REMAKING AMERICAN DEMOCRACY I: Kick-Starting the Public Powers and Power-Leverage of Popular Assemblies 2.1[1]

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If we believe that the individual struggle for life may widen into a struggle for the lives of all, surely the demand of an individual for decency and comfort, for a chance to work and obtain the fullness of life, may be widened until it gradually embraces all the members of the community, and rises into a sense of the common weal. —Jane Addams[2]

The Loss of Commonweal

For more than a decade, Republican authoritarians, the corrupted minions of America's libertarian oligarchs, have promoted the country's increasingly depraved politics.[3] Tragically for the rest of us, they have won their campaign to pervert the country's political culture and institutions[4] and, along the way, to disown the commonweal.

Adrian Vermeule has described the abandonment of the commonweal:

In the past few decades, Americans have discovered that individuals and families cannot flourish if the whole community is fundamentally unhealthy, torn apart by conflict, lawlessness, poverty, pollution, sickness, and despair. Gated residences, private schools and Uber have not sufficed to immunize even the affluent against the consequences of living in a decaying, fractured and embittered polity. No family or civic association is an island, and the health of civic society and culture are themselves dependent upon the health of the constitutional order.[5]

Compounding this dystopian scenario, Republican politics have markedly increased morbidity and mortality generally,[6] and specifically during the pandemic;[7] lessened worker and public safety by attacking unions;[8] and doubled down on environmental plundering.[9]

Yet all that may not be the worst of their betrayal of the commonweal. Callously resorting to the filibuster, they have denied sorely needed resources to families, such as health insurance, dental insurance, pregnancy-education visits, affordable prescription drugs, paid maternal/parental leave, affordable housing, affordable childcare, and a living wage.

The continuing unrelieved economic pressures[10] on families have overwhelmed millions of them, with far-reaching effects on the children,[11] producing outcomes which are unimagined by most Americans but now revealed in all their ravages by peer-reviewed studies.

Pressured families produce more childhood trauma, typically beginning with insecure *attachment*[12] between parents and their newborn infants,[13] which is suffered by about *40 percent of infants*.[14] It impairs the development of empathy, emotional bonding, and moral sensibility, which then become lifelong disabilities. Insecure attachment often becomes followed by childhood[15] *developmental trauma disorder* (DTD)[16] from chronic neglect and abuse. DTD, validated in the ACE study,[17] has been correlated with statistically significant increased risk of debilitating physical and psychological illnesses and problematic behavior in adulthood, including obesity, diabetes, heart disease, anxiety, depression, mental illness, troubled relationships, smoking, substance abuse, academic failure, employment difficulties, violence, incarceration, and suicide.

Although it may seem to be an exaggeration, the widespread lifelong maladies listed above—stemming from family pressures, insecure attachment in infancy, and subsequent DTD—can in fact account for much of our failure to achieve materially productive and spiritually fulfilling personal and communal life—two hallmarks of our painful lack of commonweal. And, without a doubt, these outcomes would be very different if Republicans stopped filibustering legislation that's designed to help families.[18]

The Takedown of American Democracy

The obstacles to changing the reactionary Republican mindset arise mostly from the obeisance of the party's leaders to the white Christian nationalism of endlessly enriched[19] libertarian oligarchs. Reliable news reporting[20] has revealed the ordinarily disguised values, motives, objectives, and methods of those leaders.

They regard politics not as policy-making for the

commonweal but an historic confrontation of good and evil. They have launched a religious crusade in the service of that belief.[21] They claim to have a holy mandate to promote white Christian supremacy as a religious certainty, one which grants America to them as *their* promised land, and which entitles them to dominate institutions of power by any means, while simultaneously undermining the rights and well-being of all others[22] (e.g., SCOTUS decisions in Dobbs v. Jackson, a reactionary, religiously driven rejection of a woman's right to control her own body;[23] Carson v. Makin, forcing state support of religious schools;[24] and West Virginia v. EPA, gifting the fossil fuel industry by not allowing Congress to limit the emissions of coal and gas-fired power plants.[25]) All who oppose them, especially liberals and Democrats, they regard as opponents of divine purpose, thus not deserving of legal, moral, ethical, or practical consideration. And they regard as illegitimate, ipso facto, whatever puts others in power.[26]

This reactionary movement is the latest incarnation of long-lived white Christian nationalism, "... one of the oldest and most powerful currents in American politics," according to sociologists Samuel Perry and Philip Gorski.[27] They describe its engaging but obviously inaccurate "deep story," that white Christians were here first, and that their rightful share of the American dream has been usurped by immigrants and minorities, and by the politicians who support them. In effect, that the U.S. was founded as a Christian nation with a founding document based on Christian principles, which now is being degraded by foreign influences.[28]

Perhaps the most troubling feature of white Christian nationalism is its libertarian view of freedom: to be free of government regulations and restrictions. "Order is understood in a hierarchical way, with white Christian men at the top. And violence is seen as a righteous means of defending freedom and restoring order, means that are reserved to white Christian men."[29] The most striking aspect of this view is its congruity with the policies and actions of the fascist libertarian oligarchs who now threaten American democracy.

Perry and Gorski conclude: "The United States cannot be both a truly multiracial democracy ... and a white Christian nation at the same time."[30]

Of course, we don't have probative evidence to determine whether for most individuals these grotesque "religious" tenets are genuinely held or only convenient, cynical rationalizations to satisfy their hunger for authoritarian power. But we do know that their voracious appetite for power is operating notoriously in the state legislatures[31] and executive branches they dominate, in their caucus in Congress,[32] and in the politicized, right-wing agenda of the SCOTUS[33]— where, in every place, they are covertly maneuvering to fleece the party's working-class base.

Confirming the historic Republican slight-of-hand rip-off of wage-earners—diverting their attention with wedge issues while they pick their pockets of dollars

and rights—Joseph Stiglitz relates that, "Since the mid-1970s, the rules of the economic game have been rewritten, both globally and nationally, in ways that advantage the rich and disadvantage the rest." In the U.S., "… the market power of workers, which started out less than in most other advanced countries, has fallen further than elsewhere. This is not only because of a shift to a service-sector economy—it is because of the rigged rules of the game, rules set in a political system that is itself rigged through gerrymandering, voter suppression, and the influence of money."[34]

Even so, the Republican Party has become steered from the rear[35] by the Trumpist[36] White grievance,[37] nativism,[38] and Great Replacement[39] rhetoric of the working-class base,[40] which itself has morphed into the violence-inclined[41] MAGA movement, a runaway populist train of reactionary[42] nationalism,[43] inspired by Trump with the imprimatur of a brotherhood[44] of strategically minded billionaires,[45] proceeding resolutely toward fascist oligarchy, energized by devotion to white Christian nationalism.[46]

Timothy Snyder, Yale University history professor, observes that we have an oligarchy with fascist features: "Revived today in conditions of inequality as a politics of eternity, fascism serves oligarchs as a catalyst for transitions away from public discussion and towards political fiction; away from meaningful voting and towards fake democracy; away from the rule of law and towards personalist regimes."[47] It typically fails to manage what happens in the world but excels at managing people's perceptions of what happens. Internally, in place of domestic policy, bad events are blamed on others who are regarded as morally defective.[48]

The reactionary movement is relentlessly pumped up by the *non*-WASP[49] population's growing size and assertiveness, politically, economically, culturally, and socially, ensuring the popularity of the authoritarians. Not surprisingly, in December 2021, 66 percent of Republicans agreed or somewhat agreed, "The growth in the number of immigrants in the country means that America is in danger of losing its culture and identity." Forty-nine percent strongly agreed, agreed, or agreed somewhat that "The growth in the size of minority communities in the country will likely result in the declining influence of white Americans."[50] In May 2022, when asked about the idea "... that immigrants are being brought to the country by a group of people for political gains—one of the central arguments of so-called 'Replacement Theory,'" about 32 percent of all Republicans registered as high conspiratorial thinkers, compared to about 24 percent of Democrats and 25 percent of independents.[51] The grim revelation is that Replacement Theory has taken hold far beyond reactionary Republicans.

Magnifying this reactionary peril to American democracy, the consciousness of the public, diverted from political affairs, first by the pandemic[52] and more recently by inflation, economic uncertainty, and a right-wing-hyped, bogus "immigration invasion," may cause the end of our democracy to pass undefended by

most of the electorate.

Realistically, it may be accurate to refer to our system as an "anocracy," neither a democracy nor a autocracy "... but something in between," something transitional, moving toward autocracy, in which "Citizens receive some elements of democratic rule ... but they also live under leaders with extensive authoritarian powers and few checks and balances." [53]

Internet media and the mainstream press have been awash with predictions that, without a countervailing initiative, the institutions of American democracy will be moribund by the end of the 2024 presidential election. Yet neither the Democratic Party,[54] nor the Congress, nor the President, nor the SCOTUS, nor corporate-America[55] has demonstrated the wherewithal or the commitment to put the brakes on this runaway train.[56] Given that its planned route is almost entirely via Republican-controlled state legislatures (since Congress has failed to pass electoral reform legislation,[57] blocked by Republican filibustering), the death of American democracy looms ahead.[58]

If this expectation seems hyperbolic or simply in error, the primer on the subject is Snyder's *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*.[59] He lays out the history of the road to tyranny and calls for a recalibration of the existential threat to our democracy. Any remaining doubt should be removed by the 2021 five-alarm-fire statement of 200 scholars of democracy.[60] We also have a comprehensive legal and constitutional analysis of the incremental disappearance of democracy, the "constitutional retrogression," what "... occurs more slowly through an accumulation of piecemeal changes, each perhaps innocuous or even justified in isolation."[61] And we have a grim scholarly projection of alternative outcomes of the country's authoritarian movement.[62]

But even if legislation had been passed in time to slow down or stop the Republican efforts at electoral suppression and subversion, there is extensive evidence to believe that the SCOTUS would not have upheld those reforms when challenged by right-wing forces.[63] Dana Milbank has recited the reactionary history of the Roberts court, which was rigged by Mitch McConnell:

> ... stacking the deck in favor of minority rule by Republicans. It has blessed partisan gerrymandering [Rucho v. Common Cause], giving Republicans representation in the House disproportionate to their share of the electorate. It has allowed elections to be decided by billionaires and corporations spending unlimited sums of untraceable money [Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission]. It has kneecapped labor unions [Janus v. American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees], co-signed voter-suppression schemes by Republican-run states [Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee] and eviscerated the Voting Rights Act [Shelby County v. Holder] to disastrous effect for black an brown voters.[64]

So the likely effect of electoral reform legislation, had it passed, would have been to delay but not permanently derail the country from becoming an undeniable fascist oligarchy.

Although it may sound far-fetched today, that dire outcome has the potential to become our inescapable future, given the forces already in play, especially our "pernicious polarization" following a "... demographic shift that poses a threat to the white population that has historically been the dominant group in all areas of power, allowing political leaders to exploit insecurities surrounding their loss of status."[65]

As Wade Rathke wrote in 2015, "Political reality in the United States has now become twisted so that the time honored pledge of 'one people indivisible under God,' underlines the God-part, while trying to look the other way when thinking about the population as 'one people,' leaving 'indivisible' more a snicker than a slogan"[66]—which underlines the white Christian nationalist authoritarianism we must overcome to remake our politics and institutions.

Snyder provides an historical insight into the polarization. He conceptualizes politics within an overarching framework of *time*, proposing that over time a shift occurs from the "politics of inevitability" to the "politics of eternity," from expecting good things to inevitably emerge in social life, to the belief that things never change, which happens when "... you face dramatic, stupefying inequality and the story of progress no longer makes sense and you fall into a different kind of story, one of cycles [as in much of rural America]. But it can also occur when you're shocked ... what happens to a lot of Americans in 2016" [when Trump was elected]. When immersed in the politics of cycles, "If you look hard, there's actually only one thing that ever happens over and over again, and the one thing that happens over and over again is that the perverted, aggressive outsider tries to penetrate the ineffable virtue of us," which is characteristic of fascist American politics. The politics of eternity creates a fictional purity of national history, such as MAGA in the U.S., which not incidentally was a time of all-around white Christian nationalism, which is now facilitated by "memory laws" (e.g., outlawing the teaching of critical race theory in the U.S. and Putin's memory laws[67]), and which eventually can lead to the politics of catastrophe, like the Russian invasion of Ukraine or right-wing violence here.[68]

The Challenges of Our Social Salvation

We have had a multi-decade demonstration of the futility of political and policy strategies that were aimed to forestall the takedown of our democracy. Snyder reminds us, "... you can't reform the state [through politics and policy] because the people who engineered the [systemic] radical inequality are the same people who control the state, and that makes reform not only impossible but literally unthinkable."[69]

Although numerous published articles and reports describe laws and policies needed to reinvigorate U.S. democracy, all with useful legislative and policy pro-

posals,[70] they fail to propose a feasible national strategy to reverse the historic U.S. economic inequality and to stop the morally unhinged use of the political power it has generated.[71]

Linda Faye Williams reports that, "To protect their gains, economic elites have captured enormous political power in national and state governments, and the problem of oligarchy has now become a concern for mainstream social scientists."[72] And Michael J. Thompson explains that "... progressive responses to inequality remain weak and ineffectual."[73]

The corruption of the Republican party, the conservative take-over of the SCOTUS,[74] the reactionary villainy of state legislatures, and the conservative control of traditional and Internet media are not incidental developments but the fulfillment of the strategic objectives of the billionaire brotherhood.[75] Presumably, the electoral crisis is their win-or-die strategy to transform the nation into the crown of a worldwide fascist libertarian oligarchic empire.[76]

Given their attacks on our foundational democratic institutions—such as public education,[77] criminal and civil justice,[78] electoral districting and administration,[79] Congressional and state law-making,[80] public health,[81] and media monopolization[82]—now waged audaciously on their behalf by the reactionary MAGA-movement's extensively documented threats, intimidation, and take-over tactics,[83] many of these institutions no longer demonstrate any tendency to self-correction, which would seem to require a reversal of the country's economic inequality and/or an empowering remedy for the "mass discoordination"[84] of the demos.

If it's true that political and policy remedies to save our democracy have proven to be ineffective, then, to oversimplify, the continuing dissolution of our democracy augurs a restructuring of the state based on either unwelcome foreign interference, unpromising violent revolution by a far-left or far-right vanguard, or unlikely decades-long popular social action to establish self-empowering infrastructure (e.g., the American labor movement and the open-town directly democratic popular assemblies in New England).[85]

The unnerving conclusion most Americans want to avoid is that we do not have a relatively quick, easy, or painless fix for what ails America. It's no longer believable that we can "... build a popular political front in defense of American democracy, an alliance that extends from #NeverTrump Republicans to Democratic Socialists, an alliance that includes religious conservatives as well as secular progressives."[86] Unfortunately, even if organized, the enlightened efforts of such an alliance—say, to defend pluralism, racial justice and equality, and compassionate treatment of immigrants—would understandably reinforce the convictions and commitments of all those in sympathy with the white Christian nationalist "deep story." In other words, such efforts would strengthen the very thing we hope to overcome.

We are beginning to see some of the best journalistic, academic, and intellectual minds and hearts come to grips with the disturbing realization that the down-fall of this society is not being stopped or even slowed by politics and policy. Yet there seems to be little consideration of the possibility that the country may go much further down and only begin to revive if the demos comes to life and empowers itself to build countervailing movement.

If that were to happen, it might take decades to reach the end of the beginning of the process, when several major cities will have begun to be transformed by a movement dedicated to institutionally empower assemblies of citizens, to confront endemic municipal corruption by monied interests and to hold higher levels of government and corporations accountable to the commonweal. And it might well take most of the remainder of this century to see clearly the beginning of the end of remaking the country's democratic institutions.

That kind of existential challenge is not unknown in America.

We imagine that, from the first moments the colonists felt that the consequences of their alienation from public powers were insufferable, it took some time before they were prepared to challenge the British Crown with radical rhetoric, petitions, and protests. At the outset, most probably did not want to think they were headed toward revolutionary war. For many, it may have been a shocking recognition that the cost of political freedom would be the division of the population into factions and the deaths of tens of thousands of patriots. They would have to call out the loyalists-to-Britain for their disloyalty to America, and then fight the most powerful army in the world for more than seven years, paying a deadly price for the freedom to rule themselves. It was certain that nothing else would suffice, that there was no alternative to gain their freedom.

The long and painful history of the non-violent civil rights movement[87] also began with, what must have seemed to many, impossible objectives: to sustain a grassroots struggle that would take many decades; to build organizations that would mobilize hundreds of thousands; and eventually to transform national policy to guarantee the legal rights and protections of African-Americans. Nothing else had stopped the lynchings, violence, humiliations, degradations, and egregious violations of rights, so their movement began irrevocably with faith and hope.

Our view is that no one has yet to propose a feasible alternative that offers believable hope to save our democracy and see it thrive other than deepening direct political participation, actualizing *citizenhood*[88] among the general population. But we take heart knowing that strengthening American democracy by organizing to empower the politically infirm[89] demos[90] has been confirmed by reliable studies to be an effective response to fascist authoritarianism throughout the world.[91]

Spotting the absence of American citizenhood, K. Sabeel Rahman has pointed out that, "... the United States has a civic and political infrastructure that is not oriented towards the *building of capacities for shared*

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self-rule ..."[92] And Benjamin Barber has observed:

> ... America still has no nationwide system of local civic participation. For this reason, the first and most important reform in a strong democratic platform must be the introduction of a national system of *neighborhood assemblies* ... in every district in America.[93]

These perspectives are hardly experimental; they mimic the focal point of Thomas Jefferson's visionary corrective for what he believed to be the new republic's fundamental defect. He proposed to subdivide the counties into small, independent governments, like the directly democratic New England towns. Jefferson's concern was not only the potential predations of representative government but "... the dangers of corruption and perversion [which] were much more likely to arise from private interests than from public power."[94] To counter those threats, he envisioned town-like "little republics," direct democracies that would ensure the right of every citizen to act *in* the government.[95]

Several decades later, Wendell Phillips, an abolitionist, stated what perhaps endures as the most cogent reason to root democracy in directly democratic neighborhood assemblies:

> Trust the people—the wise and the ignorant, the good and the bad—with the gravest of questions, and in the end you educate the race. At the same time, you secure, not perfect institutions, not necessarily good ones, but the best possible while human nature is the basis and the only material to build with.[96]

Phillips, like Jefferson, was not an ideological admirer of the demos but an advocate of institutions that were structured to ensure that, as a practical matter, the citizenry itself was responsible for the commonweal, and for the policies and practices that would sustain it.

This model of citizenhood, proposed by some of the best minds of our founders and tested throughout our history, teaches us some of the essentials to restore commitment to the commonweal, what will be needed to overcome the threats to our democracy. It calls millions of us to work together over many decades, to set in motion face-to-face organizations of self-governance. If we do so, it's *possible* that in such organizations we may rebuild trust in one another and have faith and confidence that in our common citizenhood we can work out mutually beneficial political action—without which, certainly, we will have neither commonweal nor democracy. Ahead, we discuss some of the requisite how-to of realizing that potential.

The organizational culture that enables responsible citizenhood despite diverse interests is well-known to community organizers. It relies on mutual trust, which reflects an expectation of reciprocal moral behavior. In the words of David Brooks, "... [such] trust is a collective moral achievement."[97]

That dynamic was apparent in Moshe's community organizing (CO) in south-central Los Angeles. It began after an organizing drive in a neighborhood with about one-third Anglo, one-third Latino, and one-third Black working-class residents, virtually all of whom had some connection to the values of various faith traditions. When talking with them at their front doors about their concerns for the neighborhood, many spoke of the other groups as horrible people who were ruining the neighborhood.

After the organizing drive and their founding meeting of a neighborhood organization, followed by much informal talk among neighbors, nearly a hundred residents, from all three alienated groups, came together in a church basement for a Christmas party. The good fellowship that night could be cut with a knife; the warmth and excitement were palpable.

Through their face-to-face talk, they had come to recognize that they shared the same pain and moral outrage from the gang killings in their neighborhood, and that they prized the virtue and potential results of working together despite their many differences. They had begun to form relationships and trust of one another in their dedication to their commonweal. We have witnessed this process many times in both turf-based and faith-based CO over the past 50 years, and we consider it in more detail below.

Institutional empowerment of such political participation by the citizenry in urban cities would anchor our politics in the verity that, if we build organizations that are purposefully structured and cultured to serve the commonweal, there can be no better judge of what's good for the demos than the demos itself; and that our greatest political satisfaction will come from knowing that what we have, we have chosen for ourselves. But that can only come to pass if we vest public powers[98] and power-leverage in the demos, which is also the most promising way to demolish the ideology of Christian nationalism and end the reign of billionaires.

Perhaps the first step to remake our failing democracy by participatory self-governance is to acknowledge that it will not happen through voluntary relinquishment of power by institutional power brokers or multiple grassroots campaigns on a plethora of worthy issues. History teaches it will only come from the initiative and sacrifice of millions who combine in a multi-decade, unified struggle[99] to secure the unambiguous triumph of democracy. We have never had a transformative American movement for the commonweal that was built on voluntarily devolved power or in the absence of a widely shared strategic moral vision[100]—not the American revolution, not the antislavery movement, not the labor movement, not the populist movement, not the women's suffrage movement, and not the civil rights movement, none of them.

The indispensable strategic moral vision necessarily describes a painful path to national salvation, decades of sacrifice in a struggle against do-or-die opposition, to remake the soul, the moral goodness, of American democracy. As Machiavelli warned:

> It must be considered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than

to initiate a new order of things. For the reformer has enemies in all those who profit by the old order, and only lukewarm defenders in all those who would profit by the new order, this lukewarmness arising partly from fear of their adversaries, who have the laws in their favour; and partly from the incredulity of mankind, who do not truly believe in anything new until they have had the actual experience of it.[101]

Nevertheless, we may reasonably anticipate that a popular movement to remake our democracy will become energized for the long haul by witnessing the nation's much deeper descent into the evils of authoritarianism and, possibly, by a guerrilla-terrorism version of civil war, as described by Barbara Walter:

> If America has a second civil war, the combatants will not gather in fields, nor will they wear uniforms. They may not even have commanders. They will slip in and out of the shadows, communicating on message boards and encrypted networks. They will meet in small groups in vacuum-repair shops along retail strips, in desert clearings along Arizona's border, in public parks in Southern California, or in the snowy woods of Michigan, where they will train to fight. They will go online to plan their resistance, strategizing how to undermine the government at every level and gain control of parts of America. They will create chaos and fear. And then they will force Americans to pick sides.[102]

Or worse, according to three retired generals: "The military must prepare now for a 2024 insurrection." The generals warn, "The potential for a total breakdown of the [Army] chain of command along partisan lines—from the top of the chain to the squad level—is significant should another insurrection occur.... Under such a scenario [a contested election with loyalties split] it is not outlandish to say a military breakdown could lead to civil war."[103]

But in her scholarly study of *How Civil Wars Start: And How to Stop Them*, Walter also reports that it's true, "Most countries that were able to avoid a second civil war shared an ability to strengthen the quality of their governance. They doubled down on democracy and moved up the polity scale."[104]

The necessity of democracy-affirming, institutionally empowered citizen social action has been apparent for decades,[105] yet mistakenly thought by many of us to be unnecessary or impossible to achieve. But now, given the devastating consequences of the existential assault on the republic and the need to empower the demos as a last resort, professional community organizing faces a unique, unambiguous challenge:

> ... in 'professing' organizing, we are called to declare ourselves worthy of the *privilege* and *honor* of faithful allegiance to a higher purpose, wholeheartedly accepting its lifetime obligations. But what purpose...? The purpose for organizers in our tradition is that, regard-

less of our optimism or pessimism at any moment, we profess faithful allegiance to *the individual and collective empowerment of the powerless*. We believe it to be the most promising strategic vision to strengthen both democratic institutions and the moral-spiritual values that fully humanize those institutions.[106]

As the takedown of our democracy moves toward the point of no return,[107] the mission before us is unmistakable, should we decide to accept it: Remake our democracy. Start by organizing to vest permanent public powers and power-leverage in the demos, empowering every citizen's demand for accountability of representative government and corporations.

It's past time to launch the groundwork to end the polarization, bury Christian nationalism, and throw out the oligarchs who have raised themselves up on the ruin of the country. Because that's what it will take to restore America as a democracy for the commonweal.

The Field of Action

The implied organizing strategy calls for challenging every American to reject the role of consumer cipher and instead to take on the responsibility of citizenhood by participating directly in the institutionally empowered wielding of the public powers.

It asserts the maxim that citizenhood should not be limited to advising, criticizing and petitioning but must encompass deliberation, deciding, and acting, because every one of us has an irreplaceable part to play in our governance. No one can represent our demands for relief from poverty, oppression, and injustice. No representative can stand in for our sacrifice and risk-taking to uphold democracy from love of God, family, community, and nation. And representatives cannot replace our individual will to self-governing freedom, given that, "Representation is incompatible with freedom because it delegates and thus alienates political will at the cost of genuine self-government."[108]

The urban city stands out as the venue in which to institutionalize direct decision-making in governance as a right of citizenship. It governs closest to the demos, and it is the most politically accessible government with significant public powers, ground-zero of the nation's poverty, oppression, and injustice, the nerve center of capitalist wealth, and the heartbeat of the global economy. As the urban municipality evolves into the "global city," scholars of public administration tell us these cities will increasingly come to dominate information, communication, and manufacturing technologies,[109] profit-centers that enrich the oligarchs and empower their corruption of democratic institutions.

The corruption of urban municipal government, especially, is neither unusual nor typically held to account legally. We have it on good authority,

> As public officials relax local regulations and other rules to accommodate the preferences of powerful economic interests, the poor and socially vulnerable populations are being displaced by an urban development machine

largely indifferent to creating cities that are both revitalized and inclusive."[110]

The widespread slavish accommodation of private and corporate special interests, usually hidden from public view and rationalized in the name of trickle-down economics, must be regarded as ubiquitous corruption if the fundamental purpose of representative democracy is to serve the commonweal.

The directly democratic popular assembly, patterned on the "open-town" governments of New England, stands alone as the ideal organizing model to radically root U.S. democracy. This home-grown form of local government can come to life in our cities as the lower tier of two-tier[111] municipal governance. Imagine the city no longer governed by a handful of elected representatives, exclusively in control of all the public powers and disingenuously claiming to represent constituencies of tens or even hundreds of thousands,[112] but that some of those powers have become shared with and accountable to popular assemblies, *neighborhood governments*, in which every citizen is an empowered voting member. The assemblies would have a partnership role in decisions about public safety, public health, public utilities, zoning, and much more.

One of the lessons of the four-century success of the popular assemblies in New England is that "ordinary" citizens can learn the deliberation and decision-making of self-governance, responsibly exercising the public powers. The history of open-town meetings also confirms that self-governance has not been voluntarily devolved by higher authorities; it has resulted from the initiative and participation of citizens prepared to claim their right to it and administer it responsibly.[113]

Doubts about this vision of directly democratic exercise of public powers by neighborhood popular assemblies are numerous and substantial, several of which we will consider below. But mostly they do not reflect distrust of the popular assembly per se or its adoption in a two-tier system of government, as in New England, where the popular open towns operate as a lower tier of government within counties.[114]

Moreover, most moderates, liberals, and progressives favor granting some of the public powers directly to the people at large. In fact, the last three-quarters of a century of community and faith-based organizing has been focused on building "people power," reflecting an unarticulated Jeffersonianism, while enigmatically disallowing the necessity or possibility of remaking our political and economic institutions.

Historian Lawrence Goodwyn (d. 2013) pointed out several decades ago, based on his classic study of Populism, that even committed reformers accept the idea that their reforms will not significantly transform the structure of power-inequality.[115] He concluded that, after the election of 1896,

> The idea that serious structural reform of the democratic process was 'inevitable' no longer seemed persuasive to reasonable reformers….
> A consensus thus came to be silently ratified: reform politics need not concern itself with

structural alteration of the economic customs of the society… . The reform tradition of the twentieth century unconsciously defined itself within the framework of inherited power relationships.[116]

The Lineage of a Strategic Moral Vision

Does a uniquely American form of local government created centuries ago make sense as a model for directly democratic popular assemblies now, as urban neighborhood governments, to revivify American democracy? We may begin to answer that question by considering the early open-town meetings in New England, which affords insight into their longevity, popularity, and worldwide acceptance as the truest expression of the democratic ideal.[117]

Before we begin, however, it's essential to dispossess the myth of monolithic culture in the New England towns, whether imagined to exist in their early years or presently. The misconception of "cultural homogeneity" arose because the English comprised the cultural and political majority in the colonial period, although even among themselves, significant cultural differences existed, which were based on their geographic origins in England. Moreover, by the beginning of the eighteenth century, immigration had "dramatically altered the population mix." The immigrants from Europe, especially, had a profound impact, because they reflected that century's enlightened rationalism, skepticism, and practicality in social and political thinking[118] and they followed several religious movements—all of which still endures in the New England towns.

Today, the *racial* makeup of New England towns includes White, Latino, Asian, and Black members. For example, the 2019 population of Shirley, Massachusetts, numbering about 7,500, was approximately 68 percent White, 12 percent Latino, 8 percent Black, and 5 percent Asian.[119] Racial and ethnic diversity in New England diminishes, however, going from the south to the north, with Maine the least diverse.

We were not surprised to learn that, in a New England town nowadays, "Perceived cultural barriers are dissolved when people come together with shared goals and equal status…."[120]

Looking back to the early colonial years, we can see members of a community working together in what appears to be an unremarkable activity. The settlers are constructing a modest building. It could be a place to satisfy a practical need, like the storage of communal tools. But we learn that throughout their lives it will be their church, where they meet to consider how they are governed by God; and it will be their civic meetinghouse, where they consider how to govern themselves, according to what they believe God requires of them.

Most of the earliest settlers were Puritans who shared strong, many might say narrow-minded, moral and spiritual convictions. Persecuted in England for their Biblical beliefs,[121] they emigrated to America beginning in the early 1600s. The settlers were biased

against hierarchical authority and favored local lay control; thus they adopted the "congregational" form of church governance. As Alexis de Tocqueville observed it, "Puritanism was not merely a religious doctrine, but it corresponded in many points with the most absolute democratic and republican theories."[122]

The New England towns were founded as self-ruling polities, admittedly for the sake of white Christian commonweal, with religious beliefs that would ensure commitment to it. However, their history differs sharply from our society's two-track degeneration of morality and politics—that is, our narcissistic devotion to amoral personal autonomy and self-entitlement,[123] and the corruption of our "representative" political institutions, many of which have lost their moral and ethical footing and betrayed the commonweal.[124]

When thinking about the effects of contemporary secularity,[125] it may be helpful to understand the moral spirituality of the town citizens, since its influence on their self-governance has been basic to the success of their assemblies, even though its narrow religiosity had largely diminished by the eighteenth century.

The early immigrant population of New England had fled from what they regarded as a morally corrupt society, and they possessed a moral vision of achieving a good life. Their ethos embodied a commitment to "civic godliness," which improved the condition of the poor and increased literacy.[126]

The Puritan legacy in New England includes accountability of officeholders, recognition of individual rights, and the sovereignty of the people, which influenced both civil and religious institutions.[127] But their "freedom" of self-governance continues to be the most inspiring. Unlike rule by representatives, it demands face-to-face meetings of the citizens. Regardless of comity or conflict, the town meeting was not shaped for convenience or comfort in civic affairs but for self-rule, perhaps because they intuitively understood:

> Men and women who are not directly responsible through common deliberation, common decision, and common action for the policies that determine their common lives are not really free at all, however much they may enjoy security, private rights, and freedom from interference."[128]

Ralph Waldo Emerson described the effect of their freedom: "In every winding road, in every stone fence, in the smokes of the poorhouse chimney, in the clock on the church, they read their own power, and consider the wisdom and error of their judgments."[129]

The history of open-town assemblies shows how to actualize our freedom. The mutual moral commitments of the citizens, the basis of their trust of one another, nurtured the political will needed to free the colonies from the oppression of the British Empire and, eventually, to establish the government of the United States. "Town meeting fueled the spark that ultimately led to the American Revolution and was lauded and studied for more than a century to follow."[130]

The Admirers and Critics of the Open Towns

The nineteenth century observers of the directly democratic assemblies, most notably de Tocqueville[131] and James Bryce,[132] were convinced that the open-town meetings were both an ideal form of self-governance and the most perfected "schools of democracy."[133]

But among modern scholars, there are unabashed critics of the towns. Our reading of their analyses raises questions about their relevance to present-day CO that looks to the New England town as a model for shared urban city governance.

Perhaps the best explanation for the end of the praise of open-town government, which was replaced by criticism in the Progressive era, is American industrialization and the shift of the population from rural-agrarian to urban-industrial. Local, direct democracy in assemblies came to be seen as irrelevant to metropolitan governance which, given the size of its constituencies, was deemed necessarily representative. It required the development of new forms of direct democracy, such as the initiative, referendum, and recall.

While the critics mostly do not dispute the date-and-event history of the towns, some fault them as less than true democracies, because majority rule was not always the rule at the outset; women, non-landowners, and non-church members were not enfranchised; and indigenous neighbors were not accepted as equals.

In Puritan society it was normative to believe "... in God, Satan, demons, witches, the moral significance of plagues, and other-worldly intervention in personal as well as national affairs." It's not surprising, then, that the Puritans who settled in New England believed that "... the Indian inhabitants ... worshipped devils ... and that the Indians themselves were bewitched."[134] It must also be said that the men who settled the early towns comprised part of the Puritan constituency that planted the roots of white Christian nationalism, as they imposed white Christian control over the land, the indigenous people, and institutions of governance.[135] Still, in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, which seems unlikely to have been the only exception, Mohicans "... participated in town meetings and elected 'traditional' leaders to typical New England offices." Meetings were "... conducted in the Mohican as well as the English language...."[136]

Whatever the practices from town to town, does a government exist anywhere now, regardless of how democratic and inclusive its present form, that would continue to be called a democracy if judged by its beginnings? Certainly not the U.S. government.[137] The point is, the open New England towns evolved over the centuries and now they are at least as inclusive as any other form of government in the United States.[138]

Some critics fault the founders of the towns because they were not ideologically dedicated to creating an ideal form of democracy. Such criticism betokens academymyopia. Only in the ivory tower does one imply that how actions were intellectually conceived, regardless of their evolved actual effects, somehow charac-

terizes their contemporary rightfulness. Presumably, the early settlers were living within the cultural values of their times, as we all do, struggling to find the least burdensome, most efficient self-governance to ensure their survival and the success of *their* communities—which turned out to be open-town direct democracy.

Although the view of the open towns in both the popular imagination and academic literature has gained and lost approbation over the centuries, the consensus of current opinion holds that the assemblies survive as ideal expressions of democracy in action.

The Nitty-Gritty of Doubt

The pivotal question about directly democratic popular assemblies as the lower tier of urban municipal government is whether their adaptation would be successful. We may be inspired by the history of these assemblies in New England, but doubts about their suitability and popular support in our crisis of democracy may leave us far from motivated to join a movement that would rely on them to vest public powers in the demos. This section addresses some of those doubts, beginning with one recently raised.

Wouldn't an urban popular assembly with public powers, a neighborhood government, be vulnerable to hostile takeovers?

Would the New England-style popular assembly be vulnerable to malevolent take-overs by anti-democratic forces, such as right-wing Republicans intent on electoral subversion and suppression? This concern may be assuaged by familiarity with the strengths of the towns' unique form of directly democratic government.

Open-town leaders do not make attractive targets for corruption. One of the hallmarks of the towns has been the *advisory* role of their elected leaders, the selectmen (which now includes women). Adapted to urban governance, the selectmen (perhaps renamed) would call regular and special meetings, propose laws and policies, and supervise neighborhood government activities. But while they might plan programs and services and the appropriations to pay for them, those plans would not have the force of law until the citizens "signify their satisfaction" in an open meeting. Thus, in the history of this model, there is no evidence in the town records of any serious encroachment by selectmen on the prerogatives of the town meetings.

There is no history of corruption of a New England open-town government. To corrupt the polity, it would be necessary to corrupt most of the citizenry, since every citizen is both a direct producer and consumer of town ordinances, administrative policies, and services, in addition to acting directly on rare occasions to alter the structure of the government itself (e.g., adding finance committees, town managers, and more meeting days).[139] Jefferson held that given town self-rule, "... every man in the state will let his heart be torn out of his body sooner than let his power be wrested from him by a Caesar or Bonaparte."[140]

Another disincentive for hostile take-overs would be the costs and difficulties versus the prospective benefits. Taking over a state government or urban municipality holds out the promise of commandeering significant powers and resources, and the criminal justice system in this country makes it possible to avoid legal consequences for corrupting public officials.[141] But any one neighborhood government would not possess such attractive powers and resources, and its basic structure and culture would make it invulnerable to corruption as an organization.

Even if a neighborhood established a popular assembly with public powers, wouldn't it always be vulnerable to reactionary state legislation or executive branch action that could disempower it?

In the U.S., the most promising way to create urban popular assemblies with public powers that are the least vulnerable to state interference would be to amend municipal charters through ballot initiatives.

State laws and constitutions grant charter cities "plenary" powers over municipal activities and affairs, subject only to constitutional limitations and matters of special state interest. Whether a particular activity falls within the purview of the state or the charter city in situations of conflict is determined by the courts. However, the courts consistently hold that numerous powers and activities are reserved to the municipalities.

The most important power of the charter city is that the charter itself can "... only be adopted, amended, or repealed by a majority vote of a city's voters." Furthermore, "... a city may tailor its organization and elective offices, taking into account the unique local conditions and needs of the community." In effect, "A charter transfers the power to adopt legislation affecting municipal affairs from the state legislature to the city adopting it."[142]

Of course, to form a neighborhood popular assembly as a subdivision of a chartered city would require the ballot initiative to be available. Without it, the likelihood of any city council—liberal, moderate, or conservative—voting to dilute its own powers by sharing public powers with neighborhoods would be nil. Luckily, the ballot initiative process is available in a large percentage of America's charter cities.[143]

Can we recreate New England open-town governments in American cities?

If we establish popular assemblies as neighborhood governments in urban areas, they will undoubtedly look and feel very different than the towns in New England. But some of the best features of direct democracy in the towns would follow their adaptation to urban governance, including repudiation of special interests, nonpartisan and non-ideological politics, incorruptibility of elected officials, and a fusion of efficiency, equality, equity, and accountability in public administration.

Can neighborhood governments be efficient and effective elements of urban city governance?

Public administration scholars claim that neighborhood governments cannot play a useful role in the governance of urban cities. They regard them as impractical, primarily because they are thought to work only with small constituencies,[144] and because the demands on urban governments arise across district-wide and metropolitan political and economic boundaries.

Notwithstanding these negative views, the potential of urban assemblies to deepen democratic participation has become more attractive on the street, as indicated by the "right to the city," "new municipalism," and "sortition" movements,[145] and the efforts to establish facsimiles of such assemblies in several major cities.[146]

The question of the efficiency and effectiveness of neighborhood government warrants serious investigation. We conclude that the academic view is mistaken because it fails to consider "vill economics"[147] and the histories of the U.S. municipal reform and public choice movements[148] in the context of two-tier governance.

What would be the minimum and maximum size of the citizenry of a neighborhood government in a large city, like Los Angeles, and would those numbers be practicable?

Popular assemblies with smaller populations have obvious advantages. Ideally, they would have under a thousand voting members; but then the total number of assemblies would needlessly divide urban populations that have mutual concerns, artificially inhibiting common action. However, directly democratic assemblies with constituencies of 10,000 are practicable.[149] In fact, towns in Massachusetts with fewer than 6,000 residents *must* adopt the open-town form of government.[150]

In a city like Los Angeles, we could have more than 400 popular assemblies to encompass the municipal population of just under four million (which is now divided into 15 council districts of about 250-300,000 each), although certainly not every neighborhood would be motivated to form its own government. In any event, at first blush the possibility of hundreds of neighborhood governments in one city sounds preposterous.[151]

When considered at length, that reaction is unsurprising. The early kings and their ministers may have experienced it when facing the demands of the nobles for a larger role in governance; the kings and nobles may have experienced it when facing the demands of legislatures; and now legislators and their patrons may experience it when facing the demands of the demos. In such circumstances, there is the likelihood of a defensive reaction to the dispersal of power that will deepen democracy. Typically, in that response, rationalizations of an elite-concentration of public powers—justified by "divine right," "noblesse oblige,"

"meritocracy," "technocracy," etc. by those in power—become injected into the mainstream culture, so that the fear of radical democratization ironically extends even to the public, which itself has been deprived of any meaningful role in the exercise of the public powers.

The question of whether any number of popular assemblies in an urban city is ideal cannot credibly be answered in the abstract, and undoubtedly not by public administration theorists and practitioners of municipal government. Too often, wittingly or unwittingly, they reflect powerful covert interests served by morally pliant elected officials. The standard to determine the ideal number of assemblies must be the will of the people according to the degree of "home rule" they want, not an expert's opinion on "best practices" of local government, which at best typically reveals monied-elite bias toward efficiency and economy at the expense of equity, equality, and accountability. Although the professionals subscribe to ethical associations and standards, they nonetheless often remain inert if not complicit in the corruption of urban municipal government,[152] particularly the endemic "soft" variety.[153]

The question can justly be put only to the residents in the diversity of historical, cultural, racial, and ethnic neighborhoods, especially those that are middle- to low-income and working-class. They have the potential of citizenhood to deliberate and decide whether they want to establish a popular assembly with public powers, one that would operate according to pre-defined citywide ordinances and procedures, based on the New England model of open-town government, and then only after a public education campaign carried out by nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations.

How would the boundaries of neighborhood government jurisdictions to be determined?

Boundaries would be set within the councilmanic districts of the city. They would not be set by geometric design, which would be arbitrary in relation to history, culture, race, and ethnicity, and fixed landmarks, such as rivers, mountains, and freeways. The criteria employed to establish the boundaries should be approved by the citizenry. The traditional method of forming governmental entities seems to be the most appropriate and popular; that is, by petition and election of a self-defined, contiguous citizenry, carried out by an officially recognized and bonded organizing committee of volunteer residents of the proposed jurisdiction.[154]

Limitations established by ordinance through initiative would probably include upper and lower population numbers of proposed jurisdictions, and restrictions against gerrymandering, to prevent manipulated racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, or partisan dominance (which, if challenged, could be resolved by a judge of the Superior Court). Some neighborhoods might embody smaller populations, but probably no less than a

thousand,[155] while others might come closer to ten thousand.

Is it possible to form neighborhood governments in urban areas where identifiable neighborhoods do not exist, where it seems there is little or no connection or commonality among the residents?

The absence of face-to-face relationships among neighbors is not an insurmountable obstacle to forming a neighborhood government. Experienced base-building organizers know how to initiate community where none exists, while simultaneously developing organization and the capacity for mobilization. This knowledge can, in turn, be taught to active citizens.

Most of the residents who answered doorknocking during Moshe's first organizing drive in a Compton (CA) neighborhood didn't know the names of their nearest neighbors. But their lack of community was soon remedied, because one of the first tasks of turf-based organizing is to build or rebuild community, convening residents to begin relationships based on their shared history of punishing conditions and their hopes for a better future.

During the organizing drive, the neighbors began to talk informally among themselves and in meetings of their organizing committee about the injuries and injustices they were suffering because of problems in the neighborhood. Within a couple of months, by the founding meeting of their newly formed neighborhood organization, which drew about 200 residents from an area with a population of about 1200, they were already beginning to congeal as a community.

The full-fledged community that emerged in that neighborhood coalesced during a successful campaign to reclaim their local park from gangs. They repaired and refurbished the park by successfully holding the municipality accountable to do its part and by their own self-help initiatives. The park, which had been abandoned by the residents, quickly became used as a "community center" for both young people and adults, who gathered almost every evening for pick-up sports, checkers and chess, and just schmoozing.

Wouldn't wealthy neighborhoods secede from the city, leaving the poorer ones to fend for themselves?

This concern may reflect a misconception that governments must be either centralized or decentralized. So one may mistakenly believe that neighborhood governments would be the only means of municipal governance. But they would be part of a web of city, county, state, and federal governments. It would be impossible for wealthier neighborhoods to secede with their resources (tax-base) from the authority of the larger jurisdictions, especially from their taxing, regulatory, and judicial authority. Where distribution of resources for ensuring equity is threatened, state and federal programs, regulatory legislation, and enforcement activities would continue to have a mitigating effect.[156]

In the present political-economy of many urban cities, the relationship of wealthy and impoverished districts does not reflect equitable appropriations for city services to low-income areas but tax-exploitation of the poor.[157] Under these circumstances, low-income and working-class residents would have much to gain from limited grants of public powers, acquiring the legal means to manage their own development and resource-claims, without the handicap of neglect and exploitation by much more powerful players.

A typical advantage for a low-income or working-class neighborhood would be to have a share of the public powers in the form of a veto of municipal zoning decisions that environmental impact reports confirm represent a threat to the health or life of residents or that can be affirmed judicially to be racially, ethnically, or socio-economically biased. Both of those negative conditions currently apply in Houston's largely Black and Latino Southwest Crossing neighborhood, which is threatened by the construction of a propane storage facility some 500 feet from their homes. But, as things stand, the residents' options are limited to protests of one kind or another, which are unlikely to have much effect in energy industry-dominated Texas.[158]

Why should anyone believe that usually apathetic residents would participate in the deliberations and decision-making of neighborhood governments?

We call people "apathetic" when we don't understand their experience and feelings. But it doesn't take much political insight to know that citizens' consistent experience of powerlessness in the decisions of elected representatives leads to their belief in the futility of political participation. Attendance at city council meetings, school board meetings, advisory commissions and neighborhood councils serves to reinforce that conviction.[159] Barber points out: "They are apathetic because they are powerless, not powerless because they are apathetic. There is no evidence to suggest that once empowered, a people will refuse to participate."[160]

De Tocqueville saw that "… the most powerful, and perhaps the only, means of interesting men [and, of course, women] in the welfare of their country … is to make them partakers in the Government."[161] The meeting of a popular assembly with public powers, where every citizen's will would be officially empowered, presents the possibility of a very different kind of political experience, especially when the assembly's agenda is directly responsive to the will of the citizenry. Then their wielding of power for the commonweal warrants their active participation and judgment.

What could motivate the active participation of neighborhood residents? Mutual concerns might prompt their assembly, allied with others, to hold higher government officials accountable; to ensure the safety, security, physical condition, and esthetic character of their neighborhood;[162] to take advantage of needed but otherwise unavailable programs and ser-

vices; and to demand a role in setting the taxes and fees they pay.[163]

Desirable programs and services could include: a low-cost option to install solar panels;[164] a low-cost walk-in, neighborhood medical clinic, staffed by a nurse-practitioner or physician's assistant, to do initial diagnosis and treatment of minor ailments, referral to higher levels of care, and on-site health education;[165] a low-cost Internet connection and cable-TV service;[166] a neighborhood-run public safety program, based on local recruiting and supervising of public safety officers (to deal with domestic disputes, mental health referrals, traffic control, etc.);[167] and a low-cost neighborhood mediation service (to resolve disputes between neighbors and between them and various organizations).[168]

What level of meeting turnout would be needed to establish the "legitimacy" of the popular assemblies?

Is "popular assembly" a sham if only a relatively small number of citizens attend most meetings of the assembly? That's often the view of academic critics who suggest that a less-than-ideal percentage of residents attending assembly meetings indicates something less than their legitimacy as *popular* assemblies.

But, then, what do they make of the meetings of corporation stockholders? They too vote directly and have the power to change the leadership and direction of the corporation, yet we rarely see more than a handful of shareholders at annual meetings. For them, the question of whether to attend is answered by the items on the agenda, whether they are of sufficient relevance and consequence, and whether there is a likelihood of preferential or damaging decisions. No one suggests that the failure of stockholders to attend the meetings makes those meetings a sham or that the stockholders can't justify their share of ownership in the corporation.

The history of open-town government, like all organizations that affect the lives of their members and constituents, confirms that attendance at their meetings goes up and down depending on controversial agenda items that may enhance or threaten the commonweal. Which may explain why most New England open-town meetings do not have a quorum requirement.[169]

How can a popular assembly of 10,000 work administratively in practice?

Modern New England open towns rely on full-time managers, selectmen, and a variety of committees, plus specialist staff responsible for roads, schools, tax collection, planning, etc. Managers, selectmen, and finance committees were not present in the early towns. But they were inevitable innovations because, as already noted, the citizens act as both the producers and consumers of their town's laws, administration, and practices. If their government becomes onerous, incompetent, oppressive, etc., they have a direct stake and the political wherewithal to cure the

defect. The popular assembly thus has the inherent potential of structural self-correction, which cannot be said about representative government.

Urban neighborhood governments would also form committees to study and recommend actions by their assemblies; they too would hire professional managers to supervise their day-to-day operations; and undoubtedly, they would make structural self-corrections in response to changing conditions. For instance, some might decide to allow limited use of the "Australian ballot,"[170]—that is, voting without attending the meeting of the assembly.

But how is it possible for 10,000 citizens to meet as a "popular assembly"?

We can have a popular assembly with several thousand in attendance if we employ available technology. Imagine that the registered citizens of a neighborhood government have downloaded the app for citizen participation; that they are "warned" of an upcoming assembly meeting, the agenda items set by the selectmen, and the deadline for submitting comments about the agenda items;[171] that the relevant committees have reviewed the comments and prepared a summary of the pros and cons (like sample-ballot booklets) to be presented on a large screen as well as on individual smart-phones during the actual meeting (held in a high school or college auditorium, etc.); and that citizens have the option to vote within a set timeframe using their app.[172]

Employing digital technology to manage neighborhood government meetings of outsized assemblies does not change one vital aspect of traditional town-meeting government: Neither the selectmen, nor the committee leaders and members, nor a full-time manager (if one is employed), nor anyone else has the power to implement any proposed ordinance, budget, or policy until it is approved by the full assembly, and every citizen over the age of 18 may vote on such proposals.[173]

But doesn't the technologizing of the assembly preclude actual deliberation, civic education, and meaningful relationship-building?

It may seem that the technologizing of the popular assembly will prevent the human interaction and relationship-building of the open-town model, leaving only a formal process with little or no face-to-face deliberation or shared civic education. But consider: much of the deliberation regarding upcoming business in the meeting, like that of the open town itself, would take place beforehand—across back fences, in homes, carwash waiting areas, market check-out lines, post office queues, parks, libraries, places of employment (like schools, hospitals, health clubs, businesses, etc.), barber shops and beauty salons, and of course, after worship services and other activities at synagogues, churches, and mosques—which may be why some critics of town meetings have mistakenly claimed that

the meetings amount to little more than rubber stamps.

Dedicated, secure, online neighborhood chat rooms could also be created, giving hundreds of citizens the opportunity to deliberate about specific issues simultaneously and then become active neighbors offline. One of the unexpected outcomes of online meeting places has been described as the "social street." Neighbors initially introduce themselves online but their connections transition to the streets where they greet each other and begin to talk about what's happening in their lives. These "social streets" in Europe, Brazil, and New Zealand numbered about 400 in 2015.[174]

If all the citizens of an urban neighborhood government were to receive the meeting "warning" on their cell phones, which showed decisions pending that could materially affect their lives, many would talk about them with relatives, friends, and neighbors who would also be affected. And we have reason to think that many residents would attend those assembly meetings with their relatives, friends, and neighbors.

Other organizations that serve the neighborhood would also become settings for conversations about the upcoming assembly agenda, just as they are now regarding items of concern on the agendas of city council meetings when occasionally publicized. If prepared to act, their objective would not be to pressure or logically convince a handful of council members to support their position, but instead to organize educational campaigns to influence most of the neighborhood's citizens.

All this activity would be likely to produce much more face-to-face interaction, discussion, and deliberation regarding the agenda items before the voting on them than is the case for the agenda items of typical city council meetings.

But isn't it true that without face-to-face deliberation in the meetings of the assembly, neighborhood government would be little more than representative in fact?

Citizens acting in their neighborhood government would experience the freedom of self-governance by virtue of personally exercising the power to approve or reject the actions of their government. Still, it may be argued that by removing the deliberative heart of the town meeting—recall the town citizens talking face-to-face in their meetinghouse—what remains is only a marginal improvement to the representative system. But that claim ignores two factors:

First, there is no assurance that when most voters support a particular issue or candidate in a representative system, their vote will influence a particular policy-outcome. In the U.S., especially in urban cities with large electoral constituencies, voting and government policy have become only distantly related.[175] Then, too, one's actual policy preferences may never appear on the ballot. For example, most Americans want more rigorous gun-control laws and higher taxes on the wealthy, neither of which appear on any ballot. But in a directly democratic popular assembly, the agenda is set by the people themselves and their will determines the law-making, policies, and practices of their government.

Second, the absence of traditional open-town deliberations does not necessarily mean the absence of deliberation, only the necessity to devise new ways to enable it. For example, it's possible to increase the numbers, mandates, and roles of committees, and add requirements for participation in their deliberations by citizens who submit agenda items. Procedures may be adopted to ensure that major issues do not appear on the assembly agenda until they have been reviewed by the appropriate committee and that pro and con views have been fully considered for presentation to the assembly. Housemeetings, inviting deliberation, may be encouraged by designating them priority sources of assembly agenda items. Break-out sessions that precede assembly meetings may be used. If 500 people were projected to be in attendance, the first two hours of a three-hour assembly meeting could be devoted to break-out meetings of ten groups of 50, each talking out their views of their agenda item to be presented to the full assembly. Given the ubiquitous presence of cell phones, we can expect that as proposed agenda items and summaries of the discussions of them are sent to every member of the assembly, conversations about them would ensue all over the neighborhood.

The citywide municipality in a two-tier structure would continue to manage economic spillovers, coordinate overall development, and provide area-wide and vertically integrated services (e.g., water purification, trash collection, rapid transit, detention centers, and costly police laboratory and training facilities). Neighborhood governments would expand influence on and ownership of city policy, increase and improve needed neighborhood programs and services, serve as an institutional mechanism to confront municipal corruption, and potentially emerge as a powerful means of holding higher levels of government accountable. Surprisingly, upon closer consideration, they might also play a useful role in addressing climate change.[176]

Doesn't everything depend on the culture of the population, both in creating urban assemblies and in their success as the "anchors" of American democracy?

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of establishing urban popular assemblies as neighborhood governments would be cultural. How could we ensure their nonpartisan and non-ideological character, and their commitment to the commonweal, which would be largely unfamiliar to the current generation of urban Americans? How could people come to appreciate that in the popular assembly, they would no longer be the potential victims of elected officials representing special interests but instead the official decision-makers themselves, empowered directly to will action that addresses their mutual concerns? How could they be sure that the initiatives or other legal strategies to establish such assemblies would respect their values?

These questions challenge us to begin conceptualizing the necessary groundwork to create neighborhood governments. In every city, that outcome would require a founding organizing committee, a group of trustees for interim fundraising, expertise in government law and public administration, and a canvass-organizing campaign of grassroots education and popular support. And all these, including the participants in their development and implementation, would have to be committed to creating the culture needed to sustain the movement and ensure its eventual success.

The heart of the cultural challenge would be the call for *citizenhood*, learning to see ourselves acting together as responsible citizens of a community, committed to moderating the inevitable conflict between our own will and the will of others, and prepared to negotiate and live with compromise civilly if not graciously. It would require talking with one another, not for the sake of achieving unity or a voting-majority but simply to uncover mutuality in common action.[177]

That would require empathetically becoming attached to one another despite our conflicts, bound together in pursuit of our commonweal, signifying that citizenship is "... the moral identity par excellence. For it is as citizen that the individual confronts the Other and adjusts his [or her] own life plans to the dictates of a shared world."[178] It's a civics morality lesson that would need to be repeated regularly to ensure that from the outset it would merge into the cultural wallpaper of the movement, becoming a universal expectation.

Why should we think such an extraordinary transformation is possible? From the history of the New England towns, from the know-how of community and national development practitioners,[179] and from our faith-based CO, we believe that the moral-spirituality of most Americans' faith will strengthen them to remake American democracy. We have many decades of organizing experience during which disillusioned members of alienated groups, lower middle class, working class, and low-income, virtually all more or less believers in the *morals and values* promulgated by the three Abrahamic faith traditions,[180] talked, decided, and acted together to build organizations for their commonweal (which we consider in more detail below).

While the task is daunting, it is familiar to professional base-building community organizers, those of us who have been building organizations with nonpartisan, non-ideological culture, dedicated to a moral vision of power-building for the sake of the commonweal. Although the results of our work of the last half-century may be disappointing in some respects when compared to what has been achieved by the reactionary right, the *culture* of our organizations should be a source of pride to their members, leaders, and organizers.

The culture of new popular assemblies should not be expected to emerge full-blown at the end of a lengthy process but instead to come to fruition hour-by-hour, day-by-day, over years and decades.

Why wouldn't the current polarization of the country simply play out in the popular assemblies, leading to endless paralyzing conflict?

The approach of base-building CO, which would be used to create the assemblies, relies on community- and culture-building that's well-tested in both turf-based and faith-based organizing. That approach (already suggested here in two examples above) has several identifying features:

As in the New England directly democratic towns, in base-building organizing individuals don't relate to one another as potential ideological antagonists. Meeting face to face and becoming acquainted because of their practical concerns, they talk about their common pressures and their hopes and dreams, for themselves, their families, and their community, and they build relationships as neighbors.

Much of U.S. polarization is driven by claims of ideological certainty that have little meaning in people's day-to-day lives. But base-building organizing is non-ideological by design and by the preferences of the participants. (The only exception is a Jeffersonian belief in the political wisdom of "common people.") Ideologues have no intellectual openings or oratorical license in these grassroots organizations because their agendas focus on conditions, problems, and issues that relate to presently felt injuries and injustices.

The culture of these organizations, from the git-go, encourages people with different backgrounds and experiences to meet and talk with others unlike themselves, to work out their commonweal and mutually acceptable ways of achieving it. In that respect, it's like the culture of small towns that have their "characters" and include a wide range of values and lifestyles, but in which tolerance is most valued because it enables the citizens to act together to achieve what they cannot attain individually.

We have often witnessed these dynamics in our organizing. Two more examples came to mind when writing this section: faith-based organizing in Santa Ana and turf-based organizing in Jersey City. What these two organizing settings (neighborhood and parish) had in common was that they included diverse, mostly isolated, and often mutually antagonistic groups: in the parish, Vietnamese, Latinos, and ethnic Whites; and in the neighborhood, ethnic Whites, Latinos, and Blacks—all of whom were suffering from gang activity, drug dealing, and inadequate policing.

In the faith-based community, they turned out 400 of their disparate members in a meeting with the police and city officials. The upshot was that the city attorney brought civil actions against the owners and managers of apartment buildings who were conspiring with drug dealers. In the turf-based community, they organized, met with the patrol division commander, and succeeded in getting a substantial increase in the number of regular police patrols in their neighborhood.

In both settings, the members of different groups met and talked together, reluctantly discovered their common humanity and pain, their shared recognition

that much of representative government has been corrupted,[181] and that they have mutual interests and ways to achieve them. This undoing of polarization is regularly repeated in the unexceptional experience of professional faith-based and community organizing.

When all is said and done, why should anyone believe that the citizens of neighborhood governments will have any leverage on city, county, state, and national governments, or large corporations?

The usefulness of urban popular assemblies with public powers may seem doubtful if one believes they will never have power-leverage; that is, in high-stakes conflict, neighborhood governments, even with public powers, even hundreds of them allied on an issue, will not have any leverage on higher levels of government or large corporations.

This imagined limitation may begin to be disabused by knowing more about the formation and the potential of such governments when acting together with common purpose. Their acquisition of public powers, which potentially entails much more than simply achieving a formal change in the structure of governance, offers some insight.

Consider what happened when the residents of one Central California neighborhood found they were without a water supply for their homes. The private company that had been providing water had not maintained its equipment for decades, and when the equipment failed, the owner absconded. As a resident of the neighborhood at the time and actively involved in the response of the residents, Khulda has related her experience:

> If someone had asked me before the water crisis: Do you think you and your neighbors have what it takes to form a government and to govern yourselves, at least in regard to the water supply? Or do you really think you have the ability to negotiate the legal process with LAFCO?[182] I would have answered: no, and why would we want to do that anyway? But after the crisis, after going without water to drink or flush toilets, after standing in line with plastic containers to receive emergency water supplies from a U.S. Air Force tanker, my neighbors and I in our working-class neighborhood decided we would have to put our heads together and figure out, one step at a time, how to proceed. The amazing thing is that, despite the fact that none of us (to my knowledge) had any experience of forming a government, we did.

Under such conditions, we may infer that, "In direct personal participation ... people both learn the skills of citizenship and develop a taste for freedom; thereafter they form an active rather than deferential, apathetic, or privatized constituency for state and national representation, an engaged public... ."[183]

Certainly, there are limits on neighborhood government activities,[184] regardless of the public powers

they may acquire; because, like the special district mentioned above, they would be subject to the laws and judicial orders of higher levels of government. Empowered neighborhoods would not have any possibility of becoming wholly independent, self-directing "constitutional republics" in their own right.[185]

Nevertheless, because of their potential to achieve a transformation of governance by becoming the lower tier of urban government; plus, the potential for cultural transformation of residents, from dependency to engaged citizens of neighborhood popular assemblies; there is the prospect that, conscious of the combined strength of their citizenhood, they would combine to apply radical power-leverage.

Concluding thoughts regarding nitty gritty questions:

We have elsewhere defined the major tasks of CO as building (or rebuilding) communities, organizations, mobilizations, movements, and institutions.[186] It's the last of these that CO in our era has ignored.

If we regard kick-starting popular assemblies in urban cities as a long-term, institution-building movement, then we face two additional nitty gritty questions, both of which touch on repeatedly demonstrated existential vulnerabilities of CO projects over the past half-century: (1) How to recruit, educate, and train a cadre of professional organizers who are dedicated to the CO movement as a lifelong career to remake democracy. (2) How to go beyond short-term, project start-up funding to permanent, "automated" movement and institutional funding (e.g., the church tithe, government tax, and union checkoff).

While treatment of these two vulnerabilities of CO exceed the scope of this paper, surely, they must be addressed by a groundplan aimed to organize a movement for vesting public powers directly in the people at large.

Directly Democratic Power-Leverage
Our understanding of bottom-up power-leverage comes from the labor strike, used to extraordinary effect during the first half of the last century.[187] The labor movement's power originated in countless "locals," established over a half-century at the cost of face-to-face workplace organizing, which was not deterred by unrelenting oppression and physical violence. They eventually unified nationally in an institutionalized structure that combined the might of the CIO industrial unions and the AFL craft unions, which was brought to bear on opponents by the power-leverage of the strike.

Looking back to our founding as a nation, we can identify another power-lever, one which was a tactical innovation and a "key event"[188] of the Revolution, the Boston Tea Party. It was a rejection by a lower level of government, the colonies with the support of their citizenry, of British Crown authority. *The tactic was a tax-action by governments acting together to effect a negotiated reconciliation with a higher government.*

Prior to the Tea Party, the colonies challenged the

Sugar Act and the Stamp Act, which caused the British Parliament to repeal those taxes and, after some time, remove all the taxes except on tea. American outrage was not about the financial burden of the tea tax, which was only pennies a year for the average family, but their lack of representation in Parliament.[189] Their unreconciled demand regarding taxation, which aimed for some control over the public powers, eventually led to the Revolutionary War.[190]

We can easily see the parallels to the current money-corruption of representative government in the U.S., perverted by massive corporate and billionaire special interests, effectively alienating the demos from the exercise of the public powers.

Individual tax resistance typically aims to make a principled statement against what is believed to be unjust or illegitimate activity of the national government. The usual outcome is that the individuals are arrested, tried, and sentenced, or at least fined, for their violation of federal law. The picture changes dramatically when we imagine thousands of citizens acting simultaneously through their directly democratic assemblies, which they have already done in New England,[191] but in the future taking the profound step of negotiating reconciliation of their tax obligations.

Tax reconciliation differs from tax resistance and refusal because it would seek neither to rebel against nor avoid taxation. Instead, the aim would be to negotiate neighborhood government economic support of higher levels of government based on agreement by them to vest in the neighborhoods some control over legislation, regulations, and services. The initial goal would be to reconcile through tax-liability negotiations the demands of the citizenry for a permanent share of control of the public powers.

This David-and-Goliath matchup of neighborhoods determined to pressure municipal, county, state, and national governments may seem ridiculously optimistic. But consider: The earliest American labor strike was in 1776[192] and it wasn't until the 1935 National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) that the right to strike was protected by federal law. Before the NLRA, "Bosses persuaded the courts to issue injunctions to declare a strike illegal. If the strike continued, the participants would be thrown into prison."[193] During the nineteenth century, the idea that craft unions would exert power over massive corporate monopolies, like Standard Oil, probably would have seemed ridiculous to most unionists.[194] But the strike, which some union members may have regarded as a futile gesture in the early days, eventually became the irresistible leverage of organized labor to effect local, state, and national policy.

Can we imagine the tactics needed to short-circuit municipal, county, state and federal governments from prosecuting or otherwise harassing thousands or even hundreds of thousands of individuals who refuse to pay their taxes? Won't homeowners fear losing their homes if they refuse to pay their property taxes? And how can it be possible to avoid paying sales tax?

David Ben-Gurion once said, "All the experts are experts on what was. There are no experts on what will be."[195] We can't know all the strategic and tactical possibilities today any more than the organizers and leaders of any movement know at the start the strategies and tactics they will eventually devise. But we do know that necessity is the mother of invention. We also know we will find examples to learn from, not in the history of principled individual tax resistance but in the unprincipled schemes of corporate tax avoidance.

Powerful corporations enhance their power by off-loading their tax obligations through lobbying and tax-liability negotiations with the IRS. In addition to those tactics, governments, even small ones, as Robert Moses so effectively demonstrated with New York's public authorities[196] (which are like California's special districts), can also enhance their powers to achieve comparable objectives by initiating highly technical, low-visibility revisions to government codes, thereby sidestepping some of their initial limitations.

A more direct approach to empower neighborhood governments by way of tax policy was proposed by the late U.S. Senator, Mark Hatfield. Hatfield submitted his "Neighborhood Government Act" in 1973 and for several years after that. The Act, SB2502, was essentially "A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 to provide a tax credit for contributions to a neighborhood corporation and to provide other financial assistance to such corporations under State law to furnish their own neighborhood services."

Hatfield was motivated by "... the imperative to decentralize power ... and the requirement of government, if it is to be democratic, effective and responsive, to be rooted close to the people." His articulate defense of the Act was comprehensive and inspiring. But it was opposed by officials steeped in the municipal reform ideology, which historically has been promoted by corporate tycoons;[197] and lacking an organized movement dedicated to its passage, it came and went without awakening a supportive constituency. When Hatfield died, the *National Review* noted that the Neighborhood Government Act was "embraced by many New Leftists ... and libertarians.... Naturally it went nowhere."[198]

Could an urban alliance wage a successful campaign for a city charter reform initiative to authorize the formation of neighborhood assemblies with public powers? Could they reintroduce as state legislation a variation of Senator Hatfield's Neighborhood Government Act, but this time with the support of an organized constituency? Could they eventually deliver a statewide ballot initiative to require that, in qualified directly democratic jurisdictions, a limited percentage of local sales tax must be credited to neighborhood government escrow trust accounts pending "reconciliation" with higher-level taxing authorities?[199] We can imagine taxes paid into such accounts, supervised by the popular assemblies, disbursed in turn to the appropriate governments when negotiated tax reconciliations have been debated and approved by the citizens of the assemblies.

The Rocky Path Ahead

Surely, remaking American democracy demands structural change that directly empowers the demos, the only plausible means to overcome our "pernicious polarization" and defeat the fascist Christian nationalist oligarchy. Our experience and history should convince us that, given the corruption that has enervated America's democratic institutions, an effective remedy can't be simple, quick, or painless. Then, too, as Jonathan Rosenblum, a community and labor organizer, reminds us:

> ... a potent, sustained movement must rest on more than economic and political principles. It also must draw upon the values that emanate from our deepest human emotions and desires for justice and community. The call for spiritual morality, whether advanced by organized religion or secular humanist yearnings, has played a decisive role in leading struggles throughout history. The civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s and the abolitionist movement of a century earlier are but two examples of struggles that were propelled forward by powerful calls for spiritual morality. Today, the embryonic movements that fuse direct action with a spiritually based call for justice offer similar promise.[200]

Beyond any doubt, to fulfill our hope and vision of a thriving democracy will require much more of us than grassroots power-building:

- It will demand the unflagging faith and hope of both the organizers and those becoming organized, which will be needed to sustain the sacrifices all will be called upon to make for many decades.

- It will depend on rebuilding communities of trust and mutuality, with a commitment to the flourishing of every life as the root and measure of our commonweal.
- It will direct us on a path not only of enlightened participatory politics and public administration but moral-spiritual goodness.

Our fidelity to that goodness on the path of our social salvation can be reinforced by six guides to action from our sacred religious traditions:[201] Righteousness, Truth, Justice, Freedom, Peace, and Compassion—knowing that where there is righteousness, there is truth; where there is truth, there is justice; where there is justice, there is freedom; where there is freedom, there is peace; and where there is peace, there is compassion.[202] We can only build historic movement to remake our democracy by relying on such a widely shared strategic moral vision of the future.

And isn't that now the demand of ethical patriotism?[203]

Epilog

A wave of authoritarianism has been sweeping over the world. Despairing national leaders have spoken of their disappointment that American democracy, for so long a model for other nations, has been in decline and may fail entirely. If it is true that the antidote to authoritarianism, short of violent revolution and civil war, is neither politics nor policy but instead, permanently vesting public powers in every individual of the demos, then we can make the renaissance of the popular assembly in urban America a model of flourishing twenty-first century democracy for the rest of the world.

[1] This article has been substantially updated, revised, and expanded from the initial version published in *Social Policy* (Spring 2022).

[2] From *Democracy and Social Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1902—Kindle edition), loc. 1867.

[3] One marker is provided by Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, "Let's just say it: The Republicans are the problem," *Washington Post* (April 27, 2012).

[4] See Steve Eder et al., "They Legitimized the Myth of a Stolen Election—and Reaped the Rewards," *New York Times* (October 3, 2022).

[5] See Adrian Vermeule, "Supreme Court Justices Have Forgotten What the Law Is For," *New York Times* (February 3, 2022).

[6] Regarding the effects on public health generally, see: Roman Pabayo et al., "Political party affiliation, political ideology and mortality," *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health*, 69(5):423-431 (January 2014); Ethan Nadelmann and Lindsay LaSalle, "Two steps forward, one step back: current harm reduction policy and politics in the United States," *Harm Reduction Journal*, 14(37):1-7 (June 2017); and Justin Kaashoek et al., "The Evolving Roles of US Political Partisanship and Social Vulnerability in the COVID-19 Pandemic from February 2020-February 2021," Social Science Research Network (October 8, 2021) [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3933453].

[7] See Brian Neelon et al., "Associations Between Governor Political Affiliation and COVID-19 Cases, Deaths, and Testing in the United States," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 61(1):115-119 (July 2021).

[8] See: Andy Stern, "Unions & Civic Engagement: How the Assault on Labor Endangers Civil Society," *Daedalus* (Spring 2013); and Reid Wilson, "GOP plans new assault on unions," The Hill (December 7, 2016) [https://thehill.com/regulation/labor/309122-gop-plans-new-assault-on-labor].

[9] See: Aaron M. Cright and Riley E. Dunlap, "Anti-reflexivity: The American Conservative movement's Success in Undermining Climate Science and Policy, *Theory, Culture & Society*, 27(2-3):100-133 (2010); Christopher Sellers, "How Republicans came to embrace anti-environmentalism," Vox (June 7, 2017); and Samantha Gross, "What is the Trump administration's track record on the environment?" Brookings (August 4, 2020).

[10] See: Bruce Western et al., "Economic Insecurity and Social Stratification," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 38:341-359 (August 2012); and Arloc Sherman et al., "Widespread Economic Insecurity Pre-Pandemic Shows Need for Strong Recovery Package," Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (July 14, 2021) [https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/7-14-21pov.pdf].

[11] See: Rand A. Conger et al., "Economic Pressure, Parent Personality and Child Development: An Interactionist Analysis," *Historical Social Research*, 35(2):169-194; and Aislinn Conrad-Hiebner and Elizabeth Byram, "The Temporal Impact of Economic Insecurity on Child Maltreatment: A Systematic Review," *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 21(1):157-178 (2020).

[12] See: Cynthia J. Shilkret and Robert Shilkret, "Attachment Theory" (in Joan Berzoff et al., eds.) *Inside Out and Outside In*, 5th ed. (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022), pp. 169-187; Susan Hart, *The Impact of Attachment: Developmental Neuroaffective Psychology* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011); and Lenora Duhn, "The Importance of Touch in the Development of Attachment," *Advances in Neonatal Care*, 10(6):294-300 (December 2010). And see Joseph Spinazzola et al., "Developmental Trauma Disorder: A Legacy of Attachment Trauma in Victimized Children," *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 34(4):711-720 (August 2021).

[13] For a well-developed bibliography on this relationship, see Ilene Schecter, "A secure place: Attachment patterns and socioeconomic status," Master's thesis (Pacific University, 2013) [https://commons.pacificu.edu/spp/1110].

[14] See B. Rose Huber, "Four in 10 infants lack strong parental attachments," Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University (2014) [https://www.princeton.edu/news/2014/03/27/four-10-infants-lack-strong-parental-attachments].

[15] See: Bessel A. van der Kolk, "Developmental Trauma Disorder," *Psychiatric Annals* (n.d.) [https://traumatic-stressinstitute.org/wp-content/files_mf/1276541701VanderKolkDvptTraumaDis.pdf]; Zara Abrams, "Improved Treatment for Developmental Trauma," *Monitor on Psychology* (July/August 2021), pp. 39-43; Robin M. Hartinger-Saunders et al., "Improving Access to Trauma-Informed Adoption Services: Applying a Developmental Trauma Framework," *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, 121: 119-130 (2019); and Karyn B. Purvis et al., "Trust-Based Relational Intervention (TBRI): A Systemic Approach to Complex Developmental Trauma," *Child & Youth Services*, 34(4):360-386 (2013).

[16] DTD is not yet included in the DSM. See: A. Bremness and Wanda Polzin, "Developmental Trauma Disorder: A Missed Opportunity in DSM V," *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 23(2):142-145 (May 2014); and Mary Sykes Wylie, "Developmental Trauma Disorder: Distinguishing, Diagnosing, and the DSM—How One Tenacious Task Force Worked to Separate Developmental Trauma Disorder from PTSD in DSM-5," Psychotherapy Networker (n.d.) [https://www.psychotherapynetworker.org/blog/details/35/developmental-trauma-disorder-distinguishing-diagnosing#].

[17] The CDC-Kaiser Permanente adverse childhood experiences (ACE) study is one of the largest investigations of childhood abuse and neglect and later-life health and well-being. The original study was conducted at Kaiser from 1995 to 1997 with two series of data collection. Over 17,000 HMO members from Southern California receiving physical exams completed confidential surveys regarding their childhood experiences and current health status and behaviors. For the original study, see Vincent J. Felitti et al., "Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults, The Adverse Childhood Experiences Study," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 14(4):245-258 (May 1998). See also: Vincent J. Felitti et al., "Adverse Childhood Experiences and Adult Health," *Academic Pediatrics*, 9:131-32 (2009); Peter Fonagy et al., "Morality, disruptive behavior, borderline personality disorder, crime and their relationships to security of attachment," in L. Atkinson & K.J. Zucker (eds.), *Attachment and Psychopathology* (New York, NY: Guilford Press, 1997), pp. 223-274; and Paula R. Pietromonaco et al., "Health and Attachment Processes," in (Jeffry A. Simpson and W. Steven Rholes, eds.) *Attachment Theory and Research: New Directions and Emerging Themes* (New York & London: Guilford Press, 2015).

[18] See Patrick T. Brown, "The Pro-Family Agenda Republicans Should Embrace After Roe," *New York Times* (May 7, 2022).

[19] See Oxfam, "Profiting from pain, The urgency of taxing the rich amid a surge of billionaire wealth and global cost-of-living crisis," Oxfam International (May 23, 2022).

[20] See: Thomas Zimmer, "The real—and far scarier—reason Republicans think Biden is illegitimate," *The Guardian* (March 21, 2022); Jennifer Rubin, "The GOP is increasingly viewing politics with the zeal of religious absolutism," *Washington Post* (March 28, 2022); Danny Hakim et al., "Texts Show Ginni Thomas's Embrace of Conspiracy Theories," *New York Times* (March 26, 2022); Andrew Prokop, "The real Ginni Thomas revelation," Vox (March 25, 2022); David French, "The Worst Ginni Thomas Text Wasn't From Ginni Thomas," *The Atlantic* (March 25, 2022); and Michael Gerson, "What the Ginni Thomas text furor warns about an outsize role of faith in politics," *Washington Post* (March 28, 2022). See also Elizabeth Dias and Ruth Graham, "The Growing Religious Fervor in the American Right: 'This Is a Jesus Movement,'" *New York Times* (April 6, 2022).

[21] See: Peter Smith and Deepa Bharath, "Christian nationalism on the rise in some GOP campaigns, *Los Angeles Times* (May 29, 2022); and Annie Gowen, "Right-wing roadshow promotes Christian nationalism before midterms," *Washington Post* (October 23, 2022).

[22] See Katherine Stewart, "Christian Nationalists Are Excited About What Comes Next," *New York Times* (July 5, 2022).

[23] See David Sehat, "What the end of Roe signals about the rise of Christian power," *Washington Post* (May 23, 2022).

[24] See Adam Liptak, "Supreme Court Rejects Maine's Ban on Aid to Religious Schools," *New York Times* (June 21, 2022).

[25] See Adam Liptak, "Supreme Court Limits E.P.A.'s Ability to Restrict Power Plant Emissions," *New York Times* (June 30, 2022).

[26] Generally, see: Michelle Goldberg, *Kingdom Coming, The Rise of Christian Nationalism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006); and Sarah Posner, *Unholy, How White Christian Nationalists Powered the Trump Presidency, and the Devastating Legacy They Left Behind* (New York: Random House, 2020).

[27] See Samuel L. Perry and Philip S. Gorski, *The Flag and the Cross: White Christian Nationalism and the Threat to American Democracy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2022—Kindle edition), loc. 106.

[28] Ibid., loc. 141.

[29] Ibid., loc. 195.

[30] Ibid., loc. 207.

[31] See Nick Corasaniti et al., "How Trump's 2020 Election Lies Have Gripped State Legislatures," *New York Times* (May 22, 2022); and IREHR, "Breaching the Mainstream: A National Survey of Far-Right Membership in State Legislatures," Institute for Research & Education on Human Rights, Special Report (n.d. [2022]) [https://www.irehr.org/reports/breaching-the-mainstream/] reports that more than 20 percent of Republican state legislators have affiliations with far-right, (at least nominally Christian) white supremacist organizations.

[32] See Zack Beauchamp, "Call it authoritarianism," Vox (June 15, 2021).

[33] See: Richard L. Hasen, "Election Law's Path in the Roberts Court's First Decade: A Sharp Right Turn but with Speed Bumps and Surprising Twists," *Stanford Law Review*, 68:1597-1632 (June 2016); Stephen E. Gottlieb, "How the Roberts Court Undermines U.S. Democracy," Scholars Strategy Network (January 10, 2017) [https://scholars.org/contribution/how-roberts-court-undermines-us-democracy]; and Jedediah Purdy, "The Roberts Court v. America," *Democracy*, 23 (Winter 2012).

[34] See Joseph E. Stiglitz, "The American Economy Is Rigged," *Scientific American* (November 1, 2018). See also: Josh Bivens et al., "Ten actions that hurt workers during Trump's first year," Economic Policy Institute (January 12, 2018) [https://www.epi.org/publication/ten-actions-that-hurt-workers-during-trumps-first-year/]; Kevin Vazquez, "The Republican Party Has Nothing to Offer the Working Class," onLabor (March 22, 2021) [https://onlabor.org/the-republican-party-has-nothing-to-offer-the-working-class/]; and Vanessa Williamson, "SCOTUS's labor decisions: Bad news for working people, and a taste of what's to come," Brookings (July 18, 2021) [https://www.brookings.edu/blog/fixgov/2018/07/18/scotuss-labor-decisions-bad-news-for-working-people/].

[35] See Robert Draper, "Michael Flynn Is Still At War," *New York Times Magazine* (February 4, 2022), which reports: "One year since Trump's departure from office, his Make America Great Again movement has reconstituted itself as a kind of shape-shifting but increasingly robust parallel political universe, one that holds significant sway over the Republican Party but is also beyond its control." See also Steve Phillips, "The Party of White Grievance Has Never Cared About Democracy," *The Nation* (May 26, 2021).

36 See: Lilliana Mason et al., "Activating Animus: The Unique Social Roots of Trump Support," *American Political Science Review*, published online (June 30, 2021); and Diana C. Mutz, "Status threat, not economic hardship, explains the 2016 presidential vote," *PNAS, Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, 115(19):E4330-E4339 (May 8, 2018). Trump uses the political power inherent in stoking nativism and white grievance by agitating on immigration issues, a widely used method. See Ian Shapiro, "Lecture 1: Introduction to Power and Politics in Today's World," Yale Courses (August 29, 2019) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDqvzFY72mg/].

37 See: Bethany M. Coston and Michael Kimmel, "White Men as the New Victims: Reverse Discrimination Cases and the Men's Rights Movement," *Nevada Law Journal*, 13:368-386 (Winter 2013); Douglas Schrock et al., "Signifying Aggrieved White Selves: Trump Supporters' Racial Identity Work," *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 8(1):114-128 (January 1, 2022); Forrest Cullings, "Alt-Right Influence on Radicalization of White Nationalists in the United States, According to Significance Quest Theory," Master's thesis, Naval Postgraduate School (June 2020); and Roger M. Smith and Desmond King, "White Protectionism in America," *Perspectives on Politics*, 19(2):460-478 (June 2021).

38 See: Julia G. Young, "Making America 1920 Again? Nativism and US Immigration, Past and Present," *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 5(1);217-235 (March 1, 2017); Douglas S. Massey (ed.), "Immigration, Nativism & Race in the United States," *Daedalus*, 150(2):5-214 (Spring 2021); and Yuji Endo, "Nativism in the United States and President Trump's Anti-Immigration Policy," Harvard Program on U.S.-Japan Relations, Occasional Paper Series, 2020-01 [https://programs.wcfia/Harvard.edu/files/us-japan/files/20-01_endo.pdf].

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41 See: Joan Donovan, "MAGA Is an Extreme Aberration," *The Atlantic* (January 15, 2021); and Samira Saramo, "The Meta-violence of Trumpism," *European Journal of American Studies*, 12(2), online (Summer 2017).

42 "Reactionary" is defined here as a quest to return to a time of dominant, unselfconscious cultural white supremacy and rule by political-economic white oligarchy.

43 See Ganesh Sitaraman, "Countering Nationalist Oligarchy," *Democracy*, 51 (Winter 2019) [https://democracyjournal.org/magazine/51/countering-nationalist-oligarchy/].

[44] "Brotherhood" is meant to convey that U.S. billionaires have common interests about which they communicate with one another, and a common purpose, plan, and operation, with roots reaching back more than 150 years. Nancy McLean, *Democracy in Chains, The Deep History of the Radical Right's Stealth Plan for America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2017—Kindle edition) contends that "... the single most powerful and least understood threat to democracy today: the attempt by the billionaire-backed radical right to undo democratic governance" (loc. 211). They vehemently oppose "... any group or government meddling with the market," manipulating law and policy to insulate themselves and their wealth from government regulation (loc. 36). See also: Kurt Andersen, *Evil Geniuses—The Unmaking of America: A Recent History* (New York: Random House, 2020—Kindle edition); Kristin A. Goss, "Policy Plutocrats: How America's Wealthy Seek to Influence Government," *PS: Political Science & Politics*, 49(3):442-448 (July 2016); Chuck Collins and Omar Ocampo, "Trump and His Many Billionaire Enablers," Institute for Policy Studies (January 11, 2021) [https://ips-dc.org/trump-and-his-many-billionaire-enablers]; Vicky Ward, "The Blow-It-All-Up Billionaires," Huffington Post (March 17, 2017) [http://highline.huffingtonpost.com/articles/en/mercers/]; Jane Mayer, *Dark Money, The Hidden History of the Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right* (New York: Doubleday, 2016); Mateo Gold and Robert Barnes, "Growing array of pro-Trump groups train cross-hairs on GOP lawmakers," *Washington Post* (April 2, 2017); and Adanjesus Marin and Michael Kink, "It's not the 'Freedom Caucus.' It's the Billionaires' Caucus," The Hill (June 8, 2017) [https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/336963-its-not-the-freedom-caucus-its-the-billionaires-caucus]. For an example of the billionaires' role in the Tea Party, frequently described by the media and its own members as "populist" and "grassroots," see: Amanda Fallin et al., "To quarterback behind the scenes, third-party efforts: the tobacco industry and the Tea Party," *Tobacco Control*, 23:322-331 (2014); Jess Nesbit, "The Secret Origins of the Tea Party, How Big Oil and Big Tobacco Partnered with the Koch Brothers to Take Over the GOP," *Time* (April 5, 2016); and Jane Mayer, "Trump's Money Man: The Reclusive Hedge-Fund Tycoon Behind the Trump Presidency," *The New Yorker* (March 27, 2017). On plutocrats boosting white supremacy, see Clay Risen, "William H. Regnery II, 80, Dies; Bankrolled the Rise of the Alt-Right," *New York Times* (July 16, 2021). See also: Michela Tindera, "Here Are The Billionaires Who Donated To Donald Trump's 2020 Presidential Campaign," *Forbes* (February 19, 2021).

[45] Perhaps the most potent strategy of the billionaires to solidify a reactionary nationalist oligarchy has been explored in detail by Benjamin I. Page et al., *Billionaires and Stealth Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019—Kindle edition), which first defines the basic strategy (loc. 237): "They make large financial contributions to political parties, candidates, and policy-focused causes. They hold political fund-raisers and bundle others' contributions. They establish, join, or lead policy-advocacy organizations. But despite these billionaires' prominence and their easy access to the media—which provides abundant opportunities to say just about anything they want to large audiences—they rarely talk openly about public policy. *Our exhaustive web searches indicate that most billionaires have not spoken up publicly at all, not even once, over an extended period of time—about the specifics of any of the major public policies we have studied. Our statistical analyses provide evidence that this silence is often designed to conceal billionaires' advocacy of policies that most Americans oppose. The unpopular policies that some billionaires quietly favor have frequently become official government policies with the force of law.*" Their stealth activities not only make them politically unequal "... but also largely *unaccountable* and *unchallengeable* by the American citizenry" (loc. 245). They do not limit themselves to the federal government but include state and local stealth initiatives to win "... subsidies, tax breaks, and favorable regulatory treatment" (loc. 280). Sitaraman, op. cit., describes the effects of their reactionary nationalist oligarchy ideal: "This form of government feeds populism to the people, delivers special privileges to the rich and well-connected, and rigs politics to sustain its regime." See also Kenneth P. Vogel et al., "Dissatisfied With Their Party, Wealthy Republican Donors Form Secret Coalitions," *New York Times* (April 6, 2022).

[46] For the perspective of an enlightened conservative evangelical Christian, see Michael Gerson, "'Gaffes' aside, I once assumed GOP goodwill on race. I was wrong." *Washington Post* (October 20, 2022).

[47] See Timothy Snyder, *The Road to Unfreedom* (New York: Tim Duggan Books, Penguin Random House, 2018—Kindle edition), loc. 267.

[48] See Snyder, "Transitions. Empires, Time, and Unfreedom," YouTube (March 14, 2022) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcAkWBjIu90].

[49] I.e., the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant majority which has dominated American culture, politics, and economy since the founding of the country.

[50] See University of Massachusetts Amherst, Department of Political Science, "Toplines and Crosstabs December 2021 National Poll: CRT & Race in America" (January 14, 2022) [https://polsci.umass.edu/toplines-and-crosstabs-december-2021-national-poll-crt-race-america].

[51] See NORC, "Immigration Attitudes and Conspiratorial Thinkers: A Study Issued on the 10th Anniversary of The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research," NORC at the University of Chicago (May 9, 2022) [https://apnorc.org/projects/immigration-attitudes-and-conspiratorial-thinkers].

52 See: Roni Caryn Rabin, "Overdose Deaths Reached Record High as the Pandemic Spread," *New York Times* (November 17, 2021); Tara Parker-Pope et al., "Why 1,320 Therapists Are Worried About Mental Health in America Right Now," *New York Times* (December 17, 2021); and Christina Caron, "All Children 8 and Older Should Be Screened for Anxiety, U.S. Task Force Says," *New York Times* (April 12, 2022). But also see Kevin B. Smith, "Politics is making us sick: The negative impact of political engagement on public health during the Trump administration," PLOS ONE (January 14, 2022).

53 Barbara F. Walter, *How Civil Wars Start: And How to Stop Them* (New York: Viking Press, Crown, 2022—Kindle edition), loc. 284, See, also, Sarah Repucci, "From Crisis to Reform, A Call to Strengthen America's Battered Democracy," Freedom House Special Report (March 2021) [https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/US_Democracy_Report_FINAL_03222021.pdf].

54 A radical interpretation of the Democrats failure to achieve internal "party discipline" on electoral and tax legislation (the political means of the continued empowerment and enrichment of themselves and their patrons), is offered by H.R. Shapiro in *The Bureaucratic State: Party Bureaucracy and the Decline of Democracy in America* (New York: Samizdat Press, 1975), who wrote: "Political parties are not and can never be instruments of representative government. The ideal never-achieved goal of party leaders is to render themselves, through their mutual cooperation, utterly immune to the citizenry and to reduce all politics to the self-serving machinations ... which means the death of politics and the permanent rule of irresponsible power." Current opinion on the left seems to be that the outcome of the House Select Committee investigating the January 6, 2021 attack on the Capitol will be something like "the truth will set us free," although none of the truth revealed over the past five years, in multiple hearings, news features, and two impeachments, regarding Trump and his MAGA-enablers and followers, have had any effect whatsoever to slow down their anti-democracy momentum. Perhaps we're at a turning point, but possibly not, because the threat to white supremacy and privilege seems not to be diminishing. Then, too, if the investigation of the January 6 attack leads to a referral to the AG for criminal prosecution of Trump and his co-conspirators, which the AG acts on, the upshot may not be MAGA-disillusionment with Trumpism but increased right-wing mendacity, civil unrest, and violence.

55 See Carl Rhodes and Peter Fleming, "Forget political corporate responsibility," *Organization*, 27(6):943-951 (June 2020).

56 See Elizabeth Dias and Jack Healy, "For Many Who Marched, Jan. 6 Was Only the Beginning," *New York Times* (January 23, 2022).

57 In the absence of such legislation, Matthew A. Seligman, "A Realistic Risk Assessment of the Presidential Election of 2024," SSRN (January 26, 2022) [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4018380] outlines a plausible scenario in which the 2024 election is stolen by Trump. See also J. Michael Luttig, "The Republican blueprint to steal the 2024 election," CNN (April 27, 2022) [https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/27/opinions/gop-blueprint-to-steal-the-2024-election-luttig/index.html].

58 Perhaps the most disturbing threat in relation to American democracy is described in the scholarly assessment of our current vulnerability to an outbreak of civil war. See Walter, op. cit. For a thoughtful review of Walter's book, see David Remnick, "Is A Civil War Ahead?" *The New Yorker* (January 5, 2022).

59 *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (New York: Tim Duggan Books, 2017).

60 See New America, "Statement of Concern, The Threats to American Democracy and the Need for National Voting and Election Administration Standards" (June 1, 2021) [https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/statements/statement-of-concern/].

61 See Aziz Huq and Tom Ginsburg, "How to Lose a Constitutional Democracy," 65 UCLA Law Review (2018), pp. 83-84.

62 See Alan Waring, "Future Scenarios for Radical-Right Influence: Grim or Grimmer?" CARR—Center for Analysis of the Radical Right (November 16, 2021).

63 See Linda Greenhouse, "The Supreme Court Has Crossed the Rubicon," *New York Times* (February 9, 2022). For a worst-case scenario of SCOTUS overriding the outcomes of democratic elections, see Harry Litman, "Why the Supreme Court is one of the biggest threats to American democracy," *Los Angeles Times* (August 24, 2021).

64 See Dana Milbank, "Supreme Court's hacks reward Republicans' betrayal of democracy," *Washington Post* (May 6, 2022).

65 See Jennifer McCoy and Benjamin Press, "What Happens When Democracies Become Perniciously Polarized?" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (January 18, 2022) [https://carnegieendowment.org/what-happens-when-democracies-become-perniciously-polarized/pub-86190], whose research reveals that "The most common outcome of episodes where democracies reached pernicious levels of polarization was some form of major democratic decline."

66 See Wade Rathke, "Opportunities and Challenges of Devolution: Lessons and Warnings from the USA, Canada, and the United Kingdom," *Radical Community Work Journal* (January 2015).

67 See Francine Hirsch, "Putin's Memory Laws Set the Stage for His War in Ukraine," Lawfare (February 28, 2022).

68 See: Snyder, "Racism, Antisemitism and the Radical Right," YouTube (September 28, 2017) [https://www.y-outube.com/watch?v=6rRW7EvWqZk]; and Snyder "Tore Browaldh Seminar 2022. Transitions. Empires, Time, and Unfreedom," YouTube (March 14, 2022) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bcAkWBjIu90].

69 Snyder, op. cit., "Racism, Antisemitism and the Radical Right."

70 For examples, see: Norman Eisen (ed.), "If it's Broke, Fix it: Restoring Federal Government Ethics and Rule of Law," Government Studies at Brookings (February 24, 2021) [https://www.brookings.edu/research/if-its-broke-fix-it/]; Task Force on US Strategy to Support Democracy and Counter Authoritarianism, "Reversing the Tide," Center for Strategic & International Studies, McCain Institute, Arizona State University (April 2021); Nancy Bermeo, "Reflections: Can American Democracy Still Be Saved?" *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 681(1):228-233 (January 2019); and American Political Science Association Task Force on Inequality and American Democracy, "American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality," *Perspectives on Politics*, 2(4):651-66 (December 2004).

71 See: Linda Faye Williams, "The Issue of Our Time: Economic Inequality and Power in America," Perspectives on Politics (December 1, 2004) [https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/abs/issue-of-our-time-economic-inequality-and-political-power-in-america/A222EBE4FE4E1DAB8CEA54A2CC227BE0]; Kate Andrias, "Separations of Wealth: Inequality and the Erosion of Checks and Balances," 18 University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law 419 (2015-2016); and Peter Coy, "Wealth Inequality Is the Highest Since World War II," *New York Times* (February 2, 2022).

72 See Williams, op. cit., p. xii; Kate Andrias, "Separations of Wealth: Inequality and the Erosion of Checks and Balances," 18 University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law 419 (2015-2016); and Peter Coy, "Wealth Inequality Is the Highest Since World War II," *New York Times* (February 2, 2022).

73 See Michael J. Thompson, *The Politics of Inequality* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), p. xi.

74 See Sheldon Whitehouse with Jennifer Mueller, *The Scheme, How the Right Wing Used Dark Money to Capture the Supreme Court* (New York & London: The New Press, 2022).

75 McLean, op. cit. and Sheldon Whitehouse with Jennifer Mueller, *The Scheme: How the Right Wing Used Dark Money to Capture the Supreme Court* (New York: The New Press, 2022—Kindle edition).

76 Ibid., "Putting the [reactionary] intellectuals in the lead, the [libertarian Mont Pelerin] society set out to shift the tide of history—to ensure lasting peace and prosperity by freeing markets worldwide from the collective action and government planning that its members believed so perilous [to their economic liberty]" (loc. 1222). By 1997, Charles Koch "... sought not reform, but a world-historic transformation" (loc. 4031). "It is hard to imagine such a clan upending the known world within a few decades, but chance won them a wider hearing. It came with the troubling economic events of the mid-1970s, which undercut the credibility of the prevailing approach to political economy" (loc. 2945). On the international extension of libertarian economics—to permanently entrench the capitalist class in power worldwide—the American capitalists extended their outreach to authoritarian wannabes. For instance, their initiatives in Chile, which were "... evidence of ... increasing international stature" (loc. 3429). See: Ethan B. Kapstein, *Exporting Capitalism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2022); and Doug Stokes, "The Heart of Empire? Theorising US empire in an era of transnational capitalism," *Third World Quarterly*, 26(2):217-236 (2005).

77 See Richard Neumann, "American Democracy in Distress: The Failure of Social Education," *Journal of Social Science Education*, 16(1):5-16 (Spring 2017). Regarding monied libertarian influence on public education, see the Cato Institute (https://www.cato.org/education), the Reason Foundation (https://reason.org/topics/education), and the Heritage Foundation (https://www.heritage.org/education).

78 See: Cheyanne Scharbatke-Church and Kiely Barnard-Webster, "Understanding Corruption in Criminal Justice as a Robust and Resilient System," The Fletcher School, Tufts University (December 2017) [https://sites.tufts.edu/his/files/2018/02/Understanding-Corruption-in-Criminal-Justice-as-a-Robust-and-Resilient-System.pdf]; Oguzhan Dincer and Michael Johnston, "Measuring Illegal and Legal Corruption in American States: Some Results from the Corruption in America Survey," Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics, Harvard University (December 1, 2014) [https://ethics.harvard.edu/blog/measuring-illegal-and-legal-corruption-american-states-some-results-safra]; Rocío Avalos et al., "California Justice Gap Study," Executive Report (2019), The State Bar of California [https://www.calbar.ca.gov/Portals/0/documents/accessJustice/Justice-Gap-Study-Executive-Summary.pdf]; and Mark Hamilton, "Auditor faults state on corrupt lawyers," *Los Angeles Times* (April 15, 2022), which reveals that the state bar has "... failed to rein in attorneys with problematic records."

79 See J. Gerald Hebert and Marina K. Jenkins, "The Need for State Redistricting Reform to Rein in Partisan Gerrymandering," *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 29:543-558 (2011).

80 See: Evan Osnos, "Turning the Focus on America's Oligarchs," *The New Yorker* (March 7, 2022); Benjamin I. Page, "How Money Corrupts American Politics," Scholars Strategy Network (June 19, 2013) [https://scholars.org/how-money-corrupts-american-politics]; Jeffrey A. Winters and Benjamin I. Page, "Oligarchy in the United States?" *Perspectives on Politics*, 7(4):731-751 (December 2009); Jonathan Shaw, "A Radical Fix for the Republic," *Harvard Magazine* (July-August 2012); and Dean McSweeney, "Parties, Corruption and Campaign Finance in America," in (Robert Williams, ed.) *Party Finance and Political Corruption* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000).

81 Republicans in state legislatures are now restricting public health authorities from requiring masks, ordering business closures, and other steps to mitigate the spread of disease. See: Network for Public Health Law and National Association of County & City Health Officials, *Proposed Limits on Public Health Authority: Dangerous for Public Health* (May 2021) [https://www.networkforphl.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Proposed-Limits-on-Public]; and Frances Stead Sellers and Isaac Stanley-Becker, "As coronavirus surges, GOP lawmakers are moving to limit public health powers," *Washington Post* (July 25, 2021).

82 The Future of Media Project, "Index of US Mainstream Media Ownership," Harvard University (May 2021) [https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/futureofmedia/index-us-mainstream-media-ownership].

83 See: National Terrorism Advisory System, "Summary of Terrorism Threats to the U.S. Homeland," Bulletin, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (February 7, 2022); Henry J. Gomez, "Fueled by Trump-inspired grievance, attempts to terrorize public officials escalate," NBC News (November 21, 2021); Lisa Lerer and Astead W. Herndon, "Menace Enters the Republican Mainstream," *New York Times* (November 16, 2021); Catie Edmondson and Mark Walker, "One Menacing Call After Another: Threats Against Lawmakers Surge," *New York Times* (February 9, 2022); Michael Hiltzik, "The anti-vaxxers' campaign against public health advocates gets scarier and more rabid," *Los Angeles Times* (April 6, 2022); Jeff Martin, "Bomb threats made to historically Black schools across US," AP News (January 31, 2022); and Carolyn Thompson, "Schools Step Up Security in Response to Threats on TikTok," *U.S. News & World Report* (December 16, 2021). For a specific one-to-one example, see Mary Papenfuss, "Lawsuit Says Armed Pro-Trump Canvassers Are Going Door-To-Door With Big Lie 'Intimidation,'" HUFFPOST (March 22, 2022). See U.S. District Court, District of Colorado, case 1:22-cv-00581 (filed 3/9/22): Colorado Montana Wyoming State Area Conference of the NAACP, League of Women Voters of Colorado, and Mi Familia v. United States Election Integrity Plan.

84 See Matias López and Joshua K. Dubrow, "Politics and Inequality in Comparative Perspective: A Research Agenda," *American Behavioral Scientist*, 64(9):1199-1210 (2020).

85 Regarding the bottom-up ideology, see Gather the People, "Opposing Ideologies of Infrastructure Sponsors: [Bottom-Up and Top-Down]" (2018) [https://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/INFRASTRUCTURE-SPONSOR_IDEOLOGIES.pdf].

86 Perry and Gorski, op. cit., loc. 261, identifies such a political alliance as the country's only hope to avoid going "off a cliff."

87 For the roots of the movement "... that came to national prominence during the mid-1950s," see Clayborne Carson, "American civil rights movement," Britannica (n.d.) [https://www.britannica.com/event/American-civil-rights-movement].

88 We have adopted the definition of "citizenhood" as one's *action* as a citizen; while "citizenship" signifies the *status* of being a citizen. See Robbi Williams, *Model of Citizenhood Support*, 2d ed. (Unley SA, Australia: JFA Purple Orange, 2013), p. 8, which defines citizenhood as "... a situation in which a person is actively involved as a valued member of their local community." Citizenship, on the other hand, is "... *static*, through a largely unchanging set of rights and obligations."

89 Regarding the need for such empowerment as an antidote to the political paralysis of the general public, see: Martin Gilens and Benjamin I. Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens," *Perspectives on Politics*, 12(3):564-581 (September 2014); and Kay Lehman Schlozman et al., *The Unheavenly Chorus, Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013).

90 As defined by *The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 188: "The people or commons of an ancient Greek state, *esp.* of a democratic state, such as Athens: hence, the populace, the common people: often personified."

91 See: Stephen Zunes, "People-Powered and Non-Violent Social Movements: Forcing Gradualist Democratic Reforms in Authoritarian Societies," *Frontiers in Political Science* (February 4, 2022); Nikoli Huke et al., "Disrupting European authoritarianism," *Transnational Institute—TNI* (April 2018) [https://www.tni.org/files/publication-downloads/tni-disrupting-european-authoritarianism.pdf]; Sharon Erickson Nepstad, *Nonviolent Revolutions: Civil Resistance in the Late 20th Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Stephen Zunes, "Unarmed insurrections against authoritarian governments in the Third World: a new kind of revolution," *Third World Quarterly*, 15(3):403-426 (1994); and Natalia Forrat, "Civic Mobilization in Authoritarian Contexts, Annotated Bibliography, Freedom House (May 2021).

92 Rahman, "Realizing Democracy," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Winter 2020), posits that "A structural approach to democracy reform ... would focus on eliminating ... systemic drivers of our democracy crisis and building the rules, associations, and institutions we need to ensure a more equitable balance of political power and a more inclusive economy" (pp. 4-5).

93 Barber, op. cit., p. 269, however, proposed that the assemblies initially have an advisory role, a period of building participation, only acquiring public powers after a time of development. Since he was writing in the early 1980s, if he were still alive (d. 2017) he might agree that now, after four decades of community organizing and development, encompassing hundreds of unofficial, advisory citizen councils, it's time to grant public powers to popular assemblies.

94 See Hannah Arendt, "The Revolutionary Tradition and Its Lost Treasure," Chapter 6, in *On Revolution* (London: Penguin Books, 1963, 1965), pp. 252-3.

95 In a letter to Governor John Tyler, as if anticipating the need for two-tier urban government at the metropolitan and neighborhood levels, Jefferson mentions the subdivision of the counties and general education as "two great measures ... without which no republic can maintain itself in strength." Six years later he declared, "... the article nearest my heart is the subdivision of the counties... ." See: Thomas Jefferson, Letter to Governor John Tyler, May 26, 1810, in (Albert Ellery Bergh, ed.) *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson* (Washington, D.C.: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1907), p. 393; Letter to John Adams, October 28, 1813, in (Paul Leicester Ford, ed.) *The Works of Thomas Jefferson,* Vol. 11 (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1905), pp. 343-46; Letter to John Taylor, May 28, 1816, in *The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Vol. 11, p. 529; Letter to Samuel Kercheval, July 12, 1816, in *The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Vol. 12, p. 9; Letter to Samuel Kercheval, September 5, 1816, in *The Works of Thomas Jefferson*, Vol. 12, p. 16; Letter to Major John Cartwright, June 5, 1824, in (Thomas Jefferson Randolph, ed.) *Memoir, Correspondence, and Miscellanies, from the Papers of Thomas Jefferson* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1830), p. 396.

96 From Phillips 1857 Phi Beta Kappa address at Yale College on "The Republican Scholar of Necessity an Agitator."

97 David Brooks, "America Is Having A Moral Convulsion," *The Atlantic* (October 5, 2020).

98 "Public powers," which are the powers of governments, controlled by those we regard as "in power," include the power to enact civil and criminal laws and regulatory policies, to tax, to spend public monies, to police (i.e., take rights and property without compensation for the public's health, welfare, and morals), to take property by eminent domain (with fair-market compensation), and to market tax-free bonds.

99 Barber, op. cit., p. 263, notes: "Historically, the great reform movements have been organized around a series of innovations whose radical character lay in their common vision and force."

100 See Moshe ben Asher, "Moral-Spiritual Infrastructure: Touchstone of Movement-Building Community Organizing," *Social Policy*, 50(4):55-64 (Winter 2020).

101 See Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince and The Discourses* [1513] (New York: Modern Library, Random House, 1950), p. 21.

102 According to Walter, op. cit., locs. 2345 and 2357. See also Rachel Kleinfeld, "The Rise of Political Violence in the United States," *Journal of Democracy*, 32(4):160-76 (October 2021).

103 See Paul D. Eaton et al., "3 retired generals: The military must prepare now for a 2024 insurrection," *Washington Post* (December 17, 2021).

104 Walter, op. cit., loc. 2761.

[105] See: Robert A. Dahl, "The City in the Future of Democracy," *American Political Science Review*, 61(4):953-70 (December 1967); Milton Kotler, *Neighborhood Government: The Local Foundation of Political Life* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1969); Douglas Yates, "Neighborhood Government," RAND Corporation (1971) [https://www.rand.org/pubs/papers/P4671.html]; Donna E. Shalala, "Neighborhood Government: Has the Time Come?" *National Civic Review*, 61(4):185-89 (April 1972); Howard W. Hallman, *Government by Neighborhoods* (Washington, D.C: Center for Governmental Studies, 1973); Mark O. Hatfield, "Bringing Political Power Back Home: the Case for Neighborhood Government," *Ripon Quarterly*, 1(1):19-26 (Summer 1974); Robert B. Hawkins, Jr., *Self-Government by District* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1976); Michael Silver [NKA Moshe ben Asher], "Political Liberty and Neighborhood Government," *USA Today*, 107(2402):24-25 (November 1978); Michael Silver, "Neighborhood Government Through Special Districts," *Self-Reliance*, No. 26 (July 1981); Benjamin Barber, *Strong Democracy: Participatory Politics for a New Age* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 261-290; Jeffrey M. Berry et al., *The Rebirth of Urban Democracy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1993); Shirley Svorny, "Advisory Councils Lack Clout to Effect Change," *Los Angeles Times* (July 19, 1998); and Bryan Cohen, "Retired 'neighborhood government' advocate enters District 3 race as fourth Sawant challenger," Capitol Hill Seattle Blog (May 6, 2015) [https://www.capitolhillseattle.com/2015/05/retired-neighborhood-government-advocate-enters-district-3-race-as-fourth-sawant-challenger].

[106] See Moshe ben Asher, "Ethical and Moral Demands of Professional Community Organizing," *Social Policy*, 50(3):26-31 (Fall 2020), p. 28.

[107] Huq and Ginsburg, op. cit., describe in detail the loss of democracy entailed in legal ramifications not as an event but a gradual process, one comprised of individual steps that in themselves may appear reasonable.

[108] Barber, op. cit., p. 145.

[109] See: Saskia Sassen, "The Global City: Introducing a Concept," *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, 11(2):27-43 (Winter/Spring 2005); Josefina V. Cabigon, "Cities in Globalization," *Asia-Pacific Social Science Review*, 6(2):73-102 (April 2006); Juan Pablo Pérez Sáenz and Katherine Andrade-Eekhoff, "Local Development in the Global Economy," NACLA—North American Congress on Latin America (September 25, 2007) [https://nacla.org/article/local-development-global-economy]; and Sarah Colenbrander, "Cities as engines of economic growth," Working Paper, IIED—International Institute for Environment and Development (October 2016) [https://pubs.iied.org/10801iied].

[110] See Sheila R. Foster and Christian Iaione, "The City as a Commons," *Yale Law & Policy Review*, 34(2):281-349 (2016), p. 281.

[111] For an introduction to the "two-tier solution," see Robert L. Bish and Vincent Ostrom, *Understanding Urban Government: Metropolitan Reform Reconsidered* (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1973), pp. 12-15; and Vincent Ostrom, *The Political Theory of a Compound Republic: Designing the American Experiment* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987). On the two-tier metropolitan and small cities model, Roy W. Bahl et al. (eds.), "The Decentralization of Governance in Metropolitan Areas," in *Financing Metropolitan Governments in Developing Countries* (Cambridge, MA: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2013) [https://www.landinstitute.edu/sites/default/files/pubfiles/2308_1648_FMG_Ch04_The_Decentralization_of_Governance_in_Metropolitan Areas_0.pdf], pp. 85-106, posits: "If sentiments about home rule are strong, a jurisdictionally fragmented system, or a two-tier metropolitan government structure with a strong bottom tier, is more likely than a dominant metropolitan government" to effect "... greater influence of an individual voter on budget choices" (p. 86)—"... it keeps government close to the people" (p. 88). Unfortunately, the literature on the two-tier model does not include studies of governance by urban municipal government and directly democratic neighborhood jurisdictions, presumably because no such two-tier government exists.

[112] Joshua Kalla and Ethan Porter, "Correcting Bias in Misperceptions of Public Opinion Among American Elected Officials: Results from Two Field Experiments," OSF Preprints (July 7, 2019) reports findings that strongly suggest the speciousness of such claims of representation. The experiments revealed that legislators and their staff "... systematically misperceive their constituents' opinions on salient public policies." Those who had the benefit of access to opinion data were equally off-base in their perceptions. The experimental evidence "... portrays such officials as immune to our non-partisan efforts to correct those misperceptions, possibly opening the door to influence from others, such as likely voters, co-partisans, political activists, lobbyists, or donors." Writing for public consumption in "Politicians Don't Actually Care What Voters Want," *New York Times* (July 11, 2019), Kalla and Porter were not reticent about their findings: "What we found should alarm all Americans. An overwhelming majority of legislators were uninterested in learning about their constituents' views."

[113] See Moshe ben Asher [né Michael Silver], "New England Town Government: A Model for Popular Assembly in Two-Tier Metropolitan Government," Gather the People (1980, 2020), p. 1 [https://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/TOWN_GOVT.pdf].

[114] Ibid.

[115] See *The Populist Moment: A Short History of the Agrarian Revolt in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. xi.

[116] See *Democratic Promise, The Populist Moment in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 531.

[117] See: Frank Bryan, William Keith, James Kloppenberg, Jane Mansbridge, Michael Morrell, and Graham Smith, "Collective Interview on the History of Town Meetings," *Journal of Public Deliberation*, 15(2): Article 8 (2019); and Frank M. Bryan, *Real Democracy, The New England Town Meeting and How It Works* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

[118] See Vincent N. Parrillo, "Diversity in Colonial Times," in *Diversity in America* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 2008), pp. 40-41.

[119] See Tim Jones, "Diversity in Massachusetts: The 25 most diverse towns and cities of 2019," MassLive (August 26, 2019) [https://www.masslive.com/news/2019/08/diversity-in-massachusetts-the-25-most-diverse-towns-and-cities-of-2019.html].

[120] See Emily Walton, "What's It Like To Be A Person Of Color In Rural New England? Basically Invisible," WBUR COGNOSCENTI (November 4, 2019) [https://www.wbur.org/2019/11/04/white-rural-voters-demographic-change-emily-walton].

[121] See Michael Walzer, "Puritanism as a Revolutionary Ideology," *History and Theory*, 3(1):59-90 (1963). Walzer notes that the Puritans were revolutionaries in their aim to transform society according to their own means of salvation. In New England, they destroyed the hierarchy of the old order, replacing it with "... *collective control* of themselves, of each other..." (p. 89). There they lived with "the fear of sudden and violent death" (p. 79). What they feared most, however, was social disorder, and "... righteousness was a consolation and a way of organizing the self for survival" (p. 83). Puritanism was thus a way of coping, "... self-confident and free of worry, capable of vigorous, willful activity" (p. 84). The Puritans viewed political activity as "... a form of work: it required systematic application, attention to detail, sustained interest and labor" (p. 85).

[122] Alexis de Tocqueville (Henry Reeve, trans.), *Democracy in America*, Vols. I and II (1835-1840—Kindle edition), loc. 1184.

[123] See: Joshua D. Miller et al., "Narcissism and United States' culture: The view from home and around the world," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 109(6):1068-89 (December 2015); Dennis Shen, "A rise in narcissism could be one of the main causes of America's political and economic crises," LSE Phelan US Centre (June 28, 2017) [https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2017/06/28/a-rise-in-narcissism-a-root-of-americas-crises]; and Jon Sverre Owrenn Remme, "Narcissism and Morality: A study of morality with regard to individualism and inter-subjective concern," UiO:DUO Research Archive (Master thesis, 2002) [https://www.duo.uio.no/handle/10852/24956].

[124] See: Matthew M. Yalch, "Dimensions of psychological narcissism and intention to vote for Donald Trump," PLOS ONE (April 15, 2021) [https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0249892]; Brooks, op. cit.; and Michael Gerson, "The moral decay of our politics," *The Spokesman-Review* (October 9, 2019).

[125] The characteristics of twenty-first century secular American society include commercialization of almost every aspect of life, rampant materialism, and widespread narcissism; the decline of traditional values, such as fidelity, loyalty, honesty, and productivity; the growing rejection of traditional institutions, such as family, church, and community; and the commonplace abandonment of responsible citizenship. Dr. Robert Lustig's research demonstrates that four major crises of American well-being—the healthcare crisis, the Social Security crisis, the opioid crisis, and the depression crisis—have a shared provenance: "The systemic confusion and conflation of *pleasure* with *happiness*." Virtually all the *pleasure*-producing activities, focused on sensuality and materialism, commonly lead to addictions that are self-destructive and damaging to others in one's marriage, family, community, commerce, and nation (the last, given the economic and national security consequences of metabolic syndrome diseases). See Robert Lustig, "The pursuit of pleasure is a modern-day addiction," *The Guardian* (September 9, 2017) [https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/sep/09/pursuit-of-pleasure-modern-day-addiction], in which he observes: "Too much dopamine and not enough serotonin, the neurotransmitters of the brain's 'pleasure' and 'happiness' pathways, respectively. Despite what the telly and social media say, pleasure and happiness are not the same thing. Dopamine is the 'reward' neurotransmitter that tells our brains: 'This feels good, I want more.' Yet too much dopamine leads to addiction. Serotonin is the 'contentment' neurotransmitter that tells our brains: 'This feels good. I have enough. I don't want or need any more.' Yet too little serotonin leads to depression. Ideally, both should be in optimal supply. But dopamine drives down serotonin. And chronic stress drives down both." More definitively, see Robert H. Lustig, *The Hacking of the American Mind* (New York: Avery, 2017).

126 The beneficial confluence of nonpartisan political purposes and moral-spirituality should be familiar to community organizers by virtue of their extensive faith-based organizing and by the support they have received from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the Jewish Funders Network, Lutheran Services in America, and many other denominations, and more broadly, from the Interreligious Foundation for Community Organization. See: Mark R. Warren and Richard L. Wood, "Faith-Based Community Organizing: The State of the Field," comm-org (January 2001) [comm-org.wisc.edu/papers2001/faith/faith.htm#iii]; and Brad R. Fulton and Richard L. Wood, "Interfaith Community Organizing: Emerging Theological and Organizational Challengers," *International Journal of Public Theology*, 6:398-420 (January 2012).

127 See Erik Owens, "The Boisi Center Interviews: David Hall," The Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, Boston College (October 18, 2011) [https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/centers/Boisi/pdf/f11/63%20Hall%20Interview.pdf].

128 Barber, op. cit., pp. 145-146.

129 From Ralph Waldo Emerson, "Historical Discourse" (at Concord), in (Edward Waldo Emerson, ed.) *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Miscellanies* (Boston and New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1904), p. 49.

130 See AnnMarie French, "The Evolution of Town Meeting," *Town & City Magazine* (February 2007) [https://www.nhmunicipal.org/town-city-article/evolution-town-meeting], a publication of the New Hampshire Municipal Association.

131 Alexis de Tocqueville, *American Institutions and their Influence* (New York: A.S. Barnes, 1851).

132 James Bryce, *The American Commonwealth* (New York: Macmillan, 1912).

133 Ibid., p. 601: "The town or the township with its primary assembly is best ... it is the most educative of citizens who bear a part in it. The town meeting has been not only the source but the school of democracy."

134 See William S. Simmons, "Cultural Bias in the New England Puritans' Perception of Indians," *William and Mary* Quarterly, Third Series, 38(1):56-72 (January 1981), pp. 57 & 56.

135 Perry and Gorski, op. cit., loc. 755.

136 See Daniel R. Mandell, "Indigenous People and the New England Town Meeting: Stockbridge, Massachusetts, 1730-1775," *Participations*, 15(2):123-147 (2016).

137 See Donald Ratcliffe, "The Right to Vote and the Rise of Democracy," *Journal of the Early Republic*, 33:219-254 (Summer 2013). And, of course, we recognize the undemocratic character of the U.S. Electoral College and the Senate.

138 See Joseph F. Zimmerman, *The New England Town Meeting, Democracy in* Action (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1999), p. 185: "The leitmotifs of the primary assembly are openness and equality. Majoritarian government is possible at any time. Even the most apathetic voter is invited to participate, as there are no legal barriers to participation, and his or her vote is weighted equally with the vote of a regular attendee."

139 For a fascinating example of this feature of direct democracy in action, see Dan Barry, "One Small Step for Democracy in a 'Live Free or Die' Town," *New York Times* (July 10, 2022).

140 "Thomas Jefferson [letter] to Joseph C. Cabell, 2 February 1816," *Founders Online* (National Archives) [https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/03-09-02-0286].

141 See: Peter J. Henning, "It's getting harder to prosecute politicians for corruption," The Conversation (February 16, 2018) [https://theconversation.com/its-getting-harder-to-prosecure-politicians-for corruption-91609]; and Leah Litman, "The Supreme Court Says Sorry, It Just Can't Help With Political Corruption," *The Atlantic* (May 8, 2020).

142 See Berkeley Law, "Foundational Aspects of Charter Cities," U.C. Berkeley School of Law (n.d.) [https://www.law.berkeley.edu/files/Albuquerque3_-_Foundational_Aspects_of_Charter_Cities.pdf].

143 For details on the availability of the ballot initiative in every state and virtually every city in the country, see Ballotpedia, "Cities that allow direct legislation via ballot initiative," Laws Governing Local Ballot Measures (n.d.) [https://ballotpedia.org/Cities_that_allow_direct_legislation_via_ballot_initiatives].

144 For example, see Graham Smith, *Beyond the Ballot, 57 Democratic Innovations from Around the World* (London, UK: The Power Inquiry, May 2005), p. 78, which concludes that "... the use of open [directly democratic] meetings is limited to relatively small-scale settings."

145 See: Mark Purcell, "Possible Worlds: Henri Lefebvre and the Right to the City," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 36(1):141-154 (2013); Bertie Russell, "Beyond the Local Trap: New Municipalism and the Rise of the Fearless Cities," *Antipode*, 51(3):989-1010 (2019); and John Gasti and Erik Olin Wright (eds.), *Legislature by Lot, Transformative Design for Deliberative Governance* (London & New York: Verso, 2019). More generally, see Graham Smith, *Democratic Innovations: Designing Institutions for Democratic Participation* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

146 For examples, see: Juliet Musso et al., "Toward 'Strong Democracy' in Global Cities? Social Capital Building, Theory-Driven Reform, and the Los Angeles Neighborhood Council Experience," *Public Administration Review*, 71(1):102-111 (January/February 2011): and Alberto Corsín Jiménez and Adolfo Estalella, "The atmospheric person—Value, experiment, and 'making neighbors' in Madrid's popular assemblies," *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 3(2):119-39 (2013).

147 See Moshe ben Asher [né Michael Silver], "Vill Economics," Gather the People (1978) [https://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/VILL_ECONOMICS.pdf].

148 See Moshe ben Asher and Khulda Bat Sarah, "Directly Democratic Metropolitan Government: Envisioning Beyond Oppression, Rebellion, and Reform," *Social Policy*, 46(1):6-19 (Spring 2016).

149 Barber, op. cit., p. 269, proposes, although without explicit justification, that "Neighborhood assemblies can probably include no fewer than five thousand citizens and certainly no more than twenty-five thousand... ."

150 Massachusetts Constitution, Article LXXXIX, 192nd General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts [https://malegislature.gov/Laws/Constitution#amendmentArticleLXXXIX].

151 We might similarly think it would be preposterous for a state to have hundreds of counties, but Texas has 254. It would be surprising if, given the opportunity, the citizens of those counties would vote to dissolve any of them.

152 Regarding municipal corruption generally, see Richard Fausset et al., "'It's the Human Way': Corruption Scandals Play Out in Big Cities Across the U.S." *New York Times* (February 5, 2019). For an inside view of the dynamics of municipal corruption, see Nathan Fenno et al., "Probe reveals 'cabal' running Anaheim," *Los Angeles Times* (May 19, 2022). Regarding corruption in Los Angeles, "Generations of Los Angeles leaders have fostered a corrupt political culture in the city, centered on real estate development." See Editorial, "The Englander indictment," *Los Angeles Times* (March 11, 2020); and see also: David Zahniser and James Queally, "DA's office will review campaign contributions from donors with ties to Sea Breeze developer," *Los Angeles Times* (October 31, 2016); David Zahniser and Emily Alpert Reyes, "City Hall facing a crisis of trust," *Los Angeles Times* (April 2, 2020); David Zahniser, "L.A. City Councilman Jose Huizar charged in federal corruption probe," *Los Angeles Times* (June 23, 2020); Steve Lopez, "Arrest at City Hall. Ho-hum, say Angelenos," *Los Angeles Times* (June 23, 2020); Michael Woo, "L.A. Needs New Corruption-Fighting Tools," *Los Angeles Times* (June 25, 2020); Matt Hamilton, "Former L.A. County Assessor John Noguez again faces corruption charges," *Los Angeles Times* (July 28, 2020); Susan Shelley, "Corruption, legal and otherwise, at Los Angeles city hall," *Daily News* (May 4, 2021); Soledad Ursúa, "Corruption? In Los Angeles?" *City Journal* (November 2, 2021); and Editorial, "Another L.A. City Hall mess," *Los Angeles Times* (February 27, 2022). At the time of these reports, California was not even in the top ten states for political corruption. See Statista, "The Worst U.S. States For Corruption" (February 20, 2020) [https://www.statista.com/chart/federal-corruption-convictions-per-10000-inhabitants]. For the history of L.A. corruption, see: squaremile, "How crime and corruption built modern Los Angeles" (April 23, 2018) [https://squaremile.com/features/los-angeles-dark-city]; and Charlotte Jansen, "Crime, corruption, and sin: the dark underbelly of Los Angeles in the 1920s-1950s," Wallpaper (May 21, 2018) [https://www.wallpaper.com/los-angeles-crime-photography-1920-1950].

153 See: William E. Schluter, *Soft Corruption: How Unethical Conduct Undermines Good Government and What To Do About It* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2017); James McCusker, "We have to address 'soft corruption,' and it won't be easy," Herald Business Journal (November 8, 2019) [https://www.heraldnet.com/business/we-have-to-address-soft-corruption-and-it-wont-be-easy/]; and David Plymyer, "A culture of 'soft corruption' in Baltimore County," *Baltimore Sun* (January 3, 2022).

154 In California, this tradition has been replaced by the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), county-level agencies empowered by state law to review and approve or deny the major structural changes proposed for local governments, which does not include municipal charter reform that does not affect overall boundaries.

155 Minimums may be set to ensure that a handful of citizens in an area dominated by corporate headquarters or manufacturing facilities cannot form and dominate a neighborhood government.

156 Notable examples include Head Start services, and the American Rescue Plan that provides comprehensive support for children and families to "address system inequalities." See Office for the Administration of Children & Families, "Office of Head Start" and "American Rescue Plan," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2021) [https://www.acf.hhs.gov].

157 Regarding long-term inequities in city services, see: James J. Feigenbaum and Andrew Hall, "How High-Income Areas Receive More Service from Municipal Government: Evidence from City Administrative Data," SSRN (August 13, 2015) [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2631106]; Mitchell F. Rice, "Inequality, discrimination, and service delivery: A recapitulation for the public administrator," *International Journal of Public Administration*, 1(4):409-433 (1979); Ben Poston and Peter Jamison, "Inequity is 'baked in' when it comes to L.A. city services; where you live matters," *Los Angeles Times* August 28, 2015); and Jessica Trounstine, "Minority groups perceive unequal treatment from local governments," LSE Phelan US Centre (March 11, 2014) [https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/usappblog/2014/03/11/minority-groups-perceive-unequal-treatment-from-local-governments/]

158 See Xander Peters, "How Texas' Energy Woes Are Derailing Life In This Houston Neighborhood," Huffpost (April 9, 2022). In Los Angeles, when the city council decided to permit private companies to erect dozens of large digital billboards, which threatened to increase traffic accidents because of their rapidly changing digital images, and further diminish the aesthetic beauty of the city, the disapproving neighborhoods found themselves powerless to halt the process despite its obvious quality-of-life impacts. See Rachel Uranga and Caroline Petrow-Cohen, "Several dozen new digital billboards to light up L.A.," *Los Angeles Times* (December 11, 2023). See also Wendy Russell, *Regaining Control: Community Development and Self-Determination in Fort Albany First Nation* (Doctoral thesis: McMaster University, July 1998) on the advantages of an oppressed indigenous Cree community of 2,031 gaining direct control of their own development, which had previously been controlled by a regional Roman Catholic Mission supported by the Canadian government.

159 As Barber, op. cit., p. 236, explains: "Of course, when participation is neutered by being separated from power, then civic action will be only a game and its rewards will seem childish to women and men of the world; they will prefer to spend their time in the 'real' pursuit of private interests."

160 Barber, op. cit., p. 272.

161 De Tocqueville, op. cit., loc. 5111.

162 Problematic neighborhood conditions significantly affect both urban and inner-suburban neighborhoods. See Il-hamdaniah Saleh, "Measuring Neighbourhood Hardships and Neighbourhood Change between 2010-2015 in Suburban Neighbourhoods of Buffalo Metropolitan Area, New York," *Geographica Pannonica*, 25(2):102-112 (June 2021).

163 "Perhaps the first tax revolt in North America occurred in 1631 when members of the Congregational Church in Watertown near Boston protested a tax to build fortifications to protect the colony. The Watertown minister and congregation objected when the General Court [i.e., state legislative body] enacted the tax without the consent of the people." See Constitutional Rights Foundation, "Puritan Massachusetts: Theocracy or Democracy," Bill of Rights in Action (Fall 2013) [https://www.crf-usa.org/images/pdf/gates/puritans-of-mass.pdf].

164 See Useful Community Development, "Neighborhood Solar Solutions Could Be Cost Effective" (2017) [www.useful-community-development.org/neighborhood-solar.html]; and for additional perspective, see U.S. Department of Energy, "A Guide to Community Solar: Utility, Private, and Non-profit Project Development" (2010), [www.nrel.gov/docs/fy11osti/49930.pdf]. In addition to developing their own solar enterprise, neighborhoods would have the option to negotiate for discounted rates with private companies.

165 See: Jennifer E. DeVoe and Rachel Gold, "Community of Solution for the U.S. Health Care System: Lessons from the U.S. Educational System," *Journal of the American Board of Family Medicine*, 26(3):323-26 (May-June 2013); Andrea Kline Tilford et al., "A Description of Nurse Practitioner Practice," *Journal of Pediatric Health Care,* 26(1):69-74 (2012); Nan Liu et al., "A new model for nurse practitioner utilization in primary care: Increased efficiency and implications," *Health Care Management Review* (January-March 2014); Medical Group Management Association, "NPP [non-physician practitioner] utilization in the future of US healthcare," *MGMA Research & Analysis Report* (March 2014) [https://www.mgma.com/Libraries/Assets/Practice Resources/NPPsFutureHealthcare-final.pdf], which cites David Gans (MSHA, FACMPE senior fellow) to note: "In primary care practices, they [NPPs] can provide 80 percent or more of services with equal or better patient satisfaction at a lower cost than a physician" (p. 15); C.M. Brown et al., "A neighborhood-based approach to population health in the pediatric medical home," *Journal of Community Health*, 40(1):1-11 (February 2015); A. Feinberg et al., "Launching a Neighborhood-Based Community Health Worker Initiative, Harlem Health Advocacy Partners (HHAP) Community Needs Assessment" (December 2015), A joint report by the NYU-CUNY Prevention Research Center, New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, New York City Housing Authority, and Community Service Society [https://www.med.nyu.edu/prevention-research/sites/default/files/prevention-research2/final-may-2016-hhap-neighborhood-based-comm-report.pdf].

166 For an example of the practical benefits of town public powers, see Editorial Board, "Corporate giant tries to kill small Maine town's broadband plans," *Press Herald* (November 23, 2021).

167 For the advantages of neighborhood-based public safety forces, see Elinor Ostrom et al., "Do We Really Want to Consolidate Urban Police Forces? A Reappraisal of Some Old Assertions," *Public Administration Review*, 33(5):423-432 (September-October 1973), which concludes: "(1) small police departments can provide higher levels of service than larger departments, and (2) high degrees of specialization and professionalization are not required for effective police services. On the basis of this, we believe more serious attention should be paid to proposals for creating small jurisdictions within large cities to provide generalized patrol services while enhancing opportunities for community control. At the same time, a large-scale police jurisdiction in the same city may be needed to provide the more technical services which require specialization of personnel and equipment. Conceptualization [of] reform as *either total consolidation* or *total decentralization* may not lead to better police services in metropolitan areas. Conscious use of overlapping jurisdictions of varying sizes may be necessary to combine the advantages of both small and large scale" (p. 430). See also Eric Lack, "Bill De Blasio Still Loves New York," *The New Yorker* (February 20, 2022), in which the former mayor describes Bill Bratton, the former New York police commissioner: "... his over-all impact has been profoundly progressive, because he understands most essentially that you cannot create public safety without the community. That's what neighborhood policing was, and neighborhood policing will eventually be understood as the model that works."

168 Wendy E. Hollingshead Corbett and Justin R. Corbett, "Community Mediation in Economic Crisis: The Reemergence of Precarious Sustainability," *Nevada Law Journal*, 11(2):458-480 (Spring 2011) notes: "The premise of community mediation is simple: to provide the public with a voluntary way to resolve conflict in a productive, collaborative manner that relies primarily on self-determination. Community mediation strives to keep justice in the hands of the people and provide a receptive forum for their enhanced voices. Over the past several decades, the unique grassroots-orientation of community mediation has proven to be highly effective in resolving interpersonal conflict at the local level. Community mediation is a grassroots, neighbor-to-neighbor form of alternative dispute resolution that has seen growing acceptance nationwide since its inception in the mid-1970s. The premise of community mediation is simple: to provide the public with a voluntary way to resolve conflict in a productive, collaborative manner that relies primarily on self-determination. Community mediation strives to keep justice in the hands of the people and provide a receptive forum for their enhanced voices. Over the past several decades, the unique grassroots-orientation of community mediation has proven to be highly effective in resolving interpersonal conflict at the local level."

169 Galvin, op. cit.

170 Legal limitations may be placed on use of the Australian ballot, such as specifying a limited number of uses in any year, used only to elect officers, etc. Accommodations could be made for those who are hospitalized, homebound or restricted to congregate living. Those who could not afford cell phones might be assisted in obtaining them from charitable sources; those unable to use cell phones because of age or disability, might be paired with another member as a citizen-enabler, who could be recruited, trained, and assigned through various faith communities.

171 The "warning" is a requirement of New England open-town procedure. In Massachusetts, "Two hundred registered voters or 20% of the total number of registered voters, whichever is less in number, may request a special Town Meeting," which the selectmen must call within 45 days. The "warrant" for a town meeting, issued by the selectmen, sets the time, place, and agenda. However, a minimum of 10 registered voters signing a written request may insert articles in the warrant. For details of Massachusetts town procedures, see William Francis Galvin, "Citizen's Guide to Town Meetings," Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (n.d., retrieved online January 31, 2022) [https://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cispdf/Guide_to_Town_Meetings.pdf].

172 Digital technologies in directly democratic popular assemblies seem unlikely to extend very far beyond this type of application. Norbert Kersting and Karen Mossberger (eds.), *Studies in Digital Politics and Governance* (Gewerbestrasse, CH: Springer, 2020), note that, "... far-reaching expectations of a fundamental reform of modern democracy, through the application of online tools for political participation and public discourse, are vanishing after two decades of e-democracy..." (pp. 2-3). Earlier, Graham Smith, op. cit., p. 10, who surveyed "... democratic innovations that might increase and deepen citizen participation in the political decision-making process," concluded that "E-democracy is not going to replace existing modes of engagement."

[173] Contrary to this directly democratic process, the risks of much more extensive digital innovation in governing institutions has been inadvertently suggested by Hélène Landemore et al. (eds.), *Digital Technology and Democratic Theory* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2021), which proposes going beyond the digitization of existing forms of government to new democratic institutions based on a different theory of democracy, an "alternative paradigm" called "open democracy" (loc. 1717). Despite their paeans to democracy, the authors seemingly failed to see the irony in their description of "... myriad randomly appointed small groups deliberating independently, with their inputs aggregated up to a final level of decision-making, or simply fed to a central decision-making body with ultimate sovereign power" (loc. 2059)—which approximates the USSR's totalitarian "democratic centralism." As described, their conception of "open democracy" has three remarkable shortcomings, which serve as caveats regarding the application of digital technology to governance: its digital futurism is devoid of an explicitly democratic social strategy to reach the future; it fails to offer a plan to counter the potential for corruption of an elite technocratic digital regime; and it treats the question of algorithm curation only from a top-down perspective—that is, it explores how the "news" will be filtered down in an "open democracy" but ignores the question of how the deliberations and preferences of citizen will be filtered up to the central decision-making body that controls the public powers. The irony of this imagined digitally perfected democracy is that it would replace political intermediaries with technocratic intermediaries, leaving the demos alienated as ever from the public powers, despite all the rhetoric extolling democracy.

[174] See: Gaia Pianigiani, "Italian Neighbors Build a Social Network, First Online, Then Off," *New York Times* (August 24, 2015); and Niccolò Morelli, "Creating Urban Sociality in Middle-Class Neighborhoods in Milan and Bologna: A Study on the Social Streets Phenomenon," *City & Community*, 18(3):834-852 (September 1, 2019).

[175] See: George Tyler, *Billionaire Democracy: The Hijacking of the American Political System* (Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, 2018); Samar Khurshid, "Experts Target Influence of Big Money, Voter Apathy," GothamGazette (April 10, 2015) [https://www.gothmgazette.com/government/5676-experts-target-influence-of-big-money-and-voter-apathy]; Steven Rogers, "Electoral Accountability for State Legislative Roll-Calls and Ideological Representation," *American Political Science Review*, 111(3):555-571 (August 2017); and Shane Goldmacher and Rachel Shorey, "Billionaires Big Checks Shape Battle for Congress," *New York Times* (February 1, 2022).

[176] Benjamin R. Barber, *Cool Cities: Urban Sovereignty and the Fix for Global Warming* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2017) observes that "... Climate change is the most urgent challenge facing humankind ..." (p. 1). His proposed alternative to the mostly failed efforts of national states and political parties is "... a politics of participation that devolves power back to the people closer to where they actually live: back to cities. Shift the focus down to municipalities and over to civil society ..." (p. 10).

[177] Barber, op. cit., *Strong Democracy*, p. 185. For an overview of the momentum in this direction, see Farah Stockman, "This Group Has $100 Million and a Big Goal: To Fix America," *New York Times* (November 5, 2022), which describes the formation and funding commitments of the New Pluralists. An example of this genre of community-building is demonstrated in the work of Braver Angels (https://braverangels.org), whose mission is to "... bring Americans together to bridge the partisan divide and strengthen our democratic republic." See Jane Jacobs et al., *Better Angels, Participant-Identified Effects of Better Angels Experiences* (October 2019) [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kkpwt59p7Ci6jhtOaAIYFr0cqy4QOAy9/view] for a report on their successes, a summary of which is available at https://braverangels.org/evaluation/.

[178] Barber, op. cit., *Strong Democracy*, p. 224.

[179] See: Paul M. Bisca and Renekka Grun, "Higher power to deliver: The overlooked nexus between religion and development," Brookings (February 25, 2020) [https://brookings.edu/blog/future-development/2020/02/25/higher-power-to-deliver-the-overlooked-nexus-between-religion-and-development]; Jenny Lund, "The Role of Religion, Spirituality and Faith in Development; a critical theory approach," *Third World Quarterly*, 30(5):937-951 (2009); Rachel M. McCleary, "Religion and Economic Development," *Policy Review* (April & May 2008) [https://www.hoover.org/research/religion-and-economic-development]; and Anne-Marie Holenstein, "Role and Significance of Religion and Spirituality in Development Co-operation," Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation SDC (March 2005) [https://s3.amazonaws.com/berekley-center/050300HolensteinRoleSignificanceReligionSpiritualityDevelopmentCooperation.pdf].

[180] The research reported in Philip Schwadel and Sam Hardy, "Faith still shapes morals and values even after people are 'done' with religion," The Conversation (June 16, 2021) [https://theconversation.com/faith-still-shapes-morals-and-values-even-after-people-are-done-with-religion-160328] confirms that "... the religion residue effect is real. The morals and values of religious dones [*sic*] are more similar to religious Americans than they are to the morals and values of other nonreligious Americans." Peer-reviewed research confirms that traditional values persist. See Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values," *American Sociological Review*, 65(1):19-51 (February 2000). Although the values persist in cognitive form, they may seem to have disappeared because they often remain unexpressed in action without prospective positive reinforcement, such as the anticipated benefits that accompany participation in organized social action. See Moshe ben Asher (né Michael Silver), "Social Learning Theory and Community Organizing," Gather the People (1978, 2021) [https://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/SOCIAL_LEARNING_CO.pdf], p. 17.

[181] See: University of Chicago—Institute of Politics, "National Online Survey" [re: "Our Precarious Democracy"] (May 19-23, 2022), p. 5 [https://uchicagopolitics.opalstacked.com/uploads/homepage/IOP-Poll-Topline.pdf], which revealed that 56 percent of Americans (including 46 percent of Democrats) agree that "The government is corrupt and rigged against everyday people like me;" and Jonathan M. Ladd et al., "2018 American Institutional Confidence Poll," Georgetown University, Baker Center for Leadership and Governance (2018), p. 6 [http://baker-center.wideeyeclient.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018-American-Institutional-Confidence-Poll.pdf], which reports that only 40 percent of surveyed respondents said they were "somewhat" or "very" satisfied with "how democracy is working in the United States."

[182] The Local Agency Formation Commission, an independent regulatory commission created by the California Legislature to control the boundaries of cities and most special districts. (See related note above.)

[183] See Hanna Fenichel Pitkin and Sara M. Shumer, "On Participation," *Democracy*, 2(4):43-54 (Fall 1982), p. 51.

[184] For a review of the forms of neighborhood empowerment, see Stephen R. Miller, "Legal Neighborhoods," *Harvard Environmental Law Review*, 37(1):105-166 (2013).

[185] For the absurdity of such fantasies, see Kyra Gottesman and Jennie Blevins, "Oroville is now a 'constitutional republic'—what does that mean?" *East Bay Times* (November 12, 2021).

[186] In Moshe ben Asher, "The Price of Social Development: Precursors to a Strategic Vision for Faith-Based Community Organizing," Gather the People (2010), p. 6 [https://www.gatherthepeople.org/Downloads/SOCIAL_DEVELOPMENT.org].

[187] For a list of strikes until the 1930s, see: Florence Peterson, "Strikes in the United States, 1880-1936," U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bulletin No. 651 (August 1937). On the history of "The Mine Wars," see: PBS WGBH, "Labor Wars in the U.S.," American Experience (n.d.) [https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/theminewars-labor-wars-us]. See also: Joe Burns, "Reviving the Strike: Lessons of the 1930s for Today's Labor Movement," *In These Times* (June 6, 2011) [https://inthesetimes.com/article/reviving-the-strike-section-title-part-1].

[188] See Boston Tea Party Historical Society, "Boston Tea Party, the Key Event for the Revolutionary War," (2008) [https//www.boston-tea-party.org/essays/essay6.html].

[189] Ibid.

[190] American society was also divided at that time. "The American Revolution, while not often called a civil war by modern historians, was referred to as a civil war in its first year... ." See American Battlefield Trust, "What is a Civil War?" (n.d.) [https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/what-civil-war]. Patriots reacted to "... statements and other persistent acts of British sympathizing by ... Loyalist families [which] caused them to be subjected to public humiliation and violence. Property was vandalized, and homes were looted and burned." See, SAAM, "Loyalists and Patriots," Smithsonian American Art Museum (July 2014) [https://americanexperience.si.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Loyalists-and-Patriots.pdf].

[191] For examples, see: Nancy Shulins, "Vermont Towns Vote to Prohibit Nuclear Plants," *Lewiston Evening Journal* (March 2, 1977); and David Scribner, "Resistance to gas pipeline spreads across Western Mass.," *Berkshire—The Edge* (July 2, 2014) [http://theberkshireedge.com/resistance-gas-pipeline-spreads-across-western-mass]. Collaboration of New England towns for policy advocacy and provision of services has been furthered by organizations such as the Massachusetts Municipal Association and the Southern Maine Solar Collaborative.

[192] See Peterson, op. cit., p. 12: The printers "... ordered a time-out and forced their employers to grant an increased wage."

[193] See ushistory.org, "Labor vs. Management," U.S. History Online Textbook (2021) [https://www.ushistory.org/us/37b.asp].

[194] Strikes were not an early craft-union tactic. See Wolfgang Streeck, "Labor Unions, Union Organization and Union Growth," *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2d ed. (2015), pp. 199-204 [https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/protest-movements].

[195] Quoted in Shimon Peres, "In Homage to Ben-Gurion," *New York Times Magazine* (October 5, 1986), p. 104.

[196] See Robert Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York* (New York: Knopf, 1974).

[197] See Samuel P. Hays, "The Politics of Reform in Municipal Government in the Progressive Era," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, 55:157-166 (October 1964), quoted by John J. Harrigan and Ronald K. Vogel, *Political Change in the Metropolis*, Seventh Edition (New York-San Francisco-Boston: Longman, 2003), p. 85. For a contemporary study on the policy preferences of the wealthy in contrast to the general public, see Benjamin I. Page, "Democracy and the Policy Preferences of Wealthy Americans," *Perspectives on Politics*, 11(1):51-73 (March 2013).

[198] See Reihan Salam, "Mark Hatfield's Neighborhood Government Act," *National Review* (December 13, 2011).

[199] Although modifying tax law by statewide initiative is not new, the proposal here might be in doubt long before it would be made publicly. Currently, the California Business Roundtable is collecting signatures for a statewide initiative that would make it much more difficult for local governments to introduce or increase taxes and fees. See Michael Hiltzik, "Anti-tax initiative would help its donors," *Los Angeles Times* (March 2, 2022). How such an initiative, if passed, would affect newly created public entities is unknown; but it seems unlikely that the courts would prevent new municipalities and special districts from levying taxes to meet their needs. One possible judicial remedy would be to require the public jurisdictions to get approval for tax and fee changes by a ballot initiative.

[200] See Jonathan Rosenblum, "Unions in the Trump Era," Tikkun (email broadcast 1/2/17) [http://www.tikkun.org/nextgen/unions-facing-the-trump-era].

[201] A survey of the world's seven great religions and several secular organizations, including the American Atheists, American Humanist Association, and the United Nations, confirms numerous universal moral values, including truth, justice, and compassion. See Richard T. Kinnier et al., "A Short List of Universal Moral Values," *Counseling and Values*, 45(1):4-16 (October 2000). The Abrahamic faiths—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—promulgate the values of righteousness, truth, justice, freedom, peace, and kindness, although each with its own unique theological interpretation and practice. Nonetheless, they share convictions in the application of these values to civil society. Although their theological views of "truth" and "justice" vary, the belief that public officials have a moral duty to be truthful and to treat all people equally is widely shared. For their particulars, see: Sam Berrin Shoukoff, "Pursuing Righteousness," My Jewish Learning (n.d.) [https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/pursuing-righteousness]; L. Nelson Bell, "Righteousness," *Christianity Today* (June 9, 1958); Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed of Qadian, "Righteousness," Chap. 11 in The Essence of Islam, Vol. II (London Mosque, 1981) [https://www.alislam.org/books/essence/chap11/chap11.html]; Rabbi Louis Jacobs, "Truth and Lies in the Jewish Tradition," My Jewish Learning (n.d.) [https://myjewishlearning.com/article/truth-and-lies-in-the-jewish-tradition]; John Caldwell, "What Is Truth?" Christian Standard (March 1, 2021) [https://christianstandard.com/2021/03/what-is-truth]; Quran Explorer, "Speaking Truth In Islam," Education in the Light of Sunnah and Qura'an (February 1, 2021) [https://www.quranexplorer.com/blog/education-in-the-light-of-sunnah-and-qura'an/speaking_truth_in_islam]; Rabbi Toba Spitzer, "Tzedek: The Jewish Value of Justice," My Jewish Learning (n.d.) [https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/tzedek-the-jewish-value-of-justice]; Smith Hopkins, "Justice and the Christian," Olive Creek Church of Christ (January 20, 2018) [https://www.olivecreek.org/blog/2018/1/20/justice-and-the-christian-what-is-justice]; Yasien Mohamed, "More Than Just Law: The Idea of Justice in the Qur'an," Yaqeen Institute (February 7, 2020) [https://yaqeeninstitute.org/read/paper/the-idea-of-justice-in-the-quran]; Encyclopaedia Judaica, "Freedom," Jewish Virtual Library (2008) [https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/freedom]; Michael A. Milton, "What Is True Freedom in Christianity?" Christianity.com (June 29, 2011) [https://www.christian.com/Christian-life/the-true-believers-declaraction-of-independence-11634198.html]; Abdul Sattar Kassem, "The Concept of Freedom in the Quran," American International Journal of Contemporary Research, 2(4):165-173 (April 2021); My Jewish Learning, "Jewish Ideas of Peace and Nonviolence," (n.d.) https://www.myjewishlearning.com/jewish-ideas-of-peace-nonviolence]; Volker Stümke, "The Concept of Peace in Christianity," De Gruyter (2021) [https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110682021-002.pdf]; Juan Cole, "The Idea of Peace in the Qur'an," Scholarly Work at the John W. Kluge Center (August 19, 2016) [https://blogs.loc.gov/kluge/2018/08/the-idea-of-peace-in-the-quran]; Rabbi Maurice Lamm, "Day to Day Judaism: Kindness," aish (n.d.) [https://www.aish.com/jl/i/i/48944871/html]; Stephen Witmer, "Kindness Changes Everything," desiringGod (September 4, 2016) https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/kindness-changes-everything]; and Muhammed Habib, "What does Islam teach about kindness?" medium.com (December 6, 2019) [https://medium.com/@muhammed.habib121/what-does-islam-teach-about-kindness238977ed-f35d].

[202] It is not only the moral-spiritual power of these particular values for so many people that draws us to them, but the integrated character of their effects—because where there is no righteousness, there is no truth; where there is no truth, there is no justice; where there is no justice, there is no freedom; where there is no freedom, there is no peace; and where there is no peace, there is no kindness.

[203] Ethical patriotism emphasizes a country's "moral identity and integrity" to create a "just and humane society" [in contrast to the current ubiquitous performative patriotism]. See "Patriotism," 2.2.5 Ethical patriotism, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (December 16, 2020) [https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/patriotism].

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