the *Cosmos Club Journal* (2004) with an article titled *GETTING TO THE ROOTS OF TERRORISM*. Many authors have been using the lens of complexity without the jargon of the discipline. The key concept is the nonlinear analytics in which decisions impact of environment, and the environment in turn impacts decisions. This brings us back to the discussion of *the other invisible hand*, emergence impacting the evolutionary process. That is one of the key elements under this discussion

leading to a strategy in which educational innovation empower the electorate, and the elected representatives, to restore American Democracy back on the path towards the ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence.

### The Trilogy's Content

The trilogy of books will be used to enhance learning productivity in the form of a demonstration project providing an education innovation going beyond the linking process. The exploration utilized wiki sites in exploring educational opportunities for enhancing learning productivity. It is part of a process designed to mitigate the outrageous costs of higher education, and to enable learning by motivated learners who choose to delve deeper than what is presented in the social media. It is a point of departure leading to using apps in a more efficient learning process, especially utilizing information based upon reality rather than information that does not represent sustainable facts. It is also a switch from Internet users being the commodity marketed to advertisers and others seeking to influence the public. It is a switch to Internet users being treated as the clients even when no fees are involved.

The first of the trilogy's books, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, And Endangerment*, was the outgrowth of some presentations at two interest groups of the Academy of Senior Professionals at Eckerd College. The interest group most heavily involved was one on strategic decision-making, with a focus on applications of nascent disciplines, especially using the lens of complexity. The second was an interest group on books and ideas. It was used as a leader to the first of the two interest groups that was organizing some knowledge to deal with countering the movement of American Democracy toward becoming a dysfunctional system.

Three of the early presentations in the process resulted in a few essays that are now appendices to what started as the trilogy's first book, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, And Endangerment*. The first of the three presentations was made in 2012. It is titled *Liberty and Justice for A# Some*. The opening paragraph is as follows:

America is on the road to becoming a dystopia! The ideal of *liberty and justice for all* is being eroded by the trend in the distribution of income and wealth being skewed more and more to the right and the middle class losing faith in the system. The formation of the Tea Party has moved the nation toward policies built on a faulty understanding of the operation of the *invisible hand*; an understanding that manifests itself as liberty and justice for **some**.

It, and other content lead to what was initially the concluding chapter of the 2015 version of the book that called for a Declaration of Reform.

The Declaration of Independence recorded one of Western civilization's greatest strategic decisions of how some people in a society of colonists chose to defy a tyrannical regime. Arguably, it may have represented one of mankind's greatest strategic decisions as evolve from a confederation to a federation. In any case, the disorder that is rampant in the world today, and the malignancy in the structure of America's political-economy with its societal injustice, may be setting the stage for a *Declaration of Reform*.

An excerpt from what was provided at the ending of the first version of the book, indicating the purpose of such a declaration includes the following: "..., 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.”

On June 11, 2020, the PBS News Hour devoted about 10 minutes to reporting on a just released two-year study, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. It is a report by the Commission on The Practice of Democratic Citizenship of The American Academy of Arts and Sciences. One of the interviewees, Danielle Allen, happens to be the author of *Our Declaration: A Reading of the Declaration of Independence in Defense of Equality* (2014); a book heavily quoted throughout the trilogy. The timing the publication of the Danielle Allen book was perfect because the main treatise calling for a Declaration of Reform was being developed in the book containing appendices that include the two initial essays (*Liberty and Justice for All Some* and *Divisiveness in America*) and an appendix titled *Consilience a Biological Example* adapted from a presentation by Dr. John Khosh, who practices holistic medicine for more than a quarter century. That presentation and appendix was drawn on for writing the third chapter of the book using the analogy of the organic nature of the human body in formulating an understanding of the organic nature of our society’s political economy.

The PBS News Hour interview on June 11, 2020 led to a website review that evening for some preliminary information, and the next day follow-up request for two copies of the report. By that time, only the first two sections of this essay had been drafted. The third section of this essay, An Educational Innovation had not been started. However, the topic from the third section had been designated as a lead to the concluding subsection the Designing Future Evolution.

So, as it turns out, this third section of the essay was started within about 24 hours of the PBS program on June 11. In that short time period, it became obvious that is that that fifth chapter of what is now the trilogy’s third book will need some revision. That has now been done, and this essay, *Unity Counts*, that was underway is being modified to include material from *Our Common Purpose*, the just released report of the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The coincidence of the titles of the reports, *Unity Counts* and *Our Common Purpose*, and of the great descriptions of the subject matter, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment* with his call for a *Declaration of Reform and Reinvent American Democracy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Responding to a Nation in Crisis*, is remarkable. Of great significance, however, is that the report is calling for action with a bipartisan approach to significant issues, five of which are alterations of processes and structures in the system. The sixth item, *Inspire a Culture of Commitment to American Constitutional Democracy and One Another*, is somewhat different in that it falls into the category of a holistic evolutionary approach. That is best understood in the context of the trilogy

The trilogy is designed for substantial linking to enable motivated learners to delve deeper, if they so choose while they are pursuing a line of reasoning designed to enable them to quickly grasp how a collection of concepts may be to the emergence of a better understanding of the organic nature of a complex system. That use of the lens of complexity is designed to facilitate better choices in the pursuit of desired outcomes.

At this stage it looks as though the series of strategies presented in the report will provide the foundation for additional entries on the DEEP website, Declaration Era Educational Press.

## Analytical Systems and Action

### Reinvention, Reform, and Revolution

The recently released study, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, provides six strategic approaches to the “Essential Reinvention of American Constitutional Democracy.” In support of those six strategic approaches there are 31 recommendations. Those recommendations deal with components of the structure and the processes that alter the structure.

These are in the context by which the Commission on The Practice of Democratic Citizenship of The American Academy of Arts and Sciences pursues its mission of an interdisciplinary approach to societal issues, and by happenstance to deal with the same dysfunctionality of American Democracy that was just discussed in the preceding section, An Educational Innovation. Thus, there is a commonality of interest embedded in the commission’s report by its pursuing a **reinvention of American Democracy**, and the embedded interest of the personhood of the LLC that owns the trilogy (*American Democracy Endangered*). The trilogy’s authorship started as an educational process to assemble a team for the pursuit of what has been identified as a “Declaration of Reform.” That educational effort has morphed into pursuit of an educational team that can foster understanding of what is called “America’s Third Revolution,” the subtitle of the trilogy’s first book, *Common Sense Revisited: America’s Third Revolution*.

That third revolution is expected to be in the nature of America’s Second Revolution, the transition from a confederation to a federation. Its nature is uncertain, but it could relate to numerous alterations in the Constitution including a redesign that would supersede the electoral college, alter the terms of federal judges to have finite limits, and the relationships between the states and the federal government. Furthermore, given the blatant denial of justice in the impeachment trial conducted by the Senate, and the obstruction of justice by the president of United States that has gone unchecked in many dimensions leading the nation down the road to an autocracy, it is apparent that the processes for avoiding tyranny need better control not only through legislation, but through a redesign that may include more than one element requiring a constitutional amendment.

The Academy’s approach deserves a great deal of respect because it focuses on political reality in dealing with what has been developing during the term of the current administration. It is **civic action** oriented, and that is to be supported.

The trilogy, and its supporting educational material, is **learning action** oriented. It is concerned with understanding the system so as to better deal with overcoming the shortfalls in knowledge issues that have contributed to the dysfunctionality that is so adversely affecting our quality of life, and expectations of future. The public has arisen in mass demonstrations, sparked by a blatant lack of justice in the systemic racism in the law and order system, at a time where the discriminated minorities are already disproportionately suffering from the dysfunctionality of the system.

At this time, it doesn’t look as though the public will be satisfied with minor changes that are not convincing of future results in the form of systemic change. It looks as though there will be another national spike of death and destruction of the coronavirus, and the continuation of recession that will result in more damage to the economy than anything since the Great Depression. Consider the possibility that the restructuring that occurred in the wake of the Great Depression could be rivaled by the reorganization of the political economy, the location and structure of economic activity, and the return to pursuit of *doing good*, not just *doing well*. [Link to book 1.]

Please, make no mistake on the interpretation of these comments. The action advocated by the commission report is supported by the Research and Education Division of the Maury Seldin LLC that owns this essay and the authorship rights of whatever literature is created by Maury Seldin, its founder. That LLC division is in the research and publication business, in an attempt to deal with not only outrageous costs of higher education, and its rationing that denies a fair distribution, but also with the lack of a reasonable understanding by large sections of the voting public what it takes to live in a free society. This educational orientation is a great fit with the civic engagement orientation in the Academy of Arts and Sciences report, *Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*.

The feasibility of the democracy has been questioned going back to the writings of Plato. Some progress was made in the Enlightenment era, but the masses were not ready from a knowledgeability perspective. The founding fathers had reservations about the masses in creating *The Great Experiment*. And, so did de Tocqueville early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century when he came to America to pick up some ideas having seen the disasters the French Revolution. Then, in 2016 the public was so disenchanted with the establishment that would take almost anything; and it did to its regret. Donald Trump is self-destructing the Trumpian Republican Party, and that party will, in time, reform itself. [Link to Republican Revolutions.] The challenge before us is that we are operating without an appropriate design of the system, understood well enough, and wide enough, with a morality sufficient to result in a healthy society, with the political economy operates to produce liberty and justice for all, not just for some.

#### Public Outcry

The public outcry is the manifestation of the power of the people. The spark that ignited the demonstrations struck in Minneapolis Minnesota May 25, 2020 when George Floyd, a 46 year old black man was killed during an arrest for allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill. The arresting officer Derek Chauvin knelt on Floyd's neck for more than eight minutes while Floyd was on the ground, Floyd saying "I can't breathe." The arresting officer Derek Chauvin has been criminally charged, including second-degree murder.

On June 12, about 2 ½ weeks later, another abuse of power by a white police officer, leading to an unnecessary death of a black man, provided another spark. That was in Atlanta Georgia, when Rayshard Brooks, a 27-year-old black man was fatally shot by Garrett Rolfe the arresting officer, now facing 11 charges including felony murder.

In Kenosha Wisconsin on August 23, 2020, a police officer shot Jacob Blake in the back seven times. The public outcry including "Defund the Police" and "Black Lives Matter" has continued over the several months. Since the death of George Floyd. The level of process has continued, and escalations. President Trump and his law and order crusade to visit Kenosha and focus on the damage done from the destruction. He did not visit the family of Jacob Blake, and would not have been welcome. But the presidential candidate, Mr. Joe Biden did. His visit was more presidential than that of the first current president.

Our focus here is not on interpretations of slogans, or advocacy. It is on the analytical systems and the actions that follow, or fails to follow. The vehicle is power and the generator is the source of power and the mechanism through which the generator operates.

At one extreme is a totalitarian regime. For the vast majority of the last two millennia, the dominant power structure was totalitarian in the form of royalty or church. A few centuries ago, the trend shifted towards the source of power being the people. The general form of organization is loosely described as democratic referring to the source of the authority, or republican, referring to the people being represented by elected officials. Totalitarian regimes like to pretend on representing the people; consider the formal title for North Korea, officially the “Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK or DPR Korea).”

American Democracy, with the word democracy capitalized notes our particular form. That form might be more appropriately described as a hybrid between a plutocracy and a democracy, considering the dominance of the wealthy. In the post-World War II era, the global trend for the first half century, was democracy. The trend in the last quarter century has been towards totalitarianism. Our current president, Donald Trump, seems to favor leaders in those regimes, and appears to alienate the leaders of free societies.

American Democracy has set a very poor example in what it actually does in the pursuit of the ideal articulated in the Declaration of Independence. We made progress for about two centuries, but have receded for about the last half-century with the sharpest marker of the decline in the election of our current president. Saturday’s Review Section of the Wall Street Journal contains an excerpt from the former national security advisor John Bolton’s new book, *The Room Where It Happened*. That, and other links on the website provide a great deal of information.

President Trump’s position on law and order is antithetical to the collective position of the demonstrators. The election discipline, because of the demonstrations, may well be modifying the position of many of the Republican Senators who have been shifting from blindly adhering to the president’s position until international issues started some cracks in the system of presidential domination. Was far there has been some accommodation in the Senate from what is being proposed by the House of Representatives. But it seems likely, whatever legislation results, although leading to some progress will not be sufficient to restructure the functioning of law enforcement.

It is going to take a cultural shift, over time, from the concentration of power using the rule of law to suit their own interpretation of the **role of law**. Instead of law enforcement, it may take a shift to **law compliance** by facilitating structural changes in the provision of services. Using the lens of complexity will help understand the evolutionary process by which the structure may be changed [add links]. Although some of that will shortly be discussed, great deals available through the discussion of three levels of meeting problems.

### Component Reform

Component reform can be critical because the interactions among components generating emergent properties that alter the structure; and that structure influences process. Unity counts because it develops social capital that is critical to process and structure. Pursuit of self-interests that impair the unity essential for a democracy to function may also backfire.

Consider the case of John Bolton, former national security advisor to the president. His just-released book, *The Room Where It Happened*, contains information relevant to the impeachment proceedings held by the House of Representatives, but was not available to them. It would have been available for the Senate at the trial in the form of testimony had John Bolton been subpoenaed. It is uncertain what

the consequences will be from the members of the Senate who opposed to having witnesses at the trial, when they are up for reelection, as events unfold. It appears that Bolton was focused on the revenue from the book sales in the way that he was handling critical information, including at the time the House of Representatives was preparing the articles of impeachment. Now there is some uncertainty as to whether retribution from Donald Trump, through law enforcement processes in which the federal government sees the profits on the basis of his violating national security constraints.

President Trump appears to have interpreted the *rule of law* as a means of utilizing the *role of law* as a presidential power to pursue his own personal political interests. Add to that the violation of presidential norms of behavior, especially in the president violating the role of uniting the nation in a time of crisis, the public is responding with a demand for real structural change, especially from the abuse of police power, including the presidential willingness to use military forces designed for national defense to squash the demonstrations protected by constitutional rights. In short, he is at the wrong size of the culture war.

Unity starts with caring about the commonality of interests, and the knowledge that one's own interests are dependent upon others. Just as the diversity of skills and tasks is essential to the evolution of productivity in the economy, so are the diversities in beliefs and cultures essential to the evolution of free societies that recognize pluralism to be at the core of equality of rights.

The pandemic in the United States is developing is a demonstrated failure of the current administration to meet the tests of unity in the face of a pandemic challenge. The administration diminished the epidemic preparedness, ignored the alerts, and botched the response. A great many other countries in a far better job in dealing with the coronavirus. So, what kind of reform is needed?

A great deal depends upon perspective! People tend to respond to sensory inputs in relation to expectations of the content of the information being received. A really short summary going beyond awareness is in three paragraphs contained in the opening chapter (AWARENESS OF YOUR RIGHTS) of the third booklet (Great [Danger Emerges: Democracy Challenged](#)) introducing the timely trilogy (*American Democracy Endangered*). They are as follows:

A strategic approach to danger starts with awareness. Danger awareness provides an opportunity for prevention. The cost to cure is often substantially greater than the cost of prevention. Awareness, however, is a precondition for prevention.

Systemic awareness, with self-correcting systems, is by far the most cost-effective approach. Human biology, with *homeostasis* as its self-correcting system, provides the model that is more cost-effective than conventional curing. It is a process providing a tendency to move toward stability in the face of changing conditions.

The operation of the system is dependent upon information and energy. The quality of the information and the processing system influence the outcomes. Choices in the process are heavily impacted by discipline, self-imposed, or externally provided.

The awareness is only the first component. It is discussed in the trilogy's first book, *Common Sense Revisited*, in an appendix titled "Empowerment Through More Effective Learning" in a subsection titled "The Way the Brain Works" [see pages 218-220]. The main discussion is in the three levels of meeting problems. Yet to be linked is the final section ([The Changing Structure of American Democracy](#)) of the fourth chapter (Harnessing Complexity in the Twenty-First Century). The subsection that discusses the three levels is excerpted as follows:

### ***Three Levels of Meeting Problems***

In order to avoid a failure of American Democracy, we may consider three levels of meeting problems. The three levels of meeting problems may be categorized as a *curative approach*, *preventive approach*, and *perfective approach*. These are discussed in the fourth chapter, Understanding the System, of the main treatise, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*. Intervention in the gerrymandering problem falls into a curative approach. America's Second Revolution, providing a Constitution, provides the foundation of the preventive approach, especially focusing on the avoidance of tyranny. We are now turning to a *perfective* strategy for fostering coevolution as part of a Cultural Revolution, especially through research and education, and amounting to America's Third Revolution. That *perfective approach* is built using Holland's "...four general properties of signal/boundary systems... *diversity*, *recirculation*, *niche* and *hierarchy*, and *co-evolution* [page 94]."

The starting point is that key sentence of the Declaration of Independence, "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." That was the marker for America's first revolution. Values articulated include *Life*, *Liberty*, and the pursuit of Happiness. Dealing with these values starts with the individual. <sup>114</sup>

Our discussion started with the merits of diversity of individuals and moved on to recirculation. The strategy placed before you now progresses to *niche* and *hierarchy*.

**Niche and Hierarchy.** We now turn to the third of the four general properties discussed by Holland, *Niche and Hierarchy*. These are building blocks in the structure of the system. The niche for the individual may be viewed as a sense of place for the individual among a network of others within the boundaries of the cell or organ in the biology of society.<sup>xxxiv</sup> That cell or organ is a building block in the complex adaptive system of American Democracy.

It is within that niche and hierarchal structure of American society, and beyond, that the individual functions in her or his life, which needs to be understood; liberty also needs to be understood. Understanding both life and liberty contributes to the fruitful pursuit of happiness.

Understanding life is no simple matter. One approach is a liberal education going back at least to the ancient Greek philosophers. Another approach starts with planting a garden and learning what it takes for a growing thing to flourish. The next step to take responsibility for some form of animal life — maybe only a pet, but even better, taking responsibility for farm animals. The third step takes one to Homo sapiens, and that's going to take us to liberty; and it can start with caring about another person or other people.

Understanding liberty is part of understanding life. Within the niche and hierarchy there are constraints protecting the liberty of others. That has been called negative liberty. It is in contrast to positive liberty which is having the opportunity and resources to pursue flourishing. Plants cannot flourish in barren land.

The discussion of diversity and recirculation set the stage for understanding the interdependence of life within the niche and hierarchy of an anthropological system. Within that context, there is a right to the pursuit of happiness. That pursuit is for an individual to flourish.

That right to pursuit of happiness is not an unfettered liberty. It is the right to flourish within the societal structure; but societal structures differ. However, societal structures evolve. Take the <sup>115</sup> case of Baruch Spinoza in the early 17th century Amsterdam when he wrote the subtitle to his *Theological-Political Treatise*. It was subtitled *Wherein is set forth that freedom of thought and speech not only may, without prejudice to piety and the public peace, be granted; but also may not, without danger to piety and the public peace, be withheld*. It was published with no author listed, and with a fictitious name for a publisher and a city of publication different from the city in which it was actually published.

This was a remarkable step, laying the groundwork for the Enlightenment. Spinoza, a great philosopher, had gone through a great evolution; but it took time for the coevolution segments of Western civilization to catch up with his thinking. The Constitution of the United States of America and its First Amendment recognized that right to freedom of speech.

It is the behavior in the interactions of individuals as niches in the hierarchy that can generate the emergent properties for the functioning of the perfective system.

The American Revolution started as a pursuit of justice but morphed into the establishment of thirteen sovereign states. The Confederation and then the Federation provided a great experiment in the development of a structure that provided an exceptional opportunity for pursuit of happiness. As that structure evolved, the populace had increasing opportunity to flourish with the quality of political rights to life and liberty. That great experiment in a societal structure of American Democracy is now in grave danger from its internal activity. This was a case of niche and hierarchy for a working perfective system.

So, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, "The essence of a Democratic society is that it is rooted in the essence of the people. It is not, however, a summation of the people as with a simple aggregation. It is what results from the interactions among the people as an emergent property; the set of characteristics of the structure that results from the processes." Thus, using the lens of complexity, through a discussion of diversity and recirculation, what is going to emerge in a democratic system is dependent upon the interactions of the individuals within the system. The divisiveness is destructive for democracies.<sup>116</sup>

Individuals have an equality of rights in those interactions that include the equality of rights to the access to the tools of government, especially voting rights. The denial of their rights is an injustice. Put together with other injustices it can lead to a Third Revolution. The recent Supreme Court decision denying federal authority to also include an equality rights to reciprocity; an equitable treatment in the interactions within the networks is also included. The increasing skewed distribution of income and wealth indicates that the reciprocity is falling short of equitable treatment as a participant in the system for the production and distribution of resources.

The call is thus for a change in behavior that values the pluralism that contributes to the existence of a perfective approach. That will require a coevolution of inclusiveness and society.

**Coevolution of Individuals and Society.** The case has just been made that we can use a biological analogy for the evolution of a complex adaptive system. A stronger case is made in the third book of the trilogy in the chapter titled "[An Analogical Model Using Human Biology](#)." It is supported by an appendix with greater biological detail.

We have now set the stage for our discussion of the co-evolution of individuals and society. Unfortunately, we have been moving towards a form of government that will become an autocracy. President Trump appears to be using the playbook of Putin.

Putin's policy of generating fake news and other misinformation is taking us on the road to autocracy, and debunking history in favor of myths designed to generate the action or inaction of his choice, takes advantage of the limited ability of the population to think as if they were ants in the colony, rather than think things through. By the way of contrast, the case of self-organization of bees, and their innate ability, provides an example of how a better quality of information processing produces better outcomes.

The challenge before we pursue the evolution of processes and structures that would naturally serve for a functioning, representative democracy calls for a coevolution of individuals and society.<sup>117</sup>

### ***Concluding Thoughts***

**The premise underlying the treatise is that democracy is a participatory institution, and the outcomes are heavily dependent upon the wisdom of the participants as well as the structure and processes.** [Emphasis added.] The key concluding thought is that educational strategy should go beyond common sense. An innovative approach, utilizing a wiki site that was under construction when this book was started, was the start that led to this re-visitation of Thomas Paine's pamphlet titled *Common Sense*. That approach, including a demonstration research project, is an option. That has been pursued.



Under the original plan, an additional book to be added to the series (now consisting of the original two books plus this feeder book, from which a pamphlet may be extracted) was under consideration for assembly of a team of authors to form a book of readings. That is still an option; but this treatise, which started off being designed to approximate the size of Thomas Paine's pamphlet titled *Common Sense*, readily developed into a full-size hard copy book, also published as an e-book.

Various options are under exploration, and inputs are most welcome. However, what is clear is that there is a major research and education opportunity on the table, especially for private foundations interested in restoring American Democracy back on its path towards the ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence. For democracy to be successful, an educated electorate is essential.

The necessity of an educated electorate is in the context of participation in a diverse society in which pluralism is an asset. So, just as diversity is essential in the economic sector in order to produce the productivity that enhances the quality of life, so is the diversity inherent in pluralism of the American political economy also essential to enhancing the quality of life. Beyond the diversity in values, there are diversities in disciplines that impact perspectives, and differences in analytics by which information is collected and processed in order to have a perspective that represents an understanding of the system.

Truth is essential to the process! We are dealing with knowledge that is a reflection of reality rather than understandings that are based upon confusing the shadows on the wall with the reality of what it takes to have a healthy system. The behavior that results is not only influenced by the quality of knowledge that is received but also by the expectations from the perceptions. There is a diversity in the resulting behavior that varies with skills by which the individuals utilize the tools for critical thinking, as well as the qualities of the tools.

This first book of the trilogy takes us beyond common sense to the use of better tools derived from nascent disciplines that provide us with a lens of complexity. However, we need to know more about the diversity with which others are thinking and about how to better structure our society in order to facilitate the processes that facilitate an equality in the rights of all Americans in our political economy.

Our next point is from the emphasis added in the excerpt, **"The premise underlying the treatise is that democracy is a participatory institution, and the outcomes are heavily dependent upon the wisdom of the participants as well as the structure and processes."** Fortuitously, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences recently released its final report of the bipartisan Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship. It includes 31 recommendations to strengthen America's institutions and civic culture to help a nation in crisis emerge with a more resilient democracy." The six strategies are as follows: identified as follows:

Strategy 1 Achieve Equality of Voice and Representation

Strategy 2 Empower Voters

Strategy 3 Ensure the Responsiveness of Political Institutions

Strategy 4 Dramatically Expand Civic Bridging Capacity

Strategy 5 Build Civic Information Architecture that Supports Common Purpose

Strategy 6 Inspire a Culture of Commitment to American Constitutional Democracy and One Another

In large measure, that two-year project, accomplished a great deal of what was envisioned in the concluding phrase illustrative draft for a Declaration of Reform. That phrase is as follows: “and along with enablers and practitioners with abilities to foster societal change enhancing social justice as envision 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.” Those strategies are for political actions advocated through enhancing civic engagement. They were developed by a bipartisan commission and will make a great deal of progress, especially since the Republican Party is likely to undergo another reformation fairly soon.

The preceding discussion is drawn from the platform’s welcoming item, SYSTEMIC VISION. It should be noted that most of the strategies discussed in the commission’s report falling to the intervention category. This educational innovation is focused on the co-evolution aspect that is discussed in some of the items in this array of supplemental essays, as well as in the trilogy and its overview booklets. Here is an excerpt from what was in the box of the systemic vision essay:

As a start we look at intervention of the system using the lens of complexity. It could apply the approach discussed in the book *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier*, by Robert Axelrod and Michael Cohen. It focuses on generating emergent properties to intervene in components of the system. The next step would take a somewhat more complex view using a holistic approach, somewhat along the lines discussed by John H. Holland in his book, *Signals and Boundaries: Building Blocks for Complex Adaptive Systems*. That might potentially be designed to reflect what is alluded to in the second paragraph of the third overview essay, Great Danger Emerges: Democracy Challenged. It is as follows: “Systemic awareness, with self-correcting systems, is by far the most cost-effective approach. Human biology, with *homeostasis* as its self-correcting system, provides the model that is more cost-effective than conventional curing. It is a process providing a tendency to move toward stability in the face of changing conditions.”

That is along the line of the vast majority of reforms discussed in the American Academy of Arts and Sciences “

Strategy

The third chapter of the first book discusses the evolution within the last century. The section will need to be updated to include the results of the election on November 3, 2020. As of the end of September, this is being drafted President Trump is not willing to commit to abide by the election results.

A presentation on Fareed Zakaria's September 27 program will provide a starting revision of this article. It may relate to the formation of a Grand New Party because the lengths to which Donald Trump is looking to go to remain in power may destroy his political future.

#### Coevolution

An appendix is underway dealing with the relative role of *feeling* and *reason* in choices that lead to an individual action. As of the date of this is drafted, September 30, 2020, choices are proceeding in the election process that will influence the survival of American Democracy as a free society. Without unity in a reform to pursue the ideals of the Declaration of Independence, it will die as a free society. Donald Trump as president is leading us to an autocracy.

**The events that are unfolding, and the analytics of the essay under development will provide the basis for an update of this essay reflecting on expectations of the co-evolution of the voting public and leadership. We are facing a test of the resilience of American Democracy. Trump Sent a Warning. Let's Take It Seriously, RS=GeTZHFS5SnSH\_UpOJAcyOD1\_fUQ-,**