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# PEGASUS

A NEWSLETTER FOR THE CAUX ROUND TABLE FOR MORAL CAPITALISM  
NETWORK LOOKING AT BUSINESS ABOVE THE CLUTTER AND CONFETTI



# *Pegasus*

Introduction by Stephen B. Young	Page 2
Novus Ordo Seclorum: A New Order for the Age by Stephen B. Young	Page 4
Novus Ordo Seclorum and Catholic Social Teachings Commentary by Stephen B. Young and John Dalla Costa	Page 9
Tales of the Grim Reaper — The Plague by Albert Camus: Review and Commentary by Richard Broderick	Page 17
Policing as a Public Trust – A Workshop on the Ethics of Public Stewardship by Stephen B. Young and Richard Broderick	Page 22
Poems by Richard Broderick	Page 27

# Introduction

This issue of Pegasus embraces consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. Shakespeare had the curse: “a plague on both your houses.”

First, one lesson seen in country after country is the inevitable interdependence among enterprise, government and civil society. Going forward, after the contagion has been tamed, we should be more intentional in balancing those interdependencies. A concept paper about creating and sustaining such a balance among the sectors is made in the first article. I am grateful for the advice given by former Dutch Prime Minister, Jan Peter Balkenende, which improved the analysis.

Jan Peter sent the paper to Danilo Turk, former President of Slovenia and now President of the Club de Madrid, the World Leadership Alliance of presidents and prime ministers of democratic governments. President Turk was very receptive to the idea of balance and interdependence. He wrote back:

“Thank you for forwarding this very interesting document which offers a great amount of “food for thought,” particularly now, at the time of the Covid-19 crisis and the evolving recession. Public authorities, both national and international, are creating enormous amounts of liquidity to save the economies - and are expanding a huge public debt to be repaid over a long period of time. This is a good moment to think along the lines of moral capitalism - including about such questions as “new understanding of ownership” (pp. 3-4 of the document), social responsibility of business and the fate of investment in the necessary, albeit low yield projects (water, renewable energy etc).

I believe we could use this paper and its follow-up documents for the policy dialogue “multilateralism that delivers” in late October.”

Then, the second article specifies the alignment of the concept paper with Catholic Social Teachings. I am grateful to our fellow, John Dalla Costa, for taking time and sharing his deep understanding of Catholic Social Teachings with us.

Thirdly, our colleague, Richard Broderick, wrote a review of Albert Camus’ notable novel *The Plague* as a metaphor for human travails. For Camus, in many senses, our lives are always about to be taken by a plague of one kind or another. What, then, should be our stance when a plague appears and surrounds us with its death and causes us to fear for ourselves?

Fourth is the proceedings of a recent workshop here in Minnesota on policing. Policing is to defend us against various kinds of plagues, some more dangerous than others. It is part of sustaining human community, the “polis” in ancient Greece. Laws, regulations and their enforcement are how we respond collectively to plagues and contagions. Police provide the security, order and fairness which enterprise and civil society need to nourish their financial and social capitals. Without reliance on each other and the state of our common wellbeing, our lives would tend to be “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short,” just as Thomas Hobbes predicted, should we live without a social contract.

Finally, we include two poems by Richard Broderick which, I think, catch the temper of our time of “plague,” exposing our lonely quandary when we must go it alone.

Stephen B. Young  
Global Executive Director  
Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism

# ***Novus Ordo Seclorum: A New Order for the Age***

**Stephen B. Young**  
**Global Executive Director**  
**Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism**

The current global confrontation with the SARS-CoV-2 virus could be a constructive turning point for humanity. Lessons learned from containing the pandemic can guide leadership towards reshaping our institutions to provide all of us with a more beneficial and just civilization.

Before the virus began its global dispersion, our global community was challenged environmentally by climate change, socially by disparities in wealth and income and aspirationally by achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many blame our institutions for causing the dangers and injustices we face and many demand that those same institutions take immediate, remedial action. The SARS-CoV-2 virus has only intensified suspicions that our institutions need to be re-designed with their missions re-focused and their practices improved.

## **The Three Sectors of Modern Civilization**

Our modern civilization, arising out of the industrial revolution, rests on three functional sectors: government, civil society and enterprise. Whether our economies are old socialist, new national socialist, welfare-state capitalist or neo-liberal capitalist; whether our economies are advanced post-industrial or poor and still developing; whether our political systems are constitutional democracies, one party hierarchies or directed by despots; whether our societies are open and pluralistic or constrained by ideology or theology, each nation nevertheless needs, through responsible and inspired leaders, to 1) create wealth that can sustain wellbeing, 2) provide public goods, such as law and education, and 3) maintain normative legitimacy for its institutions and proclaim moral purpose that the lives of its citizens may have reassuring meaning.

Our global civilization and each society therein are systems integrating sub-systems with different purposes to achieve. Each functional sector – enterprise, government and civil society - has its own specific tasks and duties which, taken all together, jointly deliver the common good. Successful modernity, thus, depends on enterprise, government and civil society, each making their separate contributions to the whole through a division of labor.

Government provides public goods, obtaining its income from the wealth created by enterprise and its purposes from civil society. Enterprise provides wealth to fund government and civil society, depending on government to furnish public goods, such as markets, contracts and law and on civil society to bring forth capable employees, customers and constructive shared values through the cultivation of successful families, wise religions, excellent schools, compassionate charities and inspiring cultural venues for the arts. Civil society, for its part, depends on enterprise for the wealth which nourishes its families and private institutions and in government for the public goods which encourage interpersonal commitments and social undertakings.

Each sector must support the two others in order that, in return, it can thrive on contributions received from them. No sector is justified in seeking preference for itself over the others.

### **Balanced Interdependency Among the Sectors**

The quality of our lives rises or falls on the quality of balanced interdependency among the three productive sectors of modern society. Achieving such balance is the task of good governance in each sector and of society as a whole. If any one sector gains excessive power over the others, an imbalance arises which undermines social justice. Too much government undercuts both enterprise and civil society. Too much enterprise, especially in its mode of financial intermediation, imposes inequalities on politics and marginalizes many values proposed by civil society. Too much conformity or too much conflict in civil society degrades politics and government and undermines enterprise.

Sector interdependency is the most important truth taught us by the pandemic. Public health cannot be totally divorced from the economy since lives cannot be divorced from livelihoods. Closing down enterprise to await the dissipation of virus transmission has caused anxiety and other harms. But, not closing down enterprise would impose its own costs in more disease and deaths. In responding to the pandemic, government could not avoid balancing restrictions on the economy and civil society against gains for public health. Enterprise and civil society looked to government for rules and decisions on permissible conduct. Government, in turn, took action with a considered view towards just wealth creation and simultaneous regard for the common good provided by a healthy community impervious to further spread of the virus.

Interdependence in a complex society relies on constantly reaching dynamic balance to keep its interrelated parties in proportionate reciprocity, one with another. As in a factory assembly line or in a smoothly run bureaucracy or a constructive social network, no one activity or motion can be out of synchronous interface with its neighbors. Interdependency is symbiotic.

Imbalance in the creation of energy, imbalance in access to financial wealth and a third imbalance in the distribution of political power with too much given to elites and not enough to citizens, each in its own way has contributed to our present distempers and anxieties. In human interactions and institutions, symbiosis and interdependency draw on the moral sense of participating individuals. The moral sense – ethics, taking personal responsibility, following the Golden Rule, being prudent and compassionate – acts as a kind of capital asset for each person.

A brief reflection on the teachings of many wisdom traditions from the Stoics, Old Testament, Confucius, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam affirms the importance of the moral sense animating each person as the gateway to justice and happiness within community.

### **Civilizational Stakeholders**

Each functional sector is a stakeholder in the outcomes generated by other sectors, while having the others as stakeholders in its own successes and failures. Modernity is, thus, a conglomerate of three mutually dependent subsidiary networks of action, each a stakeholder in the other two.

This structural reality of the modern era became more clearly apparent after the collapse of Communist systems in the Soviet Union after 1989 and in the People's Republic of China under Deng Xiaoping, systems where the state had dictated to enterprise and civil society. The subsequent Washington Consensus on how nations should achieve modernity embraced sector autonomy, but with interdependence. The Millennium Development Goals, Monterrey Statement on financing those goals and the subsequent SDGs also affirmed the necessity of mutual engagement of government, enterprise and civil society to achieve modern standards of wellbeing and comprehensive enjoyment of human rights.

Late last year, the World Economic Forum released its Davos Manifesto 2020 and the Business Roundtable issued its Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation. Both statements affirmed an understanding of modern society as stakeholder centric.

To minimize imbalances among the sectors of modernity, the new model of our institutions in government, enterprise and civil society must instill fidelity to shared responsibility. How can this be arranged?

### **Institutional Innovation**

Direction can be given for how each sector should use its core asset. Enterprise requires capital. Government asserts a monopoly over violence and coercion, what jurisprudence calls the police power of the state. Civil society deploys the power of the mind, its ability to reason, to imagine and its conscience.

Our institutions need co-creativity to better direct enterprise in its use of capital, government in its deployment of the police power and civil society in its shaping of our minds.

### **Capital**

The power of enterprise derives from capital. But capital must not be restricted to only money, either owned or borrowed. Successful enterprise requires more than funds to make a profit. In addition, any profitable enterprise requires, on a steady basis, the resources provided by customer patronage, employee productivity, social norms, legality and community tolerance. Social and human factors multiply the possibilities provided by funds, but more importantly, they reduce the risks of enterprise and so increase its prospects of earning revenue. The cost of financial capital to a firm is determined by assessments of the intangible factors which drive its risk profile.

Capital is a composite of multiple and stable advantages. Among the intangible forms of capital are: intellectual capital; the goodwill of the business in the perception of consumers; employees and potential employees; investors and creditors; moral capital expressed in its culture; the quality of its governance; and its integrity. And, to some extent, a firm also relies on the products of nature as a drawdown of natural capital.

In enterprise, all forms of capital should be reflected in the accounts of a firm, in a new template for its balance sheet of both tangible and intangible assets and liabilities.

Then, the profits of enterprise can be returned as dividends on all forms of listed capital, not just to the financial capitals of equity and debt. Wages and working conditions can be



reimagined as returns on capital. Quality of goods and services are equally a form of return on the social capital provided by customers. Altering products and services along with the methods of production are a form of return on the capital derived from nature.

Now, the payment of dividends on all forms of capital from its earnings will cause firms to be prudent in their uses of capital and will cycle the flow of funds in society to the providers of social, human and natural capitals, reducing stress on the environment and more justly distributing wealth across society.

In keeping with a new appreciation of the complexity of capital, a new understanding of ownership, of private property, will be advisable. Ownership of a compound asset, such as total capital, requires more stewardship than does possession of cash or its equivalents in hard assets or contract rights. Ownership of tangible assets, by contrast, provides more autarchy for whomever holds title to the assets and permits raw dominion, arbitrary and self-interested, over their use.

### **Public Power**

Government should similarly separate its work from private dominion and hold its powers only in stewardship as a public trust for the common good. Government is a service function. In particular, its powers must never be manipulated for the extraction of rents from the economy for the personal benefits of its officers. Nor should government permit its officers to use public power for any other form of personal advantage due to taking pleasure in self-magnification, intimidation or oppression or the willful imposition of invidious discrimination or taking revenge.

### **Mind**

Civil society brings forth the beauty and the miracles of the mind, including all its faculties, including emotions, reason, intuition, calculation, moral priorities and empathy. Civil society, whether in religion or other expressions of spirituality, in education, in service of those in need, in arts and culture, in media and entertainment, in literature, poetry and speech, in all forms of collaboration to achieve goals of desire and the imagination, in sports and families, in good times and bad, puts our interior powers of personal genius to work. The responsibility of civil society in its use of the mind is to enhance and not damage or degrade the moral sense because the mind gives birth to human agency.

### **A New Integrity Among the Sectors**

Capital is generative of stewardship capacity, empowering government with resources to meet its obligations. Capital is generative of mind in its social and human capital expressions and creations.

Stewardship of public power is generative of capital, protecting owners and innovation, risk-taking and elevates the quality of our lives. Public power is protective of civil society which cannot create and produce works of the mind without society having rights and individuals having security of persons, thought and expression.



Mind is generative of capital in innovation and necessary social and human capitals for reliance and institution building. Mind guides those having public power toward stewardship and wise policies.

The three civilizing factors of capital, stewardship and mind provide their respective social domains with directed motion consistent with the natural potential of each. Each factor presses forward towards its special telos. Each factor prevents retrogression and resists status quo equilibria.

But the ability of each civilizing factor to improve the human condition is compromised by humanity's tendency both to abuse what is good and to enjoy what is short-sighted or unhealthy.

### **Our World after the Pandemic**

Words divorced from realities are a personal indulgence; ideas divorced from realities can be dangerous. Seeking responsible investments from enterprise, responsible policies from government and respect for human dignity from civil society demands that enterprise, government and civil society confront reality and demonstrate value in all that they do. As Cicero demanded of virtue, what is honest in thought and feeling (*honestum*) must also be congruent with what is practical (*utile*).

Accordingly, as we make decisions on what freedoms and activities our citizens are to enjoy as the SARS-CoV-2 virus is contained, we need to set standards of excellence for each social sector.

As we ponder our respective responsibilities in the coming months and years, the priorities for each social sector must align with the essential purpose of that sector. Enterprise is called upon to create wealth justly and sustainably. Government's vocation is to serve the needs of individuals and communities, enterprise and civil society with public goods. Civil society's calling is to empower our growth as persons, enhancing our intellectual achievements and our moral sense.

As we ask our institutions to accelerate recovery from the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and revitalize productive economies, each sector should measure its decisions by the degree to which they honor the agency capacity of each person. Enterprise should promote agency with income and wealth. Government should promote agency by respecting civil liberties and human rights. Civil society should promote agency by enlivening the disciplined, optimistic and compassionate use of our minds.

### **Conclusion:**

To paraphrase Virgil, we can and must inaugurate a "new order" for our age right now.

## Introduction

John Dalla Costa is one of our fellows who has written movingly and impressively on ethics. His two books, *The Ethical Imperative* and *Magnificence At Work*, were welcome introductions to business ethics for me when I first engaged with the Caux Round Table.

When I sent John an early draft of the essay *Novus Ordo Seclorum*, he immediately pointed out to me its coherence with Catholic Social Teachings. That what had started as a set of rather prosaic observations was revealed to have beneath its surface considerable moral integrity. Awareness of its importance and usefulness was thus enhanced.

What has deep roots in principle arising from faith in goodness and of our lives as redemptive deserves our attention and gains our assent.

John kindly responded to a request to formalize the alignment of looking at our post-modern society through the interdependence of its three principal sectors – enterprise, government and civil society – with a commentary. His commentary is provided below in red.

The current global confrontation with the SARS-CoV-2 virus could be a constructive turning point for humanity. Lessons learned from containing the pandemic can guide leadership towards reshaping our institutions to provide all of us with a more beneficial and just civilization.

Before the virus began its global dispersion, our global community was challenged environmentally by climate change and socially by achieving the SDGs. Many blame our institutions for causing the dangers and injustices we face. And many demand that those same institutions take immediate remedial action. The SARS-CoV-2 virus has only intensified suspicions that our institutions need to be re-designed with their missions re-focused and their practices improved.

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Successful modernity thus depends on government, civil society, and enterprise each making their separate contributions to the whole. Each sector must supports the two others in order that, in return, it can thrive on contributions received from them.

Government provides public goods, obtaining its income from the wealth created by enterprise, and its purposes from civil society. Enterprise provides wealth to fund government and civil society, depending on government to furnish public goods such as markets, contracts, and law and on civil society to bring forth capable employees, customers, and constructive shared values through the cultivation of successful families,

### **Anthropology:**

- As embodied creatures, human beings share a fundamental vulnerability This fragility reveals the ineffable dignity bestowed on persons by the Creator. It is also the basis for all ethics - as the moral care summoned by the vulnerability shared with others;
- At this moment, as this shared precariousness comes into focus, we can discern - as Pope Francis suggested in *Laudato si* -a commonality which links us as children of God, and disrupts the relativity of postmodernism.

### **Subsidiarity Within Solidarity:**

- Created for relationship with God and one another, human beings have unique capacities for creativity, ingenuity, exchange and culture. The full flowering of the human person rests within a network of relationships. While there are various systems for governance and exchange, the aim and scope for economics and politics is to serve those inherent human capacities for security, freedom, worship, family, participation, and all the other dimensions for integral human development.
- Embedded as they are in nature, in communities and in families, the interdependence of persons has correlates in the institutions and structures created to organize affairs of state and exchange.
- The principles of solidarity recognizes that personal freedom rests on the responsibilities of others, and that prosperity is best and most enduring when achieved together.

wise religions, excellent schools, compassionate charities, and inspiring cultural venues for the arts. Civil society, for its part, depends on enterprise for the wealth which nourishes its families and private institutions and in government for the public goods which encourage interpersonal commitments and social undertakings.

### Balanced Interdependency Among the Sectors

The quality of our lives rises or falls on the quality of balanced interdependency among the three productive sectors of modern society. If any one sector gains excessive power over the others, an imbalance arises which undermines social justice. Too much government undercuts both enterprise and civil society. Too much enterprise, especially in its mode of financial intermediation, imposes inequalities on politics and marginalizes many values proposed by civil society. Too much conformity or too much conflict in civil society degrades politics and government and undermines enterprise.

Sector interdependency is the most important truth taught us by the pandemic. Public health cannot be totally divorced from the economy. Closing down enterprise to await the dissipation of virus transmission has caused anxiety and other harm. But, not closing down enterprise would impose its own costs in more disease and deaths. In responding to the pandemic, government could not avoid balancing restrictions on the economy and civil society against gains for public health. Enterprise and civil society looked to government for rules and decisions on permissible conduct. Government, in turn, took action with a considered view towards just wealth creation and simultaneous regard for the common good provided by a healthy community impervious to further spread of the virus.

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- The principle of subsidiarity aims to situate decisions as close as possible to the persons affected, to realize the oversight-from-below that makes accountability transparent and responsible.

### Respect for Human Life

- As always, the limitations of our humanity, and the brokenness wrought by sin and evil, have produced harmful imbalances. Before Covid-19, it was already clear from the growing inequality among people, and the worsening degradation of the natural environment, that the structures for human development needed repair.
- Created in the human image likeness, institutions carry forward both human ideals and foibles. Crises usually expose fundamental imbalances or rigidities, and paradigms finally change when new patterns of possibility are discerned and understood.
- We need science at its best, however we now see that science at its best is not enough. We need governments to be their best, but again, at their best governments are not enough. We need civil society too at its best, but the means for true collaboration between groups have long lagged the most world's most pressing needs.
- Reforming and re-balancing the institutions for economy, politics and civil society require a change in heart - away from the calculations of advantage, power and efficiency, towards serving and enabling the person.

In human interactions and institutions, symbiosis and interdependency draw on the moral sense of participating individuals. The moral sense – ethics, taking personal responsibility, following the Golden Rule, being prudent and compassionate – acts as a kind of capital asset for each person.

A brief reflection on the teachings of many wisdom traditions from the Stoics, the Old Testament, Confucius, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam affirms the importance of the moral sense animating each person as the gateway to justice and happiness within community.

## Civilizational Stakeholders

Each functional sector is a stakeholder in the outcomes generated by other sectors while having the others as stakeholders in its own successes and failures. Modernity is thus a conglomerate of three mutually dependent subsidiary networks of action, each a stakeholder in the other two.

This structural reality of the modern era became more clearly apparent after the collapse of communist systems in the Soviet Union after 1989 and in the People's Republic of China under Deng Xiaoping, systems where the state had dictated to enterprise and civil society. The subsequent Washington Consensus on how nations should achieve modernity embraced sector autonomy but interdependence. The Millennium Development Goals, the Monterrey Statement on financing those goals, and the subsequent Sustainable Development Goals also affirmed the necessity of mutual engagement of government, enterprise, and civil society to achieve modern standards of wellbeing and comprehensive enjoyment of human rights.

Late last year, the World Economic Forum released its Davos Manifesto 2020 and the US Business Roundtable issued its statement on the purpose of enterprise. Both statements affirmed an understanding of modern society as stakeholder centric.

To minimize imbalances among the sectors of modernity, the new model of our institutions in government, enterprise, and civil society must instill fidelity to shared responsibility.

How can this be arranged?

- From global ethics studies, it is clear that the ethical wisdom of peoples in diverse cultures grows from insights into human interdependence. Beyond the practical benefits of reciprocity, moral wisdom pivots on compassion - the ability from one's own vulnerability to understand - physically and emotionally - the wounds or fears of others.

## Preferential Option for the Poor

- The primary and often dominating ethos of recent globalization has focused on the rights of financial capital. Frequently forgotten have been human dimensions, especially as relate to the necessity and dignity of work, and to the basic desire to have a voice in decision-making.
- Throughout history, the terms for governance have usually been set by those with power. The principle of preferential option is to ensure that the poor - those whose needs or hopes are usually absent from institutional calculations - are heeded first. Indeed, justice and freedom depend on the disproportionate inclusion of those who otherwise bear the disproportionate burdens of poverty.
- Recent efforts at understanding social capital, and moral capital, recognize that politics and economics - to be fair, sustainable, and efficient - require trust.
- For responsibility to be shared, it is imperative to include the voices, needs and perspective of those at the margins of our politics and economics.

## Institutional Innovation

Direction can be given for how each sector should use its core asset. Enterprise requires capital. Government asserts a monopoly over violence and coercion – what jurisprudence calls the police power of the state. Civil Society deploys the power of the mind – its ability to reason, to imagine, and its conscience.

Our institutions need to better direct enterprise in its use of capital, government in its deployment of the police power, and civil society in its shaping of our minds.

## Capital

The power of enterprise derives from capital. But capital must not be restricted to only money, either owned or borrowed. Successful enterprise requires more than funds to make a profit. In addition, any profitable enterprise requires on a steady basis the resources provided by customer patronage, employee productivity, social norms and legality, and community tolerance. Social and human factors multiply the possibilities provided by funds, but more importantly, they reduce the risks of enterprise and so increase its prospects of earning revenue. The cost of financial capital to a firm is determined by assessments of the intangible factors which drive its risk profile.

Capital is a composite of multiple and stable advantages. Among the intangible forms of capital are: intellectual capital; the good will of the business in the perception of consumers, employees and potential employees, investors and creditors, moral capital expressed in its culture, the quality of its governance, its integrity. And, to some extent, a firm also relies on the products of nature as a drawdown of natural capital.

In enterprise, all forms of capital should be reflected in the accounts of a firm, in a new template for its balance sheet of both tangible and intangible assets and liabilities.

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## The Shared Good

- Already apparent from the disparities of globalization, and from the destruction of other species, the imperatives posed by Covid-19 point to a rediscovery of the Common Good, and an urgent re-valuing of what can be termed the “Shared Good.”

## Rights and Responsibilities

- Professionally as well as institutionally, this is a moment to end the divorce between expertise and ethics. Since Adam Smith, policies have interpreted economic priorities as largely separate from those of moral responsibility. However, as a moral philosopher, Smith had presumed that freedom was always embedded in responsibilities. He wrote very little to explain “the invisible hand,” however it is unfair to his scholarship to ignore that the “wealth of nations” depends on “moral sentiments.”
- Enterprise is an inherent talent bestowed on human beings. It is a skill for participating in God’s project of Creation, and Salvation.
- In his methodology for *Querida Amazonia*, Pope Francis highlights the need and power of imagination. Much as do entrepreneurs, he begins his analysis with dreams for what is possible for the Amazon region. What is our dream post-Covid-19?



Now, the payment of dividends on all forms of capital from its earnings will cause firms to be prudent in their uses of capital and will cycle the flow of funds in society to the providers of social, human and natural capitals, reducing stress on the environment and more justly distributing wealth across society.

In keeping with a new appreciation of the complexity of capital, a new understanding of ownership, of private property, will be advisable. Ownership of a compound asset such as total capital requires more stewardship than does possession of cash or its equivalents in hard assets or contract rights. Ownership of tangible assets, by contrast, provides more autarchy for whomever hold title to the assets and permits raw dominion, arbitrary and self-interested, over their use.

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### Mind

Civil society brings forth the beauty and the miracles of the mind, including all its faculties including emotions, reason, intuition, calculation, moral priorities, empathy. Civil Society, whether in religion or other expressions of spirituality, in

- Profits are part of the natural order. In his parables, Jesus observed the natural abundance of a single grain of wheat. (Matthew 13:8) He also recognized the “return” expected from those entrusted with talents. (Matthew 25:14-30)
- That profits are natural and a gift from God means that they do not belong exclusively even to those who merit them. The moral rationale for distributive justice is neither to disparage profits, nor to coerce the rich. The aim, instead, is to unleash the future possibilities that psychologist Erik Erikson called “generativity.”

### Human Equality

- Hierarchies are necessary in human affairs, but these are also prone to abuses of power.
- As well as protect the interests of the most vulnerable and least powerful, those entrusted with public or institutional care must earn and cultivate the moral authority for themselves, and their institutions.
- Moral authority has been squandered everywhere by scandal and failures in accountability. It can only be recovered by leaders willing to make sacrifices - by leaders suffering the toil and turmoil that is required for any structural change.

### Soul

- Created in God’s image and likeness, human beings in all cultures have undeniable capacities and longings for transcendence.



education, in service of those in need, in arts and culture, in media and entertainment, in literature, poetry, and speech, in all forms of collaboration to achieve goals of desire and the imagination, in sports, and families, in good times and bad, puts our interior powers of personal genius to work. The responsibility of Civil Society in its use of the mind is to enhance and not damage or degrade the moral sense because Mind gives birth to human agency.

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Stewardship of public power is generative of Capital, protecting owners and innovation, risk-taking, and elevates the quality of our lives. Public power is protective of civil society, which cannot create and produce works of the Mind without society having rights and individuals having security of persons, thought, and expression.

Mind is generative of Capital in innovation and necessary social and human capitals for reliance and institution building. Mind guides those having public power toward Stewardship and wise policies.

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But the ability of each civilizing factor to improve the human condition is compromised by humanity's tendency both to abuse what is good and to enjoy what is short-sighted or unhealthy.

### Our World after the Pandemic

Words divorced from realities are a personal indulgence; ideas divorced from realities can be dangerous. Seeking responsible investments from enterprise, responsible policies from government, and respect for human dignity from civil society demands that enterprise, government, and civil society confront reality and demonstrate value in all that they do. As Cicero demanded of virtue, what is honest in thought and feeling

- In times of crisis, neither solutions nor understanding can be achieved alone. The principle of association recognizes that we need to form bonds together, to solve problems together.

### Integrity

- In his moral analysis of human progress, (*Populorum Progressio*) St. Pope Paul VI emphasized human integrity - a moral demand to see the human being as a complexity of potential, involving rational, emotional, spiritual, and social dimensions.
- St. Pope John Paul II expounded on this concept of integrity, and expanded it to include analyses for work (*Laborem Exercens*) and for structures (*Centesimus annus*).
- More recently, Pope Francis has extended this principle of integrity to include human flourishing within the natural environment. (*Laudato si*)
- Integrity is a principle for wholeness, and as such, requires justice. On the one hand, this justice is what is due to the fundamental goodness that resides in every person. On the other hand it is a capacity for goodness that we rely on from one another to achieve participation and peace.

### Hope and Charity

- Pope Benedict XVI prophetically diagnosed the moral failures of globalization before those flows became so pressing with Covid-19.
- While recognizing the gifts from human genius, he also foresaw the simmering crisis of despair.

(*honestum*) must also be congruent with what is practical (*utile*).

Accordingly, as we make decisions on what freedoms and activities our citizens are to enjoy as the SARS-CoV-2 virus is contained, we need to set standards of excellence for each social sector.

As we ponder our respective responsibilities in the coming months and years, the priorities for each social sector must align with the essential purpose of that sector. Enterprise is called upon to create wealth justly and sustainably. Government's vocation is to serve the needs of individuals and communities, enterprise, and civil society with public goods. Civil society's calling is to empower our growth as persons, enhancing our intellectual achievements and our moral sense.

As we ask our institutions to accelerate recovery from the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic and revitalize productive economies, each sector should measure its decisions by the degree to which they honor the agency capacity of each person. Enterprise should promote agency with income and wealth. Government should promote agency by respecting civil liberties and human rights. Civil society should promote agency by enlivening the disciplined, optimistic, and compassionate use of our minds.

## Conclusion:

To paraphrase Virgil, we can and must inaugurate a "new order" for our age right now.

Stephen B. Young

Global Executive Director

April 2020

- Human persons had invested their desires and dreams in convenience and consumption. The machinery that stoked these desires for more have ended up turning persons into mere commodities. Overwhelmed by transactions and possessions, which have often become addictions, human beings have lost that defining capacity to hope (*Spes salvi*)
- Pope Benedict also prophetically understood the danger to truth in a world that had become idolatrous about consumption. Rather than means of insight and understanding, facts have become weapons for manipulation. Long before "fake news" was coined, Benedict taught that we can only restore the ethicality of facts by seeking truth with charity. (*Caritas in Veritatae*)

## Dialogue

- Pope Francis has repeatedly called upon people of faith, and all people of goodwill, to be unceasing bridge-builders. Our technology enables new forms of deep and respectful dialogue. Covid-19 reveals how susceptible all people are by nature of their human vulnerability. This same, shared vulnerability can be the catalyst for reimagining our institutions, and reforming our sensibilities as citizens, as creative beings, and as children of God.

John Dalla Costa  
May 2020

# Tales of the Grim Reaper

## The Plague by Albert Camus

Review and Commentary by Richard Broderick

Albert Camus was a Nobel Laureate and author of bestselling novels, books of essays and highly successful plays. Born in 1913, he was a member of the French Resistance during the Nazi occupation of France, editing an underground publication and participating in other subversive activities.



Albert Camus

After the war, he emerged as a public intellectual and one of the foremost voices of Existentialism, along with other well-known writers like Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. Unlike other post-war French Existentialists, he broke very early with the movement's support of Stalin's regime in the Soviet Union, denouncing Soviet Communism as just another totalitarian regime, like Hitler's Germany.

His outspoken views created a rift between him and figures like Sartre and de Beauvoir who only changed their views in 1956 after Khrushchev's crushing damnation of Stalin's many crimes. Camus was also a leading voice in opposing French efforts to retain control of Algeria – where he grew up as a *pied noir*, the nickname of ethnically French inhabitants -- another strong influence on his views toward colonialism and the effort to crush native populations. He died in a one-car crash in 1960, an accident that many speculated was caused by members of the rightwing terrorist organization OAS, which violently opposed de Gaulle's efforts to negotiate a settlement with the Algerian rebels.

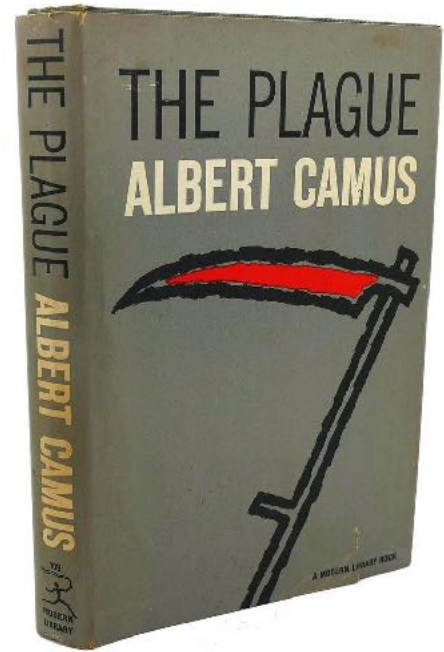
Camus was the author of many important works, beginning with *l'Étranger*, a novel that dramatized the existential quest for meaning. But of all his works, fictive or theatrical, perhaps his most influential -- and truly extraordinary -- book is the novel, *The Plague*, in which he presents a highly detailed, yet also compassionate account of an outbreak of bubonic plague in the French-Algerian city of Oran, a stand-in for Camus' native city of Mondovi (now Dréan) on the Mediterranean coast.

First published in 1946, *The Plague* is, without question, a work of genius. It serves as a kind of panopticon of every epidemic outbreak, including Covid-19, and its effects on all aspects of Oran's structure – Oran is “headquarters to the Prefect of a French Department” – from government officials to the most powerless victims of the sickness. At the same time, however, Camus relates his story with a combination of stark realism and deep feeling that brings the trials and suffering of its characters vividly to life.

He opens the book with a description of Oran as a typical Westernized center of commerce and industry – a description that could easily be applied to many cities elsewhere, including the U.S.

“The town itself, let us admit, is ugly. It has a strong, placid air and you need time to discover what it is that makes it different from so many business centers in other parts of the world. How to conjure up a picture, for instance, of a town with no pigeons, without any trees or gardens... a thoroughly negative space, in short...”

The only sign of spring’s arrival in Oran is a slight change in the quality of the air. Summer is particularly awful, with the Mediterranean sun beating down, covering everything with dust and making residents hole up in their homes during the middle of the day. Fall, though cooler, is the rainy season, turning all that dust into thick layers of mud. “Only winter brings truly pleasant weather,” Camus says.



The story begins in mid-April, when the first hint – a powerful one – of the outbreak of bubonic plague makes itself known by the sudden appearance on streets, in apartment buildings, even upscale restaurants and stores, of dead or dying rats with blood coming out of their mouths. At first, no one is particularly alarmed by this sight, assuming it is merely evidence of an illness afflicting the city’s rat population. By the end of the month, however, as hundreds and then thousands of rats have turned up all over town, there is the first evidence of the telltale signs of bubonic plague afflicting a growing number of residents.

In a striking foretaste of the initial reaction to the appearance of Covid-19 in many countries, particularly the U.S. and Brazil, the conscientious souls who work in the prefecture resist the idea of publicly announcing the appearance of plague, preferring at first to issue vague warnings of a mysterious illness afflicting some people. This resistance only holds for a short time, but it is safe to assume that some people die of plague during this period of official blindness who might have lived if the population knew what was really threatening Oran and take necessary precautions to lower the risk of a life-threatening infection.

The officials finally relent after several meetings with Dr. Rieux, a surgeon with ties to the prefecture and one of the first to assess precisely what kind of disaster is rapidly overtaking Oran. Rieux is one of several characters that, in turn, narrate the rest of the novel. Among them is a friend of Rieux’s, a big, imperturbable figure named Jean Tarrou; Raymond Rambert, a journalist on assignment desperately trying to get out of the city and back to his young wife in Paris; Father Paneloux, a Jesuit and pastor of a church who ends up sacrificing his own life in his efforts to save others; and M. Grand, an older, shy employee in the magistrate’s office who has been working for years on an epic novel of which he has only partially completed the opening sentence about a young woman riding on horseback through the Bois du Boulogne in Paris.

Rieux, himself, just prior to the arrival of the epidemic, has placed his own wife on a train that takes her to a sanitarium. Her prognosis is not good and Rieux desperately hopes that he will get to see her again as soon as the epidemic dies down. He doesn't. On the last pages of the story, when we discover that it is Rieux who has compiled the several narratives into one story, he also discloses that he has received a telegram informing him of his beloved wife's death.

Over the course of the outbreak, the reaction of the general population deepens into a kind of dogged listlessness. The mood is engendered by a visceral understanding that this outbreak of the plague has no foreseeable limits among most citizens except for a large corps of wealthy individuals who spend their nights in boisterous drinking and small orgies, both activities sometimes happen in the same café or restaurant. And even the well-to-do are not beyond the plagues' reach.

In his broad-range views, Camus also makes clear that even in the epidemic-inflicted city, a criminal underworld continues to rake in illegal payments, though the focus of the underworld had shifted from importing illicit goods without passing through customs or paying duties on anything to the equally precarious business of smuggling people out of Oran. For this enterprise, the gangsters use a series of halfway houses above the harbor, bribing enough port officials to make their clients' escapes possible. The journalist, Rambert, becomes involved with one such group of shady customers who promise an oft-postponed escape if he just manages to make it worth everyone's time. After repeated failures to enact the grand plan, Rambert, with no explanation, goes to Rieux and announces that he is joining the corps of civilian assistants helping to keep the streets clear of rats and plague victims and to check regularly on patients too sick to leave their houses, though not yet sick enough to be transferred to one of Oran's overflowing hospitals and clinics.

Camus's *The Plague* joins other impressive works about the bubonic plague, like Boccaccio's *The Decameron*, a tale of a group of well-to-do young people who flee to a country estate to escape the ravages of the 14<sup>th</sup> century outbreak of the Black Death, *Pepys Diary*, which includes a first-hand look at the Great Plague of London in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and Daniel Defoe's *The Journal of the Plague Year*.

None of these books, brilliant as they are, outshines Camus' *The Plague*, with its riveting and horrifying accounts of the effects of the disease on its victims. One of these victims is Jacques, the young son of an officious magistrate we know only as M. Othon. The boy's illness means his father is placed with his wife, Jacques' mother, in quarantine. As with today's victims of Covid, the families and friends of the afflicted are unable to visit their loved ones for safety reasons.

Rieux's efforts to save 6-year old Jacques Othon are presented in prose as vivid and revealing as a brilliant piece of cinema. Contacted by M. Othon, Rieux, in keeping with medical protocol, visits the boy in his parents' apartment. Rieux's first look at the boy makes clear that this is a very serious case.

"[W]hen Rieux entered the room... the boy was in the phase of extreme prostration and submitted without a whimper to the doctor's examination. When Rieux raised his eyes, he found the magistrate's gaze intent on him and, behind, the mother's pale face. She was

holding a handkerchief to her mouth and her dilated eyes followed each of the doctor's movements."

"He has it, I suppose?," the magistrate asks in a toneless voice. Rieux confirms that his son does have "it."

The doctor proceeds to make arrangements for the boy to be transported to hospital without delay. He tells the magistrate and his wife that they must go back into quarantine. Then, he asks if there were anything in particular the parents wanted him to do for them.

After several moments of silence, the magistrate answers, "no," he says, swallowing hard. "But—save my son."

Rieux arranges for the boy, still in a state of complete exhaustion, to be moved to an auxiliary hospital, a classroom transformed into a medical facility with room for ten patients. Within several hours, Rieux realizes the case is hopeless. By now, telltale buboes have erupted on the boy's body. Rieux tries a locally produced serum, but to no effect.

Several of his friends and colleagues –Tarrou, other doctors and surgeons at the clinic, Rambert, Father Paneloux and finally Grand – arrive to help keep tabs on developments. In the early morning hours, young Jacques comes out of his stupor and was now "tossing about convulsively on the bed."

Things continue to deteriorate, while Rieux and the others hover around the bed. Camus provides us with insight into what the helpless adults are feeling in this situation.

"They had already seen children die – for many months now, death had shown no favoritism – but they had never yet watched a child's agony minute by minute as they had now been doing since daybreak."

"And just then the boy had a sudden spasm, as if something had bitten him in the stomach and uttered a long shrill wail. For moments that seemed endless, he stayed in a queer, contorted position, his body racked by convulsive tremors." After a couple more spasms, during which Jacques flings off the blanket, big tears begin to roll out of his infected eyes and "trickled down the sunken, leaden-hued cheeks." Asked if the serum had caused even the hint of a remission, Rieux answers that it has not, though the boy was putting up more resistance than might be expected. Slumped against the wall next to the bed, Father Paneloux observes the utterly twisted benefits bestowed by the inoculation.

"So, if he is to die, he will have suffered longer."

As daylight fills the clinic, the boy seems a little calmer, but then he scratches at the blanket covering him, doubles up with his knees brought to his chest. Then comes perhaps the most traumatic moment in the novel. "In the small face, rigid as a mask of grayish clay, slowly the lips parted and from them rose a long, incessant scream, hardly varying with his respiration and filling the ward with a fierce, indignant protest, so little childish that it seemed like a collective voice issuing from all the sufferers there."

Finally, after what seems like an eternity, the boy's wail weakens and he falls silent. "The mouth still gaping, but silent now, the child was lying among the tumbled blankets, a small shrunken form, with tears still set on its cheeks... Jacques had died despite all that was done to help him survive." The doctor who oversees the clinic is asked whether he will continue to use the serum given to Jacques the night before.

"Perhaps," he said. After all, he put up a surprisingly long resistance."

Later, Tarrou visits the Othons at the stadium holding quarantined individuals. After extending thanks to Dr. Reiux for all the work he'd put in on the boy's treatment, Othon falls silent, then addresses Tarrou. "I hope Jacques did not suffer too much." Tarrou decides that under the circumstances, a lie was the most charitable response he could offer. "No," Tarrou said. "No, I couldn't really say he suffered."

Six months after the first outbreak, the plague fades away as quickly as it appeared. At first, there is an understandable reluctance on the part of Oran's citizens to think they might finally be safe. But a prolonged cold snap the first week of January confers a palpable downturn in the outbreak. And then, finally, it is over.

*The Plague* is a work of brilliant narration with a deep understanding of many issues, from the ineptitude of the initial response by city officials to the curious mood of dissociation that overtakes the population. As the novel progresses, people go about their routine afflicted by a dread of an apparently uncontrollable illness swallowing up a higher and higher percentage of Oran's citizens.

Though written in a down-to-earth narrative style, its pages filled with credible three-dimensional characters, *The Plague* is also, at its heart, an allegory, one that is figurative on many levels. It captures the ground-based reality about Oran, but also, in its broadest reading, prefigures other kinds of pandemics and civic crises, including siege warfare.

But the main lesson is that for all our delusions otherwise, we are not collectively masters of our fate. Covid-19, Ebola, the Swine Flu and Spanish Flu all represent forces that are deadly – and beyond our control.

Just read *The Plague*. Camus was there. He saw it all. And he left us this masterpiece to remind us that, when everything is said and done, we are, all of us, in this together, with no weapons at our disposal, but collective resistance and individual compassion.



# Policing as a Public Trust – A Workshop on the Ethics of Public Stewardship

*Friday, July 17, 2020  
St. Paul, Minnesota*

Steve Young presented the Caux Round Table for Moral Capitalism's (CRT) Principles for Government. The paramount principle is that public office is a public trust to advance the common good. The principles state:

“Power brings responsibility; power is a necessary moral circumstance in that it binds the actions of one to the welfare of others.

Therefore, the power given by public office is held in trust for the benefit of the community and its citizens. Officials are custodians only of the powers they hold; they have no personal entitlement to office or the prerogatives thereof.

Holders of public office are accountable for their conduct while in office; they are subject to removal for malfeasance, misfeasance or abuse of office. The burden of proof that no malfeasance, misfeasance or abuse of office has occurred lies with the office holder.

The state is the servant and agent of higher ends; it is subordinate to society. Public power is to be exercised within a framework of moral responsibility for the welfare of others. Governments that abuse their trust shall lose their authority and may be removed from office.”



The workshop proceeded with an airing of *High Noon*, the classic western starring Gary Cooper as marshall who single-handedly takes on a band of killers, even though other town officials and citizens fail to back him. Cooper, as Will Kane, has turned in his badge and married Amy, played by Grace Kelly, when news comes that Frank Miller has been released and is coming on the noon train to kill him. Kane then puts his badge of office back on and steps up to stop the killer. The movie asks the question “why?” Kane never gives us an answer, but the storyline gives us reasons for his deciding to serve the community. At bottom, only he can stop the gang from terrorizing the town and that realization causes him to accept the responsibility put upon him by fate.

The movie was followed by a discussion of its moral insights, led by Steve Young.

The pastor, supposedly a moral compass for the good people of the town, is at a loss for words: “I just don’t know what to say.”

The former sheriff advises Kane to give in to the threat and just leave town. No one steps up to help him except a drunk and a boy. In the end, Kane prevails, but as he leaves town, he throws the marshal’s star to the ground in contempt of those who just stood aside as free riders, letting him take the risks for their benefit.

The movie contains a scene where the “good” people of the town are in church singing a verse from the *Battle Hymn of the Republic*, a Civil War song written to inspire those in the north to risk all and fight to end slavery.

The standard of conduct set by the verse is:

*He [God] has sounded forth the trumpet  
That shall never call retreat;  
He is sifting out the hearts of men  
Before His judgement seat;  
Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him;*

And to make it clear what needs to be done, the song has this line:

*As He [Christ] died to make men holy,  
Let us die to make men free;*

Sir Robert Peel promulgated nine principles of policing in 1829 as the mission for the first modern police force, the Metropolitan Police of London. He distinguished a police force from a standing army.

The principles are:

- To prevent crime and disorder, as an alternative to their repression by military force and severity of legal punishment.
- To recognize always that the power of the police to fulfill their functions and duties is dependent on public approval of their existence, actions and behavior and on their ability to secure and maintain public respect.
- To recognize always that to secure and maintain the respect and approval of the public means also the securing of the willing cooperation of the public in the task of securing observance of laws.
- To recognize always that the extent to which the cooperation of the public can be secured diminishes proportionately the necessity of the use of physical force and compulsion for achieving police objectives.
- To seek and preserve public favor, not by pandering to public opinion, but by constantly demonstrating absolute impartial service to law, in complete independence of policy and without regard to the justice or injustice of the substance of individual laws, by ready offering

of individual service and friendship to all members of the public without regard to their wealth or social standing, by ready exercise of courtesy and friendly good humor and by ready offering of individual sacrifice in protecting and preserving life.

-To use physical force only when the exercise of persuasion, advice and warning is found to be insufficient to obtain public cooperation to an extent necessary to secure observance of law or to restore order and to use only the minimum degree of physical force which is necessary on any particular occasion for achieving a police objective.

-To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence.

-To recognize always the need for strict adherence to police-executive functions and to refrain from even seeming to usurp the powers of the judiciary of avenging individuals or the state and of authoritatively judging guilt and punishing the guilty.

-To recognize always that the test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder and not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with them.

The workshop continued with a presentation by Booker Hodges, an Assistant Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. He spoke about police reform and what is happening in the state regarding that. He noted that we had experienced urban warfare in the Twin Cities recently. Yet, despite that, the 10,000 police officers and National Guard members did not shoot anyone. That was a real test of our police values.

with some officers meeting that standard. The department retained former Ramsey County Sheriff Matt Bostrom to convene focus groups across Minnesota to elucidate the character traits they want to see in their police officers. There was side agreement on certain attributes of good character. The department has met with senior administrators of the Minnesota State Patrol and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to consider the alignment of organizational values with those character traits. The character traits can be used to hire officers and used in their training courses.

These are shared values because both the police and the public want the same outcomes. Having officers with outstanding character to serve as reliable trustees is the best way to rectify problems that exist. As Sir Robert Peel demanded, the police can be the community and the community the police when there is close alignment between the actions of the officers and the values of the community.

Hodges said it is important to get out into community because we want to arrive at a marriage between what peace officers value and do and what society wants from policing.

We need people to join law enforcement. We are at a crossroads now because we are running short of applicants. Most new graduates come to the Twin Cities from elsewhere.

In England, William Wilberforce sought two reforms: an end to slavery and helpful manners

among the citizens. We have lost the capacity for manners in the U.S. and so we continue to have problems, according to Hodges.

Some comments from workshop participants:

Comment: In Minnesota, we value honor, truth, respect and responsibility from our law enforcement units. Integrity, partnerships and excellence are shared values here. Respect, integrity, courage, excellence and honor are the core values of the Minnesota State Patrol.

Comment: In the U.S., police officials shoot some 1,000 people a year. If these values were systematically followed by all law enforcement agents, that number would be reduced to 500 shootings every year.

Comment: Who is responsible for enforcing these values with police unions and other agencies?

Following Booker Hodges, participants heard a presentation by former Ramsey County Sheriff Matt Bostrom. In 2017, after serving as a police official for 35 years, Bostrom retired and pursued a Ph.D. from Oxford University. After finishing his doctorate, Oxford's Centre for Criminology invited him to develop a working model of how to increase trust in the police by identifying and aligning a community's values with those of the police. During his time as Ramsey County Sheriff, he pursued the same goals and stressed four character traits a community wants to observe among local police: trustworthy, truthful, responsible and respectful.

When he became sheriff, he wanted to find out what police departments must do in order to represent St. Paul's community values. Among other things, these included an end to racial profiling and a clear effort to work for the community as a whole. The principal challenge he faced was for members of his office to be consciously and without fail interactive with the community at every level.

As sheriff, he went to several community meetings to ask the public what they thought were the responsibilities for community policing and what is the work communities should undertake to strengthen a community and reduce crime? He found that police officials in St. Paul had to work toward a moral enlightenment in which the community shared the same values as the police. "As police are integrated into community," Bostrom said, "they end up being better at policing."

During the time he was pursuing his doctorate, he went and met with police and local citizens in Los Angeles and Plano, Texas, and asked how much did each community trust the police and what values did the community want the police to hold and apply to the hiring of new officers. Both communities wanted to see cultural competence, an understanding of the different attitudes of diverse groups of citizens and a "servant leadership" model of policing in which officers are hired who possess emotional intelligence and a strong sense high character.

The workshop concluded with a presentation by Doran Hunter, a professor emeritus of political science and board member of the CRT. He teaches and does research on how complex organizations, like law enforcement, can be structured to improve communication

and coordination with the communities they serve.

According to Hunter, all human beings, with very few exceptions, are born with a moral sense that arises out of three different modes of emotion: moral emotions, which include trust, generosity, empathy and remorse; personal emotions, which include fear, anxiety, anger, happiness and sorrow; and social emotions, which include embarrassment, guilt, compassion, empathy and a sense of honor.

Our moral sense and complex of emotions can be studied as a “science of morality” that can help in determining which conditions can be emphasized to increase our moral progress. This includes conditions that communities and law enforcement officials share.

Despite what often seems a gloomy, if not doomed prospect for the future of humanity, there have been striking advances in the past several centuries of measurable improvements in decision-making and personal interactions. There has been a rise of liberal democracies and decline in theocracies and a far safer, better governed economic system. By and large, wealth has grown exponentially, while poverty rates have declined.

According to Hunter, the character traits needed for good community policing, as identified by Sheriff Bostrom, are within the capacity of most people to develop and turn into durable habits. The science of the moral sense show why it is possible for Sir Robert Peel’s principles for policing to be practical and used by every police department.



# Poems by Richard Broderick

## Embargo

The tall sail-shaped cloud  
docked on the neighbor's roof,  
calling me to board,  
The long incident-filled  
journey to escape my own  
internal weather,  
The countless fellow passengers  
who've slipped beneath  
the waves, the spray of  
cold water that soaks me  
on the first mate's bridge,  
the leagues I've clocked,  
the countless more to go,  
the crowds gathered on every dock,  
my eyes scanning the horizon  
looking for someone, anyone  
I may know. Eight bells.  
Time to go below, my ears alert  
for the first crackling  
of daybreak on the horizon.

## Journal of the Plague Year

It might last no more than a second  
that hung suspended for a year  
or a year that felt more like an endless  
second spent waiting for the doorbell  
to ring, a loved one come back to life  
with a sudden catch of breath,  
a doctor frowning overhead, faint  
traffic sounds that go on all night  
(The steady stream of dead trans-  
porting themselves back and forth  
from the grave to see whether  
their hole has been dug or  
If they'd have to lie in one of the huge  
piles of bodies, each layer marked  
by a stain of quick-lime like a threadbare  
sheet. Love is gone now, no longer  
registering any sound, an everlasting  
silence softer than the hiss of the outgoing tide  
setting sail from the harbor, the cry of seabirds,  
the moon beaming down with a mysterious smile.





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