

Website Content Introduced [revised September 10, 2021]

Preface

This website is an educational innovation designed to provide lines of reasoning in brief formats; with links to delving deeper with great ease, and citations for normal pursuit of more detailed information. Its design started off using the endangerment of American Democracy as a demonstration case. The start was with what is now the trilogy's third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, And Endangerment*.

It has now blossomed to include two additional books, as well as three overview booklets. The second book drafted, *Perspective for A Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*, was designed to be supportive, especially with an understanding of how process impacts structure. The third book drafted, is now the first book of the trilogy. That book was triggered by events in 2017, the first year of what history will record as America's worst president. The book, *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*, provides background for what is currently being designed as a supplement to the first of three overview booklets.

A fourth booklet being developed, *America's Third Revolution: The Crises*, is exploring the potential of an additional innovation in what resembles a blog dealing with the unfolding events in the context of the vast literature posted on the website. The start of that booklet is in the form of the platform's first item in the second column (Evolutionary Ethics) [America's Third Revolution](#).

An additional posting that has some resemblance to a blog dealing with the unfolding events is what could become the fifth booklet, [Strategic Guidance Towards Improving Outcomes](#). Its focus is on the pandemic, a problem that will be with us a long time. This is similar discussion of process for our evolution as a nation will be back towards liberty and justice for all, not just some. The two top crises (the political destruction of our free society and the health and death threats of the pandemics) are the priorities among the handful of crises that we are facing, and that may well emerge considering that our world leadership role as a free society has been eroding. The trilogy's first book identifies our internal problems as a greater threat than international problems, but that could change.

After the first file in the fourth column of files on the platform, there is an alternate introductory tour. It will be followed by a series of spreadsheets providing an overview of topics located in the books, booklets, and platform. They are designed to be used for creating links and apps to enhance the productivity of the motivated learners' educational efforts. This educational effort is highly interdisciplinary. As a start, the website content is introduced with the essay, outlined as follows:

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Website Content Introduced

The Narrative Revised on April 1, 2021

An Introductory Statement on Mission

The structure of this website is best understood by considering the perspectives of the motivated learners who fall into different categories of psychographic classifications. From Wikipedia we have the following:

Psychographics is a qualitative methodology used to describe [traits](#) of humans on psychological attributes.^[1] Psychographics have been applied to the study of [personality](#), values, [opinions](#), [attitudes](#), [interests](#), and [lifestyles](#).^[2] Because this area of research focuses on activities, interests, and opinions, psychographic factors are sometimes abbreviated to 'AIO variables'.

Psychographics are applied to the study of cognitive attributes such as attitudes, interests, opinions, and [belief](#), as well as the study of overt [behavior](#) (e.g., activities).

We are addressing a diversity of motivated learners who fall into a wide range of achievement in the degree certifications of higher education, as well as those individuals whose formal education may have ended with a high school diploma. Our expectation is that whatever level has already been achieved, including doctorate degrees, our readers are motivated learners who are still pursuing knowledge, with or without the intent of degree certification. We are presenting knowledge that may be blended with what the learners have already accumulated, but with an extension to include 21st century nascent disciplines.

We are particularly concerned with facilitating an interdisciplinary approach to complex adaptive systems. These systems are organic in nature; they evolve over time. Our concern is with facilitating the co-evolution of the individuals along with the systemic changes in the environment, especially the man-made environment of the political economy.

This is presented in terms of an individual's inner and outer world. The box that follows contains an excerpt from the fourth chapter, *Understanding the System*, of the trilogy's third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*.

Understanding the System

[An excerpt from the fourth chapter of the trilogy's third book.]

The American case will be discussed shortly, but it is only a variation of the use of power to extract through government publicly generated wealth for private gain. But first, here is a bit of orientation from human biology using the perspective of inner and outer worlds, with the self in the middle.

Our Inner World. Dr. John Khosh, a colleague of mine at ASPEC, commented on an early draft of this chapter, then in the form of an essay (referring to the section immediately following the introduction), as follows:

The Organic Structure of Society

I believe that you are comparing the inner world of a human being with its outer world. I also believe that they share the same process - It is a great approach; the same laws of nature are applied. This is also my approach. It is a superb way of making people understand how human body functions and what societal cancer is?
... [email of July 10, 2014]

Building on his approach to holistic medicine which he has pursued for decades, we should explore the analogies of what people do in their internal worlds to exert forces on the human immune systems in order to favorably function, and what people do that is counterproductive.

We are looking to provide an education to people starting with what they already know, or believe that they know. We are attempting to do so starting with a blend of education that deals with three questions philosophers, and others, have been asking since the embryonic philosophical era of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle in ancient Athens, about 2500 years ago.

The three enduring questions are as follows: (1) WHAT CAN I KNOW? (2) WHAT MAY I HOPE? & (3) WHAT SHOULD I DO? Our educational mission is to facilitate individuals achieving a better understanding of themselves, and the responsibilities that they have when living in a free society. Answering those three enduring questions, successfully, generates an emergent process that develops [social capital](#) that facilitates the generation of a co-evolution of the individual and society that preserves and enhances the environment that enables the freedom.

Since our readership is highly diverse, we have no way of knowing from where the individual motivated learner is starting. Our position is that learning is an individual's own responsibility even though our society has a substantial obligation to provide an equality of opportunity for such pursuit. We are facilitating such an education, virtually for free, but relying on the individual to delve deep enough to satisfy a reasonable standard of critical thinking.

The process of blending *the three questions we never stop asking* starts with where the motivated learners already stand, in the relationship to their beliefs in what is already known by them. It is facilitated by the innovative approach of this website of the Declaration Era Educational Press (DEEP).

As a start, DEEP was very quick to provide a definition of *psychographic* for readership that may not be familiar with the term, but, but it did so with a reference to Wikipedia, and provision of an excerpt that one could skip, or take the time to read, or pursue in greater depth with the links provided by Wikipedia. Similarly, it provided a box that the reader could skip over, or readily pursue. This website is filled with citations from at least a few hundred authors, supplemented by comments of numerous columnists and

reporters, as guides to delving deeper. One book author that happened not to be noted on the website, until this introduction of the structure of the website was created, is Michael Kellogg, whose book is titled *Three Questions We Never Stop Asking*. We are using it to start the discussion of the three enduring questions.

WHAT CAN I KNOW?

A Brief Historical Perspective

The first part of the Kellogg book is devoted to that question, What Can I Know? The nature of the book, as presented in the flyleaf, indicates that in each part, there is a chapter focused on presenting an answer to the question. It is followed by a chapter in which one or more other philosophers take issue. This is not a review of the book; rather it is a discussion of those questions in the context of the multiple crises that we are facing today as individuals, and as a free society that is [under threat of destroying itself](#).

We are however using one particular reference to the Kellogg book. The discussion that is referred to is contained within seven pages (32-39). It is in the section titled "The Translational Dialogues." The text is "about the nature of virtue and the good life format." Socrates (at least as Plato writes about him in the construction of dialogues) pursues asking questions from which he is able to draw truths from someone in the discussion. Included is an interesting case in which an uneducated boy is able to solve a geometric problem (pages 35-36). The truth is drawn out by the responder's reasoning, not by Socrates teaching. Socrates only asked questions.

The relevant point is that the boy thought he knew the answer, but realized that he did not know it after he figured out the correct answer using Euclidean geometry (even though not having studied it). He was able to produce the correct answer by simply responding to questions and recognizing the answer when it appeared.

The dialogue presented was written early in the first of two great bursts of philosophical creativity, each lasting about 150 years. The second was in the era that contained an overlapping of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment (also known as the Age of Reason). During that era, a mathematician ([Carl Friedrich Gauss](#)) realized that an alternative of two-dimensional geometries is possible **in that one does not** have to satisfy Euclid's parallel postulate. Gauss described the alternative as non-Euclidean. The point is, ***an alternative premise may provide a different outcome***.

That era fostered scientific advancements heavily focused on an inductive approach to science. The deductive approach starts with premises from which one could reason cause and effect. Research methodology was heavily focused on experiments designed to test the reasoning based upon the premises using inductive methodology. The more rigorous the tests with survivals from the experiments, the greater the confidence in the quality of knowledge surmised by the scientific pursuits.

The models worked well as long as the relationships among the variables did not evolve as they do with organic systems. In organic systems, the process of growth and decline alter the relationships and different models are needed.

Understanding the system is heavily dependent upon premises, or assumptions, from which reasoning starts. It is also heavily dependent upon the analytics that are used in carrying out the reasoning process. The Enlightenment era, and its associated Scientific Revolution were heavily focused upon reasoning used in the physical sciences. Indeed, the social sciences have been accused of having physics

envy. Beyond that, there is also the concern with the lack of attention to the humanities, especially in the case of morality. The indictment for the neglect of the humanities, as well as the misuse of reason, is made by John Ralston Saul in his book, *Voltaire's Bastards: The Dictatorship of Reason in the West* (1992).

Some 21st Century Developments

The global financial debacle of 2008 was the fallout from the Subprime Crisis and Capital Market Freeze that also caused our unnecessary Great Recession of 2008-9. The political economy, public sector and private sector, were not yet dealing with the issues with a heavy use of the scientific advancements from nascent disciplines, including complexity economics.

Built upon the research program led by the founder of this website, the use of the lens of complexity science is presented in the first chapter of the first book (*Beyond Common Sense: America's Third Revolution*) of this trilogy. It draws heavily from book by Eric D. Beinhocker, *The Origin of Wealth: The Radical Remaking of Economics and What it Means for Business and Society*. Beinhocker makes five key points differentiating complexity economics from traditional economics. These five key points come into play as we explore the evolution of the economic system operated under a democratic structure. The exhibit that follows is excerpted from the trilogy's first book, *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*.

Exhibit 1: The Five Distinguishing Ideas of Complexity Economics

	Traditional Economics	Complexity Economics
Dynamics	Static, linear, profit-maximizing equilibrium	Open, dynamic, non-linear, far from equilibrium
Agents	Modeled collectively – perfect information, no errors or biases, no learning or adaptation	Modeled individually – agents subject to errors and biases; they adapt and learn over time
Networks	Agents act indirectly through the market	Model interaction of agent; networks of relationships change over time
Emergence	Micro- and macroeconomics remain separate disciplines	No distinction between micro- and macroeconomics; macro patterns are emergent result of micro-level behaviors and interactions
Evolution	No mechanism for endogenously creating novelty, or growth in order and complexity	Evolutionary process of differentiation, selection, and amplification provides system with novelty and is responsible for its growth in order and complexity

Adapted from Beinhocker (2006, page 97)

The basic concepts, using the lens of complexity, start with the environment influencing the choices made, and the choices made influence the evolution of the environment. The process involved emerges from the interactions in the layers of networks in the system. The choices made are in layers of networks. Based upon the interactions, emergent properties are generated in networks macro to the micro generating network. Essentially, that is how markets work; the individual transactions are in a network from which the market arises.

In the case of the subprime crisis, the individual mortgage loans generating a market for the collection of loans that were then packaged into tranches of varying priority of claims. Then, for diversification of

market risks related to local economies, the geographically diverse tranches were then repackaged once more, and then further divided into tranches. It built a house of cards that collapsed when the bubble in housing prices burst.

What the investors thought they knew about the quality of the asset that they purchased turned out to be erroneous. Many relied on ratings made by agencies, hired by the issuers who could shop for biased ratings. There were many villains, and many innocents. There were many who thought they knew the consequences of their choices, but they were wrong.

Among the well-intentioned was the legislative branch who sought to foster homeownership by facilitating subprime lending, especially with the encouragement of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in their financing roles. There was also a lack of proper regulation of the system.

That *Great Recession* was avoidable had participants possessed a better understanding of the organic nature of the system, and the morality to make appropriate choices. The reality was individuals had some understanding of the components of the system as related to their short term interests; but either not knowing and/or not caring about the consequences of their behavior, as well as the behavior of the other participants in the activities leading to the debacle *America's Great Recession* in the global *Financial Crisis of 2008*.

We are leading towards the discussion of the potential of what amounts to a New Age of Enlightenment. Such an age would necessarily be built on better analytics, and better societal discipline in whatever form it arises, public and/or personal. This calls for greater attention to morality and the coevolution of the voting public and its leadership. Structural changes may emerge through an improvement of societal's processes. Learning and caring make a difference.

WHAT MAY I HOPE?

Process Alters Structure

The Paradigm. In the paradigm under discussion, although the choices you make influence the outcomes, the outcomes are also influenced by the choices that others make. In linear relationships, the cause and effect are directly related. In nonlinear relationships, the outcomes are influenced by choices made by others as well as made by oneself because the interactions generate outcomes that are not simply summations, but rather properties of the system macro to the generating micro network.

The processes alter the structure, and that structure in turn influences the choices made in the processes that continue to impact the evolution of the structure. In the first decade of this century, the processes built a house of cards that led to the Great Recession when the housing bubble burst and the capital market froze.

In the last four years of the second decade of this century (2017-2020), the Trump administration eroded some of the preparations we had made to deal with the pandemic that appeared at the beginning of 2020. We experienced a recession steeper than the one that appeared at the end of the first decade. Additionally, on January 6, 2021, the date of the Congressional process of counting of votes from the electoral college, there was an attack on the legislators in the Capitol building. That attack interrupted the normal processes in the transfer of power. We will be using the booklet, [*America's Third Revolution: The Crises*](#), under development, for the analytics as to what we may hope for and do to return democracy back on the path to the ideals articulated in the Declaration of Independence.

Thus, what we may reasonably hope will depend, as a start, upon how well we understand the evolutionary process that is underway, its interruptions, and the impact of the morality, or absence thereof, that prevails as it influences our behavior.

Typically, patterns may occur as exemplified in a chess game. When the opponent makes a move, there has been a change environment (the structure for the distribution of power is altered by the location of the chess pieces) affecting subsequent moves by each player. Depending upon skills, assessments may be made as to likely outcomes considering the patterns that are developing. This concept is discussed in a book by John H. Holland, *Emergence: From Chaos to Order*, using checkers and neural nets as the examples for patterns.

So, the patterns we are looking for start with the paradigm that we are using. However, the process also requires trust, morality, and integrity.

Trust is Required. You may hope for the building of social capital so that you, and other Americans, have a commonality of interests that will influence the array choices generating the desired emergent properties. Trust is crucial in this process. Consider the coronavirus; and the wearing of masks, and social distancing as they may affect the contagion.

When this was first drafted late in October 2020, the spread of the virus was spiking for second time. Understanding it may be facilitated by using a paradigm that includes the application of network science in which the number of contacts made by the virus to a new host is substantially related to the proximity and duration necessary for the virus finding a new host. At that time the dominant variant was what is now called the *Beta variant*. Mutations cause new variants, and transmissibility may change. Thus, the strategy for containment of contagion may vary because conditions changed impacting the relationship between costs and benefits. Now, as this is being updated in September, 2021, the Beta variant is the dominant version of Covid-19.

The conditions from which new hosts may be reached are critical in the process. The conditions under which contacts limit to an average of one or less new hosts, produces contamination results that provide an arithmetic limitation on the spread. If the average number of successful transfers of disease greater than one per person infected, the contamination will be geometrically increased. Two contaminations from each infected person doesn't simply double spread, it magnifies the spread in a sequence that would go 2, 4, 8 etcetera assuming the pattern is continued in successive contaminations. The pattern of three per infected, if persistent in the network, would go 3, 9, 27. Although it is uncertain what the number of subsequent contacts would be, the pattern for a containment strategy is to keep the average number at one or less.

It was predictable that after the holiday season at the end of last year, there would be another spike early in 2021. When this essay was being updated in February 2021, the spike was subsiding. It subsided mainly because vaccinations were increasing. But the contact precautions of washing hands, wearing masks, and social distancing still impede the spread of the virus.

Learning and Caring. Learning and caring make a difference. Learning may come from one's own experience and integrity. However, considering the complexity involved, learning from the experience of others may be highly productive. The integrity is a matter of morality.

The dominance of the Delta variant in the spring and summer of 2021 generated another spike in infections, hospitalizations, and deaths. The data by state and substate territorial classifications indicated what amounted to a second pandemic in localities with low rates of vaccinations. The vast majority of hospitalizations were among the unvaccinated. Interviews with Covid-19 infected persons in the hospital indicated that the unvaccinated learned by

personal experience, was a very hard way of learning.

Following the science is simply a productive way of learning. Following social media, without delving deeper, exposes one to being misled by others who are exploiting their credulity. This website is designed to enable motivated learners to delve deeper to more effectively increase their critical thinking. The caring comes into play because one's own vaccinations is not only a protection for oneself, it is a protection for others. The integrity of the individual and the system is heavily dependent upon morality.

Unfortunately, tribalism has made vaccinations and mass wearing political issues for those who seek power at any cost, as long as someone else is bearing the cost. That takes us to morality. It is foolish to trust others who have little or no regard for the truth, a significant element in morality.

Morality Impacts Outcomes. So now we can move from trust to morality. Obviously, this impacts the wearing masks and social distancing. We are looking at the morality of the people in the network in their consideration for others as well as themselves in consideration of their common interests. The *tragedy of the commons* is a classical case societal organization, or lack thereof, in grazing on common land. One can rely on the morality of commonality of interest in self-discipline and/or one may introduce regulation to implement the social contract.

Your individual success is heavily dependent on your environment, especially dependent upon the behavior of others in your environment, and the quality of government that is defending what the Declaration of Independence claims as your unalienable rights. That government is composed of many layers within the individual states that claimed sovereignty and banded together to get independence,

but evolved to become the *Great Experiment* of a federal government with delegated authority that generated responsibilities, structured in a fashion to avoid the concentration of power that would lead to tyranny.

When this was first being written during the 2020 election period where, with less than a week remaining before the last date a voter may vote in person, what was on the ballot was the future of American Democracy. Fortunately, the voting public chose a leadership with the morality and competence to better deal with the pandemic than was provided by the previous administration. The previous administration was led by a president who was not a person of high morality. The politicization of masks continues at the state level, where the pursuit of power is overriding the common good of effectively dealing with the pandemic.

Environmental Change Matters: Events after the revision of April 1, 2021 version of this website introduction was posted, included the Delta variant overtaking the Beta variant in prevalence. There are two significant differences for strategic management of policies impacting the health and welfare of the population. The first is that the Delta variant of Covid-19 is more readily transmissible. That change in contagion impacts the geometric progression illustrated with the preceding network example. The second is that the health consequences from the infection may be substantially more dangerous.

As discussed; in the appendix to the first booklet, Appendix A - Strategic Guidance Towards Improving Outcomes. Shaded for clarity in editing

As discussed in the first booklet's Appendix A - Strategic Guidance Towards Improving Outcomes (linked https://mleofthemauryselfinllc.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Item-5-ISTTD_Booklet1appp.pdf), the greater the governmental control on containment, the greater the potential for a containment on the spread of Covid-19. Our system of fractionated control, with heavy reliance on individual choices has provided us with exorbitant infection rates, and exorbitant death rates. The extent of containment results in a trade-off between human health and the health of the economy.

Methods of containment may focus on the societal system for control of the potential contacts and/or the control system for individual protection. An early warning system indicating that the virus had made contact could make a significant difference for control. There is a potential for that, but at present the best we can do starts with testing, and then tracing for contacts.

Quality and cost of tests varies, as does the ability to trace. Once identified, infected persons may be isolated. The major trade-off comes in the choice of actions designed to deal with the uncertainty of transmission. Social distancing and masks reduce the likelihood of transition, but there is a trade-off of individual activity that may facilitate infection and reduction of activity, not only in the economy but in human contact terms.

That choice is highly dependent upon societal structure. Our political economy was designed for protection against tyranny by political authority, not for protection from the control of nature.

Our vision of human being at the top of the food chain turned out to be erroneous in that a minuscule virus thrives on our providing their protein. We can get substantial protection by vaccines, but activities that provide exposure increase risks. It turns out that our choices not only affect us, but also others. That also means that others choose, and their choices affect us.

The mutation of Covid- 19 from the Beta variant to the Delta variant is the environment. And the rise of the Nu variant adds the uncertainty. The lockdowns that focused on contacts may have work well for the Delta variant, but individual protection from vaccines lower the downside of contact implications and provide an increase in benefits relative to downside risks; but it is also dependent upon the extent to which others have been vaccinated.

It sure looks as though it is time for us to change our societal environment so that caring about others will enhance the prospects for health and well-being in many dimensions for ourselves as well as others.

We are dealing with complex adaptive systems that evolve. We are particularly concerned with nascent disciplines blended into long-established disciplines, not only physical and biological sciences, but also the social sciences and the humanities. What follows is a brief discussion indicating the relevance of nascent disciplines in understanding what evolves.

Complexity Science. Complex systems such as human bodies and societies are composed of organisms that interact with each other to produce emergent properties. The interactions at a micro level relative to a macro level generate characteristics at the macro level that are not simply summations. Rather they are characteristics not necessarily present in the interaction of the organs.

What we are looking at here is behavior of individuals in making choices at a micro level that impact the structure at the macro level. This happens through the interactions in the networks. Getting a better understanding of how the system works, takes us to network science.

Network Science. The individual elements of network science are nodes. The nodes may be individuals in a social or business network. The nodes may be core airports in a transportation network. The number of links from a core node to other nodes may vary widely, as well as the strength of relationships. In personal relationships, we often think of the relationship and contacts with various levels of influence. In business relationships, contacts may varying degrees of accessibility.

For our purposes here we are looking at the interactions of individuals and the contagion of the virus to the populace in the territory under consideration. Virus has no respect for territorial boundaries, but the coevolution of the coronavirus and the infection rates is a geometric function of network contacts. The geometric function is illustrated in an excerpt from [Website Content Introduced](#).

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It was predictable that after the holiday season at the end of last year, there would be another spike early in 2021. As this essay is being updated in February 2021, the spike is subsiding. It is subsiding in part because vaccinations are increasing. But the contact precautions of washing hands, wearing masks, and social distancing still impact the spread of the virus.

Cognitive Science. The restructuring for a New Age is going to require great attention to feeling as well as reasoning. The shift is that the benefits from feeling should accrue to the individuals in society, and the community, rather than being exploited for the benefit of leadership. The Trump administration exploited feelings through tribalism and misinformation. It capitalized on the role of identity. The choices made by his followers not to wear masks, and not to pursue social distancing, added to the surge of infection and death rates. Our concern is with the coevolution of individuals the sense of enhancing their level of consciousness, beyond simple awareness.

Integrity of the System. The integrity of the system was eroded by Donald Trump by his behavior as the then president of the United States. He set a record of two impeachments. But there were no convictions. His role in the day of infamy, January 6, 2021, when the mob attacked Congress in order to thwart the transfer of power was a challenge on the integrity of the system, and to some extent on the integrity of some of the elected representatives.

The new crisis, marked by the inflection point in January 6, 2021, is a great challenge to our democracy. It along with the other crises, will be under discussion. What you may reasonably hope for is going to depend upon what you and others choose to do. Our concern includes what we thought was our greatest current crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic, along with the economic crisis it generated taking us into a recession that ranks somewhere between the *Great Recession* of 2008-9 and the *Great Depression* centered around the early 1930s.

There are at least two other crises that are threatening our future. One has to do with the climate change. The other has to do with the abuse of civil liberties, especially with systemic discrimination, not only in law and order, but also in the structure and processes by which people are compensated for their services and have access to some semblance of equality of opportunity.

What we may hope for, in the cases at hand, is that there will be a rise in the level of consciousness as to the reality the malfunctioning of the system as it has evolved in at least numerous recent decades; and, as to what our society is doing about it based upon truth, and the best of science available for the issues.

The greatest impediment to the proper functioning of the system is human behavior. Although our focus is on education, the values that underlie the choices one makes impact outcomes. Truth is critical, as is the rule of law. Furthermore, pluralism is at the foundation of a free society. So, there is little hope for our society unless we can observe the foundational values, with integrity.

The quest for power at any cost is cancerous to our freedom. The analytics that are being provided are intended for use in pursuit of the goals articulated in the Declaration of Independence. The danger for their misuse can best be countered by our citizenry doing the right thing; not pursuing justice, under the law, will result in our loss of living in a free society.

Hope for the Future of Our American Democracy

This brings us to the discussion of hope for the future of our American Democracy. The D in American Democracy is capitalized because we are referring to the proper name of a specific form of democracy,

such as it is. As noted in the other principal option as an introduction to the content of the website, *The Guided Tour*, this project emerged from what is now two appendices to the trilogy's third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*. It happens to be a demonstration case for the development of an educational innovation. That project was designed to lead to a [Declaration of Reform](#).

Blending nascent disciplines into the process may be done by intervention focused on components. It may also be done by development of a holistic approach that results in a co-evolution. That is a homeostatic approach.

[The Intervention Approach](#). The intervention approach, using complexity science, may be built upon harnessing complexity as described by Robert Axelrod and Michael D. Cohen in their book, *Harnessing Complexity: Organizational Implications of a Scientific Frontier*. The basic concept of harnessing complexity is described as "...deliberately changing the structure of a system in order to increase some measure of performance, and to do so by exploiting an understanding that the system itself is complex. [p. 9]" The index lists fourteen ways to influence complexity including dealing with variety, slack in the system, affecting types in the system, and leadership. The whole of it is that complex systems are not amenable to solely relying on the linearity analyses that are used to run a hierarchical structure, but need to include efforts to channel "...the complexity of a social system into desirable change, just as a harness focuses the energy of a horse into the useful motion of a wagon or a plow. [P. 9]"

This website contains [A Book Review of Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century](#). That publication is a report of the American Academy's Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship published in June 2020 by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The intervention through civic engagement is the main thrust of that approach.

[The Homeostatic Approach](#) The homeostatic approach involves an organic system operating for self-correction as it evolves. In the particular case at hand, that calls for a co-evolution of the people and the system. An approach to that system, leading to a coevolution, is described by John H. Holland in his book, *Signals and Boundaries: Building Blocks for Complex Adaptive Systems*. That approach might potentially be used in design 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."

The elements start with diversity, moving on to recirculation and then as a third component niche and hierarchy. It is the fourth component of the series that is of particular concern here. That component, in the case at hand is the *coevolution of the people and the system*.

This calls for rebuilding social capital. Doing so involves the concept of the need for [unity in our system](#). It may be approached by using the concept of [framing](#) in which the commonality brings the unity; and the emergence arises from the interactions that developed compromises for the differences in a democracy. The approach is to start with small scale diversity in a [democratic approach to creating emergence](#).

You may hope for whatever you wish, but the reality is that outcomes depend upon behavior, not only

of oneself but of others. If you want to answer the next question, *What Should I Do?* we need to move further in our discussion of the role of process and structure.

WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Understand the System

Learning is the Route to Understanding. Understanding process and structure is at the core of making choices that improve outcomes. In the paradigm under discussion for complex adaptive systems, organic in nature, the process influences structure; and, the structure influences process.

Our educational mission takes the tack of sharing knowledge by setting the buffet. It provides nutrition for healthy feeding of the individual and society. It starts with simple reason, or common sense if you prefer. However, it goes beyond common sense to include nascent disciplines that provide better analytics for the development of strategies that balance risk and return within the parameters acceptable to the individuals and society as a whole.

For those who are gluttons, the Age of Reason, that emerged to counter the concentration of power from a hierarchal structure, may be used to gain power in order to satisfy their greed. For others, it may be used to learn how to live in a free society.

Those persons greedy for power, and the credulous who are duped, endanger the future of a free society. Critical thinking is a start, but morality and ethical behavior make a very big difference.

Morality and Ethical Behavior. We started with a discussion that stemmed from the search to understand the nature of virtue as presented by Plato in his Socratic dialogues. What we did not discuss was the counterpart in the Enlightenment when Baruch Spinoza wrote his first book, *Ethics*. In it, he was faithful to the approach of reason with Euclidean rigor. We will get to it in the DEEP discussion of a contemporary view interpreting Spinoza's morality from a reading of *Ethics* as discussed by Antonio Damasio in his book, *Looking for Spinoza: Joy, Sorrow, and the Feeling Brain*. We will also get to a substantial discussion of morality embedded in Adam Smith's conception of the *invisible hand*.

The misunderstanding of the concept of the *invisible hand* has resulted in great societal costs. It has done so because the role of morality that was assumed by Adam Smith to exist at the time of his writing, setting the stage for pursuit of self-interest, does not exist in the contemporary environment. It requires a societal structure closer to what was envisioned by Spinoza when he wrote his first book, *Ethics*.

Just as birds in flight use signals and boundaries to keep distant from one another in flight so may humans use signals and boundaries for ethical behavior. It is a case of *distributed control* in contrast to *hierarchal control* as exemplified by regulation within business and government.

Baruch Spinoza wrote early in the age of the Enlightenment. Adam Smith who lived a century later, and wrote late in the age of the Enlightenment producing a seminal work in what is now known as economics. Adam Smith's first book, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) was an essay on ethics. It was in that book that he coined the term *the invisible hand* that became famous in his second book, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), commonly referred to as *The Wealth of Nations*. He was assuming *distributed control* in the operation of markets.

This website has substantial discussion about the *invisible hand* as a metaphor for the process of emergence. Adam Smith was a philosopher who taught about morality. The concept of morality was embedded in his expectation that the common good would emerge from pursuit of self-interest. This was consistent with what he may well have learned from the writings of Spinoza of a century earlier. Both Spinoza and Smith assume *distributed control*.

Understanding the role of morality in the context of markets in which self-interest is presumed is hampered by the absence of understanding the reality of the assumed characteristics associated with a level playing field, and the observance of such *hierarchical control* as may exist. It is a commonality of interests that makes a difference in the morality of the system, and its observance. The Orthodox Jews in the wholesale diamond business operate in a community in which there is a great deal of trust in the representation as to the quality of diamonds. The diamond dealer's reputation is at stake in every transaction he makes with his colleagues. That trust is essential to a fair representation. The buyer beware pattern that exists when the social capital is not at stake calls for regulatory systems that involve *hierarchical control* procedures.

In the trilogy's second book, *Perspectives for A Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*, we utilize reason as an approach to morality, and extend the invisible hand concept for organic processes to dealing with structures that evolve over time. In the first book, we go beyond common sense to include nascent disciplines in raising the level of consciousness. And in the third book, we move ahead with the development of the paradigm leading us to a New Age of Enlightenment in which concern for humanity is manifested through morality as an approach to dealing with our crises.

Use of a Strategic Approach. The choices that one makes may simply be reflexive and/or based upon feeling. They may also be based upon critical thinking. The increased reliance on social media has substituted the acceptance of questionable information targeted as reinforcement for existing beliefs for what little critical thinking might otherwise have been utilized.

An increase in critical thinking is called for when processing information inputs. This goes beyond fact checking and processing through reasoning. It goes to developing a strategic approach that handles multiple variables in types of risks and rewards, rather than just focusing on one area of interest. It goes to the range of concerns in one's quality of life, and to the environment upon which our quality of life heavily depends.

It goes to developing the social capital and institutions in which one may reliably trust. It goes to truth and honesty as a foundation for trust. These have been eroding for decades, the last few years have been brought us to multiple crises threatening the future of our democracy. Our democracy has been seriously damaged by self-centered greed for power.

The use of a strategic approach is being applied to the development of this website and to its educational mission. At this stage it is focused on two constituencies. The first is in assembling a leadership team for the development and dissemination of knowledge; the constituency being the thought leaders. The second constituency is the motivated learners, who may also serve in leadership roles, but whose interests are in a liberal education that will give them a better understanding of what they can reliably believe, hope, and do in their choices on how to live.

A great deal of that depends upon the environment in which they live, and finding a niche in society that will serve to facilitate their quality of life, and that of others in accordance with the unalienable rights claimed in our Declaration of Independence.

Participate in Rebuilding Democracy

Leadership Assembly. Leadership assembly has been driving this project not only from its inception, but also in some earlier research and writing. Those earlier efforts dealt with understanding

the pursuit of justice going back prior to the burst of philosophical creativity; referring to that which started among the ancient Greek philosophers 2500 years ago. The current project of website development is focused on justice that may emerge in what is envisioned as a potential third burst of philosophical creativity. The second such a burst of creativity within the Age of Reason. That period was from the early 17th century to the late 18th century.

The thesis is that a third burst of philosophical creativity may have started early in the 20th century and that potentially will blossom by the mid-21st century. It would be differentiated from the Age of Reason by an integration of humanities and some nascent disciplines in the social sciences. Essentially, it would deal with the dysfunctionality of Homo sapiens as a species. Alternatively stated, but to provide a paradigm to return American Democracy to the path of pursuit of the ideals articulated the Declaration of Independence that were pursued for two centuries, but have degenerated in recent decades.

The trilogy of books, especially the third book, use the analogy of human biology, as a start for building a new paradigm. That paradigm built upon societal biology is analogous to a foundational work by Edward O. Wilson that dealt that with a historical treatment as an evolutionary process.

The Covid-19 crisis and its associated recession progressed during 2020, and both are ongoing in 2021. They are discussed in the increasing number of overview booklets for the trilogy; there are now three. The third booklet, *Great Danger Emerges: Great Experiment Challenged*, has been written developing an alternative analogical source for understanding our societal evolution of our democracy, such as it is. The third booklet has been developed using the experience in land-use strategic decision-making as part of the development of a new paradigm.

There are several advantages for designing policy with the use of a second analogy. The primary concerns, beyond our democracy, deal with both the pandemic and the recession. As for the pandemic crisis, there is great uncertainty as to the future emergence of related pandemics. As a nation, we started with a miserable job in dealing with Covid-19. Aside from the absence of national leadership because of the grossly inadequate president, we have a population that in part was unable to exercise *distributed control*, and has in some locales resisted *hierarchical control* as exemplified by governmental regulation. The recession is likely to be longer than generally expected in that there will be a restructuring of the economy. Economic restructuring may also generate a recession. Part of the economic restructuring of this is going to be attributable to social distancing that is dispersing the residential population, and the change in the prevalence of technology for work in education. In short, it's going to be different patterns of land use emerging from the recovery attributable to the loss of employment because of the pandemic, and then a change in the nature of domestic economic production, and its geographical location, especially as to density of land-use as well as space occupancy.

Location and timing are critical for strategic choices relating to land use. The trilogy discusses the founder's experience in innovation; not only in education, but also with a demonstration project funded by HUD that provided an information system for the analytics that impacted public policy in many dimensions, and private investment. This was before the nascent disciplines utilizing the lens of complexity had reached the stage of recognition as nascent disciplines; but the perspective and analytics of complex adaptive systems was being applied.

Some of it was developed after experience in the utilization of computer game modeling for urban development. The model used dealt with fictional Oldtown and Newtown areas with models of political, economic, and societal segments. The emergent properties varied with team formation and

decision-making. Use of such models, upgraded to encompassing agent-based modeling, is envisioned with the addition of third wave Internet educational developments.

The range of disciplines is wide. The team's approach that a man to the moon demonstrated the benefit of integrating disciplines with the direct interaction of team members blending disciplines so as to use an interdisciplinary approach rather than a multiple-discipline approach.

Motivated Learner Education. This website is the tip of the iceberg for motivated learner education in that technology is being used to increase motivated learners' productivity. Additionally, the expectation is that the project will also provide a database for Third Wave Internet research.

At this stage the website is designed to provide the motivated learner with a broad range of options. There are several easy options for the motivated learner. The first is THE THREE ITEM GUIDED TOUR. The three items are essays. Two are appendices to the trilogy's third book. Those two are (1) *Liberty and Justice for All Some* & (2) *Divisiveness in America: The American Democracy on the Road to Dystopia*. The first discusses the major goal of the system. The second discusses a major problem. The third item is an essay on the platform. It is titled "*Our Democracy is Destroying Itself: Power Without Morality Is Cancerous.*"

There are also three overview booklets. The first is titled "IT IS TIME TO DECIDE! YOU WANT TO LIVE IN A FREE SOCIETY?" The first introduces the trilogy with a focus on your success in living in a free society. The second is titled "AMERICAN DEMOCRACY ENDANGERED: RESTRUCTURING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY." It presents a preview of the three books, with a focus on the endangerment. The third book is titled "GREAT DANGER EMERGES: GREAT EXPERIMENT CHALLENGED." This overview booklet focuses on a strategy for recovery from the two crises.

The readers can go directly to each of the three books. They are under review and comment status, but the front matter and the opening chapter of each is available for review and comment. Cited authors and selected others may read the entire text, even though each of the books is in a different stage of development.

The first book, *Common Sense Revisited: America's Third Revolution*, is designed to raise the level of consciousness in the spirit of the pamphlet, *Common Sense*, authored by Thomas Paine. The second book, *Perspectives for a Sense of Place: Voter Empowerment*, focuses on the role of the individual and representation. The third book, *American Democracy: The Declaration, Pursuit, and Endangerment*, contains the main treatise that calls for a Declaration of Reform. It also provides a start on a new paradigm for dealing with the reform.