

# Civic Leadership Fellows Seminar: The Art of Building a Better World

The future is uncertain but we can see its outline: If we continue down our current path of divisive politics, looming climate change, persistent poverty, and growing inequality, our prospects for a thriving future are dim. Yet we have the capacity to change the future, just as the Civil Rights Movement did before us with wisdom, courage, creativity, compassion, and hard work. In the process, we can create good lives for ourselves and connect to a community of people working together to make a better world.

Our approach is different. Most people working to make a better world think in terms of changing specific laws, policies, structures or government funding streams. We are trying to do something harder by taking an approach that builds the civic culture, the foundation for real and lasting change, while at the same time solving the immediate challenge of transforming urban education by getting a tutor or mentor for every student who needs one.

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*"The future is not a gift: it is an achievement. Every generation helps make its own future. This is the essential challenge of the present." – Robert F. Kennedy, 1962*

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Most efforts are focused on finding the quick fix, the evidence-based practice, the technological solution or the protest that will magically solve all our problems. These may be part of the answer, but they are insufficient. It's like a football team or perhaps an orchestra that spends all its money on a few superstars but doesn't do the hard work of creating a culture of hard work, passion, teamwork and the creativity needed to be successful.

**How do we get there?** By combining a practical approach to getting ordinary people more engaged in their communities through the tutoring and mentoring initiative with a public campaign to get people thinking differently about the world we can create for ourselves. Think of Apple's "These are the crazy ones... the dreamers, the people who changed things" ad campaign meets the Civil Rights Movement or Gay Marriage Equality Movement. Mindsets and culture in America can change. Empathy and even wisdom can grow. Both those movements teach us that.

The present challenge for our communities and the U.S. is to demonstrate with our actions that people in a community can work together to solve a major challenge – an educational system that is failing low-income students – and, if we can tackle that together, we can deal constructively with other issues ranging from homelessness and public health to climate change and economic development.

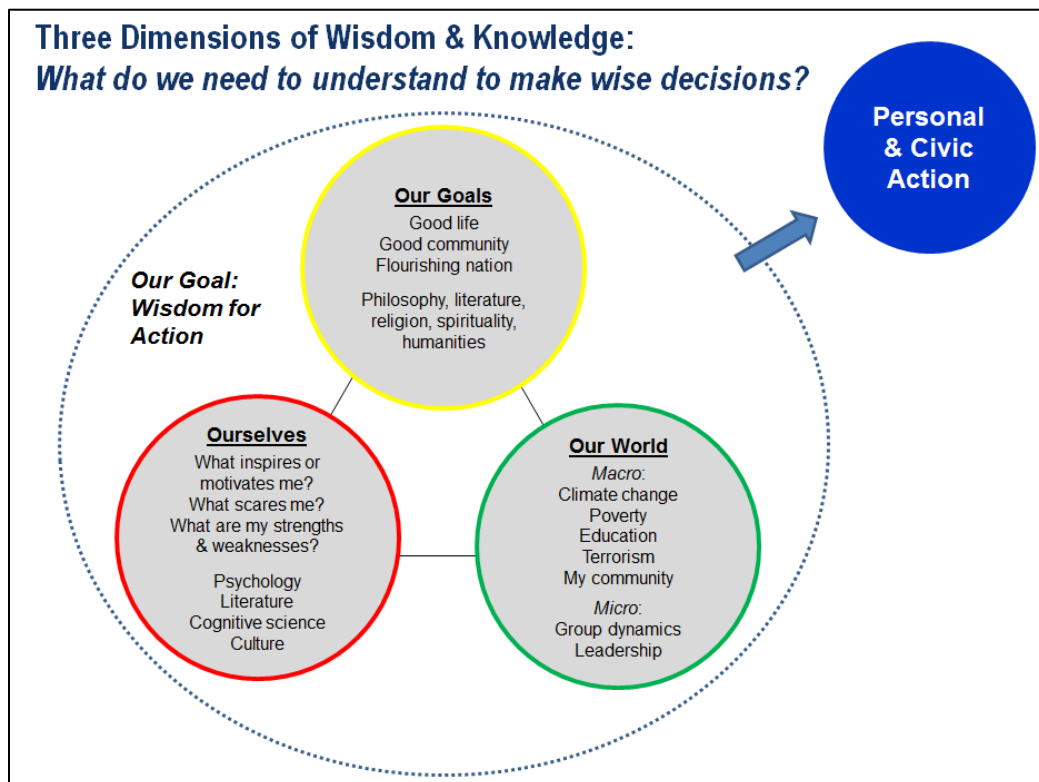
In 1960, these college students changed Nashville, and that, in turn, was instrumental in changing our world today. I believe that if we can help you learn by practical experience, study and reflection, you can have an impact equal to that small band of college students that changed America in the 1960s.



## The Intellectual Context and Overview

The purpose of this seminar is to help you think about how to work ethically and effectively to build a better world – helping others, providing leadership to communities or organizations, and "*thinking globally while acting locally.*" Where are the opportunities, the points of leverage, where one has a reasonable chance of creating meaningful improvement? What are the potential unintended consequences and risks and how can we avoid them? What are your "theories of change"? How can you balance the need for a career and a balanced life with a desire to improve the world? Answers to these questions will be considered in an intellectually rigorous seminar based on a series of short readings, videos and reflections.

We don't have simple solutions, but will attempt to give you some frameworks for thinking through these sorts of issues, which we loosely group into three dimensions: understanding our goals, ourselves, and our world. A good leader may not have many answers and is often dealing with great uncertainty in today's complex world. But navigating successfully through this sea of uncertainty almost always requires extraordinarily good judgment which may be improved with study, reflection and dialogue.



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## Books

- Robert Coles, Lives of Moral Leadership

Optional:

- David Brooks, The Social Animal
- Chip and Dan Heath, Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard
- David Halberstam, The Children

## Class 1: Introduction

*The future is not a gift: it is an achievement. Every generation helps make its own future. This is the essential challenge of the present. – Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.*

*We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory will swell when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature. - ?*

*No more prizes for predicting the rain, only prizes for building the arks. —Don Beck*

*But our democratic institutions are not automated. They must be inhabited by citizens and citizen leaders who know how to hold conflict inwardly in a manner that converts it into creativity, allowing it to pull them open to new ideas, new courses of action, and each other. That kind of tension-holding is the work of the well-tempered heart: if democracy is to thrive as that restored prairie is thriving, our hearts and our institutions must work in concert...[W]e regard “tension” as a condition to be relieved, not an energy to hold in our hearts .. Positive stress may try our patience, and yet it can help our hearts become more spacious and generous. - Parker Palmer, *Healing the Heart of Democracy**

In-class reading: I have been to the mountaintop.

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkivebeentothemountaintop.htm>

Readings and Video:

- Robert D. Putnam, Crumbling American Dreams, New York Times, August 3, 2013. \*\*\*  
<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/08/03/crumbling-american-dreams>
- Bill McKibben. Falling Short on Climate in Paris. \*\*\*  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/14/opinion/falling-short-on-climate-in-paris.html>
- Ganz, Marshall. Why Stories Matter. (Feb. 2009) \*\*\*  
<https://friendsofjustice.wordpress.com/2009/02/18/marshall-ganz-why-stories-matter/>
- Research Brief: How Do Volunteers Find the Time?: Evidence from the American Time Use Study (July 2008). <http://www.theromegroup.com/Portals/0/Volunteers.pdf> (Highlights only) \*\*\*
- Summary of the Robber's Cave Experiment. <http://www.sociallypsyched.org/item/robbers-cave-experiment> (3 min. video) \*\*\*
- Bryan Stevenson. We Need to Talk About an Injustice. (23 min. video) \*\*\*  
[http://www.ted.com/talks/bryan\\_stevenson\\_we\\_need\\_to\\_talk\\_about\\_an\\_injustice.html](http://www.ted.com/talks/bryan_stevenson_we_need_to_talk_about_an_injustice.html)
- Lovenheim, Peter. Won't You Be My Neighbor? (June 2008)  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/23/opinion/23lovenheim.html>
- Robert J. Schiller. How Idealism, Expressed in Concrete Steps, Can Fight Climate Change.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/03/29/upshot/how-idealism-expressed-in-concrete-steps-can-fight-climate-change.html> (economist, Nobel Prize laureate)

Course Themes and Goals:

- A survey course with time for reflection
- Intersection of the personal and the political, the individual and the community.
- The civic-moral dimension: Intertwining of current events, history, psychology, public policy, political philosophy, religion, and politics
- In short, we need to attend to three dimensions, three sets of questions: Who am I? Who are "we"? Where do we want to go? What are our goals or vision? What is our purpose?
- Where do we find wisdom? From highbrow public intellectuals to self-help books and articles, and from knowledge-centered (books, journalism, academia, etc.) to the practical (community and nonprofit experiments – e.g., there's no “theory” for City Year)
- Our personal “practice”: Developing self-awareness, intuition and "civic creativity."
- Leadership: From Plato's philosopher-kings to “servant leadership”

- The good community: Civic capacity, social capital and civic engagement

## Week 1: A Vision of Community and the Barriers to Achieving It

*With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations. - ?*

*You never really understand another person until you consider things from his point of view – until you climb inside his skin and walk around in it. – To Kill a Mockingbird (Harper Lee)*

**Questions:** What does a good community look like and how does it function? What barriers do we face to implementing it here?

Vincent Harding — Civility, History, and Hope (May 22, 2014). (50 min. podcast or read transcript – I recommend the podcast.) <http://www.onbeing.org/program/civility-history-and-hope/79> or [http://www.onbeing.org/program/vincent-harding-in-memoriam-civility-history-and-hope/transcript/6325#main\\_content](http://www.onbeing.org/program/vincent-harding-in-memoriam-civility-history-and-hope/transcript/6325#main_content)

William Deresiewicz. Solitude and Leadership: If you want others to follow, learn to be alone with your thoughts. [https://theamericanscholar.org/solitude-and-leadership/#.Vo72\\_N6DmrU](https://theamericanscholar.org/solitude-and-leadership/#.Vo72_N6DmrU)

Matt Ball & Anne Green. Summary of “Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard” by Chip Heath & Dan Heath. <http://www.veganoutreach.org/advocacy/switch.html>

Robert Kegan & Lisa Lahey. The Real Reason People Won't Change. <https://hbr.org/2001/11/the-real-reason-people-wont-change> (Nov. 2001)

Ezra Klein. Harvard's Liberal-Arts Failure Is Wall Street's Gain. <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/print/2012-02-16/harvard-liberal-arts-failure-is-wall-street-gain-commentary-by-ezra-klein.html>

Evan Wolfson: What's Next in the Fight for Gay Equality. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/27/opinion/evan-wolfson-whats-next-in-the-fight-for-gay-equality.html>

Omid Safi. Is All Morality Gone? Condemning ISIS, and Beyond, in a World of Suffering. <http://www.onbeing.org/blog/is-all-morality-gone-condemning-isis-and-beyond-in-a-world-of-suffering/6910>

*Optional:* Jeff Sachs. What is a Moral University in the 21st Century? (March 30, 2015, Columbia University) <http://jeffsachs.org/2015/04/2748/>

## Week 1: Our Theory of Human Nature: From Political Philosophy to Social Science

*Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually slaves of some defunct economist. – John Maynard Keynes*

*Who can decide off-hand what is absolutely better, to live or to understand life? We must do both alternately, and a man can no more limit himself to either than a pair of scissors can cut with a single one of its blades. - William James*

*[We] have a moral responsibility to be intelligent. - ?*

*The mind is the servant of the passions. - David Hume*

*The idea of democracy is a wider and fuller idea than can be exemplified in the state even at its best. To be realized, it must affect all modes of human association, the family, the school, industry, religion. And even as far as political arrangements are concerned, governmental institutions are but a mechanism for securing to an idea channels of effective operation...Regarded as an idea, democracy is not an alternative to other principles of associated life. It is the idea of community life itself. - John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (1927, 143, 148)*

**Questions:** Imagine that you have a new roommate from a tiny isolated island with a completely different culture than our own. He or she asks us to explain Western civilization, American culture and what you know about human nature from your study of psychology and the social sciences. What would you tell him or her?

Michael Sandel: Self-government for a Modern Age. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Swv\\_jnX3A3w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Swv_jnX3A3w) (2.5 min. video)

Heidi Grant Halvorson & David Rock. Beyond Bias: Neuroscience research shows how new organizational practices can shift ingrained thinking. <http://www.strategy-business.com/article/00345>

John Gottman: How to build trust. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=rgWnadSi91s> (5 min. video)

Barry Gewen, June 11, 2008. Who Is a Public Intellectual? <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/27/us/as-graduation-rates-rise-experts-fear-standards-have-fallen.html>

Roman Krznaric. The Power of Outrospection. <https://www.thersa.org/discover/videos/rsa-animate/2012/12/rsa-animate---the-power-of-outrospection/>. (Empathy and compassion) (10 min. video)

Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan. The “What” and “Why” of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior. (Page 233-235: Intrinsic motivation and autonomy, competence and relatedness). [www.selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2000\\_DeciRyan\\_PIWhatWhy.pdf](http://www.selfdeterminationtheory.org/SDT/documents/2000_DeciRyan_PIWhatWhy.pdf)

or

Dan Pink. Drive ("what really motivates us at home or in the workplace"). (11 min. animated video or transcript). <https://www.thersa.org/discover/videos/rsa-animate/2010/04/rsa-animate---drive/> \*\*\*

Danielle Allen. Turning Strangers into Political Friends. (2004) \*\*\*  
[http://inthesetimes.com/article/1777/turning\\_strangers\\_into\\_political\\_friends](http://inthesetimes.com/article/1777/turning_strangers_into_political_friends)

Robert Karan. Becoming Attached. The Atlantic, Feb. 1990.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1990/02/becoming-attached/308966/>

David Sloan Wilson, Daniel Tumminelli O'Brien, Artura Sesma. Human prosociality from an evolutionary perspective: variation and correlations at a city-wide scale. *Evolution and Human Behavior* 30 (2009) 190–200. <http://evolution.binghamton.edu/dswilson/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/bnp1.pdf>

*Optional:*

Steven Pinker. TNR. Decline of violence. [https://edge.org/3rd\\_culture/pinker07/pinker07\\_index.html](https://edge.org/3rd_culture/pinker07/pinker07_index.html)

David Brooks. Social Animal: How the new sciences of human nature can help make sense of a life. [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/17/110117fa\\_fact\\_brooks?currentPage=all](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2011/01/17/110117fa_fact_brooks?currentPage=all)

Chris Vogler. The Hero's Journey: An Outline. [http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero's\\_journey.htm](http://www.thewritersjourney.com/hero's_journey.htm) (<http://www.thewritersjourney.com>)

## **Week 1: Where Are We Now? The Big Trends**

**Questions:** The future is uncertain but the big trends seem clear. What do you think are our most pressing challenges? What connections do you see between the different challenges and opportunities for solutions?

Matthew Taylor. 21st Century Enlightenment. <https://www.thersa.org/discover/videos/rsa-animate/2010/09/rsa-animate---21st-century-enlightenment/> (video) \*\*\*

Turkle, Sherry. The Flight From Conversation. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/22/opinion/sunday/the-flight-from-conversation.html> \*\*\*

Nouriel Roubini. The Robots Are Coming! The Robots Are Coming! <http://prospect.org/article/robots-are-coming-robots-are-coming>. Dec. 31, 2014 \*\*\*

Bruce Wallace (Reuters Feb. 27, 2015). Most Americans see combating climate change as a moral duty. <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-climate-poll-idUSKBN0LV0CV20150227>

Ta-Nehisi Coates. The Black Family in the Age of Mass Incarceration. [http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/?utm\\_source=nl\\_link1\\_091815](http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2015/10/the-black-family-in-the-age-of-mass-incarceration/403246/?utm_source=nl_link1_091815) (Long)

Randall Kennedy. A Caricature of Black Reality (Review of Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me*). <http://prospect.org/article/ta-nehisi-coates-caricature-black-reality> (2015)

Chris Cillizza. The real reason for America's polarization? Look next door. On Dunkelman's Vanishing Neighborhood. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2014/08/04/the-real-reason-for-americas-polarization-look-next-door/>. August 4, 2014

Jack Miles. Three Differences Between an Academic and an Intellectual: What Happens to the Liberal Arts When They Are Kicked Off Campus? <http://www.crosscurrents.org/miles.htm>

*Optional:* Graeme Wood. What ISIS Really Wants. <http://www.theatlantic.com/features/archive/2015/02/what-isis-really-wants/384980/> (Long!!!)

## Week 2: TMI and Civic Leadership in the Context of American History

*I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power. --Thomas Jefferson to William C. Jarvis, 1820. ME 15:278*

*Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories. And to render even them safe, their minds must be improved to a certain degree. --Thomas Jefferson: Notes on Virginia Q.XIV, 1782. ME 2:207*

*The great aim and end of all learning [is to help students develop] an inclination joined the ability to serve Mankind, one's Country, Friends and Family. - Ben Franklin*

*I Have previously remarked that the manners of the people may be considered as one of the great general causes to which the maintenance of a democratic republic in the United States is attributable. I here use the word customs with the meaning which the ancients attached to the word mores; for I apply it not only to manners properly so called--that is, to what might be termed the habits of the heart--but to the various notions and opinions current among men and to the mass of those ideas which constitute their character of mind. I comprise under this term, therefore, the whole moral and intellectual condition of a people. My intention is not to draw a picture of American customs, but simply to point out such features of them as are favorable to the maintenance of their political institutions. - Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1831)*

**Questions:** Is there still such a thing as “American values” today? What are they? How do you see them play out or motivate people beyond presidential races? How much do you and your friends and relatives think about or discuss values? What role does U.S. history play in our values today?

History of education in the United States.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History\\_of\\_education\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_education_in_the_United_States)

Abraham Lincoln. Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural Address. [www.law.ou.edu/ushistory/lincoln2.shtml](http://www.law.ou.edu/ushistory/lincoln2.shtml) \*\*\*



Andrew Delbanco, The Real American Dream: A Meditation on Hope. Video:  
<https://vimeo.com/17684400> (65 min.)

Diana Schaub. Lincoln at Gettysburg. <http://www.nationalaffairs.com/publications/detail/lincoln-at-gettysburg>

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=WPuBGcng6Tw> (4 min. video)

## Week \_ : Theories of Community Behavioral and Cultural Change

*Think globally, act locally. – Author uncertain*

*The central conservative truth is that it is culture, not politics, that determines the success of society. The central liberal truth is that politics can change a culture and save it from itself." - Daniel Patrick Moynihan*

**Questions:** Which models or frameworks do you find most useful? How would you apply these frameworks today to the challenges, especially around education, in your community?

Systems Thinking. A very brief introduction. <http://www.systemsthinker.com/interests/systemsthinking/>

Prevention Continuum that Leads to Social Change (outline).

[http://www.endabusewi.org/sites/default/files/resources/primary\\_prevention\\_basics.pdf](http://www.endabusewi.org/sites/default/files/resources/primary_prevention_basics.pdf)

Centers for Disease Control. The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Violence Prevention. \*\*\*  
[http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SEM\\_Framework-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/SEM_Framework-a.pdf)

Elinor Ostrom. Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech and 50 factors chart (see syllabus appendix).

[http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2009/ostrom\\_lecture.pdf](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/economic-sciences/laureates/2009/ostrom_lecture.pdf)

UK Prime Minister's Cabinet Office Strategy Unit. Achieving Culture Change: A Policy Framework  
[https://crawford.anu.edu.au/sparc/pdf/2010/achieving\\_culture\\_change.pdf](https://crawford.anu.edu.au/sparc/pdf/2010/achieving_culture_change.pdf)

## Week \_ : Collective efficacy, civic capacity & collective impact

*Go fast, go alone. Go far, go together. - African proverb*

*[C]ooperation based upon reciprocity can emerge in a population of egoists (with a only small cluster of reciprocators), and then resist invasion by mutant strategies... Tit-for-tat had a number of important features as a strategy - it was "nice" (it didn't defect first), and it was "provocable" (it fought back if it were attacked). ...'the silver rule' – Summary of Robert Axelrod, Evolution of Cooperation (1984) - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Evolution\\_of\\_Cooperation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Evolution_of_Cooperation)*

**Questions:** Which of these theories appeals most to you? How would you compare them?

Archon Fung. Review of "Democracy as Problem Solving: Civic Capacity in Communities across the Globe," by Xavier de Souza Briggs. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2008. \*\*\*

<http://archonfung.net/docs/articles/2010/FungBriggsReview201002.pdf>

Eyal Press. Can Block Clubs Block Despair? The American Prospect, April 22, 2007.

<http://prospect.org/article/can-block-clubs-block-despair> \*\*\*

John Kania & Mark Kramer. Stanford Social Innovation Review, Winter 2011. Collective Impact: Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector coordination, yet the social sector remains focused on the isolated intervention of individual organizations. [http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact)

*Optional:* Marshall Poe. The Atlantic (September 2006). The Hive (Wikipedia).

<http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/09/the-hive/305118/>

*Optional:* Richard Florida (Nov. 9, 2012). The Rush to Resilience: 'We Don't Have Decades Before the Next Sandy'. Atlantic website. <http://www.theatlanticcities.com/jobs-and-economy/2012/11/building-resilient-cities-conversation-andrew-zolli-and-jonathan-rose/3839/#>

## Week 2: Leadership

*The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage a (drive for) power or to acquire material possessions...The leader-first and the servant-first are extreme types. Between them there are shadings and blends that are part of the infinite variety of human nature.*

*This is my thesis: caring for persons, the more able and the less able serving each other, is the rock upon which a good society is built. Whereas, until recently, caring was largely person to person, now most of it is mediated through institutions - often large, complex, powerful, impersonal; not always competent; sometimes corrupt. If a better society is to be built, one that is more just and more loving, one that provides greater creative opportunity for its people, then the most open course is to raise both the capacity to serve and the very performance as servant of existing major institutions by new regenerative forces operating within them. – Robert Greenleaf*

**Questions:** Compare the different theories and perspectives of leadership: How are they similar or different? Who exemplifies wise and effective leadership in the U.S. today or, in the absence of a current figure, in the past twenty years?

Here's to the Crazy Ones. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nmwXdGm89Tk> (1-2 min video) \*\*\*

Brene Brown. The Power of Vulnerability (20 min. video).

[https://www.ted.com/talks/brene\\_brown\\_on\\_vulnerability](https://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability)

Robert Coles. Lives of Moral Leadership. Chapter on Dorothy Day

Simon Mainwaring. Forbes (April 6, 2016). The Elon Musk Leadership Model: 3 Key Steps To Building Radical Brand Evangelism. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/simonmainwaring/2016/04/06/the-elon-musk-leadership-model-3-key-steps-to-building-radical-brand-evangelism/#55fd499c24b7>

James McGregor Burns. Leadership. (Transformational vs. transactional leadership) (Review by Scott London) <http://www.scottlondon.com/reviews/burns.html>

Ron Heifetz (author of "Leadership with No Easy Answers") on **adaptive vs. technical leadership**. [http://www6.miami.edu/pld/article\\_on\\_adaptive\\_change.pdf](http://www6.miami.edu/pld/article_on_adaptive_change.pdf) - A conversation with Ronald Heifetz: Leadership without Easy Answers, By Joe Flower, The Healthcare Forum Journal, Vol. 38, #4, July-August 1995

Richard Boyatzis. What is Effective Leadership? (Resonant Leadership). <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=VtKkTjtyYMw> (3 min. video)

Optional: The Understanding and Practice of Servant- Leadership. August 2005. Larry C. Spears. [https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/sl\\_proceedings/2005/spears\\_practice.pdf](https://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/sl_proceedings/2005/spears_practice.pdf)

## Week 2: Transformative Change or Business as Usual?

*Large systems imbalance like a sandpile -- "poised critical states" -- A single additional grain may be sufficient to cause an avalanche...The things that linger longest often have the most profound impact on the system--yet they tend to be the things we ignore, precisely because they do move and change so slowly. [R]esilience may be the hardest thing to figure out about complex systems. You could run around our world forever, chasing the fast variables, trying to address the surface concerns of security and stability...Unless you were in touch with those underlying slow forces, you would fail... - Joshua Cooper Ramo, The Age of the Unthinkable: Why the New World Disorder Constantly Surprises Us And What We Can Do About It*

*It always seems impossible until it is done. -- Nelson Mandela*

*Years later...what she remembered was her fear [sitting through her last class of the day] before they went downtown and challenged the age-old segregation laws at the lunch counters in Nashville's downtown shopping center. No matter how much she steeled herself, no matter how much she believed in what they were doing, the anticipatory fear never left her... She, Diane Nash, a coward of the first order in her own mind, a person absolutely afraid not just of violence but of going to jail, was going to join a small group of black children and ministers and take on the most important and resourceful people in a big, very white, very Southern city. She and her friends, who had nothing and were nothing, were going to go up against white businessmen, who were rich and powerful and connected to the white politicians, who were their pals and who agreed with them on everything. What had all of them been thinking in Jim Lawson's workshops on nonviolence? These men would have nothing but scorn for a bunch of black children venturing into their territory.*

*These were white men in their forties and fifties and sixties. They owned the police force of the city and they owned the judges who sat in the city's courts. And she, Diane Nash of Chicago, could not make a phone call to a single powerful person in all of America if her life depended on it, which indeed it might. She was now all of twenty-one and she was in way over her head. Somehow she had been caught in the camaraderie... We are a bunch of children. We're nice children, bright and idealistic, but we are children and we are weak... Jim Lawson is a fine man and a good leader, she thought, but this is nothing*

*but a dream. She could almost see those powerful white men.. hearing the news that a small group of black students were insisting on being served at the lunch counters at downtown stores, and laughing at them. - David Halberstam. The Children pp.3-4.*

**Questions:** Can you think of any “transformative change” experiences in your life? In the life of a community of which you are a part? Efforts to be transformative that have failed? Why do you consider them “transformative”? What’s your theory about their sources and reasons for success or failure?

Ain't Gonna Let Nobody Turn Me Around. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=WPUBGcng6Tw> (4 min. video)

Derek Sivers. How to Start a Movement.

[http://www.ted.com/talks/derek\\_sivers\\_how\\_to\\_start\\_a\\_movement#t-97763](http://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_how_to_start_a_movement#t-97763) (3 min. video)

Wikipedia. The Tipping Point. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Tipping\\_Point](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tipping_Point) and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tipping\\_point\\_\(sociology\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tipping_point_(sociology)) (see "see also" list for related concepts)

Atul Gawande. New Yorker. Slow Ideas: Some ideas spread fast. How do you speed the ones that don't? <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2013/07/29/slow-ideas>

Robert Coles. Lives of Moral Leadership. Chapter on the Thomas's and Tomasino's and the New Orleans elementary school teacher. \*\*\*

Diane Nash and the Nashville Lunch Counter Sit-Ins: Interviews.

<http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/iml04.soc.us.h.civil.nash/diane-nash-and-the-sit-ins/> (6 min video); <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/freedomriders/people/diane-nash> (5 min. video)

## **Week \_: Culture, Structures, Institutions and the Nonprofit Sector**

*Feelings and opinions are recruited, the heart is enlarged, and the human mind is developed only by the reciprocal influence of men upon one another. I have shown that these influences are almost null in democratic countries; they must therefore be artificially created, and this can only be accomplished by associations. Nothing, in my opinion, is more deserving of our attention than the intellectual and moral associations of America... In democratic countries the science of association is the mother of science; the progress of all the rest depends upon the progress it has made... In democratic countries, knowledge of how to combine is the mother of all other forms of knowledge; on its progress depends that of all the others. - ?*

**Questions:** Which Schambra article did you read and what did you think about it? How do you connect his and Putnam’s views to Salamon’s? What has been your experience of the nonprofit sector?

Lester M. Salamon. The Four Impulses of Nonprofits and What They Each Create (Oct. 12, 2015). \*\*\* <http://nonprofitquarterly.org/2015/10/12/the-four-impulses-of-nonprofits-and-what-they-each-create/>

William Schambra. <https://nonprofitquarterly.org/author/williamschambra/> (Pick an article of your choosing and be prepared to discuss with group.) \*\*\*

Robert D. Putnam (1995). Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital.  
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/DETOC/assoc/bowling.html> \*\*\*

New York Times (Jan. 27, 2014) Mikoto Rich. Intensive Small-Group Tutoring and Counseling Helps Struggling Students. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/27/education/intensive-tutoring-and-counseling-found-to-help-struggling-teenagers.html>

Malcolm Gladwell (Oct. 4, 2010). Small Change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted.  
[http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa\\_fact\\_gladwell](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell)

*Optional:* Berger and Neuhaus. To Empower People: From State to Civil Society.  
<http://www.aei.org/publication/to-empower-people/>

*Optional:* Peter A. Levine. The Case for "Service."  
<http://journals.gmu.edu/index.php/PPPQ/article/download/113/84>

## Week 1: A Good Life: Organizing Our Lives for Service and Fulfillment

*Happiness is not in the mere possession of money; it lies in the joy of achievement, in the thrill of creative effort. — Franklin D. Roosevelt*

*Nothing is likely to help a person overcome or endure troubles than the consciousness of having a task in life. ~ Viktor Frankl*

*A mature person is one who does not think only in absolutes, who is able to be objective even when deeply stirred emotionally, who has learned that there is both good and bad in all people and in all things, and who walks humbly and deals charitably with the circumstances of life, knowing that in this world no one is all knowing and therefore all of us need both love and charity. — Eleanor Roosevelt*

**Questions:** What was your reaction to the Gregg and Kasser pieces? How do other authors expand on the first two articles? What does a good life look like for you?

Richard Gregg. The Value of Voluntary Simplicity, (1936). [http://www.duaneelgin.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/the\\_value\\_of\\_voluntary\\_simplicity.pdf](http://www.duaneelgin.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/the_value_of_voluntary_simplicity.pdf) \*\*\*

Tim Kasser. The High Price of Materialism. <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=oGab38pKscw> (5 min. video) \*\*\*

Barbara L. Fredrickson (American Scientist 2003). The Value of Positive Emotions: The emerging science of positive psychology is coming to understand why it's good to feel good.  
[http://www.unc.edu/peplab/publications/Fredrickson\\_AmSci\\_English\\_2003.pdf](http://www.unc.edu/peplab/publications/Fredrickson_AmSci_English_2003.pdf) (6 easy pp.) \*\*\*

Carol Dweck, The Secret to Raising Smart Kids (Growth Mindset).  
<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-secret-to-raising-smart-kids1/>

Angela Duckworth, The Key to Success GRIT). (6 min. video)  
[https://www.ted.com/talks/angela\\_lee\\_duckworth\\_the\\_key\\_to\\_success\\_grit](https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_the_key_to_success_grit)

Meet Mr. Money Mustache, the Man Who Retired at 30. Washington Post.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/meet-mr-money-mustache-the-man-who-retired-at-30/2013/04/26/71e3e6a8-acf3-11e2-a8b9-2a63d75b5459\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/meet-mr-money-mustache-the-man-who-retired-at-30/2013/04/26/71e3e6a8-acf3-11e2-a8b9-2a63d75b5459_story.html)

*Optional:* Richard M. Ryan & Edward Deci. On Happiness and Human Potentials: A Review of Research on Hedonic and Eudaimonic Well-Being (2001).

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/12181660\\_On\\_Happiness\\_and\\_Human\\_Potentials\\_A\\_Review\\_of\\_Research\\_on\\_Hedonic\\_and\\_Eudaimonic\\_Well-Being](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/12181660_On_Happiness_and_Human_Potentials_A_Review_of_Research_on_Hedonic_and_Eudaimonic_Well-Being)

## **Week \_ : Politics, Religion, Purpose and the Civic-Moral Dimension**

*Every man lives in two realms, the internal and the external... So much of modern life can be summarized in that suggestive phrase from Thoreau: 'Improved means to an unimproved end.' ?*

*Some are guilty, but all are responsible -- Rabbi Abraham Herschel (quoted by Omid Safi).*

*Today no one in the world feels responsible for this; we have lost the sense of fraternal responsibility; we have fallen into the hypocritical attitude of the priest and of the servant of the altar that Jesus speaks about in the parable of the Good Samaritan: We look upon the brother half dead by the roadside, perhaps we think "poor guy," and we continue on our way, it's none of our business; and we feel fine with this. We feel at peace with this, we feel fine! The culture of well-being, that makes us think of ourselves, that makes us insensitive to the cries of others, that makes us live in soap bubbles, that are beautiful but are nothing, are illusions of futility, of the transient, that brings indifference to others, that brings even the globalization of indifference. In this world of globalization we have fallen into a globalization of indifference. We are accustomed to the suffering of others, it doesn't concern us, it's none of our business. - ?*

**Questions:** If you were a religious or spiritual leader – pick your faith or practice – what, if anything, would you try to communicate to Americans, who, arguably, think in secular terms most of the time? How would you explain your “faith” and what it means for how you lead your life?

Pope Francis. Fall 2015 Address to Congress. [www.usccb.org/about/leadership/holy-see/francis/papal-visit-2015/media-resources/upload/11-EN-congressional-address.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/about/leadership/holy-see/francis/papal-visit-2015/media-resources/upload/11-EN-congressional-address.pdf)

Can Compassion Change the World? (Interview with Daniel Goleman)

<http://www.dailygood.org/story/1128/can-compassion-change-the-world-jill-suttie/>

Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech, 1989. The 14th Dalai Lama.

[http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1989/lama-acceptance\\_en.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1989/lama-acceptance_en.html)

Karen Armstrong. Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life (short summary).

[www.multifaithcouncil.org/pages/12stepssummary.pdf](http://www.multifaithcouncil.org/pages/12stepssummary.pdf)

Ulrich Rosenhagen ( Assoc. Dir., Lubar Institute for the Study of the Abrahamic Religions at the University of Wisconsin-Madison) (Jan. 2015). The People's Legs Are Not Praying - Why Selma Is Not

the Interfaith Movie I Was Hoping for. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ulrich-rosenhagen/the-peoples-legs-are-not-b\\_6479070.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ulrich-rosenhagen/the-peoples-legs-are-not-b_6479070.html)

Omid Safi. Is All Morality Gone? Condemning ISIS, and Beyond, in a World of Suffering. (Oct. 6, 2014) <http://www.onbeing.org/blog/is-all-morality-gone-condemning-isis-and-beyond-in-a-world-of-suffering/6910>

*Optional:* Andrew Delbanco, The Real American Dream: A Meditation on Hope (book, Kindle); Jim Wallis. The Great Awakening.

## **Week 1: How We Think: Role of Exercise, Mindsets, Self-Awareness, etc.**

*[T]he most important contribution that political scientists might make to public life consists not in answering questions currently being asked, but in framing new questions. Our role here is to highlight ignored values, to identify important but underappreciated factors that affect those values, and to explicate the underlying logic that links facts and values. – Robert Putnam, 2003 APA Presidential Lecture*

**Questions:** What questions should public policy or political science researchers be asking? If you were creating a Public Service Academy, what “soft skills” would you teach and how?

Stephen Barr (March 23, 2007). A Push to Create a Fresh Class of Public Servants. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/03/22/AR2007032201945.html>

Tom Fox (June 23, 2015). Do we need an academy like West Point, but for civil service? <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2015/06/23/do-we-need-an-academy-like-west-point-but-for-civil-service/> (SKIM)

Ed Decker. 14 Surprising Ways To Boost Creativity. <http://www.dailygood.org/story/1011/14-surprising-ways-to-boost-creativity-ed-decker/>

Goleman. What Makes a Leader? IQ and technical skills are important, but emotional intelligence is the sine qua non of leadership. Harvard Business Review (HBR) Jan 2004. <http://hbr.org/2004/01/what-makes-a-leader/ar/1> or <http://stattrak.amstat.org/files/2015/11/Whatmakesaleader.pdf>

Wendy Suzuki. Exercise and the Brain. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdDnPYr6R0o> \*\*\*

Steven Covey. Seven Habits of Effective People (summary). <http://www.hubspot.com/sales/habits-of-highly-effective-people-summary>

Russ Linden, March 15, 2006. Getting Off the Dance Floor, and On the Balcony: Managers and leaders have to take themselves out of the fray to understand what's really going on. <http://www.governing.com/columns/mgmt-insights/Getting-Off-the-Dance.html>

*Optional:* John D Mayer, Richard D Roberts & Sigal Barsade (Annual Review of Psychology, 2008). Human Abilities: Emotional Intelligence.

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Richard\\_Roberts2/publication/5907081\\_Human\\_Abilities\\_Emotiona\\_l\\_Intelligence/links/0912f50c9e09b01190000000.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Richard_Roberts2/publication/5907081_Human_Abilities_Emotiona_l_Intelligence/links/0912f50c9e09b01190000000.pdf)

*Optional:* Alex Korb (2015). Upward Spiral: Using Neuroscience to Reverse the Course of Depression, One Small Change at a Time. <http://www.smartpeoplepodcast.com/2015/04/06/episode-185-alex-korb/> (50 min. podcast or book)

## Week \_: Education Policy and Programs

*Many of the most successful programs... are inherently unstandardized and idiosyncratic ...findings from program evaluations relate to other relevant knowledge about human behavior and social interaction. - William Julius Wilson, p.xi in Lisbeth Schorr, Within Our Reach: Breaking the Cycle of Disadvantage (1989)*

*The more I looked, the clearer it became that in the past two decades we have accumulated a critical mass of information that totally transforms the nation's capacity to improve outcomes for vulnerable children. –Lisbeth Schorr, p. xix*

*[I]ntensive, comprehensive, individualized services with aggressive attention to outreach and to maintaining relationships over time... are what works for helping at-risk families and children. - Schorr, p. 285*

**Questions:** If you were the head of a community foundation in a mid-sized city with \$5 million dollars to spend over the next four years on education or poverty, what would you do? If you were an “impact investor,” head of a major national foundation, or advisor to federal policy makers with the potential to spend \$100 million in the next four years, what would you do?

Gary Walker & Marc Freedman (July-Aug. 1996 American Prospect). Social Change One on One: The New Mentoring Movement. <http://prospect.org/article/social-change-one-one-new-mentoring-movement>

Mikoto Rich. New York Times, Dec. 2015. As Graduation Rates Rise, Experts Fear Diplomas Come Up Short. <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/27/us/as-graduation-rates-rise-experts-fear-standards-have-fallen.html>

Valerie Strauss. Wash. Post, October 28, 2015. What the national drop in 2015 NAEP test scores really means. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/10/28/what-the-national-drop-in-2015-naep-test-scores-really-means/>

Claudio Sanchez (NPR All Things Considered, July 16, 2013). The Charter School Vs. Public School Debate Continues. <http://www.npr.org/2013/07/16/201109021/the-charter-school-vs-public-school-debate-continues>

Robert Pondiscio (US News, April 27, 2015). The Great Charter School Debate: How many charter schools is enough? Can they replace traditional public schools entirely? <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/knowledge-bank/2015/04/27/the-great-charter-school-debate-how-many-is-enough>



David L. Kirp (Jan. 9, 2016). How to Fix the Country's Schools. And How Not To.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/01/10/opinion/sunday/how-to-fix-the-countrys-failing-schools-and-how-not-to.html>

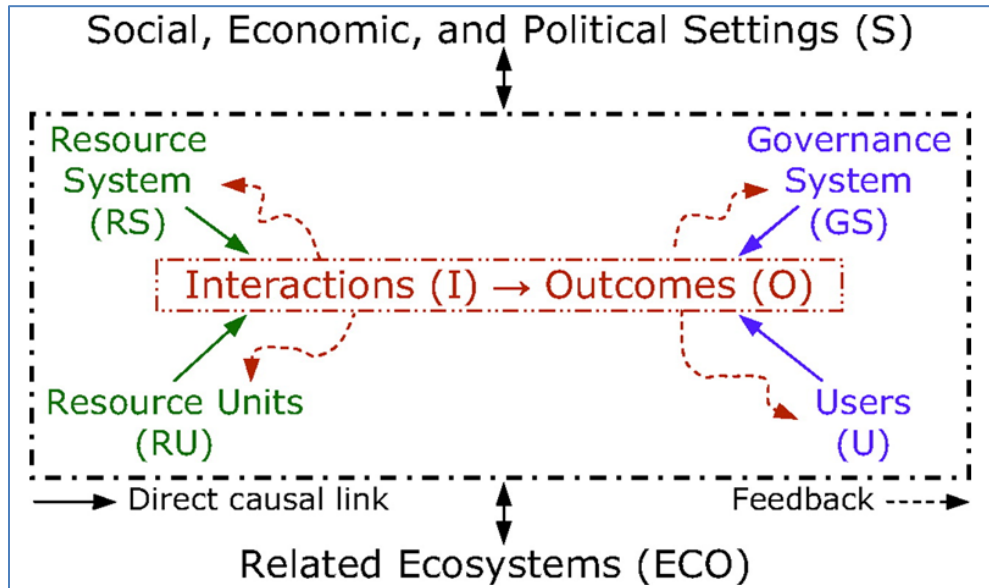
Tim Walker. Atlantic Monthly (June 2014). How Finland Keeps Kids Focused Through Free Play.  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/06/how-finland-keeps-kids-focused/373544/>

David Bornstein (May 15, 2013). A Team Approach to Get Students College Ready (Blue Engine)  
<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/05/15/a-team-approach-to-get-students-college-ready/>

## **Final project: What's your "personal theory of change"? What can you do to make a better world?**

At a personal level, most of us would like to avoid no-win situations, like those faced by some teachers in troubled schools with unsupportive administrations and insufficient resources, who would like to do some good in the world but feel virtually powerless to do so. At the opposite end of the spectrum, we would also like to avoid being morally compromised by working in an organization with a mission that we can only give lip service to but one that commands substantial resources and offers its workers opportunities to learn alongside good compensation and a sense of autonomy. What should you do today to lead a satisfying or fulfilling life?

**A multitier framework for analyzing a Social Ecological System**  
**Elinor Ostrom PNAS 2007;104:15181-15187**



**Table 1. Second-tier variables in framework for analyzing an SES (social-ecological systems)**

<u>Outside the interaction box</u>	<b>Governance System (GS)</b>	<b>Users (U)</b>
<b>S &amp; ECO vars</b>		
<b>Social, Economic, and Political Settings (S)</b>		
S1- Economic development.	GS1- Government organizations	U1- Number of users
S2- Demographic trends.	GS2- Non-government organizations	U2- Socioeconomic attributes of users
S3- Political stability.	GS3- Network structure	U3- History of use
S4- Government settlement policies.	GS4- Property-rights systems	U4- Location
S5- Market incentives.	GS5- Operational rules	U5- Leadership/entrepreneurship
S6- Media organization.	GS6- Collective-choice rules	U6- Norms/social capital
<b>Related Ecosystems (ECO)</b>	GS7- Constitutional rules	U7- Knowledge of SES/mental models
ECO1- Climate patterns.	GS8- Monitoring & sanctioning processes	U8- Dependence on resource
ECO2- Pollution patterns.		U9- Technology used
ECO3- Flows into and out of focal SES		
<u>Inside the Box</u>	<b>Resource Units (RU)</b>	<b>Interactions (I) Outcomes (O)</b>
<b>Resource System (RS)</b>	RU1- Resource unit mobility	I1- Harvesting levels of diverse users
RS1- Sector (e.g., water, forests, pasture, fish)	RU2- Growth or replacement rate	I2- Information sharing among users
RS2- Clarity of system boundaries	RU3- Interaction among resource units	I3- Deliberation processes
RS3- Size of resource system	RU4- Economic value	I4- Conflicts among users
RS4- Human-constructed facilities	RU5- Size	I5- Investment activities
RS5- Productivity of system	RU6- Distinctive markings	I6- Lobbying activities
RS6- Equilibrium properties	RU7- Spatial & temporal distribution	O1- Social performance measures (e.g., efficiency, equity, accountability)
RS7- Predictability of system dynamics		O2- Ecological performance measures (e.g., overharvested, resilience, diversity)
RS8- Storage characteristics		O3- Externalities to other SESs
RS9- Location		