

ZEN AND THE ART OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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**Ninth Annual Final Word Lecture
Faculty Recognition Day
Wilkes University
May 13, 2002**

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Introduction

Sitting in my first political science course at LaSalle College in the fall of 1967, learning about the basic principles of American government – federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances – I did not imagine that, thirty-five years later, I would still be studying our democracy, marveling at its resiliency and frustrated by its shortcomings. The opportunity to reflect on my life as a student and citizen of the United States political system for The Final Word lecture is an honor for which I am most grateful. What follows is my interpretation of what makes America's democratic system unique, as well as an analysis of the trends in American politics, which, I believe, place our democracy at risk. I strongly suspect that some will disagree with my ideas while others will find them intriguing. What I sincerely hope, however, is that no one reads this without feeling something about our political system – that the paper causes the reader to care about our government. As I will demonstrate, it was concern for and interest in government and politics expressed by average citizens that made American democracy possible, and only reinvigorating the public's passion for politics and its demand for quality from their government that our democracy will be preserved.

A Theory of American Democracy

In order for American democracy to function properly, liberalism and democracy, among the other core values, must be in balance. It is my contention that these two values, which will be defined shortly, have fallen out of kilter, with liberalism dominating the political landscape. The inherent, dynamic tension between liberalism and democracy remained in harmony as long as tolerance and compromise, two other critical values, were also widely understood and practiced. But, Americans appear less willing to compromise today on a personal level and in the aggregate as reflected in the increasingly polarized voting behavior of their representatives in Congress and the fifty state legislatures (Dodd & Oppenheimer 2001; Erikson & Wright 2001; Smith & Gamm 2001). They are also excessively tolerant of unfounded and dangerous ideas. Please understand that I am not advocating intolerance; rather, the excessive tolerance to which I refer is the kind that passively nods at racism or anti-Semitism without challenge and accepts them along with existentialism or vegetarianism as just other mindsets deserving of equal treatment.

Ultimately, the reason for the imbalance in our political values, I believe, is the slow erosion in the average citizen's ability to identify with or relate to things political. The passion for politics, and with it an expectation for quality government, that characterized American civic life during the country's first 160 years has waned to such a degree that we no longer care about politics. A passion for politics is absolutely critical for the proper maintenance of our democracy because democracy is not a spectator sport. It requires the informed involvement of the public. If we no longer care about politics – if the passion has been extinguished – the quality of our democracy suffers, perhaps resulting in a transformation of our political system into something that our Founders would not recognize and that we would eventually find oppressive. I withhold speculation for the moment, and instead review the core values of our unique political culture, why we came to have them, and how the values manifest themselves in our government's structure and powers.

American Political Culture

I wish to make it perfectly clear that when I speak of our democracy as unique, I do not mean to imply that American democracy is superior to the democratic governments of other nations such as Canada, France, India, Switzerland, or Sweden; rather, I intend only to state unequivocally that our democratic system is one of a kind. While our system may share some of the structural characteristics of other democracies, the political culture of the United States, those beliefs and values about politics that we hold in common -- or what Tocqueville described as "the habits of the heart" -- are what distinguish our democracy from all others.

As noted above, two essential elements among others in our political culture are liberalism and democracy. The liberal tradition in America, as traced by Louis Hartz (1955), emphasizes individual rights and liberties over civic responsibilities, and private initiative over community effort. The democratic tradition stresses egalitarianism, or populist equality, over individual interests, and the moral responsibility for community action when individual motivation to act is not forthcoming. The centrality of liberal democracy to American political thought cannot be overstated, though the two values often conflict with one another. We simultaneously believe that individual liberties are paramount and should not be constrained, and that we are all equal such that, in the name of a community of equals, the community may restrict individual choice -- or, in other words, limit rights. If the dynamic tension between the two is still not apparent, it will be shortly after an analysis of the origins of these two traditions.

America's political culture emerged from a grafting of 18th century Enlightenment philosophy onto the personal values and experiences of the ordinary people who colonized the New World. Those people who left England to forge a new life in an unknown land were fiercely independent risk-takers. Most were Protestants, deeply religious people who believed in decentralized religious organizations in which each congregation was responsible for the construction of its church, the hiring of its minister, and the enforcement of church rules. Most were also farmers, who accepted the uncertainty of Mother Nature's fickle behavior as it affected their ability to provide for their livelihood. If low rainfall yielded a poor harvest, the farmer accepted that fate without considering what some government agency might do to ease the pain. But, congregation members very likely would have come to this needy person's assistance out of a sense of moral responsibility. Because members of the church community were also members of the civic community, their beliefs in communal obligation were transformed into a sense of civic obligation or duty, or more generally, community spirit. Civic responsibility and community spirit founded on a belief in the equality of the members of a community are basic principles of our democracy. Tocqueville and others noted that the birth of American democracy was made possible precisely because the first colonists created their own communities founded on equality. Had the American colonists brought with them and practiced feudalism, democracy might not have developed here -- certainly not in the form we know today. (Tocqueville 1945).

The ideas of Hume, Locke, Montesquieu, Rousseau, and Adam Smith were generally known to the intellectual and political elites in the colonies. The radical Thomas Paine popularized some of their ideas in his tract, *Common Sense*. The concepts of natural rights, popular sovereignty, and governments with limited powers envisioned by these philosophers were critical to the development of our political culture and the construction of the American political system.

Natural rights, according to Locke, are those rights that every person holds by virtue of birth, and he listed them as the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of property. These are God-given, and no government may restrict them without consent of the people. One's body is one's property, and in the State of Nature -- the world before the creation of government -- one has an absolute right to take whatever steps are necessary to survive. No other person may limit one's ability to live. The pursuit of private property is necessary for life, so other individuals may not infringe on one's

right to acquire or use one's property. By the latter part of the 19th century, some Americans found in these Lockean conceptions a justification for limited government, one that secures only life and property. As a result, our conception of liberty took on a much different cast than that found in most of Europe.

In addition, Locke contended that, because God creates all people as equals, all people have natural rights (1). Such notions were seen as radical for the time, and so, because they challenged the established order, were labeled as liberal. Today, we refer to these ideas as classical liberalism. Belief in natural rights was later incorporated into the language of state constitutions as political liberties or freedoms, and the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, association, and religion came to be expected, if not always practiced, throughout the new country.

A related political value that flows from belief in liberty and individualism is a suspicion or mistrust of government, or to put it more positively, a trust in government with severely limited powers. After the Revolution and especially with the triumph of Jeffersonianism, many Americans came to believe that a government that governed least governed best, because a government with limited authority was less likely to infringe on the natural rights and liberties of the people.

Bernard Bailyn (1967) traced the American colonists' evolution of their separate and distinct political culture from that of England along three other dimensions. First, the English believed that the legitimate authority of government flowed from the monarchy, giving the King, and by his concession, Parliament, the power to make all laws. The colonists, on the other hand, came to believe that the power of any government to rule derives from the will of the people. This is the concept of popular sovereignty. Locke, in his *Second Treatise of Government*, argued forcefully that only governments founded by the people to serve the wishes of the people were legitimate. (He also urged people to overthrow governments, forcibly if necessary, that did not act in their best interests, an idea not lost on leaders of the Revolution.) With this understanding of popular sovereignty, Americans came to place their trust in democratic governments, those whose leaders were selected by the people and who served at the will of the people.

Second, the English accepted a form of rule of law that was grounded in an unwritten constitution. One could argue that the Magna Carta is the English Constitution, but that brief document provides no real structure of government, just a concession of power by the king to the nobles. (In fact, to this day the English do not have a written constitution.) Any proclamation by the king or act passed by Parliament became part of England's constitution. The capriciousness of the kings and their ability to manipulate the Parliament made for a great deal of political uncertainty on the part of the citizenry.

On the other hand, in the colonies, beginning with the Mayflower Compact and extending to each congregation's founding compact and colonial government charter, Americans grew to expect that their laws would have a written source that the people had some hand in drafting. This concept of a rule of law grounded in written laws created by the people or their representatives is yet another essential component of our political culture. There is a permanency to written constitutions that royal edicts do not enjoy, though written constitutions are subject to interpretation and amendment.

Third, the English and the American colonists differed in their understanding of representation. In the 18th century, members of Parliament were not required to live in the districts from which they were elected (before or after their elections), represented constituencies of widely varying size, and could buy and sell their seats at their discretion. There were also seats from rotten boroughs, where few people lived but which had a historic claim to send a member to Parliament. These were sufficiently common so that whole regions of the country did not have their own MPs. The English practiced what Edmund Burke described as virtual representation, that is, as long as a group's interest had a representative in Parliament, even if some part of the group lived in a different region than that of

the representative, the group was *virtually* represented in the body, and therefore did not need its own representative. In addition, representatives were not expected to follow the will of their constituents; instead, representatives were elected to exercise their judgment, use their discretion to act in the best interests of the entire country, not simply in the narrow interests of a geographic constituency – another Burkean concept.

The corrupt practices of the English parliament were well known to the colonists. In constructing their colonial assemblies, they required that real people actually elect their representatives from distinct geographic areas or municipalities. They also held to the Whig theory of representation, that is, they believed that the representative must follow precisely the wishes of the constituents. Little discretion on the part of the representative was tolerated. To assure that representatives remained attentive to their constituents' interests, representatives served only one or two-year terms, and constituents collectively "instructed" their representatives frequently, meaning that they formally wrote to the representative and told the person how to vote. Thus, these two contrasting views of representation not only aided the Revolution (recall the famous words "taxation without representation is tyranny") but also influenced the form of representation later adopted for the Congress.

A Bit of American History

When the tensions between the colonists and the English homeland finally came to a head in 1776, colonial representatives gathered in Philadelphia. There, they formed a committee to draft a statement declaring that the colonies would become a separate nation and stating the reasons for the separation. Thomas Jefferson, in *The Declaration of Independence*, summarized in most eloquent words (even if a few were borrowed from Locke) the core beliefs of the new American political culture:

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it and institute a new government

In three sentences, Jefferson captured the values for which Americans -- then and now -- would die. Some scholars describe the ideas in the *Declaration* as America's "civic religion" or "civic creed" (Kingdon 1999; Lipset 1996; Smith 1997) because they were more deeply and passionately held than any others, much like religious beliefs. Alexis de Tocqueville, mentioned earlier, traveled this country in 1831 and 1832 ostensibly to study the US penal system. His reflections on our country and its political system, the two-volume *Democracy in America*, endure as one of the best commentaries on American politics. In it, he noted repeatedly the vigor and earnestness with which Americans engaged in political discussion and the passion of their commitment to liberty, equality and democracy.

To the surprise of the English and nearly every other civilized nation, we won the Revolutionary War, and the new United States operated under its first constitution, the Articles of Confederation, until 1789. Unfortunately, the national government established under the Articles strained to hold the states together, and nearly saw the collapse of the new nation. The near-disaster sheds light on some of the inherent tensions of American political culture. Thus, it is instructive to consider it briefly. Our first national government consisted of a unicameral legislature in which each state had one vote, regardless of the size of

its population (and its delegation to the Congress!), no executive, and no national court system. The powers of this government were extremely limited, as it was denied the ability to impose taxes and regulate interstate commerce. The confederal structure placed the significant powers in the hands of the state governments where the people had much tighter control. Each state constitution included extensive lists of rights and liberties that were not to be infringed by government, and the states' delegates to the national Congress assured that the national government did not abridge those rights, either. What the country experienced under the Articles was excessive democracy and individualism such that those few people with wealth benefited at the expense of those with little property, leading to riots (viz. Shay's Rebellion), trade wars between states, and the near-bankruptcy of the national government. Each sovereign state, acting in its own self-interest at the direction of a majority of its people, created these conditions. By 1787, it was apparent to the political elite that something had to be done -- and quickly -- if the new nation was to survive.

Once again, delegates from the states met in Philadelphia to find a way to correct the defects in the Articles. What they finally did was write a new constitution. The new government they created was less democratic than that of the Articles, but as it turned out, much more capable of governing the new nation. For example, the people directly elected only the House of Representatives, while Senators were chosen by state legislatures (2), the President was directly elected by an Electoral College, and judges were appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate serve life terms. The new constitution gave the central government greater powers than the Articles had granted -- powers to tax, borrow money, regulate commerce, raise a standing army, etc. -- and much greater power over the states.

The structure of the government divided its powers among three branches and gave each branch the ability to check and balance the powers of the other two. In the words of James Madison in *Federalist #51*, "in framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself." Separation of powers and checks and balances force the government to control itself, but these concepts also make governing messy. Laws are not easily passed by the legislature, and when they are, they are subject to presidential vetoes and judicial interpretation that could render them unconstitutional. This was intentional. The Framers' governmental system necessitates compromise. To achieve compromise, trust and tolerance must be practiced by the participants. The general public was intentionally not directly included in the process that would lead to compromise.

What were the Framers thinking when they created this system? One explanation, by Richard Hofstadter (1969), is that the Constitution is an anti-party document. The Framers feared that any new government they created would be undermined by the destructive, selfish competition of political parties, and so they built a system that made it extremely difficult for parties to form. Indeed, this was the hope of Madison, this time writing in *Federalist Paper #10*. Factions -- parties -- were the enemy of liberty and democracy, and they either had to be prevented from organizing or their "mischief" (activities) had to be controlled. Obviously, the Framers' and Madison's vision of a party-free political system did not materialize, but we are still left to deal with a structure that makes compromise absolutely essential.

It would seem that a majority of the Framers did not trust people to make informed decisions and so were not comfortable with the idea of mass participatory democracy. The uneducated and landless citizenry might be swayed by individuals skilled in the "popular arts" (also known as demagogues). It was thus not an easy task to convince the people that limiting the number of national officials directly elected by them was an attractive feature of the system,

especially when the president, senators and judges appeared to have substantially greater powers in the new national government, which itself held greater powers than the central government conceived under the Articles. Moreover, the absence of anything resembling a list of protected liberties was even more troubling. Despite the pleas of Madison that the Constitution did not need such a list, those opposed to its ratification (the Anti-Federalists) managed to extract a concession from those supporting its passage (the Federalists) to amend the Constitution immediately after the first meeting of the Congress. The result was the first ten amendments, our Bill of Rights.

In the years following the ratification of the Constitution, Americans experienced no great changes in their daily lives. The national government remained a distant and relatively unimportant institution while most of the governmental activities that affected them on a daily basis came from state and local governments. The country prospered, and the American democratic experiment was viewed by people elsewhere as a success, and perhaps something to be copied.

I mentioned Tocqueville earlier, and it is appropriate now to consider more fully his analysis of the political culture of the early Republic.

Tocqueville's travels took him through most of the states and into towns large and small. In every community, he discovered that Americans possessed an extensive knowledge of the political system and a passion for discussing politics. Americans were able to identify correctly each of the three levels of government and their respective spheres of authority. (To a Frenchman accustomed to a unitary system, this was indeed amazing.) Citizens highly valued their liberties, a constant source of reference in conversations, and they were quick to point out that, as citizens, they were all equal. He was impressed that Americans intentionally kept their public lives apart from their religious ones, exhibiting a general tolerance for the faiths of others. He noted that such behavior removed a historically inflammatory subject from public discourse. And he marveled at the emphasis that Americans placed on community. Citizens spoke of civic responsibilities and participated in all types of public and private organizations. Americans were great joiners, he observed, and they entered into their various groups because they believed in the benefits of community. Tocqueville explained the Americans' dedication to civic life as "self-interest rightly understood." In a time when no public agencies existed to support the private citizen, it made good sense for individuals to form voluntary associations to lend assistance to one another in times of need. The volunteer fire company is an excellent example of self-interest rightly understood.

But for all the admirable qualities of America's political culture, Tocqueville also identified a number of serious, potentially crippling, features. The many levels of government opened the possibility for "administrative despotism," through which government departments, acting as autonomous agents, could replace democratic control over public policy. This might occur if the citizenry's interest in politics waned. Americans' attraction to the principle of equality, coupled with majority rule, runs the risk of creating a tyranny of the majority (something that John Stuart Mill also warned of in *On Liberty*). If all people are truly equal, and the majority decides on a course of action, the minority position, despite its merit, is overwhelmed, even if the minority's is the correct path for the community. (Rousseau called this the Will of All overcoming the General Will.) Beyond the political arena, Tocqueville identified this tendency in popular cultures as well. Extreme egalitarianism produces a bland culture, as novel ideas and creations are suppressed in favor of what the masses prefer. Life in general then becomes less satisfying and drab. Lastly, Tocqueville feared that excessive individualism could lead to an erosion of the sense of community and to coarseness in civic discourse. Indeed, excessive individualism leads to excessive acquisitiveness resulting in the destruction of community spirit.

As the earlier discussion of the contradictions inherent in our political culture has suggested, the tensions between classical liberalism and democracy became manifest during Washington's first administration, and appear regularly to this day. Could the United States provide a political environment that was conducive to the rights of the individual and the demands of the community? The political arguments during the country's first 140 years were those that pitted the champions of individual rights and private initiative — classical liberalism — against those who sought to have the government become more democratic, and thereby make the community of citizens more equal. Washington and Hamilton, his Secretary of the Treasury, were briefly successful in laying the foundation for a strong central government that ensured individual enterprise would not be diminished. But, Jefferson, Jackson and their successors in the democratic tradition dominated the next sixty years of political history during which voting rights were expanded, the role of the Electoral College was diminished, and mass political parties were organized and integrated into the political system at all levels. The Civil War marked the end of one era, and settled the slavery question (though it did not resolve the issue of racial equality), but the post-war years saw the rise of industrialization and essentially unfettered capitalism, the efforts of the Progressives notwithstanding. For the next sixty-five years, classical liberalism prevailed over the democratic impulse.

The administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, acting in response to the Great Depression, reconfigured the political order and the terms of political debate. Indeed, no longer would the proponents of individual rights be known as liberals; instead, they would become conservatives, or as a party, Republicans. Roosevelt and his Progressive advisors redefined liberalism to mean democratic equality, and henceforth, those who supported him and his efforts to have government guarantee social as well as political liberties came to be known as liberals. FDR looked to the Constitution's Preamble for the legal justification for his agenda. "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, ... to promote the general welfare ... do ordain and establish this Constitution." The General Welfare clause, as the italicized phrase is known, gave Roosevelt the opening he needed to call for a Second Bill of Rights in his last State of the Union Address on January 11, 1944. In FDR's vision, the national government would guarantee to every citizen the following rights:

the right to a useful and remunerative job, the right to earn enough to provide adequate food and clothing and recreation, the right of every farmer to raise and sell his products, the right of every businessman to trade in a free, competitive environment, the right of every family to a decent home, the right to adequate medical care and to achieve good health, the right to protection from economic fears of old age, sickness, accident and unemployment, and the right to a good education. (Rosenman 1950)

FDR did not live to see his vision fulfilled, but successive Democratic presidents continued his agenda, with Lyndon Johnson finally completing much of it. Of course, Johnson's Great Society programs did not go unchallenged, and as the electorate shifted allegiance to the Republican Party, Nixon, Reagan, and then Bush selectively rolled back big government, particularly those programs that created the welfare state system (3).

In this very brief review of American history, what is revealed is a transformation of the contest between liberalism and democracy into a struggle between individualism and equality, or, if I may, a competition between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome. This competition for the hearts and minds of the American public continues today. Americans believe that we are all equal because we all share the same liberties under the law as citizens of the United States. The laws of our land allow me the opportunity to be anything I

want to be. The Bill of Rights insures it. This is equality of opportunity. If this were our only political value, government would do nothing but protect individual rights. This is the world that absolute libertarians envision, in which the government provides for national and local security and a court system to enforce contracts and settle disputes – nothing else. In such a system, what would happen to a carpenter who loses the use of one arm? No one would hire the person, and the carpenter would not be able to earn a living. Death might even result from lack of money to buy food or shelter. This carpenter's misfortune is not a concern of the government. From a strict libertarian point of view, the carpenter's problems remain the carpenter's alone, but as a citizen, the carpenter continues to enjoy the opportunity to try to survive because theoretically no one would prevent it.

On the other hand, Americans also think of themselves as a community of people who care about and for one another. In the past, as noted by Tocqueville, Americans voluntarily gave their time and talents to help their neighbors and even, at times, strangers, because in a democracy we are all responsible for one another's well-being. One expects some minimal level of equality in life regardless of the circumstances of one's birth and one's natural talents and abilities. FDR identified government as the community, and had it assume the responsibilities of the community. In his mind, it would become the means by which one would be assured assistance in time of need if one had no family, friends, or other group from which to draw support. Moreover, if circumstances of birth left one disadvantaged, government would provide the resources to compensate for those disadvantages. FDR's interpretation of equality, therefore, supported equality of outcome. Returning to my example of the carpenter with the physical challenge, the government, acting for the community, takes responsibility for providing for the basic needs of the carpenter. The carpenter's standard of living should not be significantly diminished because of the handicap (4).

Two more contemporary examples may further clarify the distinction: the Americans with Disabilities Act and the tax cuts of 2001. Passage of the ADA promotes equality of outcome; Americans with physical challenges lead more normal – and equal – lives today than in 1990. The cost, however, for governments to make curb ramps at intersections, add wheel-chair friendly buses to transit systems and the like is enormous, and the increased revenue necessary to pay these expenses comes from citizens. For every penny taken from a citizen, one's choices on how to spend one's income are diminished. The citizen's liberty is diminished.

Likewise, the Bush tax cut allows citizens to keep more of their income, thereby enhancing each citizen's liberties or choices. People have greater opportunities; hence, the tax cut promotes equality of opportunity. At the same time, however, the government has less revenue with which to fund programs that promote the general welfare.

I contend that nearly every piece of domestic legislation and a fair number of foreign policy matters involve a choice between promoting equality of outcome or equality of opportunity. As might already be apparent, both of our two major political parties champion a position, with the Republicans emphasizing equality of opportunity and the Democrats equality of outcome. Their arguments create a kind of schizophrenic struggle for America's political conscience.

Now the conflict between the two views, or the balance between liberty/individualism and democracy/equality, has oscillated fairly regularly, over the years, with one side holding sway for a few decades only to be replaced by the other. The two constants were the inevitability of change and the enthusiastic participation of the people to follow along. Unfortunately, the public's passion for politics has weakened since the late 1960s, and with it, the

swing of the political pendulum appears frozen in the middle, if the outcome of the 2000 presidential election is any indication. As diametrically opposed as the parties are, the electorate appears confused as to which direction the country should take, leaving party leaders to debate major issues in polarizing language.

The Problems Facing Our Democracy

It is fairly common knowledge that the number of citizens voting in United States elections at all levels – local, state, and national – has been declining. For presidential elections, 1960 is the modern high-water mark; then, 63% of eligible voters went to the polls. The decline has been steady ever since, with slightly more than 50% voting in 2000. Turnout for senatorial, congressional, gubernatorial, and other statewide offices, is on average even lower. Local elections are more difficult to generalize about given the vagaries of local issues, but in Philadelphia, birthplace of our government, turnout in recent elections, primaries included, has been below 25%. This is not unusual elsewhere across the country.

Additionally, it has been noted that Americans are not as involved in civic or community activities in the same numbers as they once were. The first noteworthy evidence of this phenomenon was reported in *Habits of the Heart* (1985). Interviewing a sample of over 200 middle-class white men and women, Bellah and his colleagues found that people in their sample expressed feelings of isolation. They believed no one really cared about them and yearned for community while experiencing an appalling moral void. More recently, Putnam (2000) in *Bowling Alone* chronicles the decline in a range of group activities from league bowling (hence the title of his work) to participate in fraternal, civic and religious organizations. According to Putnam, when Americans have free time, they are likely to spend it alone or with family. This trend reverses literally hundreds of years of American tradition of civic and community engagement, and for me is a manifestation of the erosion of our political culture. There are communitarians, however, such as Etzioni (1993, 1996), who challenge Putnam's statistics, but their arguments are often coupled with pleas for greater involvement, thereby undermining the credibility of their interpretation of the trends.

Should we be concerned about low levels of civic involvement and voting? What if volunteer fire companies had no volunteers, or if we held an election and no one came? Or, more likely, what if an election is held in which only 30% of the eligible voters participate, and the winning candidate in a multi-candidate field receives 40% of the total vote? The winner can claim victory, which in reality represents the choice of only 12% of the eligible voters. Or, consider examples from recent presidential elections: in 1980, Reagan received the support of 25% of the eligible electorate; in 1992 Clinton garnered 22%; while in 2000, Bush collected barely 24%. Democracy requires the participation of the people in the choice of its leaders, and low levels of participation raise questions about the legitimacy of elections and the ability of elected officials to rule. Admittedly, there are those who are sanguine about low levels of voting (see Lipset 1981; Ansolabehere & Iyengar 1995; and any number of political consultants who seek to suppress turnout as a campaign strategy), but most political scientists are deeply troubled by the trend.

Why don't people vote? The three demographic factors most often associated with voting are age, education, and income. The older, more educated, and wealthy one is, the more likely one is to vote; and so conversely, the younger, less educated and poorer one is, the less likely one is to vote (Miller and Shanks 1996). Since education and income are highly correlated, one may substitute socioeconomic status and have a more parsimonious explanation. But, with nearly half of the voting age population not participating, these demographic variables reveal only part of an answer. Studies focusing on nonvoters demonstrate that the educated and relatively wealthy non-voters,

especially among the younger age cohorts, are likely to be apathetic, alienated or cynical citizens. The apathetic citizen has no interest in politics, while the alienated person feels abandoned by the system, and the cynical non-voter sees the political system as corrupt. (Hadley 1978; Piven & Cloward 2000; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980) Political scientists would describe the latter two types of non-voters as having low levels of political efficacy, which is the sense that one is able to influence the political system.

Why have apathy, alienation, and cynicism become so prevalent? I believe that basic elements of our political culture have been battered by relatively recent historical events. Beginning with the assassination of President Kennedy, succeeding generations of Americans experienced the Vietnam War as run by Nixon and Kissinger (5), Watergate, Koreagate, Abscam, the savings and loan scandal involving Charles Keating, eight years of President Reagan's attacks on government as the source of American's problems, and the various scandals of Clinton. It is no coincidence that a common theme in most of these disaffecting political experiences is the large amounts of money attempting to influence policy-making.

Since 1960, it seems, Americans have witnessed events that cause them to question the value of government. Indeed, it should not be surprising to learn that recent studies also find many Americans are mistrustful of government. By nearly every measure, Americans express a lack of faith in government and political leaders (Braithwaite & Levi 1998; Nye, Zelikow, & King 1997). When examined over a fifty-year period, the downward trend is unmistakable. Congress and the president evince the least amount of trust with the federal courts faring somewhat better. Of course, that changed in November 2000 with the Supreme Court's decision in *Bush v. Gore*. Some of the explanations for the trend relate to economic cycles, the increasing polarization or partisanship in politics, and the growing negativity in election campaigns. It also does not help when incumbent members of Congress run campaigns that are critical of the Congress (Fenno 1975; Parker & Davidson 1979).

In their study, *Congress As Public Enemy*, Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1995) found that the public's poor perception of Congress is a function of the public's distaste for and disdain of partisan politics and the legislative process itself. Essentially, people do not particularly like to see democracy in action, or if I may paraphrase Bismarck, they would rather not watch either sausage or laws being made. I find this particularly revealing and disturbing, and it marks a distinct change in our political culture. Can we maintain a democracy when the public does not understand or appreciate how its government operates?

The last problem follows from and reinforces the others, and it amounts to the ignorance of Americans of things political. If one has ever seen Jay Leno pose common knowledge questions to average people on the streets of Los Angeles, one understands immediately what I mean. A larger and more scientific study of American political information (Delli Carpini and Keeler 1996) found that the extent of political knowledge across the electorate has not changed significantly from relatively low levels to modest levels (depending on the subject matter) in fifty years, this despite far more extensive media coverage of public events and a supposedly more literate citizenry. The authors found that, as with voting, age, education and income differentiated the more from the least informed, but that race and gender also were significant in explaining differences in political information. Whites and males were significantly better informed than non-whites and women.

Were Jefferson alive today he would be appalled. He understood early on the value of an educated citizenry to the successful maintenance of democracy, and argued for public education so that citizens could discuss intelligently the major public policy issues of the day and evaluate the qualifications of those seeking public office. But Americans no longer bother to discuss politics, and if

and when they do, they are likely not to understand the subject matter nor particularly enjoy the conversation. To compound the problem, standardized test results over several years show that students know little about American history or understand how their government operates (McQueen 1999; Toppo 2002).

A contributing factor to poor political knowledge is the media. Driven by the demand for high profits by stockholders and less concerned with fulfilling a public service function, nearly all major news sources produce "news" that caters to the lowest common denominator. I do appreciate the fact that newspaper, radio, and television companies must be profitable, but I fail to accept the idea that quality and professionalism in the gathering and reporting of news must be sacrificed to achieve profitability. When ABC turned its news operation over to the entertainment division and Roone Arledge in the late 1960s, it marked the beginning of the end of old-fashioned, unglamorized news coverage (6). The proliferation of news sources, especially those of questionable value on the Internet, and the 24-hour news cycle feed the frenzy to sensationalize the news to attract an audience. A recent survey found that almost half of all Americans get some of their daily news from the Internet, while more than one-third of Americans under thirty acquire their news from late-night talk show hosts like Leno and Letterman as well as television dramas and even comedies like *The Simpsons*, one of my favorite social satires but not a source of news (Williams & Delli Carpini 2002).

To recapitulate the problems, the average American citizen is poorly informed about politics, does not understand and trust government nor appreciate how and why the government functions, and is less involved in civic and community activities, including the most basic of civic obligations, voting. Not an inspiring image of *Civitas Americanus*. But are we alone in facing these problems? Are other democracies confronting similar trends? Given the condition of our democracy, should we continue our efforts to export it – conduct democratic nation-building experiments – to peoples emerging from authoritarian or totalitarian political regimes? Investigating democracies in other cultures provides a basis for comparison with our own as well as exposing the problems endemic to democratic systems.

Democracy Abroad

In 1975, the Trilateral Commission released a study in which the authors claimed that the industrialized democracies of the world were in crisis because their governments were caught between increasing public demand for services and declining resources with which to meet those demands (Crozier, Huntington, & Watanuki). Their dire predictions now appear prescient but for reasons other than those outlined by the authors, although democratic governments' capacity to deliver services of acceptable cost and quality continues to be a concern. What tears at the fabric of democracies in modern, industrialized nations is the deterioration of public interest and trust in government not unlike what has transpired in America.

Democracies in the developed nations of the world – Western Europe and Japan – have witnessed changes among their citizens comparable to those in the United States discussed earlier. Pharr and Putnam (2000) present compelling data that portray the voting public in these democracies as disillusioned with their leaders and governmental institutions. Drawing on opinion surveys with similar questions over a thirty-year period, they report a steep reduction in public trust and confidence in Austria, England, France, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden, and Switzerland. While the authors and their colleagues disagree as to what causes these trends, they do contend that there is a causal relationship between the poor performance of governmental institutions in the public's mind and the decline in civic engagement.

One manifestation of the problem is the success of right-wing candidates, those promoting individualism at the expense of community yet in the name of a

homogeneous community, that is, one without foreigners, who supposedly are the root cause of all social, political, and economic ills in their countries. Joerg Haider in Austria, Vlaams Blok in Belgium, Mogens Slistrup in Denmark, Le Pen in France, Berlusconi in Italy, Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands, and Carl Hagen in Norway, among other party leaders in every industrial democracy, have built their careers on exploiting the public's xenophobia, ignorance of politics, and mistrust of government (see Dionne 2002; Rubin 2002). It appears that democracies are at risk from internal forces that are, theoretically, within the control of their citizens. I will offer an interpretation and solution to this below, but first I wish to pursue one more line of inquiry: Is democracy in peril from external forces as well as internal ones?

According to one author, "western," liberal, democratic regimes have nothing to fear from competing ideologies. In the summer of 1989, Francis Fukuyama published an article (later expanded into a book called *The End of History and the Last Man*) that generated great controversy. In it, he argued that liberal democracy, as a philosophy of government, defeated its main rivals on the right, fascism and authoritarianism, when the Allies won the Second World War, and those on the left, totalitarianism and communism, when the West prevailed in the Cold War. The latter victory was marked by the fall of the Berlin Wall, the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the opening of the Chinese market to free trade. With no other serious challengers, Fukuyama speculated, the world was entering a period of unending tranquility (7). Liberal democratic governments assure a peaceful existence because liberal democracies rarely go to war with one another.

Not surprisingly, Fukuyama was challenged by others who argued that the political conflicts of the future would not be between countries that championed particular political ideologies but cultures seeking to separate their identities from those of other cultures. Put another way, as Samuel Huntington says, we will see clashes of civilization, particularly secular, western cultures confronting Islamic culture (Huntington 1993; and see Lewis 2002). Globalization has spread western values into regions of the world where those values are unwelcome by some to the point of provoking violence to preserve traditions.

There is also telling evidence that stable regimes, those that provide a relatively peaceful and secure environment for their people, need not be democratic, whereas democracies produce insecurity and violence if planted on inappropriately prepared people. Kaplan (1997) reviews the experience of democratic governments in developing nations over the last twenty years, and notes the large number of countries that experienced civil unrest and decimated economies. Clearly, while democracy may appear triumphant to Fukuyama, it may not be the appropriate form of government for all people at all times. The flaw in Fukuyama's thesis is that he places more emphasis on liberalism (read capitalism or materialism) than he does on democracy. To assume that liberal, capitalistic democracies will quickly and easily be established in all nations strains credibility, as the many scholars who have studied democracies comparatively would attest.

Aristotle was the first to understand the fragility of democracy. In *The Politics*, he analyzed governments using two criteria: the size of the ruling body (categorizing them as one, a few, or the many) and the motivations of the rulers (this time employing two questions: did they rule in their own, selfish, interest or in the interest of the state or entire body politic). As he and his students examined their examples of regimes ruled directly by the people and in the true, best interests of the entire citizenry, they found that these countries had a large and stable middle class. Aristotle concluded that the presence of a large middle class diffused class conflict and radical efforts to redistribute wealth, thereby reducing stress on government while creating a stable society (8).

In the last forty years, social scientists have added to our understanding of factors that are critical to the success of democracy (see Almond 1991; Diamond 1992; Muller 1995). Mean income correlates very highly with the incidence of successful democratic government, as does the average level of education. Though education and income are correlated, both remain independently associated with democratic rule. Moreover, the higher the average level of education attained by a country's people, the more likely the people are to espouse democratic values such as freedoms of speech and press as well as to support free elections (Inkles & Smith 1974). Without a people that hold democratic values, no democracy will flourish. Essentially, a nation's political culture must be transformed to accommodate democracy; yet, a citizenry is very unlikely to acquire democratic values if a majority lives in conditions of poverty and ignorance.

Returning to Fukuyama, one must ask: Is capitalism necessary for democracy? It seems that, based on the research, a healthy economy and educated electorate are absolutely necessary. But need the economy be capitalistic? Fukuyama assumes it will be; yet it is not a foregone conclusion that every new or existing democracy be founded on a capitalist economy. Indeed, Almond (1991) wrote a telling piece in which he compiled credible arguments as to how democracy can both sustain and erode capitalism and how capitalism can both sustain and erode democracy. Though it sounds improbable, the arguments on all sides are logical and supported by serious scholarship by major figures (see Bowles & Gintis 1986; Friedman 1981; Hirschman 1986; Lindblom 1977; Olson 1982; Schumpeter 1946).

Capitalism may evolve in almost any political system, but the critical elements needed to kick-start a capitalist economy -- one with free markets -- are people with initiative and creativity and a ruler or rulers willing to accept some free exchange of goods and service. It does not matter how or why these things occur, but without them, capitalism is unlikely and democracy will not develop. Thus, a benevolent dictator (for example, Tito in Yugoslavia) or communist regime (China, for example) may create the conditions conducive to capitalism. Once a middle class emerges, it pushes for greater educational opportunities for its children. More education leads to higher expectations for political rights and additional economic freedom. Eventually, over time, the people will topple the government if it fails to extend greater rights and privileges and replace it with a political system that is a crude democracy that matures with practice.

From the preceding discussion, it should be obvious that democracy is not a form of government that is suitable for all peoples at all times, particularly liberal democracies. Moreover, once democracy is established, it may fail for lack of proper attention by its citizens. America and its counterparts in other industrial democracies confront a common dilemma: how to recapture the public's trust and confidence in the political system.

Zen and the Art of American Democracy

As I have suggested, liberalism or individualism now dominates our political culture and that of the other industrialized democracies. What is worse, it is individualism in its crudest form: selfishness. If one has any doubts about just how pervasive selfishness has become, consider the popularity of TV shows like "Survivor," "Millionaire," and "The Weakest Link," entertainment that celebrates the success of individuals through luck, scheming, or deception. The rash of scandals in the business community involving, among others, Enron, WorldCom, and Xerox, strongly suggests that individual corporate executives are more willing to place their own personal gain ahead of their companies' well-being, their stockholders, and the general community. A recent study reports that most Americans admit to encountering rude behavior in public places, particularly in autos, and engaging in said behavior themselves (Farkas et al 2002). If the general culture has developed to the point where people seek ways

to avoid engaging with others but complain that they feel lonely, or when they do interact with others, they treat others poorly, it is not surprising then that people no longer see the value of participating in political activities. Somehow, those of us in the education business need to begin sowing the seeds of civic responsibility and community spirit so that another generation of citizens does not fall victim to selfish individualism. The passion for politics that once sustained American democracy must be reawakened. People must again care about politics and government, and with that renewed passion will come quality in both. How may this occur?

The inspiration for this paper is *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert M. Pirsig (1984), a book that I rediscovered about fifteen years ago, and read again this summer. I recall that my first reading, as a graduate student, was exhilarating. Pirsig's battle with mental illness, to understand himself and to come to terms with his son while searching to reconcile reason with romanticism and emotion, challenged me as few other books had. Rereading it this summer, traveling through Wyoming and Colorado and hiking in Yellowstone, the Tetons, and Rocky Mountain National Parks, I found myself relating to Pirsig's life as an academic, a professor at a teaching college, in ways that I could not as a graduate student. Though I am not pursued by the same psychological demons as Pirsig (just a few CIA agents dressed in black), I do share his interest in quality. I also think that I understand more clearly why he linked his quest for quality to the study of Zen Buddhism. I cannot be certain if Pirsig's philosophical analysis is correct, but adapting his approach to the current problems facing our democracy seems worth a try.

Pirsig saw the distinction between reason and emotion as artificial. He argued that those trained in the scientific method pressed the application of pure reason to the study of the world's problems to the exclusion of other approaches, while those educated in the humanities emphasized the use of emotions or feelings to interpret or understand the world without appreciating reason. Pirsig's insight was that the pursuit of quality joins the two perspectives. Without the passion for a task, such as fixing a motorcycle, the application of reason is likely to lead to shoddy workmanship. Likewise, trying to fix a motorcycle just because one loves motorcycles but without some understanding of the logic of its construction does not get one very far. As Phaedrus, Pirsig's alter ego in the book, says, a person must feel an identity with the task at hand. Feeling one with a motorcycle -- bringing logic and reason as well as passion and emotion to the task -- produces quality results. I admit that I am not doing justice to Pirsig's thesis, so I strongly encourage everyone to read the book.

Let me now apply Pirsig's ideas to problems of America's political culture. If one considers liberalism, the creation of the thinkers of the Enlightenment, as cold, calculating reason, and democracy as emotional romanticism (9), one begins to understand how Pirsig may fit. We cannot bring these two conflicting values into harmony without also adding a healthy dose of quality in our political system, and quality will not emerge unless the public cares about politics. The average citizen must once again identify with America's democratic system. The public must understand that, if it wants quality government, it must care about it passionately, understand its operation in some detail, and then work at it. We must reclaim the connection between caring about government and the quality of the government we receive. Citizenship is more than just a passive right; it carries affirmative obligations, and too few Americans today appear willing to assume these obligations even at the most basic level: voting.

Allow me to assume that liberalism fosters tolerance while democracy nurtures compromise. If I am correct, then a renewed passion for politics should also restore both tolerance and compromise to their rightful places in our political system. As the people awaken to the political world, they should understand that

tolerance, in its appropriate form, frees them and their elected officials to engage in an open exchange of ideas that then lead to real compromise in which all parties understand the trade-offs and consequences of any final decision. Ben Franklin clearly understood this when he said that compromise does not make heroes but does make strong democracies.

Current efforts to stimulate public involvement may help restore the public's passion for politics and the balance between liberalism and democracy. The Kettering Foundation hopes to restore political participation through what it calls "civil deliberations." The Foundation publishes booklets on three major policy issues each year in which the issues are presented objectively and in straightforward language. The Foundation also hosts a network of National Issues Forum across the country in which the public is invited to discuss the issues under the guidance of a Kettering staff professional. Through ties with newspapers, especially in Dayton, Ohio, where the foundation is located, the substance of the discussions is reported to a wider audience. In this way, Kettering anticipates the intelligent, careful, and civil discussion of public policies (*The Economist* 1998).

In something that he calls a deliberative poll, Fishkin (1995) brought 300 randomly selected average citizens (who were willing to participate in this experiment) together for several days of testing and discussion during the 1992 presidential election. The participants were first polled as to their opinions on the major public policy issues raised in the election. They were then given objective, balanced presentations on each issue as well as a large amount of factual information presented without jargon. The people were then placed in groups where they were free to discuss their views on the issues and to try to change the minds of others in their groups. Participants were polled again to determine if and how opinions had changed. Fishkin discovered that, in the aggregate, opinions on the issues changed little; however, the participants felt much more informed about the issues and the candidates' positions on the issues, and therefore were much more likely to vote in the 1992 election.

It appears that, given the opportunity to be involved in open and informed political discussions, Americans are capable of reconnecting to politics. Expanding the number of people involved from several hundreds to hundreds of millions requires leadership from within government as well as extensive use of the public journalism mentioned earlier (see note 6).

In closing, I wish to share some of Pirsig's own words:

I think that if we are going to reform the world, and make it a better place to live in, the way to do it is not to talk about relationships of a political nature Programs of a political nature are important end products of social quality that can be effective only if the underlying structure of social values is right. The social values are right only if the individual values are right. The place to improve the world is first in one's own heart and head and hands, and then work outward from there. (Pirsig 1984, 267)

Ultimately, Pirsig is correct. The political system cannot and will not reform itself unless the people demand it. But before any significant change in our democracy occurs, individual Americans must find a place for politics, however small, in their own hearts, heads, and hands.

The End

Notes

1. Locke, as did all others of his time, actually wrote that all *men* are created equal. Women were not viewed as full and equal members of the political system.
2. The 17th Amendment, adopted in 1913, permits direct election of US senators by the people.
3. I do acknowledge that major government deregulation of business began under Carter in 1978 with the airline and trucking industries, and that Nixon actually spearheaded regulation of the environment and expanded a few social welfare programs, particularly Social Security, when he pushed through the automatic increase of benefits so that they did not require votes in Congress and indexed increases to the cost of living. But, the overall trend since 1964 is for Republicans to dismantle government while the Democrats fight to retain it.
4. A friend and colleague reminded me that the difference between liberty/individualism and democracy/equality is not unlike the difference economists describe between efficiency and equity in the marketplace. Efficiency in a market involves the use of resources to achieve the greatest possible happiness for society as a whole. "Typically, economists believe that this can be achieved by encouraging liberty, or the unencumbered individual pursuit of self-interest. Obviously, when the pursuit of self-interest does not produce such a result, or when Adam Smith's 'invisible hand' fails miserably, government must step in to correct market outcomes (taxing polluters, enforcing antitrust laws, providing national defense) and interfere with liberty. Equity or fairness is based upon the democratic notion that all citizens have a right to some minimum standard of living and that market outcomes should be altered along those lines. Thus, economists typically favor some type of welfare system and minimum standards of access to education and health care. Much like the conflict between liberty and democracy, economists must deal with the conflict between efficiency and equity. For example, in the pursuit of equity, we provide welfare benefits that require taxes on non-poor citizens, thus reducing the incentive to produce for beneficiaries as well as taxpayers. This reduces overall production and happiness in society thereby reducing efficiency." (Conversation with Dr. Robert Seeley, May 14, 2002)
5. Recent revelations in books like *Sideshow* (Shawcross 1979) and *A Tangled Web* (Bundy 1998) strongly suggest that Nixon and Kissinger manipulated the conduct of the Vietnam War, delaying its end for the political needs of the president in order to secure his reelection.
6. There is a movement among some professional and academic journalists known as civic or public journalism. It seeks to have journalists produce the kind of objective, intelligent information that creates an informed and intelligent electorate. See http://www.cpn.org/cpn/pew_partnership/civic_partners_journalism.htm for additional information.
7. Fukuyama employs a Hegelian methodology in which he assumes that all world history is driven by competing ideas or worldviews. One worldview may dominate for hundreds of years, be periodically challenged by competing worldviews, until a worldview of sufficient credibility (and a large enough following) supplants the dominant worldview. Hegel believed that all of history could be explained in this manner. Fukuyama adapts Hegel to suggest that liberal democracy is the end product of thousands of years of this dialectic, giving us the "end" of history, and also the titles of his essay and book.
8. Aristotle labeled regimes ruled selfishly by the people democracy, which he saw as a kind of mob rule. Regimes ruled directly by the people but in a fashion that recognized the greater needs of the community he called "polities."
9. In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau railed against reason and the Enlightenment, and called for a return to government founded on emotions. In his perfect political system, people individually and collectively trust their feelings to determine the correct course of action for their community.

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Concerning the Speaker

Born in the summer of 1949 to Angie and Dom Baldino, Dr. Thomas J. Baldino, or Tommy as he was known then, had a rather traditional South Philadelphia childhood: he played stickball and touch football between parked cars; attended a Catholic elementary school; and watched the Phillies play at Connie Mack Stadium. The Army-McCarthy hearings raised his first questions about politics, but it was the 1960 election that triggered serious interest in the subject. He was fortunate to attend LaSalle College High School in suburban Montgomery County, and he made the daily, 105-minute commute on public transportation. The challenging curriculum and the values of the Christian Brothers pushed him to excel in areas and ways he hadn't understood before, and it was in the history and government classes that he finally found his academic niche. At LaSalle College, he majored in political science, but also took many courses in history and German language and literature. It was during these years that he met and fell in love with Sandy Carbone, and the two wed in August 1972. With a draft number of sixty-four and the Vietnam War still raging, he decided to enlist in the U.S. Army Reserve in May 1971, days before his graduation, *summa cum laude*. Fortunately, he was able to defer his enrollment in the PhD Program at the University of Illinois for a year while he completed his active duty commitment. From January to June 1972, he worked as a substitute teacher in the Philadelphia public schools, an experience that convinced him that secondary school teaching was not where he should spend his future. He completed a master's degree (writing a thesis on Italian foreign policy in the post-war period), and transferred to the University of Pennsylvania in 1974, where he was as a teaching and research assistant. His dissertation on the consequences of congressional reform was written under the supervision of Professor Edwin Haefele. In 1978, he accepted a tenure-track position as an instructor in political science at St. Francis College in Loretto, Pennsylvania. One year later, he took a similar position at Juniata College where he remained for the next twelve years. While at Juniata, he was tenured and promoted to associate professor, served on many college committees, as well as task forces and authorities in the larger community. He held the chairmanship of the political science department for over four years. Dr. Baldino was hired by Wilkes in 1991 as a full professor without tenure to serve as the chairperson of the department of political science and public administration. He received tenure in 1994, and was appointed chairperson of the division of social sciences and communication studies in 1998. Following a sabbatical in 2002, he stepped down as chairperson and returned to full-time teaching.

Dr. Baldino teaches courses in American government and politics, the Congress, the presidency, political parties, elections, and various issues in public policy. His teaching has twice been recognized as outstanding: at Juniata in 1985 with the Lindback Award and at Wilkes in 1996 with the Carpenter Award. Over the years, Dr. Baldino has held various offices in the Northeastern Political Science Association and the Pennsylvania Political Science Association, where he held the presidency, and was the editor of its journal, *Commonwealth*, for five years. He continues as associate editor for manuscripts in the area of American politics. His scholarly interests include congressional politics and ethics, state and local governments, and public policy. His research has been published in journals and edited volumes, while his book reviews appear regularly in *The Library Journal*.

When not teaching or engaged in scholarly pursuits, Dr. Baldino enjoys reading modern fiction, especially science fiction, playing the acoustic guitar, hiking, and spending time with his family.

Concerning the Lecture

The premise of the Final World Lecture is that the lecturer has only six months to live and would like to sum up a career of teaching and scholarship for colleagues, students, and friends. While the selected professor is, in fact, healthy, the hypothesized death adds urgency and focus to the lecture. The idea is borrowed from the University of Michigan's "Last Lecture."

The Final World Lecture is given on the evening of Wilkes University's Faculty Recognition Day, at which faculty are lauded for their achievements as teachers and scholars. A number of awards, including the Carpenter Award for teaching, are announced at this annual event.

The Final Word lecturer is chosen by a committee of Wilkes professors and receives a \$1,000 award through the generosity of an anonymous donor. At a subsequent time, and at the donor's discretion, the title of the award and lecture series will be changed to include the donor's name.

Previous winners were:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 1993 | James L. Merryman
<i>Reinventing Humanity for Survival in the Twenty-first Century:
Salvaging Our Best through Prehistory and Multiculturalism</i> |
| 1994 | Dennis P. Hupchick
<i>Nation or Millet? Contrasting Western European and Islamic
Political Cultures in the Balkans</i> |
| 1995 | Donald R. Brand
<i>Multiculturalism Revisited</i> |
| 1996 | No lecture given |
| 1997 | Jane M. Elmes-Crahall
<i>Rhetorical Savvy and Political Civility</i> |
| 1998 | Patricia Siplon
<i>Scholar, Witness or Activist: The Lessons and Dilemmas of an
AIDS Research Agenda</i> |
| 1999 | William Terzaghi
<i>Cornucopia or Pandora's box? The promise and perils of cloning,
genetic engineering, and bioinformatics</i> |
| 2000 | Umid R. Nejib
<i>Civility of Discourse and Integrative Curriculum: The Overlooked
Duo of Academe</i> |
| 2001 | Walter Karpinich
<i>World Without Boundaries: For Richer and For Poorer</i> |