

University of Vermont

UVM ScholarWorks

Graduate College Dissertations and Theses

Dissertations and Theses

2014

Iraq: My Stories of Life, Liberty and Leadership

Kenneth Smith

University of Vermont

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/graddis>



Part of the [Educational Administration and Supervision Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Smith, Kenneth, "Iraq: My Stories of Life, Liberty and Leadership" (2014). *Graduate College Dissertations and Theses*. 319.

<https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/graddis/319>

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Dissertations and Theses at UVM ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate College Dissertations and Theses by an authorized administrator of UVM ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@uvm.edu.

IRAQ: MY STORIES OF LIFE, LIBERTY & LEADERSHIP

A Dissertation Presented

by

Kenneth Smith

to

The Faculty of the Graduate College

of

The University of Vermont

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education
Specializing in Leadership & Policy Studies

October, 2014

Accepted by the Faculty of the Graduate College, The University of Vermont, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education specializing in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies.

Dissertation Examination Committee:

Robert J. Nash, Ed.D. Advisor

Judith A. Aiken, Ed.D.

Christopher J. Koliba, Ph.D.

Judith A. Cohen, Ph.D. Chairperson

Cynthia J. Forehand, Ph.D. Dean, Graduate College

Date: August 26, 2014

Abstract

...this war is lost, and the surge is not accomplishing anything...

– Harry Reid, April 19, 2007

Human nature prevails. Our desire is to live. Our unalienable right is to be free; to enjoy the fruits of our labor. How we spend our limited time on this earth pursuing happiness is up to each of us: uniquely, individually, with our own distinctive personality, intellect and motivation. In the following personal exploration and scholarly analysis, I discuss how our inherent gift of life and the desire for liberty form an integrated platform from which leadership personifies itself in the lives of many. I examine how my life and the lives of others from both Iraq and America connected on the plains of Al Anbar Province to form a common bond of humanity – not of clashing cultures – that ultimately led a nation of thirty million people to freedom; and identify how leadership decisions led to an Islamist invasion from Syria that threatens that very freedom that 4,400 Americans died to provide. I integrate conversations with Iraqis to inform my conclusions about the utility of our occupation, the role leadership played and the implications for theory and practice. This dissertation explores the political, economic and religious distinctions and underlying similarities between perceptions and reality as they relate to life, liberty and leadership in disparate cultures framed by war and peace, and concludes with suggestions how multi-cultural organizations in general, and educational leadership communities in particular, can practically apply what I learned in their daily work processes and relationships.

If ever time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in Government, our country will stand in need of its experienced patriots to prevent ruin.

– Samuel Adams, 1780

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation and my entire life-long learning experience to my mother, Lois and father, Ken. Though you passed to a better place many years ago, and I did not have much time to spend with you on this great earth, what happened when we were together offered me the foundation from which to build my life, value liberty and lead change in times of adversity. To both, I am truly grateful. And to my brother, Fred, still with me, though in Australia with his family of five, who serves as a beacon of familial stability, demonstrates a work ethic second to none and inspires me to value the importance of dedicating life to the service of others.

Acknowledgments

I want to thank my student advisor since starting the Educational Leadership Program in 2005, Dr. Chris Koliba, for his patience and insight over the years. I also owe a debt of gratitude to former Ed.D. Program Coordinator, Dr. Susan Hasazi, for her encouragement to focus my research on leadership and my experiences while on active duty in Iraq. Dr. Judith Aiken was instrumental in completing my work through the knowledge I gained in her dissertation writing class. It provided the framework for my efforts and helped me focus on what is important. I also thank my dissertation advisor, Dr. Robert Nash, for introducing me to scholarly personal narratives as an expressive research tool and outstanding way to transfer knowledge from one human to another. My sister-in-law, Marcia Trahan, is a gifted writer who took my conversations with Iraqis and turned them into wonderful stories of life, liberty and leadership. Her masterly-crafted vignettes illuminate the lives of Iraqis in Al Anbar Province – and for this I am truly grateful. And lastly, and most recently, I want to thank Salli Griggs for her professionalism in editing and formatting this dissertation. I cannot count the many hours she saved me by taking the initiative, making changes and sharing recommendations that enabled this work to be complete, coherent and hopefully meaningful and helpful to the reader. To all: Thank you!

Table of Contents

Dedication	iii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
List of Figures	vii
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Purpose.....	1
Objective and Themes.....	3
A Look Ahead.....	6
Chapter II: Methodology.....	7
How Will I Do This?.....	7
What is Scholarly Personal Narrative?	7
Finding Research in Me	8
Constructs, Themes, Personal Stories, and Hooks.....	9
Challenges.....	10
What is my Situation and Story?	11
Chapter III: Discovery	14
My Journey	14
My Family.....	15
Race.....	19
Sexuality	21
Privilege	23
Discrimination.....	23
Looking Back.....	26
As a Leader	28
Emergence.....	28
Formative Years.....	30
Institutional Models	31
Peer Groups.....	33
Theory and Applications.....	34
Going Forward.....	38
Chapter IV: Iraq.....	43
It is Time to Go	43
California	44
South Carolina	44
Kuwait.....	48

I am There	51
Their Lives	88
Conversations of Life, Liberty and Leadership	91
Distinctions and Similarities	96
Perceptions and Reality.....	100
It's Over	103
I am Home - but Not	107
Chapter V: Application	111
Guiding Principles	112
I Believe	112
Life	114
Liberty.....	120
Battlefield to Classroom to Boardroom to Congress	126
Education	127
Leadership.....	130
Managing Change	131
Understanding and Coping	132
What does it Mean for Those Implementing?.....	133
How do Leaders Develop a Personal Theory of Change?	135
My Theory of Change	138
Unanticipated Consequences: Squandered Negative Entropy	140
Complexity.....	141
Personal Philosophy	148
Policy	154
Community	157
Commitment	160
Conclusion	164
Chapter VI: Lessons.....	166
The Reflective Practitioner	166
How will I Apply	169
Implications.....	171
Looking Back.....	172
Going Forward	173
Finally	175
References.....	176
Appendices.....	182

List of Figures

1.	Family Home Pencil Sketch.....	17
2.	1967 Firebird.....	18
3.	Army Teaching Navy.....	45
4.	Learning Enough to be Dangerous	45
5.	How to Search.....	46
6.	How to Shoot	46
7.	My Family.....	47
8.	Having to Show You Care	47
9.	Happy Campers on Their Way	48
10.	Happy Campers on Their Way	48
11.	World Airways MD-11 In-Flight Tracker	49
12.	Underside of Plane.....	49
13.	Seabags	49
14.	Hanging at the McDonald’s Food court.....	50
15.	Kuwaiti Camel Herders.....	50
16.	Part of the Coalition Forces – Georgians.....	50
17.	Coed-Multi-Ethnic Camp Out in Kuwait.....	50
18.	9mm Training in Kuwait.....	51
19.	Convoy Training in Kuwait	51
20.	CH-46 – The Workhorse – The Taxi – At Ramadi.....	52
21.	Ancient World.....	53
22.	Euphrates River South of Haditha	54
23.	New Iraqi Flag	58
24.	No, this CH 46 Gunner does not need a Haircut.....	58
25.	Open tailgate on CH 46 – Always in Pairs	58
26.	A Typical Street in Camp Fallujah	59
27.	The Typical Office.....	59
28.	With Simon from Uganda at Camp Fallujah	60
29.	Camp Fallujah Church Service	60
30.	New Al Anbar Provincial Seal.....	61
31.	The Governor Himself with Gunner	62
32.	Al Faw Palace	63
33.	With Iraqi Anbar Provincial Police of Ramadi.....	65
34.	Meeting with Refinery and Train Station Offload Facility Iraqi Contractors.....	66
35.	The Crude Oil K3 Pumping Station to Syria	67
36.	K3 Refinery.....	72
37.	Mr. Khalid, One of our Construction Contractors	73
38.	Engineer, Iraqi Republic Railways Director of Operations	75
39.	First Train from Bayji Offloading Crude Oil at K2.....	77

40	At K3 in Haditha Deciding What's Next.....	77
41	First Crude Oil to K3	78
42	With K3 Refinery Staff.....	78
43	Ospreys Landing at K3	79
44	Al Anbar Province Governor at K3 Dedication.....	79
45	Refinery Opening Celebration	80
46	Captain with Brigadier General	82
47	The Future Lives On	88
48	Liberty.....	110
49	May 17, 2014 Car Accident.....	120

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Purpose

...this war is lost, and the surge is not accomplishing anything...

- Harry Reid, April 19, 2007

I volunteered to go to Iraq in the summer of 2007 to join others already there to make a difference, to help win the war, utilize my experience and training to the best of my ability and to prove Reid and others with similar beliefs that they were wrong. And we did. I was part of “the surge” – President Bush’s plan for victory in Iraq. Like the current “surge” in Afghanistan, the Iraq war surge did accomplish something: liberty, which has at its foundation the freedom to live life as one chooses not as others dictate. The purpose for invading Iraq on March 19, 2003 was best articulated only five months earlier:

In the four years since the inspectors left, intelligence reports show that Saddam Hussein has worked to rebuild his chemical and biological weapons stock, his missile delivery capability, and his nuclear program. He has also given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including Al Qaeda members, though there is apparently no evidence of his involvement in the terrible events of September 11, 2001. It is clear, however, that if left unchecked, Saddam Hussein will continue to increase his capacity to wage biological and chemical warfare, and will keep trying to develop nuclear weapons. Should he succeed in that endeavor, he could

alter the political and security landscape of the Middle East, which as we know all too well affects American security.

- Senator Hillary Clinton, October 10, 2002

It is with this political backdrop that my desire to go to Iraq was formed. The resulting changes in my life define my purpose for writing to appeal to a larger audience through storytelling by sharing my discoveries, lessons learned, practical applications and to reflect on what may come next. My goal is to have the reader better understand the differences across cultures in terms of language, religion, governing and educational institutions that I experienced in Iraq. I do this through three major constructs of life, liberty and leadership, exploring each as they relate to life experiences and the literature. And most importantly, to provide a framework of leadership principles that can improve organizational effectiveness in multicultural institutions ranging from the classroom to the principal's office – from the student senate to the president's office – and from associations of collective bargaining unions and the factory floor to the halls of higher educational administration and corporate boardrooms.

I write this dissertation because I believe the feelings and beliefs I share throughout my dissertation are shared by many others, and that they are universal to our experiences associated with higher education. However, I argue that many students and educators are reluctant to express them in the academy for fear of retribution – alienation. For we all have the need to belong, to have the comfort of association with like-minded individuals.

In the following pages, I present guiding principles of who I am, my purpose for writing, how I present my findings through Scholarly Personal Narrative (SPN), and what I discovered through life's journey that led me to Iraq and beyond. I will present a detailed framework following the themes of life, liberty and leadership as set in Iraq in 2008, but which also include my personal experiences and practical applications for education, business, political, religious, economic, and philanthropic communities of action all so critical to maintaining a civil society. I provide not only my perspectives, but share synopses of conversations with Iraqis that capture the essence of their leadership expectations. I examine how my life and the lives of others from both Iraq and America connected on the plains of Al Anbar Province to form a common bond of humanity, not one of clashing cultures, but one that ultimately led a nation of thirty million people to freedom. In this dissertation I explore the political, economic and religious distinctions and underlying similarities between perceptions and reality as they relate to life, liberty and leadership in disparate cultures framed by war and peace, and concludes with suggestions how multi-cultural organizations in general, and educational leadership communities in particular, can practically apply what I learned in daily work processes and relationships that will enhance their operational effectiveness.

Objective and Themes

My objective in researching, reflecting and writing this dissertation is to provide a narrative of disparate cultures sharing leadership traits and practices with a common desire for life and liberty. A second and tangential objective is to help give voice to a population of politically and fiscally conservative college students, which should be

embraced by higher education, not ridiculed or ignored. I argue this has largely gone unnoticed in the literature. This is aptly illustrated by Nash lamenting the lack of “opposing truth perspectives” that liberal campus “progressives tend to see as reactionary conservative stances, simply beneath the interests of an enlightened, intellectual elite.”¹ I do not profess to be a member of the academy’s intellectual elite. However, I do offer my narratives and those shared by Iraqis that are based on multitudes of practical life experiences as a way to hopefully open the door to a different way of thinking.

My dissertation attempts to find answers to the following questions:

1. How has my upbringing and losing my parents at an early age affected my outlook on life?
2. Why do I have the seemingly unquenchable thirst for change?
3. How has my leadership style changed and adapted over the years?
4. What are the unique values and leadership attributes that are shared among disparate cultures?
5. How can we enhance leadership and political diversity throughout educational, political and corporate institutions?

Each of these contributes to a new understanding of the importance of preparing our future generations to inherit an open-minded, fiscally responsible and free world. Where liberty flourishes and tyranny is rejected; where each can choose to live life as they please, not as dictated by others.

¹ Nash (2004), 40.

My dissertation explores themes central to my core beliefs of life, liberty, leadership, multiculturalism (ethnic, religious, political, economic), education, diversity, flexibility, assertiveness, steadfastness and insecurity with respect to political and economic diversity in the academy. These themes weave throughout my dissertation to illustrate what I believe to be the foundation of freedom: an organization, state or institution that is financially stable and safe, where innovation and enthusiasm flourish because we respect each other and the generations who follow. This is the requisite platform from which I believe we as a free and safe world must operate: humanely, freely and with the collective good of humankind at the center of our efforts.

I draw upon the leadership, political and economic literature and personal communications and story-telling to universalize my own experiences. My narrative exposes the hypocrisy of the academy as it dismisses the importance of diversity of political thought as though it is something beneath addressing.

My second objective for writing this is best articulated by DeMethra LaSha Bradley who articulated the following in her ELPS dissertation:

I am not sharing my narrative for the sake of sharing; on the contrary, I am sharing my narrative in an effort to bring to light experiences that I purport are shared by many others throughout higher education. Through this dissertation others will have the ability to hear my story and my voice, and perhaps be able to find their voices in my narrative and know that their 'invisible' experiences are becoming "visible".

- DeMethra LaSha Bradley (2009). UVM Dissertation “Outside second-generation, inside first-generation: Shedding light on a hidden population in higher education.”

My hope is that by hearing my voice, the reader can throw off the fear of ridicule, reject the status-quo and embrace and teach the importance of diversity of political thought so important to the civil society and ultimate survival of humankind.

A Look Ahead

The following chapters discuss how I convey my research and findings and explore and reflect on my life and the discoveries I have made along the way. I will then identify how my life’s experiences and research of the literature combine to provide practical applications in the workplace, be it the classroom, boardroom, union hall, halls of government, workroom or war room. I will conclude with my personal reflection on where I have been, what I have provided, where I want to go and what I want to lead next.

CHAPTER II: METHODOLOGY

How Will I Do This?

What is Scholarly Personal Narrative?

Writing a scholarly personal narrative (SPN) seems to embody the characteristic of a Narcissistic Personality Disorder.¹ However, “Each of us must someday explain, and claim, our truths in our own voice.”² SPN allows me the opportunity to express myself in a formal document from which others may learn. As I reflect, discover who I am, what I have learned and what I can contribute to society in the future, I developed themes I wish to share with the reader by way of stories. It is with this foundation I start my scholastic journey of discovery by weaving personal stories into a narrative of themes illustrating life, liberty and leadership that I have experienced in life in general and in Iraq in particular.

I will articulate the theme of my life, liberty and leadership stories pieced together with scholarly literature references that includes personal stories and conversations with Iraqis utilizing cross cultural leadership analysis. My narrative is a personal essay on life, liberty and leadership and how scholarly applications, justifications and confirmation weave and/or integrate into Iraqis’ life stories. It includes moments of important self-insight or self-definition, moments when I made a breakthrough in discovery or becoming who I am. I want to use this form of scholarship to tell a story that could only be told personally. To be there, to witness, smell, laugh, gaze, to be amazed...“I write, therefore I exist” (Nash paraphrasing Descartes).

¹ Nash (2002).

² Nash (2003).

SPN further exemplifies itself for the reflective practitioner as I also address in Chapter VI's Lessons. It allows one to explore the consequences of one's predisposition for interpreting data. The data, observations and analysis I present in this paper are all influenced by the lens of my early childhood in particular, and environment in particular. Critical to understanding this is that I must grasp the concept of "internalization of authority,"¹ practically meaning I must know my "motivational reasoning for writing and ultimately learning from" my dissertation.²

This was a challenge for me. I did not understand the rigor required to construct an SPN. I had heard of it, tried it in class, but apparently did not listen or apply it well. I struggled with implementing the concept that ultimately led to this dissertation. I learned from my committee's feedback, conducted further research of the literature, reflected on my past, present and future, and ultimately wrote what I hope is a meaningful, historically accurate, account of life, liberty and leadership based on my experiences in Iraq. It is my aim that this SPN will bring to light many applications of how these experiences, grounded in my preconceived notions and the educational leadership literature, will offer the reader the opportunity to apply what I learned in their respective multicultural organizations.

Finding Research in Me

One of the key elements in developing an SPN is the understanding of self. Who am I? What do I stand for? What are my beliefs? How do I use my experiences to study myself, others, the literature and how do I apply these experiences to the future is

¹ Dewey (1938/1963).

² Koliba (2004).

paramount to successfully telling my story. The more I understand myself, the better I understand others. The more I study myself and how I interact in life, the more I can help others. Analyzing, reflecting, studying all become a way of researching me. My goal is to apply this research through my SPN so that others can more easily analyze, reflect and study themselves. The more we as a society understand ourselves, and why we do what we do, why we lead the way we lead, the better we will function harmoniously together improving our institutions for the betterment of the world. I was a member of these institutions in Iraq. And as a result of being flexible, adapting and better understanding each other, the Iraqis and Americans came together for the common cause of freedom. I argue that by knowing oneself, finding research in oneself, and being open to explore oneself, we all become better leaders with the ability to affect positive change in our society in general, and personal institutions ranging from the factory floor to the schoolhouse, in particular.

Constructs, Themes, Personal Stories, and Hooks

My SPN follows a model constructed by Nash¹ – a Passionate Search for Meaning – his theme of a journey for creating multiple meanings in life.² He uses his journey to answer his own intellectual and emotional curiosities. He tells personal stories from the earliest days of his teaching career in an urban high school in Boston and the success and failure of his individual experiences. They include the devastation of a student’s suicide and being told by her sister he was partly to blame. This is a hook. My hooks are not so profound, but do seek to illuminate the undercurrents of economics,

¹ Nash, 2002.

² Ibid.

politics, citizenship and religion while presenting a compelling story with themes of life, liberty and leadership.

I use themes and counter-themes in my narrative as they relate to leadership as we Americans perceive it and how Iraqis experienced it. The dimensions of cultural themes are:

- Technology (Society / Nature)
- Power (Society / State)
- Dependence (Individual / Society) and
- Nationalism (one's own State and other states)

These themes are particularly compelling in telling my stories from Iraq as they focus on relationships between societies, states, nature, individuals and nationalism. "Each dimension becomes engaged in media discourse on a variety of issues and each has a central theme and a counter-theme with deep historical roots in American culture",¹ and I would argue, Iraq.

Challenges

The trade-off in using SPN as a tool for providing knowledge is clear. As one draws themselves into becoming the "unit of analysis," our inherent bias regarding different cultures, nationalities, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, political principles, economic systems, and educational backgrounds come into play. These belief systems are instrumental to our foundation as individuals, but with SPN we share our individuality with others for the dual purpose of understanding and improving ourselves

¹ Gamson (1992), 56.

and helping others learn and improve. If my bias is obvious, and I do not acknowledge it, then the reader will likely shut down and not be open to personal reflection, let alone take seriously what I am saying in my personal stories.

Another challenge is my use of considerations of leadership by my Iraqi colleagues. This runs the risk of shifting the focus of my dissertation from me to others. Yet, this SPN makes unique contributions to the academic body of knowledge we have come to expect from higher education research and applied research and is worth the risk. I mitigate this risk through interrogation of self as reflected in interpersonal connections as a consequence of my Iraqi experience.

My discussion of leadership is based on strong, western, male perspectives. I want to explore how other cultural perspectives could add to my study.¹ My Iraqi colleagues' opinions on leadership qualities are included to substantiate the body of leadership literature as reflected in western-inspired academic circles of influence. The resulting diversity of academic thought is invigorating to higher education as it applies to the modern world.

What is my Situation and Story?

Nonfiction “builds only when the narrator is involved not in confession but in this kind of self-investigation, the kind that means to provide meaning, purpose, and dramatic tension.”² Will my story be an essay or memoir? An essay can encompass the objective, personal and abstract telling the story *of a life*. A memoir is factual and tells a story *from a life*. My personal narrative is a combination of the two. By including the

¹ Aiken (2013).

² Ibid., 35.

application of literature references and dealing with the objective, and identifying how life, liberty and leadership experiences in my life can assist educational and other multicultural organizations, my story becomes a scholarly personal narrative. In this narrative my sentences must have bite and be elegant statements of simple ideas. “The writing we call personal narrative is written by people who, in essence, are imagining only themselves in relation to the subject in hand.”¹

The connection is an “intimate one; in fact, it is critical.”² This is how I developed and framed myself while in Iraq. How I contemplated, questioned and minimized risk. How I observed others, probed, inquired and thus presented my personal narrative. I desire to emulate the writer who “is so present, we feel that we know who is speaking. The ability to make us believe that we know who is speaking is the trustworthy narrator achieved.”³ “Writing enters into us when it gives us information about ourselves we are in need of at the time that we are reading.”⁴ Thus, I tell the stories of my experiences and others’ while trying my best to emulate this framework. My ultimate goal is to tell my story “exactly and truly, leaving nothing out.”⁵

I will observe, converse and reflect. SPN allows me to do this. I will unpack my writing with scholarly references for justification and amplification to better understand and identify the way forward. SPN also allows me to provide contending truth narratives often lacking in liberal colleges dominated by the “progressive” elite. I will

¹ Ibid.

² Gornick (2012), 6.

³ Ibid., 17.

⁴ Ibid., 17.

⁵ Roorbach (2008) ¹ Nash (2004).

provide contrast and diversity of political and economic thought that should provoke discussion and possibly influence a change in thinking. Choosing SPN to record my life journey leading up to Iraq and beyond was inspired by Nash¹ writing, “It’s even rarer still for anyone I know on my campus, student or faculty, to come out in active support of the United States’ invasion of Iraq. No bumping-up of narratives allowed here – against what we progressives tend to see as reactionary conservative stances, simply beneath the interests of an enlightened, intellectual elite like ourselves.”

I seek to identify what makes us different, what makes us human, what makes us similar through my personal narrative of my experiences, observations and conversations while in Iraq. It is a story of connections and relationships, hope and resiliency, self-determination and persecution.² I do this through the lens of three major constructs of life, liberty and leadership among the individuals who are shared in the following pages. What emerges is the sheer will, determination and resiliency of not just the Iraqis, but also the many Americans and other coalition forces that supported their freedom while enduring great sacrifices.³

My hope is others will learn from these stories. It is with this background and goals for the future that I begin my discovery.

¹ Nash (2004).

² Aiken (2013).

³ Aiken (2013).

CHAPTER III: DISCOVERY

My Journey

My first wish...is to see the whole world in peace, and the Inhabitants of it as one band of brothers, striving who should contribute most to the happiness of mankind.

– George Washington, 1785

Did a near-drowning, panic-filled experience as a child shape my life in ways I have yet to understand? Do I have a sense of urgency others may not? Is that why I am restless and seemingly intent of believing that a change is better than a rest? I had five employers over a ten-year span. I joined the Navy Reserve in 1987 as commissioned officer at the age of thirty-three. And I retired today as I write this on my sixtieth birthday, March 19. My decision to join was made without much thought, perhaps due to the fact my first marriage to a Malaysian woman I met in Saudi Arabia was failing and I felt I needed something to stimulate my intellectual curiosity, sense of purpose and patriotism. Or was my seemingly unquenched thirst to discover happiness part of the equation? Nash¹ discusses empirical research showing virtues necessary for achieving the “happiness state” are wisdom, courage, humanity, justice, temperance and transcendence. Perhaps it was a subliminal search for happiness that was exemplifying itself by me thinking serving in a war zone was somehow “courageous.”

Friends, family and co-workers would all describe me differently. A woman I respect very much once told me she felt she treated co-workers better than she treated her family. And she was what I considered very caring and compassionate. I feel the same

¹ Nash (2010), 264.

way. I treated friends and co-workers better than I treated my only sibling as we grew and became mature adults. I believe friends would say I am relaxed, easy-going. Co-workers would say I am intense but fair. And family would have said I am good at providing a house and home, but overly critical and not so fair. I, however, believe I am too sensitive, too emotional. One time in particular my vulnerability showed as I brought my beloved dog, Snoopy, home in pieces wrapped in a bloody sheet. She had been hit by a car. I was twenty-two and cried like a baby. I believe this is explained by recognizing that I have a “compartmentalized personality” – one that channels emotion into seemingly self-serving causes, while neglecting the needs of others.

So what to make of this inconsistency? Perhaps how I was brought up will shed some light. So I will explore areas of my upbringing that may help explain who I am today. I will address in detail how cultural influence, race, sexuality, privilege and Odiscrimination affected my life as the eldest son of a World War II veteran of the European Campaign.

My Family

Both my parents were born and raised in southwestern Pennsylvania in the early 20th century. My father was quite poor, which was made worse by graduating from high school at the age of twenty in 1928. And we know what happened in 1929. His father was a carpenter and his mother had to raise her siblings from the time she was twelve. She was married at seventeen. She was not a happy woman. I never knew his father. No one from his family ever attended college. My father completed only one year at the University of Miami in Coral Gables. He was injured playing football and could not

continue as he lost his scholarship. That cannot happen today. Perhaps that explains why my brother and I graduating from college was so important to him. He did not see it happen. He died in 1977 at 69, just months before my brother and I graduated from Auburn University.

My mother on the other hand, raised in a family of farmers, was comparatively well off. Both her parents graduated from college as did she and her brother. Her father was a Republican County Commissioner in an overwhelmingly Democratic county, which must say something for his interpersonal skills. He was a grand man. But I never knew her mother. I assume meeting and marrying my father eleven years her senior after a three-month courtship and within months of graduating from college was neither in her parents nor her plan. Perhaps that explains why they were married in Pittsburgh and not in her small hometown Presbyterian Church shortly before my father departed for military training with the Army Air Forces and ultimately went to Europe. And perhaps that also explains my impulsive behavior.

They settled on the east coast of Florida after my father returned from the war, and bought a home in 1947, which I still own to this day. Figure 1 is a pencil sketch of my family home by a friend who was an architect major at Auburn.



Figure 1. Family Home Pencil Sketch

This connection to my past is likely also illustrated by my still driving my first car, a 1967 Firebird.



Figure 2. 1967 Firebird

They were married thirteen years before I was born. As White Anglo-Saxon-Protestants raised in the Great Depression and seasoned by World War II, I often compared our upbringing to that portrayed on the “Leave it to Beaver Show.” My family tree is composed of Smiths, Fultons, Carters, and Blacks. My mother is a member of the Daughters of the American Revolution (which means I am a son of the Revolution). Her great-grandfather fought for the North in the Civil War. My father was a Mason, though he was not active when I was growing-up and I am not sure to this day what the Masons are all about.

My father was somewhat of a risk taker, at least when it came to purchasing land around our home. He sold it to pay for his retirement and our college. My aunt told me he was happiest when he was an entrepreneur. I never knew this side of him. He worked for the Florida Power and Light Company for twenty-five years and retired in 1973 making \$12,000 a year (in current dollars not adjusted for inflation). I always wanted to be an entrepreneur but am not that much of a risk-taker. Or am I? I started purchasing land when in college. Unfortunately, I typically did not hold the properties long enough to see significant gains, but when I did, after paying capital gains taxes based on the cost basis, which is not allowed to be adjusted for inflation over the years, I may have broken even. It was always assumed in our house that going to college was just like going to Grade 13. That is what we were going to do next. And regarding our economic status and the role it played in my family, we were best described as frugal and thrifty. We recycled before it was popular to recycle. We saved newspapers for our church, which in turn collected them from other members and every six months or so sold them by the truckload to a recycling company. We also saved rags, tinfoil, string, scrap wood – just about anything that could be used again. So, I turned out to be a tightwad, which is quite a legacy!

Race

I grew up in “The South” but did not have much contact with African Americans even though forty percent of my hometown was black. Since schools were segregated there were no black students in my elementary school and only one in my junior high. My high school integrated in 1970. Thus my first significant contact with racial

minorities was as a sophomore on the football team. One of my teammates and I were standing side-by-side at our lockers getting dressed after practice. I asked him if he preferred to be called “Colored” or “Negro.” I distinctly remember him saying, “I’m not ‘Colored’ do I look like a ‘color?’ – I’m a Negro.” So there it was, debate settled.

Although, in a 2006 Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) hearing, where I served as the Designated Management Official (DMO), I asked the complainant which she preferred, and she said she did not care for either Black or “African-American,” but would settle with African-American. I bring this up only because I believe we as a society spend too much time struggling to identify what name of what group we all fall into and subsequently dividing us into economic, social, racial, religious, ethnic, age and gender clumps. We are all Americans regardless of the color of our skin, how much money we make or how old we are. We have the same unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness

My father helped alleviate any concern I had of how to integrate with my black classmates who were forcibly bused between five and ten miles to their new school. I did not have any choice where I could go to school either and was bused twelve miles, but did not have to change schools as my black classmates did. Since the buses left when school let out, there was no way for kids who played after-school sports to get home unless they had family or friends who could drive them. My father offered to take my friend Michael home, which was at least twelve miles longer than going straight to our house. This time together and visiting his home was invaluable and quite frankly would not have occurred if it was not for the integration of our public schools. I am not sure if

any of this is relevant, but I did end up dating various racial minorities, including African-Americans, and ultimately married a Malaysian who also happened to be Muslim. Of course I noticed they were people of color, but it had no bearing on what kind of people they were inside or why I was attracted to them.

Sexuality

My father had a gay (not the word of choice in the 1960's) cousin who lived in Pennsylvania with a man and their two Doberman Pinchers. We visited at least every couple years and stayed at their home. Frankly, all I remember were the vicious dogs, not the fact that two men lived together. So it was certainly comforting to have been exposed to the sexual orientation issue early in life, though I am sure I did not fully understand it. The point is, my family certainly did not hide it. And as I grew and learned more about the debate over homosexuality, rights, privileges, etc., I was able to keep it in perspective as a conservative kid from the South who, by virtue of family in Pennsylvania, had been exposed to the issue from an early age.

My personal sexuality was intense. I realized much later in life that what I experienced as a child was the beginning of what would become a long struggle with relationships. "I did not have sexual relations" until twenty-one in part due to being shy, the fear of rejection or not wanting to go to "Hell." However, I had a robust attraction to the opposite sex from an early age. I struggled with temptation, guilt and anxiety over whether or not it was okay to have "sex" before marriage. It was not until I had my stoic father trapped in the car on a nine-hour drive from Auburn to Daytona that I asked him what he thought about having sex. In his succinct way he responded, "Son, if you

haven't got any by the time you're twenty-one, I'd think there's something wrong with you." I smiled as that gave me permission to act on my desires. I had little reservations about who I was with. I am fortunate I remained physically healthy throughout but unsure about emotionally healthy. It was not emotionally healthy to use others to elevate my own false sense of well-being. The *narcissistic personality disorder*¹ exemplifies itself in me once again.

We were not an intimate family. I saw a TV show in college where the father died and the son realized he had never told him he loved him. I had not told my parents I loved them. Nor do I remember them telling me. I felt they loved me. But it was not something we spoke about. I immediately called them and told them I loved them. It was not as hard to do as I had imagined.

My father and mother did not speak much or so I found out just before my mother died. I was with her as her primary caregiver in 1987 as she was dying from breast cancer that had spread into her skeletal system. After a long conversation one evening just a few weeks before her death she told me, "You know, your father and I never had a conversation like this the entire time we were married." I did not know what to say. Perhaps, since she had told me numerous times growing up when I did not show physical affection, "You are just like your father," she now realized shortly before she passed that I was not "just like" him after all.

¹ Nash (2004).

Privilege

I suppose just being born as a White-Anglo-Saxon-Protestant means I had a head start in life's journey. We are now referred to in the academy of higher education as being members of the "dominate class" as we are no longer the majority. Having two parents who took an active interest in my schooling and encouraged me in Scouting helped as well. A stay-at-home mom and a strong religious foundation also resulted in my being privileged. Being six-foot tall did not hurt either. I was also privileged to have a father who encouraged me to try different occupational fields. He arranged interviews with associates in aviation and engineering. I chose civil engineering, worked through Auburn on a Cooperative Education program and paid the entire cost while not using the money he had saved. He gave it to me anyway. Even though he never saw it, I was able to apply my education and work experience immediately in a way I never thought imaginable as I spent almost five years working in the Middle East, Israel and Africa. Also, during this time in my twenties and early thirties, I went back to school and received an MBA from the University of Pittsburgh, which further enabled me to experience career opportunities I would not otherwise have been able to enjoy.

Discrimination

I believe the only time I faced discrimination because of my race was when I was in high school. My mother and I were returning from a football game when we were attacked by a mob who I assume were unhappy there were Caucasians in their neighborhood even though they won the game. The car was pelted with pieces of debris, one of which broke the windshield. As I said before my mother was impulsive and so am

I. So what did we do? I “followed” her lead as she got out of the car to confront the youths. Not a good idea. We started being hit and instinctively decided to retreat to the safety of our 1966 Rambler Classic station wagon. Fortunately for us, neither was hurt and the police basically said forget about catching anyone and do not get out of the car next time.

I may have also experienced discrimination with respect to my age, religion, and political beliefs. I assume it has occurred only because it is human nature to notice and react sometimes negatively to those who are different. But I do not dwell on it and believe I can overcome it by hard work, a solid value system and faith in God’s purpose for my life.

I am sure there are remnants of racial, age, religious or sexual discrimination in my past and present for that matter. Do crude jokes count? Yes they do. Do thoughts count? Or must negative acts take place? Is it the intent? Or acting on the intent? In particular as I was searching for the “perfect” lifelong partner I “discriminated” (actually a choice in personal relationships) against single mothers. Did not want that. Wanted my own kids one day. Would not get involved; it was just wasting of our time. But what happened? I came to believe an “old” guy like me was not likely to find an unmarried woman without any children who would be interested in someone over forty (age discrimination?). However, I agreed to a blind date with a native Vermonter in 1998 and we married two years later. She had two young girls. My life was forever changed.

While this type of discrimination was not against a protected class as defined by the EEOC, it was discrimination nonetheless. And I do not feel good about it. But that

was my narcissistic outlook on life at the time. Had I continued to discriminate, I would not have had the opportunity to make a positive difference in two little girls' lives from the time they were four and eight years old. The oldest graduated from George Washington University in 2012 majoring in Public Health and is currently in graduate school. The younger is in her first year at the Community College of Vermont. This has affected my life significantly. I can certainly say to others, "Don't make the same mistake I did for all those years." But in hindsight, I do not believe I was mature enough for the commitment of marriage, let alone an instant family of four when all I had to do previously was care for myself, and to continue searching for that "perfect match."

I now realize the profound influence my family upbringing has had on my life. Not only to be alive but also to understand how my parent's meager beginnings have influenced my behavior. How growing up in the South, going to college in the South, graduate school in Pennsylvania and now New England and working in the Middle East and Africa left me with a hunger to always want to experience more. How I was always encouraged but seldom pushed. I did not excel in high school but I did well in college. It is almost as if my parents knew I could be "burned-out" and did not push me to make good grades. I did not excel in athletics as my father had but I liked many sports. A true jack of all trades and master of none...but was that so bad?

And why did I push myself to do well in college? I later realized it was due to the importance of paying for what you get versus having it given to you. I viewed public education as free and thus had no vested interest but now I was paying for it and wanted the most for my money. I tried hard, never cut class and was angry when a professor

cancelled class or did not assign homework that counted as part of my grade as I was less likely to do it if it did not and thus I would not learn as much or achieve a high grade. Of course it is easier for the professor if homework does not count since it does not have to be graded. I promise, if I am ever a teacher, I will give homework that counts toward the final grade.

I suppose losing my father when I was twenty-three and my mother at thirty-three leaves me with an impression of them that is larger than life. But it is hard to say. I know my wife believed I felt that way. But I just cannot seem to help it.

I know much of what I do, the decisions I make and the chances I take or do not take are viewed through the lens of my cultural influences and the privilege and discrimination I experienced throughout life. I better understand myself as a result.

Looking Back

I cannot help but recognize how much the formative years spent growing up in Daytona Beach, FL affected me. I visited my hometown this past summer. I had not been home often over the years. It was surreal. Things changed, but they had not. The imprint of family such as the school where my mother taught 2nd grade before I was born had been renovated and looked the same; our old home had been fixed-up after three hurricanes and looked the same. And of course the beach and ocean and sand and mud smelled the same. I was privileged no doubt. Do I feel guilty? No. Do I want to give back more than I received? Yes.

When I visited my hometown, I spent hours speaking with my aunt, the only member of my parent's generation still alive. She filled in many gaps and corrected some

perceptions I had of my parent's marriage, my father's gay cousin and the meager and difficult life my father had while growing up in the coal-mining area of southwestern Pennsylvania. I would say the most upsetting was realizing just how much my parents did to provide a solid foundation for my brother and me and how little I have yet given back to society to help those less fortunate. I am surprised how freely I am writing this, never having spoken these thoughts to anyone before. I learned new information about my parents from my aunt as I was not mature enough to capture what I would have liked to know before my parents died. I was fortunate to be with my mother during her final months as primary caregiver in Hospice and that gives me comfort as I reflect and learn new things about my family and myself.

My parents worked hard, much harder than I have worked in life. God made them. They made me. We were both shaped by society. We were part of the civil society – the Nation's citizenry. It takes a family, not a street, neighborhood, school, ward, precinct, district, village, town, borough, city, township, county, state, province, federation of states, country, republic, kingdom, or world. Our job as social-service providers and educators should be to do our best to ensure all children have the opportunity to safely and happily navigate life's journey. How can we do that? We can provide the environment where they maximize their chances to graduate from high school. And we must do our best to ensure they have the tools to succeed in life. One of the tools is to understand the importance of not starting a family until both parents are mature enough emotionally and financially to improve the chances of success. And finally, our nation must be fiscally responsible. We must not burden our children with

debt that will take thirty years to pay off even if we balanced the annual budget. This balance is only sustainable as long as people are willing to loan us money with the certainty that we will pay them back. How much longer will they continue to be willing? It is impossible to say if we are not fiscally responsible. I do not believe it is worth the chance we are taking. We need to hold our elected politicians accountable.

These are the only ways I can envision a society where we as the privileged majority (“dominate class”) can help those less fortunate break out of perpetual poverty and to keep it from being passed from generation to generation. I wish to take up that cause, but for now, I will settle for exploring myself. And maybe discover why I do what I do – like go to Iraq.

As a Leader

Emergence

I have had many experiences, both personal and professional, throughout my life that have contributed to my development as a leader. Many of which, I am sad to say, do not reflect a sense of caring or compassion. I was certainly not a good practitioner, as I did not treat my only sibling, my brother, with respect. To this day I regret the way I would put him down and tease him to make him feel bad. All the while I used the excuse that I was justified because I was older and that I seemed to be able to get away with it. I have since apologized and was on the lookout for similar disrespectful behavior between my stepchildren, two young girls. I made sure, to the best of my ability, they did not treat each other the way I treated my brother.

I learned from these experiences and hope to minimize their occurrences in the future. The most telling truth is that teasing or bullying done at childhood can easily manifest itself throughout life. My brother continued to perceive my actions as a continuation of what occurred at childhood. What I now consider the smallest possible provocation is somehow elevated to heated discussions. I realize the damage I did as a child and that he is merely still on the defensive and ready to counter at the slightest perception of an insult or questioning what he may be doing. It got so bad that we finally confronted it while at a ski resort in Japan. He was treating me to the vacation as I flew there to visit while I based in Japan in the Navy. We started arguing in the buffet line and I realized we had to address it. As the only surviving members of our family we only had each other. I asked if he ever talked to his friends the way he spoke to me. He said he did not. And I said I would never talk to my friends the way I talked to him. We made a deal. Each time one of us spoke differently than we would speak to our friends, we owed the other a beer. It was a simple action that turned out to be an easy way to stop and think before speaking. It became clear how often we spoke to each other like we were children rather than adults.

When this happens now, I have learned to only respond to this elevation of emotions in a very calm manner, almost as if it did not happen. I try not to counter; I just deflect it as not personal. I never would have done that twenty years ago, let alone fifty when we were children, but I am contemplating reintroducing the bet for a beer when I visit him and his Australian wife and four children in Sydney in the future.

I welcome this opportunity to reflect on my past, present, and future. Upon reflection, it seems good leadership role models have always surrounded me from my parents (calm, thoughtful, slow to anger and caring), scoutmasters, teachers and classmates. I have learned much but clearly did not realize at the time how to show compassion by the simple act of caring. Of doing to others what you would like done to you (how simple but true).

Formative Years

My father was the first and foremost influence in shaping my thoughts and actions. He was looked upon by my friends and his peers as quiet, reserved, thoughtful, yet forceful and influential. He earned respect. How could this man of little means, who worked for the Florida Power and Light Company as a customer service representative making \$12,000 a year, have this stature? Am I making this up? Because he died when I was twenty-three, have I made him larger than life? Regardless, I base many of my actions on his guidance and influence. He taught me to take control over my own destiny, to not wait for others to help me out, and to stand up for what I believe. I am too outspoken at times as I often find the need to pray to keep quiet and the restlessness I feel may be a result of wanting to do too much in the short time we have on earth to live up to his expectations; but his guiding principles have helped make me what I am. And I am comfortable with that.

My family greatly influenced me in my preschool years, though I doubt I was aware of it at the time. I was definitely a follower when it came to the decision-making process of deciding whether or not we were going to Church on Sunday morning. We

just did as there was no choice in the matter. And I was definitely held accountable for my actions, as corporal punishment was certainly carried out swiftly but fairly. I would say I was a leader at getting into trouble. And unfortunately, that did carry over into my school-age years.

Institutional Models

Scouting offered me the earliest form of organized leadership opportunities I was able, with the encouragement and frequent insistence of my parents, to progress through the ranks, assuming more and more responsibility, along with the requisite accountability, until I ultimately achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. With no higher to go, I continued to earn merit badges and was inducted into the Order of the Arrow. While in college, I served as Assistant Scoutmaster and participated in one of the most rewarding experiences of my life, which was a five day, fifty mile canoe trip on a little-used Florida river with twelve scouts. This was the pinnacle of my Scouting experience. I was able to learn from the scoutmaster who was calm, direct and a calculated risk-taker. I do not think even now I would have the courage to take twelve kids on a trip like that. My other Scouting experiences paled in comparison. It offered the opportunity to learn how to be reliant on others as a team no matter their age and became one of my core leadership beliefs.

Scouting also offers a related leadership challenge. As a model institution, Scouting has suffered an identity problem framed by negative press coverage. At the time I was in Scouting, the publicity was positive. Since Scouting has seen its funding decreased, it was necessary to reconnect with the purposes of the organization and people

committed to it. Scouting had the capability to reframe its strategy and involving staff in the process helped the organization to thrive and commit to the long-term success of the program.

Another institutional leadership opportunity occurred when I was asked to join the Key Club in High School, which is an affiliate of Kiwanis International. I became Secretary and ultimately was given a community service award by the local Kiwanis Club. Even though I was not President, I must have done something that impressed the adults. The significance of this encounter is that I became familiar with community and international service organizations other than my church and scouting, which ultimately led me to join Rotary in Burlington, VT and serve as President in 2003-2004. It is the largest Rotary Club in Vermont and part of a 1.3 million-member organization in sixty-six countries around the world and all dedicated to community, international and vocational service. Key to the success of Rotary International is that leadership effectively manages two forces which pull in two opposite directions: *interdependence* and *diversity*. It is the largest non-religious, non-government service organization in the world crossing multitudes of racial, ethnic, political, and religious lines. The Clubs and Districts are interdependent and diverse, the perfect challenge for managing in a changing world, and I likely would not have had the pleasure of serving if not for the leadership experience in my high school Key Club.

Peer Groups

Despite my Scouting experience, I would say I grew up more of a follower. I would get in with the wrong crowd. My cousin and I would throw sand with shells at cars as they drove by. Then we would run and hide in the sand dunes on the beach as they came looking for us. I guess there was a rush from the excitement. Another time we set off fireworks at an elderly neighbor's window. What jerks we were. I certainly wish I had never done those things.

As I approached high school and college I matured somewhat and lost the aggressive thrill-seeking nature. I became more of a leader with my peer groups. At Auburn University I was elected President of Chi Epsilon, a Civil Engineering Honor Society. This allowed me to work directly with my scholastic peers, faculty and staff as we strove to increase the level of awareness of the environmental, transportation and structural engineering professions. This was quite a change from throwing things at cars ten years earlier.

My family and institutional backgrounds had a great deal of influence on me. That began to change in college, where others came to the forefront. In particular, the second person that had a great influence on me was my first professional employer as a Cooperative Education Program student at Auburn. I worked for a local Daytona Beach, FL consulting engineering firm designing water and wastewater systems. The Executive Vice President, Charles Burkett, was also a man of few words like my father who introduced me to him so I could learn about civil engineering. As a result, I changed my major and he hired me as their first Co-Op student. If my father had not taken the

initiative, I would not be a civil engineer and would not be writing this dissertation. But Mr. Burkett had a profound impact on my professional life. He took time to coach me and learn my expectations and I learned his. His motto was never say never as there will always be a way to work things out. This premise has stuck with me throughout my life. When confronted with a problem, always look for opportunities and do not say it cannot be done.

Theory and Applications

Stewardship is defined as holding something in trust for another, or serving the needs of others using openness and persuasion rather than control.¹ My philosophy as a leader is to influence my employees to hold our organization in trust for the greater good of society. To accomplish this, all employees must know they are valued. I see parallels with the field of education as my organizational culture perpetuates the reproduction of social division of labor as articulated by Bowles.²

My strength in effectively building relationships was highlighted during my first professional job experience fresh out of Auburn's Civil Engineering program. Looking back after reflecting on the literature, there is little doubt I was practicing the Leader-Member relationships as I built the five, four-person Pakistani survey crews in Saudi Arabia. We set goals. I asked them what they needed to meet the goals and gave it to them. What they primarily wanted was independence and respect. So I provided completely outfitted vehicles they could use without having to return to the camp for support or without having to share personnel. Each team was on their own, understood

¹ Spears (1998).

² Bowles (1971).

their mission, had achievable objectives and had the necessary tools to do their jobs and meet their goals.

These are key ingredients of successful teams.¹ I believe they saw that I cared about and respected them and was compassionate, especially when compared to the typical American construction worker we employed who often verbally abused their Pakistani countrymen. I quickly learned, after some soul-searching discussions with my employees, that these compassionate people deserved the same respect we expect others to show us. They looked after one another. They were like a big family. I also came to realize, in a selfish way, that there was no way I was going to be successful in my job if I did not have the commitment of my employees. I was able to identify those with leadership abilities and put them in charge. We met the goals and made very few mistakes except when we accidentally cut the prayer line to Medinah and hit an 110,000-volt power cable while completing the ninety-mile water distribution project in Jeddah. Other than what I was to experience in Iraq twenty-eight years later, this initial job has been the most rewarding and satisfying of my professional career.

Thus, my personal leadership philosophy is best stated by the simple statement: take care of your people. The “Servant-Leader”² concept most accurately reflects the way I believe we can reach the ultimate goal as a transformational leader who is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tries to help them reach their fullest potential.³

¹ Dreher (1996).

² Spears (1998).

³ Northouse (2004).

Reaching this goal involves knowing when to apply varying leadership skills as articulated by Hersey¹. I discuss these principles later in this Chapter and in Chapter 5.

I have also made leadership mistakes. One in particular had a great impact on my understanding of leadership. While on active duty with the U.S. Navy during the operation to remove the invading Iraqi armed forces from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1991, I served as the Assistant Operations Officer of a Naval Construction Battalion and had junior enlisted personnel in my section. I remember the humiliation I caused one of my team members when I publicly berated him for something he had done. He was my assistant and I was upset he was not where he was supposed to be since we were working on an important project with a tight deadline. I found him in another part of the building and before giving him a chance to explain, chastised him in front of others. Another junior enlisted sailor pulled me aside and told me in very respectful yet clear terms that what I had done was wrong. The vocal reprimand others heard was not appropriate behavior. He displayed a courageous act for which I am grateful. I immediately realized what I had done, acknowledged it and apologized to both. I do not understand why I did it unless I was regressing to the way I treated my brother as a child, or I let the stress of the moment get the best of me. However, I learned a valuable leadership lesson I will never forget, which is to praise in public, reprimand in private.

My federal government civilian workplace is often best described as having a bureaucratic mentality that focuses on traditional political behavior characterized by maneuvering situations and people, managing information to one's own advantage,

¹ Hersey (1984).

strategic and instrumental in relationships, seeking approval of those above us and being cautious telling the truth.¹ I believe these traits are driven by the inherent security in government jobs. Whether they are local, state or national, these jobs are virtually permanent, especially so at the national level as budget cuts rarely result in lost jobs. This security, and the lack of performance indicators or having to make a profit, creates a culture that often results in less efficiency and productivity. Thus, employees can be deliberate, methodical and display a lack of urgency as more and more rules and policies are added year by year,

It is not a healthy atmosphere and needs improvement. However I bring on some of the issues myself. I have always been sensitive to how others feel about me and tend to be a perfectionist. These two behaviors often cause me conflict. And I do not always effectively understand the way my actions are perceived. I try to improve what I bring to my workplace by analyzing my relationships and responsibilities with respect to my various leadership roles in order to identify a pattern in my leadership effectiveness. I am learning to realize how my actions affect others and what to look for in their reaction to my behavior. The concept of transcending ego² has helped me realize there are tools available that I can use to free myself from the personal sensitivities (real or imagined) that have at times restricted me from taking risks and from fully embracing life's opportunities. This situation certainly helped me realize that others notice and form opinions very quickly. As a leader in any organization it is imperative to be aware of

¹ Block (1987).

² Dreher (1996).

yourself,¹ to understand how your every action is observed, and to ensure you are setting the example you want to set for your organization follow.

Going Forward

These lessons, along with others experienced while serving as Regional Director of a Consulting Engineering firm in Missouri and Director of a 240-person Department of Justice Administrative Center in New England, provided the foundation of leadership skills I would later use in Iraq and in my current role as Associate Director of a 1,500-person Department of Homeland Security Service Center in California. I particularly strive to use skills, philosophies and strategies identified by the following authors – all of which whose principles are applied throughout this dissertation in the pages that follow:

– Waldman² breaks Deming's Total Quality Management³ fourteen points into five basic factors:

- (1) Leader's ability to stimulate change,
- (2) Teamwork to work collaboratively together toward common purpose and being collectively accountable,
- (3) Continuous improvement,
- (4) Trust building,
- (5) Eradication of short term goals. Get rid of management by objectives.⁴

Instead, goals should focus on process and the long-term perspective.

¹ Ibid.

² Waldman (1993)

³ Deming (1986)

⁴ Drucker (1974).

– Servant Leadership¹ argues effective leadership emerges from the desire to help others, not overseeing others; focusing on the leader being in center - not on top; understanding the personal needs of individuals, healing wounds caused by conflict, being a steward of the organization's resources, developing skills of individuals and being an effective listener. Iraqis I spoke with emphasized these key characteristics of effective leaders as I discuss in Chapter IV.

– Warren Bemis² states it is not about charisma or personal skills, but:

- (1) Creating a shared vision,
- (2) Having a clear voice characterized by sense of purpose, sense of self, self-confidence,
- (3) Operating from a strong moral code,
- (4) Adapting to relentless pressure to change.

– Steven Covey³ emphasizes to:

- (1) Be proactive. Control your environment, respond to key situations,
- (2) Begin with the end in mind. Keep goals in mind,
- (3) Put first things first. Focus on behaviors that directly relate to the organization's goals,
- (4) Think win-win. Everyone in organization benefits when goals are realized,

¹ Greenleaf (1970, 1977).

² Bemis (2003).

³ Covey (1989, 1992, 1994).

(5) Seek to understand first - then be understood. Listen, understand others and communicate,

(6) Synergize. Cooperating and collaborating goes further than isolated efforts,

(7) Sharpen the saw. Learn from mistakes and don't repeat them.

– Block, as noted in Spears, proposes a shift in our focus from “leadership” to “citizenship.” The goal is to have all employees become leaders – for them to accomplish what we traditionally expect of our leaders. Each of us should be able to:

(1) Create and articulate a vision,

(2) Be accountable for the well-being of the whole organization,

(3) Set and pursue goals that sustain the entire institution,

(4) Become a role model.¹

Block speaks of “self-governance” that hinges on employees’ willingness to provide to each other what the leader previously provided. This is accomplished in part through “peer accountability,” which is the “glue” that holds the organization together. If successful, organizations based on this “connection and common purpose” will emerge when they:

(1) Focus on the employees who are committed and care, not the small minority who abuse their freedom,

(2) Use meetings as “work” environments where the right people contract together and make decisions for the common good,

¹ Block (1987).

- (3) Learn and apply the use of dialogue, open space methods and face-to-face exchanges that are proven methods for both “getting decisions made and evoking high levels of commitment,”
- (4) Are decentralized – they strive to “get the boss out of the center;”
- (5) Have employees who forge partnerships with others and insist on being role models. Everyone is a leader.¹

This is an excellent summary of how the concept of servant-leadership may provide a gateway for the eventual transition from leadership to citizenship, which is my personal goal. But it requires leaders to take a chance by giving up traditional leadership powers. Spears² captures the essence of the argument:

- Democracy is not defined by the actions of its elected officials; it is defined by the action of citizens.
- Clinging to our attraction to leadership keeps change in the hands of the few. We want to transfer it to the many. This is the power of citizenship.
- Our bias toward monarchy and our belief in the centrality of the leader has us ignore collective and communal successes and celebrate the heroism of the individual.

Taking these previously mentioned theories and adapting them to varying situations is the ultimate methodology for implementing effective leadership in any organization. Situational leadership theory is where leaders’ effectiveness is related to how they carry out their traits or behaviors in differing situations. Leaders’ effectiveness

¹ Ibid.

² Spears (1998), Chapter 8.

is contingent on their ability to modify their behavior to the level of others' maturity or sophistication. The style a leader uses under situational leadership is based upon combining levels of directive behavior and supportive behavior. Hersey¹ focused on four different leadership behaviors:

1. Telling is where the leader demonstrates *high directive* behavior and *low supportive* behavior
2. Selling is where the leader demonstrates *high directive* behavior and *high supportive* behavior
3. Participating is where the leader demonstrates *low directive* behavior and *high supportive* behavior
4. Delegating is where the leader demonstrates *low directive* behavior and *low supportive* behavior

Situational leadership is the style I want to emulate in my everyday interactions – be it in the workplace, church or home – and has its place in what I was about to experience in Iraq.

Finally, I want to go forward in my leadership journey applying what Nelson Mandela² learned during twenty-seven years in prison. That “self-control, discipline and focus” are essential to effective leadership while staying “balanced, measured, controlled.” It is with this desire to emulate what I have learned that I find myself destined for the next phase of my life; helping to bring liberty to a faraway people by utilizing my leadership skills.

¹ Hersey (1984).

² Stengel (2009), 14-15.

CHAPTER IV: IRAQ

It is Time to Go

I roamed the countryside searching for answers to things I did not understand...

– Leonardo Da Vinci

I found myself in Iraq because I volunteered. I wanted to serve, to make a difference and to be a part of something different, something bigger than myself, or what I had already experienced in life. My decision to go was the result of my cumulative experiences in life and my personal beliefs. I felt I had a moral responsibility to my country I had trained to serve for the last twenty years. I was also determined to prove to that segment of the citizenry and politicians out for personal or party gain that the war was going to be won and not already lost as Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid stated in 2007.

My wife said she wanted a divorce, suggesting I cared more for my part-time career as a Navy Reserve officer in the Civil Engineer Corps than I did for her, but was talked out of it by my seventeen-year old stepdaughter. Was she correct? I had spent four years in Saudi Arabia in the late 70s through mid-80s and traveled to, lived in or worked for short periods of time in Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Morocco, Bahrain, Pakistan, Malaysia, England, Angola, Guam and Okinawa, was previously married to a Malaysian Muslim and knew basic Arabic ...so, why not?

California

After pre-mobilization planning in San Diego in December 2007, my first stop was the Navy Mobilization Processing Site (NMPS) at Port Hueneme, CA. I spent three days conducting administrative and medical processing at this Navy base in Ventura County before returning home for Christmas. Port Hueneme is the main training center for the Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) and I completed my indoctrination there twenty years ago as a thirty-four year old Ensign. Also, when I deployed with Naval Mobil Construction Battalion (NMCB) 23 from Fort Belvoir, VA in 1990 for Desert Storm, we conducted our processing and training there prior to spending the next seven months in Guam and Okinawa, neither of which could be considered anywhere near the war zone. Things are different this time.

South Carolina

I reported to the next step of the mobilization process in South Carolina on New Year's Eve. The three weeks at the Navy Individual Augmentee Combat Training Center (NIACTC) located on the Army's Fort Jackson was filled with gear issue half of which I would not use in Iraq, lots of 9mm and M-16 firing and general combat instruction ranging from first aid and convoys to urban combat techniques like entering and inspecting buildings. Hopefully I would not need that skill.



Figures 3 and 4: Army teaching Navy in the piney woods of South Carolina...Learning enough to be dangerous on 50-calibur machine gun.

The Navy contracted with the Army to provide the facilities and instruction. The drill sergeants, activated Army reservists and National Guard were very professional. Days typically started at 0600 and ended around 1800. The Navy support staff at the Liaison Office (LNO) at Camp McCrady were the most professional I have seen in my twenty-six-year career. They had everything organized and had a “can-do” attitude.

Our berthing and training were located in Camp McCrady, which is also home to a South Carolina National Guard and a Marine Corps Reserve Center. We were about twenty miles from the Fort Jackson main gate.



Figure 5: How to search...Too Easy...
Think Different, Act Smart



Figure 6: How to shoot (Mark-19, 20mm
grenade launcher)

In 2004, ninety-five percent of Individual Augmentees (IAs) were Navy reservists who left their command to accept temporary assignments supporting other units, which could be Navy, Army, Marine Corps, or Air Force entities. However, with the increased opportunities in Iraq, Afghanistan and other locations in the Middle East and Africa, almost seventy percent of IAs are now active-duty personnel. My class had about 350 participants with about 150 ultimately deploying to Iraq. Since the goal is to have all IAs be volunteers and since we are very fortunate to have an all-volunteer military, most in our class were very professional, motivated and believed in the mission-at-hand.

I was committed to the cause. I distinctly remember the feeling I had one evening walking across the tarmac. It was surreal. It was a moment of intense pride, excitement, anticipation and meaningfulness about what I was doing and about to do. It was a feeling of relief, awe and resilience. Why am I so inspired? What was it about liberating a nation of thirty-million in the Middle East? Was it because I had lived and worked in the

part of the world for four years of my life while in my twenties? That I had trained for twenty years for this day? That I wanted to be a part of something bigger, grander than anything I had experienced in life – despite the risks? That I knew some Arabic and had been married to a Muslim? Did I believe that I had much to offer in part because of my fifty-four years on this earth? If I did not go, that they would send a much younger person with less experience or motivation? Was it simply ego, as my wife believed? Upon reflection I now know it was all of the above.

The highlight was my family’s (Claire, Nicole and Olivia) visit during the last weekend. They stayed with my best friend’s wife as they lived nearby in Columbia. It was a great opportunity for them to see Army life, touch M-16 and 9mm weapons and experience a Waffle House! Also, it was great to see them again and to have a nice “see-you-soon” farewell.



Figure 7: Olivia (HS), Nicole (NW), Claire (SP), Me (W)



Figure 8: Having to show you care... that we are “High Speed.”



Figures 9 and 10: Happy Campers on their way...only about 150 of our 350-person class were going to Iraq – and the others?

Kuwait

On January 18, 2008 we flew on a World Airways MD-11 (leased from Delta) and loaded at the Columbia airport with about one thousand seabags of gear. I got all my gear into three bags, one of which I never planned to open in Iraq – and did not. After refueling stops in Bangor, Maine and Leipzig, Germany, we arrived on the 19th to a cool 42-degrees at the Kuwait City International Airport. We taxied to the military side of the sprawling airport. After offloading, which brought back fond memories of climbing into the cargo bays of Delta aircraft at Reagan National Airport in Washington, DC, we arrived at our camp. It was a large tent and modular trailer-filled facility in the desert not too many miles from Kuwait City, which to this day would be part of Iraq had we not done the dirty work back in 1991. Actually, nothing in Kuwait is very far from Kuwait City.



Figure 11: World Airways MD-11 In-Flight Tracker Approaching Kuwait



Figures 12 and 13: Underside of our plane with Russian Transport staring at us...And, did I say “seabags” in the sand?

We lived in tents for the next week conducting various training activities including two nights at another more remote camp where it rained hard for hours. When

I worked in Saudi Arabia I remember it raining twice in four years. However, at least it is much better than going through training in Kuwait when it is 130-degrees and there is no rain for months. The training took place in desert areas where we saw herds of camels and goats methodically walk by looking for scraps of green. Most of Kuwait is desert.



Figure 14: Hanging at the McDonald's Food Court



Figure 15: Kuwaiti Camel-herders pretty much go where they please – including the middle of a military training area.



Figure 16: Part of the Coalition Forces – Georgians



Figure 17: Coed, Multi-Ethnic Camp Out in Kuwait – beats a tent

We were only a small part of the base that includes army, marines, air force and personnel from other countries. In fact, we were vastly outnumbered by the Army of

Georgia whose members were in transition here as well. I saw or met military personnel from Mongolia, Korea and Poland. No one stayed there very long. They were coming and going – into and from the Iraq theatre of operations.



Figure 18: 9mm Training in Kuwait



Figure 19: Convoy Training in Kuwait

The last two days were laid-back administrative days. We flew to Iraq sometime after midnight.

Everything I share here is available publicly, nothing classified and names changed to protect identities.

I am There

Still, if you will not fight for the right when you can easily win without bloodshed; if you will not fight when your victory will be sure and not too costly; you may come to the moment when you will have to fight with all the odds against you and only a precarious chance of survival. There may even be a worse case. You may have to fight when there is no hope of victory, because it is better to perish than live as slaves.

– Winston Churchill

We landed in Al Taqaddum, Iraq, during the early morning hours of January 27, 2008. These plains of Al Anbar Province would be my home – specifically Fallujah and later Ramadi, with trips to Haditha and Baghdad. After an overnight layover we flew late at night in a CH-46 U.S. Marine Corps (USMC) helicopter to Fallujah. The CH-46 would be my primary form of transportation over the next six months with virtually all flown during daylight hours.



Figure 20: CH-46 – The workhorse – The Taxi – at Ramadi

The Euphrates River runs through Fallujah, which has been inhabited since [Babylonian](#) times and the home of important Jewish academies. The city of three hundred thousand is also home to approximately two hundred mosques. Fallujah was the scene of the most decisive eradication of terrorists and insurgents during the eight year conflict to liberate Iraq. By the time I arrived three years later it had become relatively peaceful. Fallujah was an important area of support for Saddam Hussein along with the rest of the region labeled by the U.S. military as the “[Sunni Triangle](#).” Many residents of the primarily [Sunni](#) city were employees and supporters of the government, and many

senior [Ba'ath Party](#) officials were natives of the city. I ventured into the city only once by convoy on my way to Ramadi.

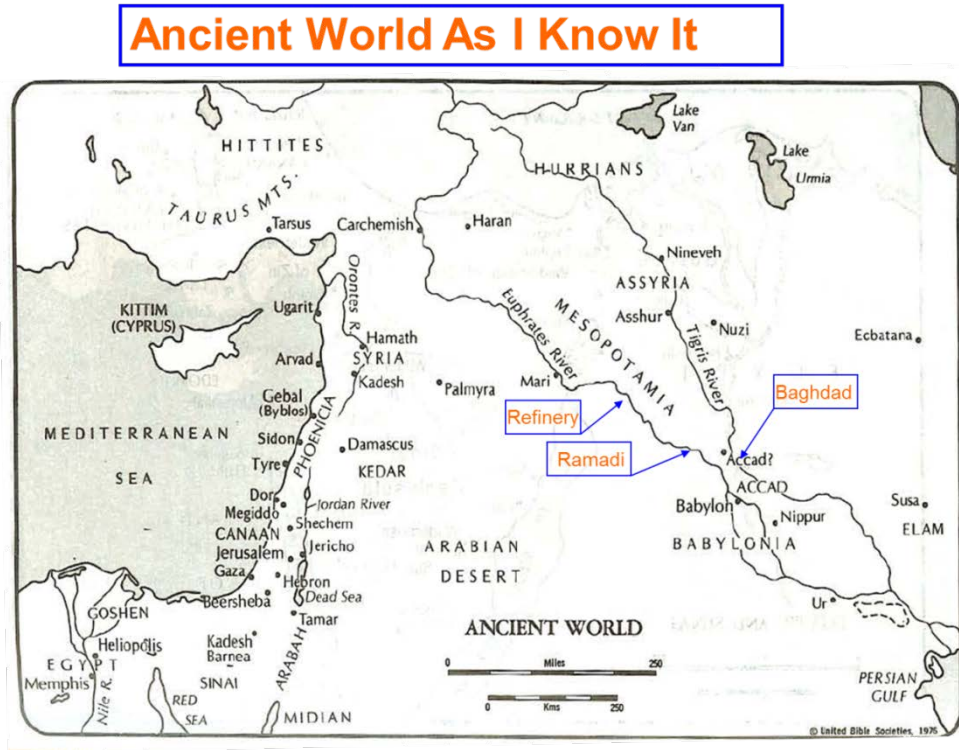


Figure 21. Ancient World

I moved twenty-five miles west to Ramadi in April as the Marines began to return security of Fallujah to Iraqi government forces. It is the largest city in Al Anbar Province with a population of approximately four hundred thousand. It also had a large [Jewish](#) community, but most have since migrated to Israel. Ramadi is in a fertile, irrigated, alluvial plain along the Euphrates. It was founded in 1869 under the [Ottoman Empire](#). The main purpose of the city was to give the Ottomans a base for communications with and control of the [Dulaim](#) tribe of the region.



Figure 22. Euphrates River South of Haditha

This and other tribes that are predominately Sunni began supporting and working with American Army and later Marine forces assigned to eradicate insurgents in the area. Specifically, the trend started to change when the “Awakening” began in August 2006 and was showing positive results by March 2007. Intelligence-driven (tips from locals) operations began taking out bad people. Within hours of finishing one particular operation, Sunni leaders (Tribal Sheiks) contacted coalition forces and thanked them for conducting the operations, which eliminated Sunni terrorists from the area. Police ranks began to grow with recruits who wanted to rid the Province of terrorists trying to establish an Islamic caliphate-based state of operations from which they would spread

mandatory conversion to Islam throughout the world, like they tried to do with the “Taliban” in Afghanistan. It would be an uphill battle, one which they are now waging in Syria, Iraq’s neighbor.

Islamist doctrine states it is imperative to have a base of operations from which to operate freely. In “Voices of Terror Manifestos”¹ (“Knights under the Prophet’s Banner”) Al Zawahiri writes, “The crusader alliance led by the United State will not allow any Muslim force to reach power in the Arab countries.” Successfully establishing a democratically elected Muslim government in Iraq would mean Al Zawahiri was wrong. He goes on to say, “Victory by the armies cannot be achieved unless the infantry occupies the territory.” Victory for the Islamic movements against the world alliance cannot be attained unless these movements possess an Islamic base in the heart of the Arab region. This is what they did in Afghanistan and what they were and are still trying to do in Iraq. Additional details of how Islamists aim to establish their world-wide caliphate are found beginning in “Voices of Terror Manifestos”² – the “Al-Qa’eda Manual” *Guidelines for Beating and Killing Hostages*.

This change of heart by winning the hearts and minds to join with us in order to rid the Province of terrorists, insurgents and Islamists was critical in allowing the interrelationships to develop in what Wheatley refers to as the “web of relationships” necessary for life to exist. In just two years these relationships between Iraqis and Americans flourished to the point where Al Anbar was having free elections and is a functioning democracy to this day. But it was not easy. Sacrifices were made.

¹ Voices of Terror (2004), 426.

² Ibid., 407.

The U.S. military took a lesson from public education. Reformers have long deemed community involvement a key factor in improving performance in schools. Teachers reaching out to their students' families helped develop relationships that could lead to active participation in their child's schooling. Stepping out into the community to get to know their students and families was what we did in Iraq. We set up outposts in cities and began patrolling with Iraqis engaging the community. It could be called "community-based counter insurgency" to help win the hearts and minds of our adversaries. It worked.

The Iraqis also appreciated our involvement in rebuilding damaged schools. One Iraqi I spoke with said this about Iraqi educational institutions:

During his thirty-five years in power, Saddam Hussein didn't think about education or about the teachers. Granted, education is free in Iraq. But at the same time, Hussein didn't care about the salaries for the teachers or the directors. The supplies for the universities and schools are not good, and he didn't care.

Some offer the explanation that he neglected schooling to keep the populace at bay in order to help preserve his dictatorship. But now the schools were being refurbished and supplies and textbooks provided. This too aided in winning the support of the tribal sheiks so critical to a free Iraq.

Despite the negative publicity the war received back home, like counting daily how many Americans were killed "since President Bush declared major combat operations over" and plastering it on the front page of newspapers, the University of

Baghdad continued operating and students continued to graduate. An Iraqi engineer I worked with was a recent graduate and he told me the university was graduating engineers from 2005 through my time there in 2008. This was good news, little of which was provided by the mainstream media.

The most extensive fighting in Iraq was in Ramadi. Though not as publicized as other locations like Fallujah, it was the home of brutal, door to door, rooftop to rooftop, ally to ally fighting. We lost more Marines in Ramadi than anywhere in Iraq, and we killed many insurgents; thus freeing the city from the grip of tyrannical Islamists.

My conversations with Iraqis placed throughout my dissertation reveal the extent with which the liberation of Iraq was a joint effort of choosing life and liberty over tyranny. This was achieved through systematic leadership exerted by Iraqi tribesmen, tribal leaders, police forces, armed militia, army, provincial officials including the Governor and the USMC. And yes, the State Department's Provincial Reconstruction Teams played a part. The conversations also reveal how leadership traits and applications are distinct yet common in purpose to influence many by the leadership of few.



Figure 23: New Iraqi Flag – at least for a year (a compromise to make everyone happy) – The old flag had three stars representing the Arab Power Block of Egypt, Syria, Iraq (at least two out of three are U.S. allies).

We lived in Camp Fallujah located a few miles east of the city. The camp was a former Iranian exiled regime in waiting. Had Saddam Hussein been successful in his invasion of Iran to overthrow the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (the “mad mullah” as he referred to him) in September of 1980, these so-called exiles would have been those who filled the leadership void; at least that was Hussein’s plan.



Figure 24: No, this CH 46 Gunner does not need a haircut



Figure 25: Open tailgate on CH 46 – always in pairs

The camp was primarily hard-stand (preexisting mortar-covered stone or concrete) buildings, plenty of trees (primarily palm) and even ponds with geese. When the U.S. Army arrived in March 2003, there were deer, gazelle, and other wild animals running free. With indoor and outdoor swimming pools, large auditoriums and theaters, it was quite an elaborate facility for the Iranians to lounge and plan their assumption of power in Tehran, which obviously never occurred. Who knows where they went in March 2003, or where they are now. It is safe to say, however, they are not in Iran. I lived in one of the Iranian apartments.



Figure 26: A “typical” street in Camp Fallujah (Turned over to the Iraqis in 2008 – But under control of Islamists after June 2014 invasion from Syria)



Figure 27: The typical office – I am the empty seat on left. Bob’s from Iowa and works for Battelle Labs, and Jack on the right is from Dallas and works for the city as building inspector.

The guard force was provided by the British firm, Sabre. The guards were from Uganda. They are Christian, educated, polite, well-spoken and friendly – and getting paid a lot of money compared to back home. Aegis was another British firm. They

provided secure convoys using South African-designed and built mine-resistant vehicles. We attended their daily intelligence briefing every morning at 0700. The British contractors that provided security were very professional. Safety was always their top priority and the convoys did not proceed if they determined the route dangerous.



Figure 28: With Simon from Uganda at Camp Fallujah



Figure 29: Camp Fallujah Church Service in the base theater that was constructed for the Iranians by Saddam Hussein

The four of us Civil Engineer Corps (CEC) officers who were mobilized together split into our respective positions, changed into USMC uniforms and began the acclimation process. As augmentee from the Navy to the Marines, I became embedded, if you will, in the Civil Military Operations (CMO) group, or cell. And, as the name implies, we focused on civil affairs, specifically working hand-in-hand with the Iraqis to establish institutions for:

- (1) Rule of Law
- (2) Infrastructure (water, fuel, electricity, roads, rail)
- (3) Governance
- (4) Economic Development
- (5) Public Health and Education

I was in the “Infrastructure” cell.



Figure 30: New Al Anbar Provincial Seal – Designed by Governor Mamoun



Figure 31: The Governor himself with “Gunner” at the Provincial Government Center in downtown Ramadi. Site of some of the most severe fighting in Iraq. More Marines were killed here than anywhere else. (All identities throughout this dissertation obscured for protection from Islamists who invaded from Syria in June 2014.)

I was a member of the First Marine Expeditionary Force – (Forward) out of Camp Pendleton, CA, which is only twenty miles from where I now live. Upon deployment to Iraq we became the coalition force responsible for western Iraq, which is basically all of Al Anbar Province – geographically the largest in Iraq. The official name of my unit was Multi-National Force – West (MNF-W). It consisted of Marines and a few Navy, Army and Air Force service members. The Marines were excellent to work with and pleased to have us join their command. The diverse military was on display where men and women of all races served together as Americans. We are very fortunate to have such a diverse and complementary fighting force.



Figure 32. Al Faw Palace – On outskirts of Baghdad International Airport – approximately ten miles west of downtown. These palaces for the “King for Life” (self-proclaimed by Saddam Hussein himself) dot the landscape...while his subjects were scraping by – with the geese.

I remember realizing in May, halfway through my deployment, how this was the most professionally rewarding experience of my life. I had never worked so hard nor enjoyed so much. The Iraqis are very courageous and wonderful to work with. Yes, we only left our base via armed convey, helicopter or Osprey, a vertical takeoff and landing tilt rotary aircraft, but it goes with the territory as there were bad people still lingering around waiting for us to leave. Which was not going to happen – no matter whom was elected President of the United States – until the war was won.

I was very fortunate to have a job where I could make a difference. Most assignments are not as rewarding or at least would not be to me. I spent my first month (February) conducting a survey of the buildings at the Provincial Government Center in downtown Ramadi. This in itself provided a wealth of observations on leadership in action: plan, provide options, recommend, decide, prepare and execute – persevere, as others are watching and following. The key take-aways were: when briefing a proposal, always have the recommended solutions at hand, even if others tell you not to. And be decisive; do not wait to do what should be done now.

An example of poor leadership was exhibited by the State Department’s representative in charge of the Al Anbar Provincial Reconstruction Team located in Ramadi. I had heard of his uncooperative, uncommunicative nature, but was determined to forge a working relationship. Immediately upon meeting him I realized what they were talking about. He seemed arrogant, reclusive – and yes, uncommunicative and uncooperative. That said, I worked hard to open the conversation, asked leading questions, found common areas of interest and began what was to become peaceful coexistence. As much could not be said for his relationship with Governor Mamoun, who refused to meet with him. He would go from Camp Ramadi daily to sit in the Provincial Government Center, but never interacted with the Iraqis. And this was the prime U.S. government representative in the Province?

The State Department “diplomat” had little if any interpersonal skills and had no relationship with the Governor he was there to support, and little interaction with the Marines leading the security and reconstruction in the Province. And the most amazing

thing is we all knew he was leaving as his term ended but incomprehensibly the State Department extended his tour another six-months.



Figure 33. With Iraqi Anbar Provincial Police in Ramadi

Next, I was assigned to manage MNF-W CMO's # 1 priority project: the re-commissioning of the Province's only oil refinery, known as K3 and located just south of Haditha. It had been inactive since September 2005. The interpersonal dynamics between Americans would prove to be more challenging than with the Iraqis primarily caused by layers of bureaucracy and egos. One such exchange occurred when I recommended we should support the Iraqi's request for VHF (Very High Frequency) radio communication along their rail routes. We would be transferring oil from Bayji to Haditha to refine at K3, so rail communication for both operations and security was

critical for the success of our mission. However, I was told not to pursue the VHF radio project the Iraqi Railroad leadership wanted. I was not given a reason. When I updated the Deputy Commanding General, he said, “Get Bill on the phone.” Taking the phone from me, “Bill, there are too many layers of management between Ken Smith and me...” Needless-to-say, but I am going to anyway, the direct line of communication was henceforth established. And was, frankly, directly responsible for the successful outcome of our mission to start K3. So what can be concluded about leadership within a hierarchy? Effective leadership needs clear lines of communication established where individual voices are heard for the collective good. The key take-away: flatten the organization to establish direct lines of communication. I am practicing the same concept now in my new position with the Department of Homeland Security.



Figure 34: Meeting with refinery and train station offload facility Iraqi contractors.

The refinery, along with its sister pumping station that no longer pumps crude oil is small. It produces only 16,000 barrels per day (2,500 cubic meters for metric aficionados). But once the Iraqis started it up it began stockpiling about fifty percent of Al Anbar Province's diesel and kerosene, which was a huge morale boost for a long-neglected area of the country. However, because people had been cutting holes to drain the crude oil from the pipelines that bring it from the northern oil fields, we had to transport the crude oil by rail in tank cars. The war did not cause the damage. It was like when we have a blackout and you watch TV showing looters stealing from the stores. I suppose they think in some twisted perhaps survivalist way they are entitled to it just because no one can stop them from taking it.



Figure 35: The crude oil K3 Pumping Station to Syria – destroyed by coalition forces in 2003

The refinery had not been updated since it was built by the British in 1949. Saddam Hussein was not interested in his people having refined oil products that would empower them to resist his Ba'athist dictatorship, so he exported the crude oil for the easy money and kept enough benzene and diesel fuel for the Ba'ath Party members, family, friends, and the military apparatus. The LA Times was at K3 on February 13, 2008 along with Iraqi media and published this article about the facility. Their reporting provides another perspective of what this project was all about; however, I clarified inaccuracies in *italics*. It was my first visit to the refinery and just before I was assigned to be the program manager for the start-up that was scheduled for the middle of July.

K3 LA Times article written about the February 13, 2008 Conference

<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/mar/10/business/fi-iraqoil10>

Helping restore a 1930s oil facility will take local planning and teamwork.

By Tony Perry, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer
March 10, 2008 HAQLANIYA, IRAQ

The ragged oil refinery in a barren corner of Anbar province looks more like something out of a post-apocalyptic Mel Gibson movie than the centerpiece of an ambitious energy project.

The plant, known as K-3, was built by the British in the 1930s [*it was built in 1949*] allowed to slip into disrepair for three decades under Saddam Hussein, then bombed by the Americans in 1991 and 2003 [*the refinery was never "bombed" – but the crude oil pump station to Syria 1.2 km away was – see photos*].

Now repairing the refinery and increasing its capacity could be the easy part.

The more difficult job, according to U.S.-led coalition forces, is getting the layers of the Iraqi government to cooperate. On top of that, the coalition must help

Iraqi officials transform the centralized planning adopted under the Hussein regime that stifled local initiative.

"The whole mind-set has to change. That's proving to be the longest pole in the tent," said Canadian Brig. Gen. Nicolas Matern, a counterterrorism specialist.

It is a common concern throughout Iraq, where dozens of reconstruction projects, funded in large part by the U.S., are underway. Without Iraqi buy-in, many projects are doomed to flop, officials concede.

"It's an easy task to trash a country," said British Lt. Gen. William Rollo, second in command to U.S. Army Gen. David H. Petraeus. "It's bloody difficult to rebuild it."

Despite its wrecked appearance, K-3, located in the desert about 100 miles northwest of Baghdad, is still functional. It shut down three years ago because of squabbling among Iraqi officials. *[It shut down because the crude oil supply pipeline was interdicted by local Iraqi citizens stealing the oil – there are hundreds of holes, which is why we are transporting oil by train – the first time ever undertaken in Iraq.]* The workforce remained on the payroll, with many living on site.

With the world's second-largest oil reserves, Iraq is looking at an economic future that's inextricably linked to questions of how to extract the substance from the earth, how to exploit demand and how to divide the profit and other benefits, such as electricity. Oil is also one of the most volatile political disputes among Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish factions.

If K-3 can be revived, perhaps with the help of U.S. contractors, *[There was never any consideration to use "U.S. contractors" – all of the work was done by local Iraqi contractors – see photos – w/ the total cost coming to \$3m plus \$1m for a new road.]* it could provide energy and income for Anbar and decrease the sense of alienation many feel toward the central government in Baghdad.

That alienation is worrisome, they said, because it might provide openings for insurgents seeking to regain control along the Euphrates River corridor.

Some of the power lines streaming from the massive, Soviet bloc-built Haditha Dam toward Baghdad have been destroyed. The chief suspects are Sunni Muslim tribal sheiks who are angry that resources flow from their region to Shiite-dominated Baghdad with little in return.

On paper, the project looks straightforward: Bring crude oil from the Kurdish region in the north by rail or truck to K-3. Refine it into kerosene (for heating oil), naphtha (for road building) or diesel fuel.

Then get the product to a diesel-run power plant at Tahadi or to markets in Syria and Jordan.

A tanker-truck facility and a rail-loading platform are within a few hundred yards of K-3. The rail lines will need repair [*no repair was needed*] as will roads and bridges to accommodate 60-ton tanker trucks.

But in a bit of staffing serendipity, two reserve officers from the 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment assigned to the area just happen to be oil industry specialists.

Capt. Matt Mayo, an energy consultant, and Maj. Gordon Hilbun, a Royal Dutch Shell executive, have been assigned to the K-3 project. As a technical matter, they said, upgrading K-3 shouldn't be much more difficult than restarting U.S. refineries hit by Hurricane Katrina.

The Marines brought a variety of Iraqi officials to the area recently to view K-3, the truck facility and the rail station. Among them were an Oil Ministry official who had not been in the area for 15 years, a transportation official who only recently emerged from hiding in Syria and Anbar Gov. Mamoun Rasheed. [*Governor Mamoun stayed and fought the insurgents and came to work every day, risking his life.*]

Rasheed [*Mamoun – in Arabic the family name is first*] was buoyant. "Yes, it's going to happen," he said. "I want the factory to be running seven days a week, 24 hours a day."

On one point, he was insistent: "We need more security." In recent weeks, an insurgent attack near the Baiji oil refinery, 125 miles north of Baghdad, killed more than 25 people, and a mysterious fire struck the oil facility at Basra, the country's southern port city.

There were other concerns.

One of the foremen at the truck facility told U.S. Marine Brig. Gen. Martin Post that his workers needed strong clothes and thick boots. Post turned to an aide and told him to make a list.

"We're going to finish this project together," Post told the foreman, Abpalwhab Ruef Samarey.

"I hope my god keeps you safe," Samarey replied.

After the daylong tour, the Marines provided a chow hall dinner for two dozen Iraqi officials. Quietly, the Marines left the room and let the Iraqis discuss the project.

Rasheed, a linebacker-sized man with a similarly outsized personality, fired off orders. "Don't tell me you have 12 trucks unless you've counted them yourself," he bellowed at a transportation official.

Officials have learned to be wary of displays of enthusiasm that can wane when difficulties arise.

"We need to live this project every day," Matern said.

In the post-combat phase of the U.S. mission in Iraq, Marines have had to also learn patience. The meetings that led to the gathering of Iraqi officials were drawn out and detailed.

"These people need our help," said Marine Lt. Col. David Bellon, commander of the 3-23.

"And this beats the hell out of fighting them."



Figure 36: K3 Refinery

The Iraqis I worked with were very courageous. The Governor of Al Anbar came to work every day with our escort during the worst of the attacks from the so-called nationalists (Ba'athist Socialists) and global caliphate-types (AQI – Al Qaida in Iraq) during years 2005-2007. Now that it is peaceful (relatively speaking) Iraqis who left are slowly returning, but not always to welcome arms. It seems those who “took their country back” through bravery are not too fond of those who fled. One night in 2008 seven bodies were found hanging from light poles. These Iraqis had been released from prison in Basra only days before and unknowingly faced vigilante justice. But those that feel that way seem to be in a minority.



Figure 37: Mohammed, one of our construction contractors working at the K3 Refinery, hosting dinner.

The refinery is thirteen kilometers south of Haditha, not far from the Euphrates River, in a town named Haqlaniyah, which is about a forty-five-minute helicopter flight northwest of Ramadi (150 km – 90 miles). There is much history here. I lived / worked only a couple hundred yards from the Euphrates where Abraham walked a little while ago while on one of his pilgrimages (aka, exiled) to Babylon, which is only about 150 km southeast.

The collaboration among Americans and Iraqis reached its peak in 2008. We created and articulated the vision in collaboration with the Iraqis of a self-sustaining oil production facility at K3. The U.S. State Department was not involved, though they were informed. They were out of the way letting us do our jobs. The meetings I organized

were collective and collaborative in nature. As Figure 38 shows, the gatherings were organized as working sessions. We set and pursued goals that sustained our vision – we became role models.¹ The Iraqis and Americans were shifting our focus from “leadership” to “citizenship.” The goal was to have the Iraqis become leaders. We emphasized that everyone is a leader.²

We set goals all the while focusing on the shift from dependency on the Americans to Iraqi self-governance. Block speaks of “self-governance” that hinges on employees’ willingness to provide to each other what the leader previously provided. This is accomplished in part through “peer accountability,” which is the “glue” that holds organizations together. This foundation of “peer accountability” among the Iraqi Republic Railways (IRR) Director of Operations, the MNF-W Deputy Commanding General (DCG) (Figure 41 and Appendix 1), forty Iraqi officials from the Ministries of Defense, Transportation, Interior, Oil, Iraqi Army and Police, and the Mayors of Haditha, Haqlaniyah and Bayji was achieved at the Security Conference I organized at Combat Outpost (COP) Haqlaniyah. We flew them in on Ospreys and CH-46s from Baghdad, Ramadi and Bayji.

The meeting was successful in building an action plan assuring the safe loading of crude oil in Bayji and transportation to the K3 Refinery. This was possible based on the “connection and common purpose” we experienced at the meeting of those who were committed and cared, not the small minority who abused their new-found freedom. Our meeting was used as a “work” environment where the right people contracted together

¹ Block (1987).

² Ibid.

and made decisions for the common good. We applied the use of dialogue, open space methods and face-to-face exchanges that were proven methods for both “getting decisions made and evoking high levels of commitment.” We proactively and assertively forged partnerships with disparate groups within the Iraqi government and insisted on them being role models. Everyone is a leader.¹



Figure 38: Engineer Mohammed, Iraqi Republic Railways (IRR) Director of Operations and MNF-W Deputy Commanding General (DCG) addressing the 29May08 IRR Security Conference at Combat Outpost (COP) Haqlaniyah. Forty Iraqi officials from the Ministries of Defense, Transportation, Interior, Oil, Iraqi Army, Police, and Mayors of Haditha, Haqlaniyah and Bayji attended the first-ever conference convened to ensure the best possible security arrangements are in place for the movement of crude oil by rail to K3. Part of my job was to arrange this and subsequent meetings.

¹ Ibid.

After dusting-off the IRR tank cars and building the loading and offloading facilities and a 2 km pipeline, the first train in Iraq's history carrying crude oil arrived at K3 on May 29th. Engineer Salam, the IRR Director of Operations writes:

From: Mohammed

Sent: Tuesday, May 27, 2008 8:23 PM

To: Smith CDR Kenneth (G-3 CMO RROC)

Subject: Re: [U] RE: Baiji-Haqlaneyya communication equipment train (UNCLASSIFIED)

Greetings,

The first train arrived Haqlaniya (8 tankers) loaded with crude oil. This is the first train in Iraq (and in the world) the crude oil transport by train. Thank you for your help.

My regards to the General.

It will be hard to verify if, in fact, it is the first, but it was very significant for Iraq, and specifically Al Anbar Province.



Figure 39. First train from Bayji offloading crude oil at K3 - with Mohammed – K3 Engineer (He's a little bashful, very polite, very nice and good engineer).



Figure 40. At K3 in Haditha deciding what's next...



Figure 41. First Crude Oil to K3 since Sep 2005 Shutdown occurred 29 MAY 2008



Figure 42. With K3 Refinery staff discussing construction progress and security.



Figure 43. Ospreys Landing at K3 with Iraqi Officials for K3 Dedication



Figure 44. Al Anbar Province Governor Mohammed at K3 Dedication



Figure 45. Refinery Opening Celebration (Pursuit of Happiness)

As the construction wrapped-up at the refinery, I spent most of my time working on security force transition from the Ministry of Oil to the Ministry of Interior, IRR route security / radio communications and coordinating the various state-run oil companies, railroad and the myriad of coalition forces and Department of State entities that need to come together to make the safe transport of crude oil from the Bayji Oil Refinery (about 160 km) to the northeast happen. What made it even more interesting is that Al Qaeda in Iraq and its associated mercenaries were still scurrying about along their “rat lines” up that way trying to stay alive waiting for us to leave...but, what about the future?

As I got to know the Iraqis I worked with, collaborated with USMC and Army personnel and read detailed reports on everything from oil production, electrical generation, water quality and insurgent attacks to the chemical stockpiles discovered in

Fallujah, I became increasingly aware of what was not being reported by the U.S. news media. I had a secure phone on my desk, Secure Voice over Internet Protocol (SVoIP). I had a non-secure copper-pair phone. I had two computers with e-mail on my desk: One SVoIP and one non-secure where I could access the public Internet. Communication was not a problem. I even used cell phones and secure satellite phones at times. As I settled in and learned what was happening in Iraq, I sat down and composed what I called “The Real Iraq Story” in June. This provides a glimpse of what I was seeing, hearing and feeling at the time, including political, futuristic, religious musings. I did edit some language to take the “edge” off regarding politics and economics.

The Iraqi’s are a very courageous people. Sure there are bad guys like in the U.S. And the weaker-links of humanity come here from outside the country “to kill Americans, marry beautiful Iraqi virgins and defend Islam.” They are defending Islam from Americans who want to eliminate it from the face of the earth. Or so they are told when recruited by Imams (Preachers) in mosques in Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Egypt and wherever). They soon find they kill fellow Muslims instead, do not get the virgin and are not defending Islam, but trying to establish a restrictive, radical take on the world’s junior religion and initiate the quest for a global caliphate. Disillusioned, they decide to return home. But instead of returning they are threatened with an unpleasant death at the hands of their employers or obtain martyrdom by killing themselves and as many others as possible. The others they kill are overwhelmingly innocent civilians.

I met Brigadier General Mohammed (Figure 45) last week in Haqlaniya. He is a pleasant man in his forties and was in the Iraqi Army during the ill-fated, miscalculated invasion of Kuwait. We were riding in an MRAP (our main source of ground transportation) when he said, smiling, “You shoot at me...now we are friends.” He also described capturing Saudi members of Al Qaida a couple of months ago. He asked them, “Why do you come to Iraq?” “To kill Americans,” they replied. He said, “Really, why don’t you stay home and kill them there? There are thousands of them.” I asked, “Then what did you do?” “We beat the shit out of them,” smiling. “Where are they now, I asked?” “In Bucca prison,” again, with a smile on his face. In fact, he always seemed to be smiling.



Figure 46: Captain Jones with Brigadier General Mohammed in the MRAP just after describing his catching Saudi terrorists.

And what about religious strife? Let's put it in perspective: what about hundreds of years of Catholics and Protestants killing each other – innocent civilians – in a so-called westernized and civilized society in Ireland? This place is a lot like a cross between the wild, wild west in cowboy movies and the Japanese kamikaze pilots who fought in desperation when the end of their global quest was near. Is the end near here? Unlikely. Is it worth the effort? Only history will tell should we live long enough to read it.

We are not leaving Iraq until the Iraqis (a sovereign nation) want us to. No matter what presidential wannabes John Sidney McCain III or Barack Hussein Obama Jr. say, which is likely much different than what they actually believe or even know to be the truth. (see my description of then- candidate Obama visiting Ramadi in the “Their Lives” section.) It isn't going to happen. It is a totally different type of conflict than Vietnam. More at stake. Too close to peace. With a different President in office, we could be in peacekeeping mode here witnessing genocide like that that occurred in “The Balkans.” There has been no genocide here since 2003, but it did happen before - ask the Kurds in the north and the Shia in the south.

These people will come to terms with their future and realize what they have a historically significant part of the world (Babylon / Mesopotamia) that just happens to be sitting on its 2nd or 3rd largest oil reserves. Though not top-quality oil, it still fetches a decent price due to the out of control demand. We already know McCain's position – and we think we know Obama's – but in the end we'll be here. The Iraqis want us here. If they don't then we leave. But, once they get to know you they'll say, "Please don't leave." Hearing that makes me more convinced than ever we are doing the right thing. People who believe a U.S. President will "bring the troops home" (I want to throw-up every time I hear that phrase) are miscalculating the current situation just as Saddam Hussein miscalculated invading Iran in 1980 and Kuwait and Saudi Arabia in 1990. It could be from three or up to fifty or sixty years and counting like Korea, Germany, Italy or Japan. And it's not that a precedent hasn't already been set in the Islamic world. A good comparison would be other Middle Eastern countries where we have had military presence for up to thirty years: Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Kuwait. They want us there not to protect them from Zionist Israelis, but rather from Iran expanding its domain by exporting its revolution under the banner of Islam.

So, folks will just have to get spun-up over some other issue. Like how terrible the economy is, how exclusive the health care system is, how racist and uncaring we are because we don't spend enough \$ on people / systems / programs or how expensive gasoline has become as they demand change while reclining in their home theaters lamenting how the rest of the world hates us and gnashing their teeth at the unfairness of the universe as they know it. Well come here and watch people risking their lives daily for the promise of freedom for their children and their children's children. It will provide a better perspective of what we are all about.

We are doing a noble thing in partnership with the Iraqis protecting the future of our kids, the kids of the Middle East, and setting an example for helping those persecuted around the world that there is hope for freedom. I will return content upon knowing what we as a country and the Iraqis are accomplishing. It takes leadership and those leading change are often not appreciated (sometimes even despised) until many years later long after they are gone. I predict that is how the world will eventually view the peace-keeping / freedom-building / nation-building mission currently underway in Iraq.

This is a war about winning the hearts and minds of people. It is not about taking oil or land away from one and giving to another. If God who liberates all is in the hearts and minds of the people, then there is freedom in the land. If there is freedom in the land there will be revival in Iraq. There will be revival in the Middle East. There will be revival in the world. And interestingly it all started here in the Ancient World.

All I can say to the skeptics who aren't compelled to have their pessimism swayed through reason or hope or faith (faith is to be sure of the things we hope for. But hope can just be an excuse for doing nothing) is do not underestimate the effect of freedom and how it can liberate societies. Because after what I witnessed in four years in Saudi Arabia working construction in my younger days, being married to a Muslim for seven years, considering the oil reserves the Iraqis have and the fact that they are much more secular than the Saudis (or Afghans for that matter) I believe they will be successful merging the various ethnic, religious and tribal (the basis of their existence throughout history) elements into a diverse, free, and economically viable country. At least I hope and pray so.

And while I was sitting in the relative comfort of a secure camp, others were dying. I made numerous trips by helicopter mostly in daylight to the refinery and a couple to Baghdad and a few by day and nighttime convoy. I never felt in danger, though I was. Only one rocket hit our camp while in Fallujah, and none in Ramadi. My predecessors suffered greatly with frequent rocket attacks. I do not suffer from PTSD. If my prayers are answered it will do justice for one young man's legacy who perished:

It takes a special kind of courage to serve our nation in uniform. It takes a big heart and true grit to marry a soldier and support that soldier during deployment. Americans are victors, not the victims in the fight against an enemy that kills children and wants only suffering instead of suffrage.

Because of Corporal Mixon and others like him, Iraqi women cast ballots in an election, a dictator was overthrown, and thousands of Iraqis will soon vote once again in free elections.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Rickard on [Justin Ray Mixon](#) killed by IED (Improvised Explosive Device – a bomb) on June 1st, 2008 in Baghdad. He was twenty-two years old.

And what about the future?



Figure 47. The future lives on...But, no, wait – “bring the troops home” – the “war is lost,” they cry out in despair! Then, the future dies.

And so my story ends...and theirs begins. Next, I will share the lives of Iraqi’s I worked with and came to know. I do this in order to piece together the intricate web of relationship that came together to establish peace and justice in this part of the Ancient World.

Their Lives

The Iraqis I came to know were heroes to me. Brave. Fought against the odds, but held course, persevered, helped lead their countrymen to freedom from tyranny. They decided they wanted a change. They wanted life. Liberty. And they achieved what they sought. I now examine how the lives of Iraqis and Americans connected on the plains of Al Anbar Province to form a common bond of humanity – not of clashing cultures – that ultimately led a nation of thirty million people to freedom.

My use of considerations of leadership by my Iraqi colleagues runs the risk of shifting the focus of this dissertation from me to others. Yet, this SPN makes unique contributions to the academic body of knowledge we have come to expect from higher education research and applied research for particular institutions and is worth the risk. I mitigate this risk through interrogation of self as reflected in interpersonal connections as a consequence of my Iraqi experience. My Iraqi colleagues' opinions on leadership qualities are included to substantiate the body of leadership literature as reflected in western-inspired academic circles of influence. The resulting diversity of academic thought is invigorating to higher education as it applies to the modern world.

American politics also played out while I was in Iraq. Presidential candidate Obama and other senators visited Ramadi in July. The following are quotes from Iraqi's regarding Obama's planned visit – as edited by the Associated Press:



Jul 18, 2008 1:37 PM (ET)

By The Associated Press

Some comments from around Iraq on Sen. Barack Obama's expected visit:

We are worried that he might win the presidency and pull out (American) forces because chaos would prevail in Iraq and militias would return.

– Mohammed -----, 19, Shiite primary school teacher in southern city of Hillah.

We hope Obama will fulfill his promise of pulling out American forces if he wins the election. If he is sincere with this pledge, we hope he wins.

– Hussein -----, 35, Shiite laborer in the Baghdad neighborhood of Sadr City.

I wish God would inspire Obama to do something in the interest of the Iraqi people.

– Harith -----, 52, Sunni engineer in Baghdad.

I think that after visiting Iraq, Obama will change his mind about pulling out American troops because the security in Iraq is more stable with the forces here.

– Bahra -----, 39, Kurdish teacher in northern city of Irbil.

America is like a giant company whose only concern is profit. Obama's visit is for propaganda.

– Sami -----, 36, Shiite engineer in Baghdad.

The American forces will not withdraw whether Obama wins or not. If they withdraw, that would create a big vacuum and Iran would be the first to fill it.

– Ahmed -----, 55, Sunni official in Ministry of Higher Education in Baghdad.

The senators arrived at Camp Ramadi in the morning and the Marines took them by convoy to the Al Anbar Provincial Government Center where they met both the tribal and provincial government officials who insisted the surge was working and to not remove the Marines, which Obama had said he would do. Despite these requests, when asked by reporters as his helicopter prepared to depart Ramadi, “Do you now admit the surge is working?” – Obama answered, “No.” But to this day he will happily accept responsibility for “ending the war in Iraq.”

Conversations of Life, Liberty and Leadership

My discussion of leadership is based on strong, western, male perspectives. I want to explore how other cultural perspectives could add to my study.¹ I had numerous discussions with Iraqis using a common theme of personal stories of leadership. They told their stories in their own words. I only edited for readability. I have included synopses of these conversations throughout my dissertation, andnd provide the following two to put on record the typical feelings and historical documentation of what actually happened in Iraq – when it was happening.

Mohammed is an engineer who I worked with in Ramadi. He and his family have since immigrated to the United States on a Special Immigrant Visa. He reflects on America’s invasion of liberation:

¹ Aiken (2013).

I live in Baghdad. My father was a lawyer; he is dead. I have no brothers, just two sisters. My father was a famous lawyer, and he had a private school, but Saddam took his private school about 1976; I have an official document to prove this. My mother is the headmaster of a school. After my father's death, she took care of us and she sent us to the best schools to complete our studies. I graduated from the University of Baghdad in 1994 with a degree in civil engineering. My sister is an English teacher in my mother's school, and my second sister graduated from a business management college.

When I first graduated in 1994, I did nothing. I did not choose to work with Iraqi ministries. If you wanted to have a good job, you had to go back to Saddam's area, in Tikrit. In the Iraqi government, I didn't find people who supported me, who wanted me to have a good job. Not like the Americans. Instead, I had simple work, a simple business. For three years, I operated a supermarket, and I rented a shop to bring in some money every month. After Saddam went, customers didn't care about the rules, and I didn't get paid the rent I was owed. I should have gone to court and ask for my money, but I didn't. I am the only son in my family. I was afraid I might be kidnapped, I might be killed.

During the war between Iraq and Iran, Saddam made all of Iraq into a kind of big prison: No one could leave the country. I was fourteen years old. Saddam was a crazy man. He wanted only power. On TV, we were told that when we finished the war with Iran, the country was now without money. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia sold oil at a very cheap price. Saddam wanted them to cooperate with him. When his meetings with them didn't get the right result, he decided to invade Kuwait. And also he said that Kuwait is part of Iraq. In 1991, I was a student, and we were surprised that the Iraqi army invaded Kuwait.

The US Army is like a safety valve for all of Iraq. They must stay in Iraq. Otherwise, Iraqis will fight each other. Different groups want power. Even the Iraqi police and Iraqi army shouldn't be given stronger weapons, because you can't depend on them. I am afraid of them. I see a checkpoint in Baghdad on my way to work in the morning, and I think, maybe these guards are good, and maybe they wouldn't hurt me. But at night, it's impossible to trust them. I hear many stories about police vehicles being used to kidnap people. They misuse the authority of the police uniform and vehicle. If they hate someone, they can harass and harm them.

When the Iraqi people understand democracy—standards, procedures, rules—democracy will work very well. Maybe in five years, ten years

from now? I hope so, but I'm afraid it might take longer. It will take time before all Iraqis understand the democratic system, the American way of dealing with people. Part of the problem is that most educated people have left Iraq, like doctors and engineers. It's easy for crazy people like Al Qaeda to lead uneducated people in the wrong direction. Iraqis should take a training program to learn about democracy.

Right now, the leaders we have are ridiculous—they fight among themselves over chairs when foreign politicians visit! Part of the problem is the way we elect people. In America, you know the names of your candidates; you know exactly who you're voting for. Here, when you choose a leader, you're voting for a number that represents a party, not an individual. Then you're surprised about who ends up in the position! There are people in the Iraqi government who hate Americans. They don't want Iraq to be a democratic country, to be successful. They don't want the American army to be successful in Iraq.

Prejudice is another reason why we can't have a real democracy now in Iraq. About 70 percent of Iraqis believe there is no difference among the Shi'ites, the Sunnis, and the Kurds. Educated people are more likely to understand this. But those people who think there is a difference make problems. We have a lot to learn.

Omar worked with me in Ramadi in July / August 2008. He spoke English and we conversed without an interpreter: I am a twenty-nine-year-old civil engineer. I was born and raised in Baghdad. I graduated from university in Baghdad in 2003, the year the war began. Since then, I have worked with many contractors. I helped build substations, houses.

Like so many Iraqis, I've lost someone close to me: In May 2006, my best friend was killed. After that, I was afraid to leave my house even for work, because the same thing could happen to me. I had some friends who worked for the US government. I thought this would be the safer way to make some money. I started working in the Green Zone in July 2006.

I went to Syria for almost seven months in 2007. I sent my brothers ahead of me, because it was dangerous for them to stay here. When I came back, I went back to work in the Green Zone. I came here to Ramadi in 2008.

When the US forces first came here, it was a positive thing. I would chitchat with American soldiers; I would have them over to my home, play soccer with them. When we had problems, we told them, and they helped us. They wanted to improve our lives. After about six or seven

months, we could finally go outside, but nobody had jobs then. The most important thing to people was the fact that Saddam was gone, the guys who worked with him were gone, and we were free. But after six or seven months, people needed work, and they were angry.

Some people resent the coalition forces for certain reasons. There were bad people who went to the coalition and told them, “This person worked with Saddam,” and they gave them the address. When the coalition forces went after this person and didn’t find him, they’d take his wife. This is wrong. If I am a father and I have a wife and six or seven children and my family gets killed, I will hate the people who do this to me.

Also, the coalition dissolved the Iraqi military at the beginning, in 2003. These people were without a job. It’s not easy to find another job when you’ve been in the military all your life. You can’t go back to a normal life. And the ministries were disbanded. After that, when they made a new government, they let some people go back to work.

In the meantime, Al Qaeda gained power in Iraq. About 30 percent of Al Qaeda here were from outside Iraq. Many of the Iraqis who cooperated did so because they were afraid of being killed. Also, people needed money for their families, and Al Qaeda had a lot of money to give them; they were being funded by sources from other Middle Eastern countries. People were afraid of Al Qaeda because they did the most terrible things. They cut off heads, they burned people. They did this for stupid reasons—for instance, to make money. They killed Iraqis who they suspected of wrongdoing. Houses were blown up by Al Qaeda, with families inside them. This is unacceptable. They are not God, to judge these people without evidence, to decide they deserve a death sentence.

Here in Ramadi, at first, people thought, the US has come to take our country. But I think that the first people to start fighting Al Qaeda were in Ramadi, in 2007. A leader here in Iraq controls three to four thousand people, or more. A tribe like this extends to Syria, Saudi Arabia. The leaders decided to fight Al Qaeda because they did something to hurt every family. A car bomb in a crowded marketplace could kill anybody—Iraqis or Americans, men, women, children. Tribal leaders knew Al Qaeda had to be stopped: They have no respect for human life, only their own interests.

I know about this from my own life. I’m happy that my father paid all of this money so that I could be a good example and study to be an engineer, and I’ve spent my life studying and supporting my family. They’re proud

of me. I love and admire my father because he's always supported me. Even when I did badly in school, my father still paid all the bills.

I'd like to be a leader to be this kind of person, a man like my father, who suffers along with us, who knows what people are looking for. We want very basic things that are necessary to the wellbeing of all people. We're looking for water, we're looking for safety. We're looking for support.

I would follow a fair leader. It doesn't matter if he's Shia, Sunni, or Kurdish. He has to take care of all the people in Iraq who want a good, simple life. I am Sunni, but I have many Shia friends. My mother is Shia. I think that in Iraq, only 20 percent think like I do, that they don't care who is Shia or Sunni. This makes things very difficult. All of the people who work in the ministries are Shia.

Right now, I think there are good and bad things happening in Iraq. It's good that the government is growing. But I'm afraid of when the coalition leaves. Things are at a critical point. Most people are afraid of the coalition forces and don't want them to stay forever. But our government doesn't yet have enough force or strength to function on its own. The police stay inside the police station out of fear. They can't protect the people yet. I don't trust the new government; I don't trust the Iraqi military.

For democracy to work, it's important to provide essential things like water and power. It's important to find jobs for people who are sitting at home. Right now, we're at the same point as 2003. We didn't move forward. We still don't have many of the things we need for everyday life.

Saddam treated people terribly, so I do believe the Americans needed to come in to end his rule. The US Army helps us, supports us, but the British understand our culture better. The main problem is that the coalition forces didn't have a plan for after the war. They don't know how to provide what the Iraqi people need.

The conversations afford a glimpse into the lives of people from a war-torn nation. They reveal the conflicting opinions of our success dismantling the Iraqi government and military apparatus after destroying Saddam Hussein's regime with little loss of life. People who would have gladly continued to support the invasion turned

against us – as I would have. We suddenly have “unemployed” hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. With the US eliminating their jobs, they had no income to support themselves or their family. Many left the country. Others turned to Al Qaeda and other foreign insurgents for aid. This was a horrible mistake we made that set the occupation back while delaying the ultimate successful withdrawal of all coalition forces until December 2011.

While their stories reflect similar sentiments, it is telling that one believes 70% of Iraqis are inclusive of differing sects of Islam and the other believes only 20% are accepting. I suspect it is somewhere in the middle. And surveys reported by the U.S. Institute of Peace in March 2014 indicate that despite sharpening sectarian divisions that have pitted Iraqi Sunnis against Shias for decades, polls found that only a third of Iraqis believe sectarianism is too deeply rooted in their society to ever go away, while 58% said the divides would lesson in the long run. Only time will tell who is right. Telling these stories enables the framing of distinctions and underlying similarities between perceptions and reality as they relate to life, liberty and leadership in a disparate culture. One of which we were unprepared to engage. But we learned, adapted, improvised and overcame to win the hearts and minds and change the course of history.

Distinctions and Similarities

You cannot get more distinct than changing from tyranny to liberty. But that is just what the Iraqis chose to do. Leaving behind the totalitarian brutality of the Saddam Hussein regime, rejecting the repression of an Islamic state, Iraqis chose freedom over bondage, liberty over tyranny, life over death, democracy over statism. This we have in

common, just as we rejected the chains of England; Iraq rejected the chains of Ba'athists after our intervention and Islamists after they attempted to install an Islamic state through force. They chose instead to establish a political system with a constitution and democratically elected men and women representatives from all Provinces. They chose to share the oil wealth between the Kurdish north and Shia south, and to coalesce around a government where religion plays a role, but is not the absolute dictator of personal behavior. Public opinion surveys conducted while I was in Iraq show the improved outlook Iraqis shared compared to that from depths of the attempted Al Qaeda takeover in 2007.¹

Our economic systems are both based on free enterprise: The freedom of thirty million people to make hundreds of individual decisions daily about what they want to purchase and for what price; free of government dictates, set-asides and coercion to buy one product over another, all of which are key ingredients of a free society. However, free enterprise as an economic system does not guarantee a free society. Look at China, for example. They have had success in fulfilling the appetite of 1 billion people through mostly open competition, but citizens have no control over who governs them and certainly do not have freedom of speech nor freedom to assemble nor freedom of religion. This is what Iraq was like under Saddam Hussein. And why Iraqis treated us as liberators when we first arrived. But now, while America adds layer upon layer of controls over its economy, the Iraqis have a “flat tax” that promotes wage-earning, not

¹ Iraqi Public Opinion (2008).

detract from it as ours does with its so-called “progressive” income tax where the more you make the greater the percentage of your income the government takes from you.

Iraqis and Americans have the obvious differences in religion, but the common foundation is that we believe in one and only one God, maker of heaven and earth – at least most of us do. And we both recognize places of worship as significant to our religion, be they synagogues, churches or mosques. We both believe in the virtue of life and the complementary freedom of personal choice that enables virtue to exist. This we have in common: when the Iraqis discovered that Al Qaeda insurgents “have no respect for human life” as Omar stated, they began to turn against the invaders and work with Americans to rid their country of the menace.

And when it comes to liberty, the Iraqis soon found Al Qaeda’s goal was to control life in Iraq. Not unlike when “Saddam made Iraq like a big prison, no one could leave the country” as Sam pointed out. They chose freedom instead.

The leadership traits, styles and actions that Iraqis identified are the same as contained in the body of literature I previously discussed. Much focuses on the human side of leadership such as that identified in Servant Leadership¹ theory. To care for their people was repeatedly mentioned as a key attribute of leaders in Iraq. I have identified the following from my conversations to exemplify what Iraqis desire in a leader. These are unedited and appear as many times as quoted:

*Broad minded, does not discriminate, collaborative, tolerant, humble,
generous, brave, a listener, deliberative, patience, bravery, integrity,*

¹ Greenleaf (1970, 1977).

instills confidence, generous, understands people, has trust, respect, humility, honesty and gratitude; courage, having respect for all the people, being humble, and loving—that's very important, you've got to show people you care; courage, hopeful, optimistic, happy, determination, care, support, protect, provide water, safety; fair, civilized, diplomatic, courageous, simple, help others first, proficient, not idealistic, collaborative, devoted to freedom / democracy, good communicator and educated; civilized; courageous; simple / plain-spoken / humble / modest; help others before helping himself; proficient in his work, and not bound to his background or his religion or his party. He should love diplomacy, cooperating with other countries. And of course, he has to be devoted to democracy.

I synopsise these desired leadership traits, qualities, styles merely to accentuate what we have come to know: that leadership personifies itself in the lives of many, regardless of race, nationality, ethnicity or religious background. And that these are key parts of modern leadership theory as illustrated by Servant Leadership¹ findings that effective leadership emerges from the desire to help others, not overseeing others; focusing on the leader being in center, not on top; understanding the personal needs of individuals; healing wounds caused by conflict and being an effective listener. This is further exemplified by Warren Bemis² who argues leadership is not about charisma or

¹ Greenleaf (1970, 1977).

² Bemis (2003).

personal skills, but creating a shared vision, having a clear voice characterized by sense of purpose, self-confidence, and operating from a strong moral code.

Perceptions and Reality

Perceptions, generated in large part by the American press and politicians opposed to President Bush, had Iraq as unwinnable, a lost cause, a failure, a quagmire, a mistake, Bush's War, a War for Oil, a country that could not be governed. Joe Biden advocated dividing Iraq into various sections due to tribal, ethnic (Kurds) and religious (Shiite and Sunni) differences he advocated could not be overcome: "Biden and Leslie Gelb, president emeritus of the Council of Foreign Relations, [advocate](#) breaking Iraq into a federation consisting of three parts: a Kurdish north, a Sunni center and a Shiite south. Those terms – north, center and south – are the vaguest approximations, but they represent a thought, or a despair, or a resignation. The only way Iraq is going to work is if we concede that it is not likely to work the way we wanted it to."¹

However, Biden and others like him were wrong; as it was wrong to underestimate a people whose unalienable right is to live in freedom. Unfortunately, most Jews and Christians have already left Iraq and are unlikely to return, which in itself is tragic for religious diversity. But in reality the war was winnable proven by the fact that the Iraqis are today a functioning, self-governed free society joining Israel as the only ones in the Middle East (Appendix 3). They are not divided by the Western powers

¹ Cohen (2007).

into three clumps of peoples based on racial, ethnic, cultural or religious differences as devised by Biden. They chose to work together though certainly challenges remain.¹

The most significant of which was the Sunni Islamic jihadists' invasion from Syria in June 2014. As of this writing they are contained to the Sunni-dominated regions of Iraq where I worked. It is abhorrent to realize that the very ground I walked on and U.S. Marines and soldiers died on is now lost to the radical Muslims whose goal is to install Sharia law in a caliphate carved among a once-free people – as was done in Afghanistan by the Taliban after the former Soviet Union was forced to abandon its occupation of that country. Had we the commitment (Chapter V) to Iraq, or to helping the moderate rebels in Syria, we would likely not be witnessing losing a war we had won – quite the legacy of the Obama administration. But beyond one man, it is a sad time for Americans and their allies abroad, as they know not what to expect from our country's leadership.

Reports by the U.S. Institute of Peace in March 2014 indicate that:

Despite sharpening sectarian divisions that have pitted Iraqi Sunnis against Shias for decades, polls found that only a third of Iraqis believe sectarianism is too deeply rooted in their society to ever go away, while 58 percent said the divides would lessen in the long run. Pollsters also found that 41 percent of Iraqis believe the country is going in the right direction, up from 31 percent in September. The improvement may be due to pessimism last year as violence began to rise again and in the wake of provincial elections.

Security, unemployment and corruption were the top issues for respondents in the poll, while basic services prompted less concern. A majority – 65 percent – said electricity and water supplies were improving, 56 percent said education was getting better and 55 percent said the cost of living was becoming more

¹ Guardian (2004).

manageable. The poll has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent for the national results.

The poll's findings also showed that 65 percent of Iraqis still believe democracy is the best form of government for their country, including 71 percent in Baghdad and 75 percent in the country's south. Furthermore, 72 percent of respondents said they think elections are "a good thing," and 75 percent are more enthusiastic about the upcoming vote than they were about previous elections. In addition to electing members of the Council of Representatives, voters also will choose candidates for provincial assemblies in the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG). The rest of Iraq conducted provincial elections last year.

Polls like these compared to those from 2008 indicate a promising future for Iraq and help clarify what "winning" the war looks like today. This moves the discussion beyond the rhetoric of "choosing freedom" to something more tangible, and provides greater evidence of the measures of success of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Another misperception was that the educational system was in shambles; but in reality the University of Baghdad remained open and continued to graduate engineers during our occupation.¹ And the perception Iraq had no Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) was not true. When in Fallujah, the Marines uncovered caches of mustard gas. I personally learned of this from a secure Situation Report (SITREP) I read the day the gas stockpile was discovered. I was surprised by these findings as they were not being reported by the American press. I guess I should not have been surprised. Or perhaps it was classified and not releasable to the press.

My observations of, and reflections upon, conversations with Iraqis on life, liberty and leadership reveal that personality, intellect and motivation of humans are universal; they are all comprised of innate traits. I discovered this by listening to what Iraqis said

¹ U.S. Institute of Peace (2008).

about leadership. Their descriptions captured in this dissertation show how all have varying degrees of intellect and motivation within distinctive personality types – all of which are part of the mosaic of life in a free society. I learned how our inherent gift of life and the desire for liberty formed an integrated platform from which leadership personified itself in the lives of many. I see how my life and the lives of others from both Iraq and America connected on the plains of Al Anbar Province to form a common bond of humanity – not of clashing cultures – that ultimately led a nation of thirty million people to freedom.

I discovered the political, economic and religious distinctions and underlying similarities between perceptions and reality as they relate to life, liberty and leadership in these disparate cultures framed by war and peace. May these stories be remembered so as to honor those who worked, fought, and continue to work and fight for liberty so those who paid the ultimate sacrifice have not done so in vain.

It's Over

I left Iraq on July 28, 2008 and returned to Kuwait for debriefing, downtime and equipment and weapon return. I slept for fourteen hours the first night.

The third day there I learned the USMC JAG I worked with daily, Colonel Michael Stahlman, was found shot in the head with his 9mm Beretta in his room in Ramadi – just steps from mine. His wife said he was murdered

(<http://www.veteranstoday.com/2012/02/01/widow-of-marine-corps-colonel-involved-in-haditha-trials-launches-campaign-to-prove-her-husband-was-murdered/>). Attempted

suicide, they decided. I agree. I knew why. He died months later at Bethesda Naval Hospital, leaving behind his wife and two young girls. Tragic. It could have been prevented in my mind with counseling and antidepressant drugs, but he was an intense and proud Marine and would not admit vulnerabilities that would likely have saved his life.

We flew to Baltimore, Maryland (where, it turns out, I was to later live on my forty-seven-foot Trawler for two and a half years) via Germany on August 8th. I processed through Port Hueneme and had a minor medical issue addressed in San Diego, CA at the Balboa Naval Medical Center. I bought Claire a “new” used Saab SUV and drove it back to Vermont. It was exactly three thousand miles.

So what has since transpired in Iraq? Was it to be victory or defeat? Or something in between? Mark Steyn provides a synopsis in the 22MAR13 Investor’s Business Daily: “Iraq Less Unwon than other Wars”:

Ten years ago, along with three-quarters of the American people, including the men just appointed as President Obama's secretaries of state and defense, I supported the invasion of Iraq. A decade on, unlike most of the American people, including John Kerry and Chuck Hagel, I'll stand by that original judgment.

None of us can say what would have happened had Saddam Hussein remained in power. He might now be engaged in a nuclear arms race with Iran. One or other of his even more psychotic sons, the late Uday or Qusay, could be in power. The Arab Spring might have come to Iraq, and surely even more bloodily than in Syria.

But these are speculations best left to the authors of "alternative histories." In the real world, how did things turn out?

Three weeks after Operation Shock and Awe began, the early-bird naysayers were already warning of massive humanitarian devastation and civil war. Neither happened.

Over-compensating somewhat for all the doom-mongering, I wrote in Britain's Daily Telegraph that "a year from now Basra will have a lower crime rate than most London boroughs." Close enough. Maj. Gen. Andy Salmon, the British commander in southern Iraq, eventually declared of Basra that "on a per capita basis, if you look at the violence statistics, it is less dangerous than Manchester."

Ten years ago, expert opinion was that Iraq was a phony-baloney entity imposed on the map by distant colonial powers. Then-Sen. Joe Biden, you'll recall, advocated dividing the country into three separate states, which for the Democrats held out the enticing prospect of having three separate quagmires to blame on Bush, but for the Iraqis it had little appeal.

"As long as you respect its inherently confederal nature," I argued, "It'll work fine."

As for the supposedly secessionist Kurds, "They'll settle for being Scotland or Quebec." And so it turned out. The Times of London, last week:

"Ten Years After Saddam, Iraqi Kurds Have Never Had It So Good."

In Kurdistan as in Quebec, there is a pervasive unsavory tribal cronyism, but on the other hand, unlike Quebec City, Erbil is booming.

What of the rest of the country? Iraq, I suggested, would wind up "at a bare minimum, the least badly governed state in the Arab world, and, at best, pleasant, civilized and thriving." I'll stand by my worst-case scenario there. Unlike the emerging "reforms" in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt and Syria, politics in Iraq have remained flawed but, by the standards of the grimly Islamist Arab Spring, broadly secular.

So I like the way a lot of the trees fell. But I missed the forest.

On the previous western liberation of Mesopotamia, when Gen. Maude took Baghdad from the Turks in 1917, British troops found a very different city from the Saddamite squat of 2003: In a lively, jostling, cosmopolitan metropolis, 40% of the population was Jewish.

I wasn't so deluded as to think the Jews would be back, but I hoped something of Baghdad's lost vigor might return.

Granted that most of the Arab world, from Tangiers to Alexandria, is considerably less "multicultural" than it was in mid-century, but the remorseless extinction of Iraq's Christian community this last decade is appalling — and, given that it happened on America's watch, utterly shameful. Like the bland acknowledgement deep in a State Department

"International Religious Freedom Report" that the last church in Afghanistan was burned to the ground in 2010, it testifies to the superpower's impotence, not "internationally" but in client states entirely bankrolled by us.

Foreigners see this more clearly than Americans. As Goh Chok Tong, the prime minister of Singapore, said on a visit to Washington in 2004, "The key issue is no longer WMD or even the role of the U.N. The central issue is America's credibility and will to prevail."

Just so. If you live in Tikrit or Fallujah, the Iraq war was about Iraq. If you live anywhere else on the planet, the Iraq war was about America, and the unceasing drumbeat of "quagmire" and "exit strategy" communicated to the world an emptiness at the heart of American power — like the toppled statue of Saddam that proved to be hollow.

On the 11th anniversary of 9/11, mobs trashed U.S. embassies across the region with impunity. A rather more motivated crowd showed up in Benghazi, killed four Americans, including the ambassador, and correctly calculated they would face no retribution. Like the Taliban in Afghanistan, these guys have reached their own judgment about American "credibility" and "will" — as have more potent forces yet biding their time, from Moscow to Beijing.

A few weeks after the fall of Saddam, on little more than a whim, I rented a beat up Nissan at Amman Airport and, without telling the car-hire bloke, drove east across the Iraqi border and into the Sunni Triangle. I could not easily make the same journey today: Western journalists now require the permission of the central government to enter al-Anbar province.

But for a brief period in the spring of 2003 we were the "strong horse" and even a dainty little media gelding such as myself was accorded a measure of respect by the natives. At a rest area on the highway between Rutba and Ramadi, I fell into conversation with one of the locals. Having had to veer on to the median every few miles to dodge bomb craters, I asked him whether he bore any resentment toward his liberators.

"Americans only in the sky," he told me, grinning a big toothless grin as, bang on cue, a U.S. chopper rumbled up from over the horizon and passed high above our heads. "No problem."

"Americans only in the sky" is an even better slogan in the Obama era of drone-alone warfare. In Iraq, there were a lot of boots on the ground, but when it came to non-military leverage (cultural, economic) Americans were content to remain "only in the sky." And down on the ground other

players filled the vacuum, some reasonably benign (the Chinese in the oil fields), others less so (the Iranians in everything else).

And so a genuinely reformed Middle East remains, like the speculative scenarios outlined at the top, in the realm of "alternative history."

Nevertheless, in the grim two-thirds-of-a-century roll-call of America's unwon wars, Iraq today is less unwon than Korea, Vietnam or Afghanistan, and that is not nothing. The war dead of America and its few real allies died in an honorable cause.

But armies don't wage wars, nations do. And, back on the home front, a vast percentage of fairweather hawks who decided that it was all too complicated, or a bit of a downer, or Bush lied, or where's the remote, revealed America as profoundly unserious. A senator who votes for war and then decides he'd rather it had never started is also engaging in "alternative history" — albeit of the kind in which Pam Ewing steps into the shower at Southfork and writes off the previous season of "Dallas" as a bad dream.

In non-alternative history, in the only reality there is, once you've started a war, you have two choices: to win it or to lose it. Withdrawing one's "support" for a war you're already in advertises nothing more than a kind of geopolitical ADHD.

Shortly after Gulf War One, when the world's superpower assembled a mighty coalition to fight half-a-war to an inconclusive halt at the gates of Baghdad, Washington declined to get mixed up in the disintegrating Balkans. Colin Powell offered the following rationale:

"We do deserts. We don't do mountains."

Across a decade in Iraq, America told the world we don't really do deserts, either.

I am Home – but Not

We decided to “downsize” and bought a new home while I was still in Ramadi.

We used email and phone to make decisions. We had not sold the other home of six years, which added a little stress on top what was going on in Iraq. My family moved in while I was leaving Kuwait in early August. This impulsive purchase was indicative of

my past and things to come. So I came “home” but to a different home and a different family.

I struggled for six months with acclimation to a normal life. I started a new six-month assignment with Homeland Security recruiting severely wounded, injured or ill veterans in late October 2008. However, it meant a temporary detail to Washington, DC. But the good thing is that my eldest step-daughter, Nicole, was starting her freshman year at George Washington University. It helped build our relationship and allowed a gradual transition to life with Claire as we settled into our downsized home. I took Nicole and two classmates to Kenya for an “Engineer Without Borders” project. I was happily continuing to be a step-father while paying for her college. However, after my experience in Iraq, I am not sure “back to work” will ever mean to me what it used to.

I was now “home” in Vermont. It was 2009. I was fifty-five years of age. I was content. I sure did not expect to be. I remember my angst at turning forty. A friend warned turning fifty would be worse. I would have to disagree. But upon writing this, I realize the angst one may feel at any age is related to one’s particular situation at the time. I was alone at forty, but I was not at fifty. He was alone at fifty. I had searched for the “perfect” lifelong partner that eluded me the first time around. Now I was settled, with two stepchildren, a wonderful wife, a dog, a boat and a mortgage. I had also searched for the “perfect” career that would bring financial independence and happiness (or so I believed), for the next exciting venture to another city, another country, a new relationship, a new job, a new degree. So now, after twelve years in the private sector, I

found myself a bureaucrat with a stable government job where I can make a difference in people's lives.

I struggled, however, with the lack of a challenging job. When Homeland Security was formed in 2003, my previous job of eight years was abolished. The leadership position I held was no longer. It was part of the reason, I believe, that I felt compelled to go to Iraq in the first place. Though I denied it. To myself. And to my family. Not content in my job, I searched for other opportunities. When I saw the opportunity to apply for a nine-month temporary active duty Navy assignment on the "Comprehensive Review" of the law commonly referred to as, "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" – I did. And to my surprise, I was selected to represent the entire National Guard and Reserve forces from every branch of service. However, it would mean leaving Claire and Olivia behind in Vermont for nine more months. She objected and was angry. It was a selfish choice. One that would ultimately cost me my marriage.

So what was my life like? I would say content at the time. Content because I was learning to live with myself, but Claire was also learning to live with herself. Our marriage struggled. We went to marriage counseling. Trying to resolve differences, mostly centered around money. We attended a two-day "Returning Warrior" workshop at the Hilton Inn in Burlington, VT. We wrote letters to each other expressing how we felt; what we wanted in the future. However, my time away was too much. Twelve months later she wanted out and this time she did not change her mind. We divorced in 2012. Married, Divorced, Married, Divorced. Not a pretty picture. Now what was I to do?

I started over. Sold the house in Vermont, bought a boat (named “Liberty”) and lived on her for three years until moving to California for my new position with the Department of Homeland Security in September 2013.



Figure 48. My home from 2011 – 2013 “Liberty” in Baltimore Harbor

Chapter V: APPLICATION

Sixty-two percent of Iraq's 19 million eligible voters went to the polls in March 2010, exceeding turnout for U.S. presidential elections of the past 50 years. High turnout occurred in the largely Sunni provinces of Saladdin, Anbar and Nineveh...

- USA TODAY, March 9, 2010

It is with this background of a motivated citizenry that I unpack and explore practical applications of successful leadership strategies that saved lives and ensured liberty for thirty million Iraqis. These applications were battle-tested on the plains of Al Anbar province where from 2003 to 2012 Iraqis and Americans connected on the plains of Al Anbar Province to form a common bond of humanity – not of clashing cultures – that ultimately led a nation of thirty million people to freedom. In this chapter I integrate education, leadership and policy literature into my narrative.

These battle-tested, multicultural operational elements, if successfully applied, will result in any organization improving its effectiveness. As I explore the detailed components of each I will show how they manifested themselves in the lives of many and survived the test of time. They are *education, leadership, policy, community* and *commitment*. Life and liberty are key ingredients for these to flourish, and leadership is the glue that holds them together. I will explore each of these elements, how they manifested themselves in Iraq, and how they were tested and enhanced along the way. At the foundation of my exploration are the principles I strive to live by. I share the following to illustrate the lens through which I see the world.

Guiding Principles

So I concluded there is nothing better than to be happy and enjoy ourselves as long as we can. And people should eat and drink and enjoy the fruits of their labor, for these are gifts from God.

– Ecclesiastes 3:12-13

I Believe

In the beginning, God created... What is it about? What is the purpose of life? What is the reason for being? Are we here by accident? Do our eyes see by accident? Do we reason by accident? Do we choose right and wrong by accident? I believe God created heaven and earth – all we see, feel, smell, hear, think, sense, love and hate. I believe God's purpose for our life is to be happy; to enjoy the results of our work, and that we can only be happy if we are free. I believe God gave us all the ability to learn, but not the ability to understand why we learn. I believe God gave us the gift to dream, but not to understand why we dream. For understanding why we exist is impossible – just as we cannot understand infinity. There is the mystery of sight and life...all of which we learn to accept as is through faith. Faith that there is something bigger and better and above all of us.

I believe in America as it was and is to be: A nation of unique, spiritual, individuals “endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”¹ I believe we are bound by the collective natural right of each “to live, live freely under self-government, to acquire and retain the property they create through their own labor, and to be treated impartially before a just

¹ Declaration of Independence.

law.”¹ Americans are discovering “their own potential and pursuing their own legitimate interests” displaying unique qualities of “initiative, self-reliance, and independence.”² These are tempered, however, by a moral order that has as its foundation the principles, practices and beliefs of “individual liberty, private property, family and faith.” This moral order guides their lives and all human lives “through the prudent exercise of judgment” that is “restrained, ethical and honorable.”³

I believe in the absolutes of the Preamble to our Constitution: “establish,” “ensure,” “provide” and “secure.”⁴ Only one is arbitrary, not definitive: “promote.” Promote is subjective. It does not mean, provide. Yet, some use this as an arbitrary absolute to expand the realm of power of the federal government; i.e., as providing housing, education, food, medicine, health care, jobs and money. While many words take on socially constructed connotations, I argue that “secure” and “establish” are purposefully distinguished from “provide” by our constitutional framers as articulated in the Federalists Papers: (<http://www.foundingfathers.info/federalistpapers/>). As Schaeffer declares:

If this arbitrary absolute by law is accepted...bred with the concept of no absolutes but rather relativity, why wouldn't arbitrary absolutes in regard to such matters as authoritarian limitations on freedom be equally accepted

¹ Levin (2009), 9.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Constitution of the United States.

as long as they were thought to be sociologically helpful? We are left with sociological law without any certainty of limitation.¹

I believe the desire for liberty and freedom creates the foundation for people to rise-up and break the chains others were too timid to break. Whether it is throwing off the chains of slavery or Iraqis in Al Anbar Province, who set the stage, served as examples, led, and others willingly chose to follow. That they too can have the equality they deserve and the equal opportunity to live life as they please. And I believe freedom breeds liberty and liberty breeds peace. Freedom cannot be given, whereas liberty can be declared, and peace can flourish in this world. Freedom is innate in the gift of life.

Life

Life...is incongruous, complex, and paradoxical. It can bore us, soothe us, upset us, confound us, sadden us, inspire us, and anger us, sometimes all at once.

– Nash (2010, p. 123)

In *Leadership and the New Science*,² Wheatley discusses multi-disciplinary views of leadership and organizations, but with a particular emphasis on life I found compelling, specifically how it relates to my experience in Iraq and how we survive only by participating in a web of relationships formed by intimate engagements. Engagements such as these are dynamic, diverse and have stated and unstated objectives. These engagements played out all over Iraq. They provided safety in numbers, diversity of political thought and worked effectively when engaging collaborating and negotiating to influence and enable the best possible outcome. Some engagements provided security,

¹ Schaeffer (1976), 222.

² Wheatley (1999).

communications, transportation and some goods and services. It was coordinating and facilitating these engagements that required the most time and emotional capital to successfully implement and execute the plans.

Wheatley continues:

Life is about creation. This ability of life to create itself is captured in a strange-sounding new word, autopoiesis (from Greek, meaning self-production or self-making). Autopoiesis is life's fundamental process for creating and renewing itself, for growth and change. A living system is a network of processes in which every process contributes to all other processes. The entire network is engaged together in producing itself (Capra 1996, 99). This process is not limited to one type of organism - it describes life itself. As described by systems scientist Erich Jantsch, any living system is "a never resting structure that constantly seeks its own self-renewal" (1980, 10). And this description defines a paradox that is important to note when we think about change: A living system produces itself; it will change in order to preserve that self. Change is prompted only when an organism decides that changing is the only way to maintain itself.¹

Though organisms do change unconsciously, the change I discuss and practically apply is by reasoned, rational choice.

¹ Ibid., 195.

There is another important paradox in living systems. Each organism maintains a clear sense of its individual identity within a larger network of relationships that helps shape its identity. Each being is noticeable as a separate entity, yet it is simultaneously part of a whole system. While we humans observe and count separate selves, and pay a great deal of attention to the differences that seem to divide us, we in fact survive only as we learn how to participate in a web of relationships. Wheatley's work builds on Daloz who introduced *the commons* that marks "the center of a shared world. Despite sometimes sharp differences, the good of the common – the good of all – could be worked at, figured out and figured out again. By happenstance and intention, people met and talked together with some sense of a shared stake, something in common."¹

Autopoiesis describes a very different universe than does Wheatley, one in which all organisms are capable of creating a "self" through their intimate engagement with all others in their system. This is not a fragile, fragmented world that needs us to hold it together. This is a world rich in processes that support growth and coherence through paradoxes that we need to contemplate. Wheatley discusses creation, renewal, growth and change and how all living organisms maintain their individual identities within living systems. I call this the world order. My question is why are some individuals in the system allowed to live, and others to die? My personal story follows:

The day was overcast, windy and the waves larger than usual in Daytona Beach. I was around ten years old I believe and not very proficient at staying afloat without a life jacket. I should not have been in the ocean that summer day. But I was. I had lost my

¹ Daloz, Keen, Keen, & Parks (1996), 2-3.

inflatable inner-tube when it was pulled from me by a wave. I was being pulled out to sea. I could barely touch bottom...then I could not. I had no idea what was happening to me, why I could not swim back to shore, what was pulling me away from the safety of shallow water.

I began to panic. I swallowed the salt-filled water. One cannot yell for help when drowning. It is impossible. I knew I was drowning. I learned later in life that the large volume of water from waves deflecting off the shoreline generates an undertow as it returns to sea through channels carved through sandbars – often just a few wide – often called rip tides. Thus, the flow rate – and resulting pressure – was so strong that I could not walk, let alone swim, against it.

I remember seeing my uncle ashore looking my way. I wonder what would have happened if he had tried to rescue me. For all I know, he could not swim either. He showed no reaction. Perhaps he did not know I was in trouble. He could not see well, I suppose. Perhaps he did, but was afraid to come into the increasingly deep and rough water. I will never know.

Being pulled into deeper and deeper water, I instinctively reached out to the only other hope I had: God, and my belief He created me and thus could save me. I learned this from my parents and attending Sunday school each and every Sunday.) I started praying. Silently, as I continuously struggled to get back to shore to keep my mouth above water. I asked God to save me – to help me. I had not lost hope. But knew God was my only hope. Praying came naturally and easily when faced with death. I do not

know if I knew what sin was in my young life so was not aware that asking forgiveness would have been natural before dying. So I did not. I just prayed to God for help.

I distinctly remember what happened next. After five or ten seconds, I stopped trying to get to back to shore. Instead, I began to swim, crawl, splash and head toward the north, along the shore, not toward it. Why? Why stop trying to get to shore where there was shallow water. What had happened to me? It did not make sense – it was not intuitive, not natural. Later, I came to realize I was experiencing a miracle.

After a few moments, I noticed that I was not being pulled out to deeper water any longer. The waves that hit me were beginning to push me toward shore, as they had before I lost my inner-tube. The next thing I realized the toes of my feet were grasping the hard sands of life and I was saved from certain death. I never spoke about what happened until I was an adult.

I know I experienced a miracle. The questions I struggle to answer are, why me? Why was I saved when many others die from drowning? As I write my dissertation of discovery, I want to explore how my near drowning, panic-filled experience shaped my life in ways I have yet to understand. And to expand upon the thought that, what happened to the writer (me) “is not what matters; what matters is the large sense the writer is able to make of what happened.”¹ What do I make of what happened: That life is fleeting, that there is a higher power, a savior. And what did I come to make of what would happen forty-four years later? That we as humans survive only as we learn how to participate in a web of relationships (Wheatley)...those relationships formed on the

¹ Gornick (2012), 91.

battlefields of Iraq. An example of one of these relationships I built was with Mohammed, a Sunni I worked with in Ramadi. During one of our conversations in the Summer of 2008 he reflects on how fleeting life can be in a war zone and how some do not value life the way most people do:

During the last four years, everything was bad. I had to think about every step on the street. Because any second you're expecting a sniper, or an IED or there is something or someone waiting for you, to kill you. So you're not focusing on study or work, on your family or your home. You're focused on how you're going to get killed and when.

And Al Qaeda? They're idiots, saying to themselves, if I kill an American I will go to heaven. It doesn't matter if I kill fifty innocent Iraqis as long as I kill one American. Beyond this insane wish to go to heaven, they have no goals here. They want us to think they are defending our country, and that's why they want to kill the Americans. It's not like that. If they care about the people they would never kill fifty persons at the same time just to kill two or three Americans. So I don't believe they came here for the country, except maybe to take over the country. Maybe they thought they could control life here.

And lest I would forget the miracle that life is, on May 17, 2014, I was hit by a drunk driver in a truck going 60 mph while stopped at a red light in Southern California. The truck went airborne, flipped over my demolished car and landed on its roof (Figure 49). I only needed six stitches on my forehead and am going through physical therapy. This reminder does nothing but reinforce the power of life and the importance of making it possible for those around the world to live it freely without domination or threats by others – to be able to experience a life of *Liberty* over a life of tyranny.



Figure 49. May 17, 2014 car accident

Barrett¹ states, “The life of a human being on earth is a unitary synthesis of an individual’s actions; in truth, one’s life is really a single act. We are holograms in that our oneness reflects the whole of all oneness in a complex mutual process symphony.” I view my life as a single act; an act of searching for meaning. Why was I allowed to live another day? Why should we free a nation from a tyrannical dictator? What is worth living for? I believe life without liberty is meaningless. We as a nation can exert power second to none by knowingly participating in change. However, we must be aware of the complexity of the situation, the choices we have and ensure we have the freedom to act intentionally in creating change. It is the inherent underlying quest for our freedom to act and to choose that manifests itself in liberty, and in turn be liberated.

Liberty

¹ Barrett (2010), 52.

Truth brings the elements of liberty...The power of God brings deliverance to the captive...A few immortal sentences, breathing the omnipotence of divine justice, have been potent to break despotic fetters and abolish the whipping-post and slave market; but oppression neither went down in blood, nor did the breath of freedom come from the cannon's mouth. Love is the liberator. All men should be free.

- Mary Baker Eddy

...where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

- IICOR3:17

I believe establishing justice, ensuring domestic tranquility, providing for the common defense and “promoting” (not “providing”) the general welfare will “secure” the blessing of liberty. Our inherent desire is to be free. To be free is to be happy. However, is being free the same as being happy? I argue not, as you cannot be happy when not free. And why not? Why would anyone not want to be free? And what about virtue? Doug Bandow, Senior Fellow at the Cato Institute, argues it is a mistake to assume one principle must be sacrificed for the other. Rather, freedom and morality are complementary. That is liberty, the right to exercise choice free from coercion, is a necessary precondition for virtue. And virtue is ultimately necessary for the survival of liberty. Anyone interested in building a good society should desire to live in a community that cherishes both values. Thus the success of our calculated risk to invade Iraq was dependent on expectations the people would eventually choose liberty over tyranny – and that they did as a nation of thirty million now live in freedom.

Despite the newfound Iraqi freedom domino-effect experiences in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Syria, and the inherent death and destruction that resulted, the prospect for

rational leadership in the Middle East and ultimate peaceful coexistence among its people has never been greater. This may be a bold statement for some, but to me it is firm conviction that liberty will ultimately prevail worldwide.

The Iraqis I knew were seeing their first glimpse of freedom in their lifetime. As their testimonials suggest, and results of our intervention attest, they came to understand the invading enemy was their friend. Granted, many cheered our invasion and the quick dismantling of the Ba'athist regime, but others were hesitant to embrace invaders.

Typical of those supporting our intervention was an engineer I worked with in Ramadi. I synopsized our conversation in July 2008:

I remember the bombing of Baghdad. We stayed in our house to be safe. I respect the US Army; I trust that whatever they do has a good military purpose. They never hurt us. In 2003, my feeling about the invasion was happiness, because I knew that Saddam's reign would end, and maybe we would start a new life. For more than thirty-five years, it was the same. Saddam was on TV for hours every day. His team told him he was like God, he was the air, and he was the water.

When the bombings started in 2003, I didn't go outside my house. But after the bombings ended, all the Iraqi people went and said hello to the American army and thanked them. They welcomed the American people.

The Americans did nothing wrong in invading Iraq. For example, they disbanded the Iraqi army, and that was the right thing to do. Some in the Iraqi army believed in the greatness of Saddam and would have remained his followers even after his execution. If the Americans had left the army intact, those people might have caused problems.

Saddam's team went to Syria, where he had a huge amount of money. I think Syria tried to make problems in Iraq using Al Qaeda. Al Qaeda came from Iran, Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Morocco. Al Qaeda was supported here in Ramadi, starting about 2005. Then Iraqis saw that they were very bad people, and they changed their minds. They no longer supported Al Qaeda.

I think about 10 percent of Iraqis in Ramadi supported Al Qaeda at first because they didn't have jobs and they didn't have education. Lack of work and ignorance makes people more likely to follow bad guys. I was without work for a year, but I have an education; I knew I would have work again, and I understood that Al Qaeda was a bad group. Now, I think only 2 percent of Iraqis in Ramadi support Al Qaeda, because there is stability.

We should use Ramadi as an example, because in Baghdad, there is no disagreement with US policy. Here in Ramadi, I think that when Al Qaeda controlled this area, 30 to 40 percent were Iraqis; the rest came from outside. On our engineering project in Ramadi, we deal with many engineers who are from Ramadi, and I have asked this question about percentages many times. They tell me that only 30 to 40 percent fought the US Army in Ramadi before. Another 10 to 20 percent supported the fighting, but they don't join in. The remaining 40 percent sat in their houses and they didn't like the fighting.

Al Qaeda gave themselves authority over everything. They would kill you if you defied them. Crazy, crazy people; I don't know how they live. Al Qaeda didn't allow people to go to school or university. They didn't allow people to smoke cigarettes or drive cars. They told Iraqis they shouldn't marry Shia women, and if they were already married to Shia women, they should divorce them. Iraqis were constantly being told, don't do this, do that; don't go here, go here; kill this. After a time, the Iraqis realized they were very bad people, but very late, and they started to fight back.

The people who finally rose up against Al Qaeda didn't have the qualifications to work with the US Army, but the local tribal sheikhs led them. A sheikh is responsible for a number of people in his area, and in the beginning, Al Qaeda gave them money. Then Al Qaeda made problems for many sheikhs in Ramadi and even killed some of them. Therefore they began to fight back, eventually with the help of coalition forces.

He has since immigrated to the US with his sister and mother on a Special Immigrant Visa. They live in California.

It was not until the alternative to Americans and other coalition members, the Islamists who were intent on establishing the antithesis of liberty, Sharia Law, became

clear, that Iraqis chose liberty. The leadership traits of Iraqis who stood for freedom of the individual, who worked with us to secure their blessings of liberty, are the same as the leadership literature I discuss and reference in this scholarly personnel narrative suggests. They are no different. And my conversations with ordinary Iraqis illuminate how we of disparate cultures formed a common bond on the sun-bleached sands of Al Anbar Province. Critical to forming this common bond was emphasizing the cultural context of the change as maximizing the social good for Iraqis in particular and the broad collation of partners, in general.¹ We accomplished this bond by forming a loosely-defined social contract, a hypothetical and sometimes written array of agreements with Iraqi leadership including community, tribal, political, military and business that defined and limited the rights and duties of each of us. Security and construction responsibilities were typical agreements.

And the fact that we were so different religiously makes the success of this bond all the more remarkable.

To help understand the choices the Iraqis had to make, one has to understand their options. One choice would have been to side with the invading force whose overwhelmingly predominate religion has as its foundation Jesus Christ. The other was to side with the invading force (Al Qaeda) whose entire being is based on radical theological domination that has at its foundation a prophet, Mohammed. It was not an easy a choice. However, the religious differences were mitigated when working with different sects of religious doctrine. Some Iraqis were moderate in their interpretation of

¹ Stone (2002).

the Prophet Mohammad's edicts and others have a vastly more radical view – one which includes world domination. We were fortunate to be able to work with those with the moderate view.

How then can I draw distinctions on the battlefield of life from two so vastly different peoples? How can the leadership styles, effectiveness and overall influence possibly be the same? I argue it is because the inherent desire of all people is to be free.

Liberty is about free will; about having the ability to choose without coercive intervention. The Iraqis ultimately decided the Americans offered that opportunity more than Al Qaeda. It took a few good people with courage and leadership to influence this decision to choose liberty over tyranny. One such man was Caesar, a Sunni engineer from Haditha I met while working on the start-up of an oil refinery that I will discuss later. He reflects on the choices Iraqis had to make and the results in this synopsis of our conversation in July 2008:

The activities of the Americans in this country who stand up with us against Al Qaeda give a good impression about what your intent is. In the past four years there was only killing, starvation and destruction. This was done in the name of Islam.

And now, there is a big gap between Al Qaeda and local residents. All of them are refusing Al Qaeda. Within the last year, Americans haven't been attacked, because the American forces or coalition forces are supporting this area. So we respect these achievements by the Americans. We respect them and we welcome them.

Understanding the will to live and the free will to make the choices of how we shall live, I now turn to how leadership is defined by the literature, my personal experiences and those of the Iraqis I came to know.

Battlefield to Classroom to Boardroom to Congress

In deciding how to present my findings in a way that will help others, I decided to reflect back on themes reflecting my guiding principles of life, liberty, leadership, multiculturalism (ethnic, religious, political, economic), education, diversity, flexibility, assertiveness, steadfastness and security. All of these manifested themselves one way or another in Iraq. And all will help build an effective platform from which I draw conclusions and present battle-tested leadership applications for organizations ranging from classrooms to corporate boardrooms, and from school boards and union halls to the halls of Congress.

I discussed the wonder of life and how liberty provides the freedom to choose how we enjoy that life. Effective leadership is required to ensure our security and allow liberty to flourish. These three key themes are interconnected and form a triangle of support for an organization's energy and influence to flow freely from one leg to the other. Thus the principles of life, liberty and leadership, as tested on the planes of Al Anbar province, can be applied to any organization anywhere. It is my goal in this section to present tools that organizations can apply to maximize their performance and continuously improve their effectiveness. As previously addressed in this SPN, these practical tools were successfully used in Iraq among disparate peoples of diverse ethnic, cultural, economic, religious and political origins from around the world. They worked in Iraq and they can work anywhere, be it in peacetime or wartime.

Life, liberty and leadership are universal truth principles that form the foundation from which organizations can flourish; tribal councils in Iraq during war, congressional

committee rooms in our nation’s capital, corporate boardrooms, assembly lines, factory floors, teams, religious institutions, homes, or classrooms. The organizations are interconnected by these basic principles and function best by sustaining a culture of “connective leadership.”¹ But how can we sustain this culture? Barrett² suggests by living power, specifically, power as freedom “in the interest of wellness and well-being for ourselves and all those whose paths we cross in life,” if we make and carry out the types of choices that promote liberty.

It is with this foundation that I unpack lessons from Iraq and beyond to provide the reader with sustainable tools ranging from how focused training and employee development produce extraordinary leaders, to how the battlefield schoolhouse provides literate police recruits to combat terrorism and ultimately free Iraq from the darkness of tyranny. Much of what forms the basis of my analysis is an assessment of conditions in Al Anbar from a 2008 article in *Military Review*, “Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point”.³ I was in Ramadi at the time this was published; however the events took place two years earlier. I will now transition to discussing training and education in more detail – specifically how it was used in Iraq to turn illiterate Iraqis into an effective fighting force that was primarily responsible for removing insurgents from Ramadi and Fallujah.

Education

Recruiting, educating, training and developing a new national army and local police force were the largest obstacles to overcome. The biggest mistake we made in

¹ Lipman-Blumen (2000).

² Barrett (2010).

³ Smith & MacFarland (2008).

Iraq, and what caused the war to last much longer, was our disbanding the military because of perceived loyalty of its members to Saddam Hussein. When the military was in the early phases of being reestablished, the lack of paid jobs and resulting lack of security allowed the so-called “foreign fighters” (Al-Qaeda in Iraq (AQI)) to enter Iraq. They quickly terrorized the smaller communities resulting in local Iraqi policing all but disappearing overnight throughout the country. The only exception being the Kurdish region in the North. They handled the transition to freedom very well and the area is thriving.

Once Iraq reached its “tipping point” where there were more reasons to side with the Americans than there were to side with insurgents such as AQI, the sheiks began working with us (The Awakening) to rapidly fill the police ranks with new recruits (U.S. Embassy, Baghdad. Unclassified cable of 1 MAY 2008). However, the largest impediment was illiteracy, which was the most frequent disqualifier. We met that challenge. The army commenced adult literacy classes which were placed in communities as part of a concerted effort to bring security and education to areas previously designated as too dangerous. The classes had a collateral benefit. As security improved, hundreds of women enrolled, about five times the amount expected.¹ The fact that women felt safe enough to go to class illustrated to others how the security was improving day-by-day.

¹ Ibid.

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP)¹ has been actively involved in supporting Iraq's higher education sector since 2003. There have been successes. Iraqi students and faculty report supplies of research and reading materials have been quickly incorporated into class syllabi.² USIP also reports that Iraqis demonstrate a remarkable degree of support for democracy, considering the renewed violence of the past year and the effects of sectarianism and corruption on their lives, according to a poll conducted as the country prepares for its first parliamentary elections since the US withdrew its forces in December 2011. Lessons from how Iraq responded to regenerating its educational communities of learning can be applied to other organizations around the world. Overcoming corruption and secular divide to promote the common good is a key success during the aftermath of the US-led invasion and the permanent withdrawal of forces in December 2011.

In conjunction with leadership training, which improves all organizations, literacy and skill training are outstanding examples of ways for a motivated population to become productive contributors to society. But in order to win this war and guide Iraq to a regional state of influence, we had to leave our fortresses and move into the cities so we could directly engage the populace. By doing so with effective leadership, we also enhanced their quality of life and secured their liberty. All organizations can be improved with timely, targeted training that addresses not only technical skills, but also soft skills such as communication, public speaking and physical health. However, it is

¹ Harb (2008).

² USIP (2004).

the comprehensive and systematic application of training by exporting to the community that provides the ultimate reward by enhancing the quality of life for all.

Leadership

It is amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit.

– Unknown

Effective leadership, whether in corporate boardrooms, factory floors, union halls, schools, religious institutions, city halls, congress or the battlefield exemplifies itself in particular characteristics of leaders. These leaders influence rather than coerce. They lead multi-cultural organizations worldwide using similar traits and styles, and they lead countries. Nelson Mandela believes, “That leadership at its most fundamental is about moving people in a certain direction – usually through changing the direction of their thinking and their actions. And the way to do that is not necessarily by charging out front and saying, ‘follow me,’ but by empowering or pushing others to move forward ahead of you. It is through empowering others that we impart our own leadership or ideas. It is valuable in every arena of life. We see it in the workplace when a manager encourages her employees to help formulate new strategies. We see it at home when parents have a family meeting to guide their children toward sensible rules and behavior, rather than simply laying down the law.”¹

I interlace the following writing with observations from the Iraqis I came to know, and draw on personal experience and the literature to collaborate my findings that can be used in educational institutions and multi-cultural organizations around the world.

¹ Stengel (2009), 77.

One of the key foundations of leadership is how we influence, manage and cope with issues in a changing environment. Some propose the only constant is change. It is part of everyday life, and effectively managing change can mean the difference between life and death. I begin this section by focusing on change management as an underlining principle of effective leadership.

Managing Change

To exist is to change, to change is to mature, to mature is to go on creating oneself endlessly.

– Henri Bergson

I want to continue creating myself throughout the brief moment of time we have on this Earth; thus, I must change. What does it mean to change, how do I cope with it and how do leaders develop a personal “theory of change?”¹ Change means doing something different. That seems simple enough, but change can be complex and life-altering. Change encompasses a variety of situations ranging from individuals or small groups to large organizations, and ultimately to the world and universe. Every living organism is part of a larger system, all of which are continuously changing. We are changing as we breathe, grow older, and learn both academically and interpersonally. If change is not understood, then it becomes harder to embrace and thus to accept the inevitable.

My thirst for things different invigorates and motivates me to the point where I feel like I get an adrenaline rush or endorphin kick. My favorite saying is: “A change is better than a rest.” I want to uncover what change is all about. Why do I find myself

¹ Fullan (1999).

drawn to new adventures, new relationships? What would prompt the Iraqis to want to change from the status quo of Saddam Hussein (a tyrannical dictator) to an Islamist state (dictating every facet of life) or to a society governed by democratically elected leaders? And what about when change is imposed? The result can be different to what the imposer expected as I will discuss in the following sections. I believe it is my seemingly inherent quest for change that led me to Iraq and to possibly help Iraqis see the virtue of liberty over tyranny.

Understanding and Coping.

Fullan¹ says people resist change for what they see as good reasons and for reasons we may not even think of. So it is important for us to understand the change process and the individuals and systems affected. Asking questions about what is happening around us and collaborating with others will help us understand why some resist change and others do not. For if we understand change we will be better able to cope with it. And it can be argued that coping with change is important because failure to do so likely leads to increased stress that can lead to poor decisions, poor health and a much less fulfilling life. Barrett² argues that to create a specific change in your life or to participate powerfully in any situation, ask yourself:

- What am I aware of?
- What choices am I making?
- Am I following through on the choices I'm making?

¹ Ibid.

² Barrett (2010).

- What actions am I taking?

These answers allow you to consider the dimensions of power in relation to the change you are attempting to create. Now in order to guide yourself in actions that suggest powerful participation in the situation, ask:

- Do the changes I intend to create interfere with anyone else's freedom?
- Do the changes I intend to create attempt to control, dominate, manipulate or bring harm to anyone?
- Do the changes I intend to create harm my health or shorten my life?
- Do the changes I intend to create violate what I know to be the truth?

If any of these questions are “yes,” then we need to think about what we are doing; we may not be enhancing our power-as-freedom or well-being.

What Does It Mean for Those Implementing?

Those leading or implementing change typically have a much more vested interest in the process because they are directly affected by the outcome. Who leads? Who implements?

Those leading change can be policymakers in the form of public policy foundations (“think tanks”), lobbying groups, corporate board of directors, school boards, unions, politicians at all levels of government, military strategists, private charity board

directors, political action groups, senior executives of any organization (public, private, educational, political, philanthropic, community, civic action or religious), criminal and terrorist bosses and, I argue, anyone with the capacity (emotional, intellectual) to lead. Those implementing change carry out or execute the policy instilled by the leaders. In some cases, the leader, influencer and implementer can be the same person, such as the entrepreneur who founds a company and continues to personally oversee its operations. However, typically the implementers are those such as federal government employees in the executive branch of government, the operations officers and factory floor workers, the regiment, battalion, companies, squads and teams in the military who, in Iraq, directly engaged the Iraqis providing security and support rebuilding damaged or neglected infrastructure, the administrators and teachers in public and private schools, the clergy and the volunteers in both religious and charitable organizations, and the hit men, thieves, insurgents and suicide bombers of criminal and terrorist organizations. These are the true implementers. They are ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the change whether we classify it as good or evil, right or wrong.

The success or failure of the change becomes a direct reflection on themselves and their effectiveness. This can be as simple as deciding whether or not a family should buy a used or new car, or as complex and far-reaching as deciding whether or not, as president of the United States, to lead your country into harm's way to enforce United Nations mandates, which in turn will or will not make for a safer world. However, making enduring change requires working "through the established institutions and

procedures.”¹ These include government, educational, corporate, philanthropic and political organizations ranging from battlefield command posts and classrooms to school boards, corporate boards and Congress.

Regardless of the change being implemented it is important for the leader or collaborator in the change process to understand the implications of their proposed actions as it relates to individuals directly affected by the change at the time, and those that will be affected by the actions for years and generations to come. For the latter, a perseverance of will is required to withstand the temptation to take the easy way out, or to hold true to your beliefs in a higher moral purpose.²

How do Leaders Develop a Personal Theory of Change?

Fullan³ argues there will never be a definitive theory of change. That it is impossible to generate a theory that applies to all situations. However, he discusses how theories of change can guide thinking and action, which can have far-reaching, long-term implications. I believe we all develop our personal theory of change, whether consciously or not, by relying on our past experiences of how we prefer to be treated ourselves. Would we rather be told what to do? Would we be more apt to change if we had a vested interest in the decision and implementation process and thus the outcome? Who led in Iraq? Effective leadership means taking action. I served with Sterling Jensen in Iraq. He witnessed a burning Ramadi police station attacked by a suicide bomber. While American soldiers were trying to contain the damage, he watched as the police

¹ Feldmann (2014).

² Ibid.

³ Fullan (1999).

chief, defying the U.S. military officer's wishes, "marched with his policemen back into the station where they extinguished the fires."¹ Though the Americans believed they had the situation under control and were leading and implementing the effort, it was the Iraqi's who ultimately stood up, were assertive and implemented the change.

I believe leaders who have been forced into prior change will try to force others into change without collaborating with the individuals, groups or nations directly involved. This consequential action is damaging to organizations ranging from the family to nations. However, change agents or leaders who have been part of previous change management scenarios are more likely to gather the involved parties, obtain input and reach a consensus on a course of action.² We did this in Iraq, but it took three years of combat to understand, react, adapt, change, build trust, lead and implement the ultimately successful collaboration necessary to provide security and rebuild infrastructure and political institutions. Thus, Iraqi, American and other coalition forces leaders' ability to stimulate change, build trust and team-up to work collaboratively together toward the common purpose of a free Iraq all exemplify what Waldman³ argues are the principle themes in Deming's Total Quality Management⁴ (TQM) theory.

Amplifying Deming's TQM theory first introduced in this dissertation on page 38, I will illustrate how the following key principles applied to my experiences in Iraq:

(1) Leader's ability to stimulate change,

¹ Jensen (2007).

² Fullan (1999).

³ Waldman (1993).

⁴ Deming (1986).

- (2) Teamwork to work collaboratively together toward common purpose and being collectively accountable,
- (3) Continuous improvement,
- (4) Trust building,
- (5) Eradication of short term goals. Get rid of management by objectives.¹

Instead, goals should focus on process and the long-term perspective.

The foremost example of a leader stimulating change was how Brigadier General (BGEN) Post (Figure 41) influenced both Americans and Iraqis by his commitment to the successful start-up of the oil refinery known as “K3” (Figure 36) just south of Haditha and the Haditha dam. The dam was in the news last week as the Islamist terrorist, before beheading journalist Steven Sotloff, said with his British accent that the execution was blamed on Obama in retaliation for bombing Islamists attempting to capture the dam.

<http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/02/world/meast/isis-american-journalist-sotloff/>

He was successful by embodying the other four of Deming’s tenants for success. That is how he was able to influence change. He gained the trust of the Iraqis. Made sure they were part of the team (Figure 38). He put his trust in me as Project Manager and allowed me to form and lead the team. We visited Iraqis in their homes (Figure 37), not just at the refinery (Figure 42). He made sure I had the authority along with the responsibility / accountability to implement a process that focused on the ultimate goal: start the long-dormant facility.

¹ Drucker (1974).

To do that, we (the Iraqis) had to load crude oil in rail tank cars in Bayji (now, just six years later, controlled by invading Islamists from Syria) and transport by locomotive 100 miles westward through Al Qaeda-infested areas. The oil was then offloaded (Figure 41) using pumps we purchased in Scotland to fill the only undamaged storage tank. This required teamwork among US and Iraqi military, oil police, refinery operational personnel, refinery security personnel, rail police, local militia, Anbar Province government / security personnel and local police, and continuously improved the security and transport processes through coordination / collaboration meetings (Figure 38) that I planned, organized and administered. These meetings and ongoing communication built trust between us that directly resulted in the refinery opening on July 4, 2008 - one of the most gratifying experiences of my life (Appendix 1).

My Theory of Change.

The characteristics or dimensions of my personal theory of change are combinations of experiences from my youth where I grew up in a controlled environment where the free flow of ideas and open conversation and collaboration were not frequently observed; the workplace leading diverse groups and organizations; the military that is also not the most open and collaborative of organizations but is certainly racially and ethnically diverse; and my education and training in group dynamics and change.

There is little doubt that my being trained as a civil engineer, and ultimately obtaining my Professional Engineering license, lends itself to a more structured way of managing change. Finding solutions to typical engineering problems requires identifying the issues, understanding the background, developing alternatives, evaluating their

effectiveness and determining the best solution. Weiss¹ argues for a structured approach as a way to quantify the effects of potential outcomes of proposed solutions such as interventions for initiating change. Her “Theory of Change” emphasizes the importance of developing an evaluation strategy that determines whether these expected outcomes are actually realized.

This approach complements my training and learned experiences and is how I approach serving as a catalyst for change and influencing the success of its outcomes. I have been fortunate to make many mistakes (though not catastrophic) at home, at work, in the military and with religious and service organizations in which I have served and led. I say fortunate because for the most part I believe I have learned from the mistakes at managing change. Combining my experiences, education and training, I have developed a collaborative approach to change in the workplace, military, government, religious and service organizations. However, I still struggle with the collaborative approach in my personal life with familial issues that seem to continuously rear its ugly head. I suppose the only consolation is that I understand what I do wrong when I try to force the issue, but seem not to be able to implement what I know to be the best course of action as I would in the other settings.

I believe the collaborative approach is the most effective way of designing, implementing and managing change. However, when the time comes to make a decision and knowing that time is often elusive, it must be made by the change agents (leaders) decisively, utilizing the most comprehensive input from the affected parties and

¹ Weiss (1995).

stakeholders. Tensions between the diversity and interdependence of organizations influence virtually all decision making. Leaders will find it more difficult to make autonomous decisions that many followers expect. Decisions by commanding are out and negotiations are in. For change agents to make effective decisions, “Each leader must negotiate continually with a wide assortment of other leaders and unfamiliar groups.”¹ And once the decision is made it is equally important to be open to change the proposed implementation plan as conditions dictate, while maintaining the persistence required, ensuring the ultimate goal is achieved no matter how long-term it may be. The collaborative approach is operationalize in scenarios such as labor-management relations, Iraqi-American interaction from 2003 to present, teachers, principals and school boards determining the best course of action to deal with budget issues and supervisors and managers engaging with all employees to seek the best possible solutions.

Unanticipated Consequences: Squandered Negative Entropy.

One can argue negative entropy is prevalent in the public bureaucracy as “importing more energy from its environment than it expends”² happens whenever Congress decides to appropriate more funds than can be efficiently spent, which happens all too often and has saddled future generations with trillions of dollars in public debt. This stored energy (negative entropy – in this case money) is typically not returned to the taxpayers (or non-taxpayers, which account for approximately half of working-age Americans) by increasing security or improving education.

¹ Lipman-Blumen (2000), 7.

² Burke (2002), 56.

Burke also observes that stimuli for structural changes of living systems or organizations come from their external environment, which causes new events.¹ This is clearly what happened after the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001. President Bush identified and articulated the need for change, promoted consistency in managing the implementation and persevered by staying the course and repeating the message.² This structural change also happened in my personal life and family, which is yet another living system full of its own complexities. And it happened in the lives of many people of many nations on the plains of Al Anbar Province. My dissertation tells this story of change and the lessons I learned.

Complexity

There are extraordinary leaders and leaders who are the least effective. They both have unique characteristics. So what makes one individual an extraordinary leader and the other ineffective? Organizations are continually trying to answer that question. The US and our coalition partners spent nine years and suffered four thousand deaths to effect regime change and restore stability. Many leaders rose to the top from both Iraq and the US.

One such leader was Army Captain Travis Patriquin, an Arabic-speaking infantry officer who coordinated meetings with the local sheiks in Ramadi, that provincial capital. Through his linguistic and interpersonal skills he developed strong personal bonds with sheiks and their families, and by conducting daily meetings with townspeople he gained the sheiks' trust that led them to support efforts to reinvigorate police recruiting.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

Captain Patriquin effectively used a simple tool he created: a black and white [PowerPoint](#) presentation¹ showing stick figures of Americans and Iraqis discussing their option of supporting our efforts to increase security or acquiescing to the AQI Islamist insurgents. His influencing and negotiating “connective leadership” style² worked so well that the once decimated Ramadi police force rose from four hundred officers in June 2006 to four thousand only six months later. Within months his innovative strategy of effective leaders with outstanding interpersonal skills building relationships with the populace by using simple communication tools spread to other military units and the Department of State’s Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) throughout the country. Tragically, [Captain Patriquin](#)³ was killed by an IED in December. Local sheiks turned out in mass for his memorial service. He was thirty-two.

Innovative, persuasive leaders like Captain Travis Patriquin have one thing in common: they possess a few profound strengths they build on; rather than try to improve in areas they are weakest.⁴ The most effective leaders use these few strengths to great advantage in their organization. In contrast “mediocre” leaders were distinguished by their lack of strengths, not their possession of a few deficiencies.

One way of identifying top-tier leaders is to first identify who are the *least effective* leaders. They are those who have the following flaws: inability to learn from mistakes, interpersonal incompetence, lack of openness to new ideas, tendency to blame

¹ Patriquin (2003).

² Lipman-Blumen (2000).

³ Patriquin (2003).

⁴ Zenger (2004).

others for problems and lack of initiative.¹ They are typically “play it safe” careful non-contributors who are perceived as timid.

Unfortunately, in my opinion America has such leadership in the highest office in the land. And it is important to examine this in depth, particularly in two aspects: blaming others and “play it safe” timidity. Americans have heard repeatedly from President Obama and his administration that, “It is Bush’s fault” – for how much longer shall we hear this lack of accountability? And the timid approach and contradicting positions President Obama has toward taking action is jeopardizing the security of our nation. Why, for example, have a policy of not negotiating with terrorists, then negotiate with terrorists and free five of them for one American deserter? A 30-year U.S. Navy Intel Officer had this to say about the five terrorists President Obama released:

Oh, they were ‘reformed’ dudes...Taliban leadership, the worst of the worst...5 dudes who will go back to the fight in a nanosecond. They were badasses...I can tell you that because I’ve seen them and spoken to a few. They were superb detainees...they didn’t make trouble, they hated the Arabs, and they were simply biding their time...patiently waiting, to go back to the fight, which they will.

And why tell Syrian President Assad not to “cross the line in the sand” regarding using weapons of mass destruction, and when he did, do nothing? The jihadists now overrunning parts of Iraq had their birthplace in Syria...they knew they had the green light to move forward if Obama did nothing. And he did - nothing. And on August 5, 2014, President Obama’s press secretary lectured that there is “no military solution in Iraq” – and two days later Obama orders air strikes – welcome to Iraq War III.

¹ Ibid.

Now with bombs dropping on Iraq once again, the Islamists issued a warning to stop or a captured American citizen would be murdered. We rightly did not, and he was (<http://madworldnews.com/james-foley-cautionary-tale/>) then another: <http://video.foxnews.com/v/3766210751001> and <http://www.cnn.com/2014/09/02/world/meast/isis-american-journalist-sotloff/>

What are the consequences of these decisions? President Bush predicted in 2007 this would happen if we abandoned Iraq: <http://video.foxnews.com/v/3768333397001> To reflect on what happened regarding winning the war and maintaining the peace through presence (as we have for 69 years in Japan, Italy, Germany and Spain) the 30-year U.S. Navy Intel Officer observed this during a talk that he hosted at Macquarie University given by Former US Ambassador James F Jeffrey, Ambassador to Iraq 2004-2005 and again 2010-2012:

“He was outstanding. He was 'kind' to both Bush and Obama in most ways but was very blunt on the challenges, both with the fledgling Iraqi government and with (both) administrations adjusting to changing circumstances on the ground. Near the end I had the opportunity to ask him a question so I asked, 'Sir, what was your position on the SOFA agreement in 2011 and do you think a SOFA will be needed in the future to get this right?' He immediately smiled, and said, 'Who are you?' I told him that I was lecturer in the PICT and left it at that. He went on to walk the audience through the UNSCR, supported by our 'friends' - France, Russia and China - putting the US in charge of Iraq 'after' the invasion...which he found interesting.

He told of how the newly elected, 'democratic' government of Iraq wanted the UNSCR to expire and to stand on their own two feet. He explained how Bush worked for the deal to transition away from the UNSCR from 2008-2011. He told how he and General Austin went back to the White House in 2011 and spoke to President Obama about the SOFA and the need for it and Obama agreed - for 5000 troops. I said the Iraqi government couldn't even get its act together to vote on it because of its own growing pains, thus, it expired. He said that he believed it was a mistake and that in the future it should be a part of our course of action in

Iraq. As he was walking out he stopped and said, 'now who are you really?' I told him that I had served in the US Navy for 30 years as an intelligence officer, retiring two years ago and he laughed saying, 'I knew it...it's so obvious'. He was a great guy, former Army Infantry officer in Vietnam...interesting guy.

What he didn't say and I think he knew that I knew, was that Gen Austin wanted closer to 25K troops left in Iraq. I knew this through a buddy of mine in Northwood (UK) who was an Army officer involved in the SOFA negotiations. I believe he told me that the Administration kept cutting the number down through 17K and finally to 5K but I can't remember for sure. Apparently, the Iraqi leadership protested, saying it was not going to be worth it for them to go into battle with the Sadr militias over their support for the SOFA for so few troops. My buddy said words to the effect of, 'my friends on the ground in Baghdad tell me that the Obama Administration want this to fail...that's their impression...they want it to fail'. When it did, I'll never forget our last conversation in the parking lot at Northwood. I said, 'well, maybe it's for the best, maybe Iraq needs to go it on their own.' He shot back, being junior in rank, 'Sir, you're wrong, this is a mistake, a huge mistake...you mark my words this will end in DISASTER'. I kind of shrugged and said, 'wow, you sound pretty certain.' He responded with, 'I am, having done multiple tours in Iraq...they're not nearly ready yet to go it alone.'

So, he was right and I was wrong. But you know, if he figured it out and General Austin figured it out and Ambassador Jeffrey figured it out with the information they had, then why didn't Obama? My guess, is that he believed that it wasn't 'his' war...he never would have gone in so why stay? How short-sighted and petulant. Obama clearly grabbed defeat from the jaws of victory, as McCain accused him of at the time.”

These leadership decisions must be examined to learn of their implications.

History will be the ultimate judge. One of my goals in writing this dissertation is to document history as I see it playing out before my very eyes. I do not have confidence that history will be recorded accurately based on what I read (or do not read) in media accounts of what is transpiring.

Leaders such as these do not take action, are risk adverse and have a “status quo” mentality. They are contrary to Steven Covey¹ who emphasizes being proactive,

¹ Covey (1989, 1992, 1994).

controlling your environment, responding quickly to key situations, beginning with the end in mind, seeking to understand first, then be understood, cooperating and collaborating and learning from mistakes and do not repeat them. In her interview with The Atlantic magazine posted on August 10, 2014, Hillary Clinton further amplified the lack of leadership from President Obama as it pertains to foreign policy and lays out the case where he could have prevented the Islamist invasion of Iraq from Syria if not for his being so risk adverse. Thousands have died or suffered as a result. “The failure to help build up a credible fighting force of the people who were the originators of the protests against Assad—there were Islamists, there were secularists, there was everything in the middle—the failure to do that left a big vacuum, which the jihadists have now filled,” Clinton said. She went on to say, “Great nations need organizing principles, and ‘Don’t do stupid stuff’ is not an organizing principle” – a direct criticism of Obama’s so-called, “foreign policy” as outlined in his speech to West Point graduates in May 2014. “You know, when you’re down on yourself, and when you are hunkering down and pulling back, you’re not going to make any better decisions than when you were aggressively, belligerently putting yourself forward,” she said. It is refreshing to see a politician distinguishing good leadership from a lack of it – specifically in the case of a former Secretary of State criticizing her Commander in Chief. James Carafano of the Heritage Foundation puts it this way: President Obama has “doubled down on the formula of doing just enough to not get criticized for doing nothing.”

Being an extraordinary leader does not mean doing thirty-four things reasonably well; it means doing three or four things *extremely* well – and knowing when and under

what circumstances to apply them. (I discuss the concept of situational leadership in the next section, *Personal Philosophy*.) A major discovery from Zenger's research is that great strength in a relatively small number of competencies raises someone into the top tier of their organization:

These strengths cannot be just any behaviors. Punctuality, for example, was not a differentiating characteristic of the best leaders. The strengths must be in areas that make a difference. They must be traits or behaviors that others readily see, and that make a positive impact on how the organization functions.¹

For example, being on time to every meeting does not mean you are making a positive impact by improving productivity. You are merely there. One must take the initiative and reach out for more challenging assignments. That was one of the reasons I went to Iraq in the first place: to reach out, contribute, effect change and otherwise make a difference.

Zenger argues extraordinary leaders can be made. Genetic make-up is not the main determinant of great leaders.² Certainly some people are born with a high energy level, keen intellect and emotional hardiness. These are helpful traits, but they fail to explain the late-blooming leader. They also fail to explain the promising youth who gets derailed and never recovers. Effective leadership training and development are paramount to the success of any organization. Many military officers make great leaders

¹ Zenger (2004), 6.

² Ibid.

both in and out of the military. Why? Because they are trained to use the skills that can make a difference by keeping people alive.

Personal Philosophy

In discussing my personal leadership philosophy, I begin by addressing the foundations I try to live by: continuous learning and loving, leaving the world a better place, living life to its fullest, treating others as you want be treated (with respect), work as a team,¹ praise in public and provide constructive feedback in private, take control over your destiny showing motivation and accountability, have the conviction² to stand up for what you believe, have “can-do” optimism, never say never (optimism) and always have compassion.³

My vision of leadership is to be able to provide an environment where members of my team creatively flourish, have fun and enthusiastically work toward achieving a common goal. To do this, an effective leader must learn to stay “centered.”⁴ The key to successful leadership is the ability to build relationships. Leadership skills have a direct relational slant as leaders are encouraged to include stakeholders, to evoke followership, to empower others.⁵ Reaching out to others and seeking consensus while including them in decisions are very rewarding experiences.

These concepts of servant-leadership eerily portray what the Iraqis experienced

¹ Vella (2002), 191.

² Daloz (1996), Ch. 4.

³ Ibid., Ch. 3.

⁴ Dreher (1996).

⁵ Wheatley (1994).

throughout their history. From the earliest traces of humans in Mesopotamia¹ (Greek for “between the rivers” – Tigris and Euphrates) dating to 25,000 BCE, to Alexander the Great’s conquest in 331 BCE, the Ottoman invasion of 1534, the British occupation in 1914, the establishment of present-day Iraq in 1932, revolutions in 1958 and 1968, Iraq’s invasion of Iran in 1980, their invasion of Kuwait in 1990 to our invasion / interference / freedom-making / nation-building / liberation / “war for oil” actions that commenced on March 19, 2003, all portrayed a region of instability between various ethnic, national and religious groups. It is with this background that Iraq was given the opportunity to choose change. This is a choice they made in 2007 when a critical mass of citizenry rose-up and joined forces with Americans and other coalition partners to choose liberty and celebrate heroism of the individual over the tyranny of the State. An Iraqi I worked with often discussed what was happening and what may happen in Iraq. This is another of the conversations I captured and apply throughout this dissertation. He proclaimed this about leadership while emphasizing the human right to be free:

A good leader is one who is broad-minded enough to look at issues from a human standard, not from a racial standard. Why should we fight if we can talk and find a solution? We need the Americans; Iraq needed the Americans a long time ago, instead of bringing Russians and Chinese who are less advanced with fewer qualifications. We should have gone directly to the Americans. The Americans have science, and they have civilization.

We have crude materials and we make an exchange, this for that. This is a peaceful co-existence among people. We only need a portion of the crude materials we have in this country. But we need services, we need schools, we need hospitals, we need many other things. We want to have a friendship with the country that believes in our freedom and human rights.

¹ Munier (2004).

A good leader has tolerance, meaning he can forget personal slights. He should not boast of his position—he should be humble. He should be generous, brave and should not hurry in making judgments. He should not counsel others. He should listen to others.

Another I spoke with was responsible for security at the oil refinery and had this to say about leadership, fear and justice:

The most important qualities for a successful leader are patience and bravery. These are complements to the rule of law. The Iraqi people were very patient and brave. They were able to break the stranglehold around them. They were able to break out and fight injustice.

The Iraqi people were overpowered by the fear that was imposed on them by the foreign parties who came to Iraq in order to abuse them. This is what pushed the Iraqi people to rise up against those who tried to abuse them and to destroy them. And this encouraged many leaders to show up and stand against those who worked against the Iraqi people. This encouraged them to stand up against those who abused them. And now the Iraqi people are better than what they were three years ago. They started to work and to reconstruct their country in order to bring life as it was before.

Effective leadership influences change; it does not coerce or demand it. The Iraqis witnessed this firsthand when Al Qaeda Islamists entered their country. (Unfortunately, after being forced to flee, they reentered by invasion from Syria in June 2014 as an organized coalition of Sunni radical Muslims rebranded as The Islamic State.) They demanded acquiescence or death. Whether in Iraq, the United States, China or elsewhere in the world, effective leaders must be able to build a “dominant coalition” that provides the opportunity for “strategic choice.”¹ The dominant coalition in Iraq was the invading multi-national force. The strategic choice they provided enabled Iraqis the opportunity to reject tyranny and embrace liberty. Such strategic choices are made

¹ Hall & Tolbert (2005, p. 79).

possible by leaders who can form dominant coalitions; whether they be in halls of government, union halls, corporate boardrooms or educational institutions. These strategic initiatives, such as a local school district adopting and implementing a plan to establish school choice, offer organizations the opportunity to choose among competing ideas. These ideas can form the basis for a diverse array of options that promote diversity, generate additional coalitions for change and improve operational effectiveness by engaging all stakeholders in the decision-making process.

As described in Chapter IV, I worked with Sam who is an engineer in Ramadi. He spoke of these desired attributes in a leader and reflects on America's invasion of liberation:

A good leader should be a civilized man. He should be courageous and simple; he should try to help others before helping himself. He should be official and proficient in his work, and not bound to his background or his religion or his party. He should love diplomacy, cooperating with other countries. And of course, he has to be devoted to democracy.

We like Americans. We thank President George Bush for giving the Iraqi people freedom. It's not easy to give more than 30 million people freedom from Saddam and his men. They destroyed everything—took people's lives, took their money. Official documents can prove all of this.

My discussion of leadership is based on strong, western, male perspectives. I want to explore how other cultural perspectives and feminist and connective leadership could add to my study.¹ I researched how the Iraqis were trained in leadership. British influence dominated the first evolution of formal training followed by countries such as Yugoslavia, East Germany and the Soviet Union. These cultural influences are similar to

¹ Aiken (2013).

western countries. The discussions I had with Iraqis confirmed the similar perspectives where leadership traits and behaviors most admired include:

Broad minded, non-discriminatory, collaborative, tolerant, humble, generous, brave, a listener, deliberative, patience, integrity, instills confidence, understands people, has trust, respect, humility, honesty and gratitude, courage, being humble, and loving—that's very important, you've got to show people you care, hopeful, optimistic, happy, determined, caring, supportive, protective, provider, keeps people safe; fair, civilized, diplomatic, simple, helps others first, proficient, not idealistic, collaborative, devoted to freedom / democracy, good communicator and educated; civilized, help others before helping himself, proficient in his work, not bound to his background or his religion or his party, love diplomacy, cooperating with other countries. And of course, he has to be devoted to democracy.

These attributes are reflected in the authors' work previously introduced in Chapter III (As a Leader) and explored and unpacked / applied to Iraq in Chapters IV and V that confirms effective leaders who are non-coercive have universal characteristics and appeal to multinational and multicultural institutions. Coercive leaders such as dictators, authoritarians and statists rely on position power and the threat of physical, emotional or economic harm or manipulation to achieve their goals regardless of the means. The Iraqis I came to know and understand reject this premise of leadership. As Lipman-Blumen points out, "In this new connected world, leaders whose repertoires are limited to

the more traditional behaviors of dominating, competing, or collaborating will be left behind.”¹ A leader utilizing position power to command rather than influence with persuasion through empowering and collaborating will have a difficult time dealing with the interconnected, multicultural, globalized world where there is a “constant jostling and movement in the connections among people, organizations, and ideas.”² I witnessed these constantly moving connections among people, organizations and ideas in Iraq. It was the leaders who negotiated versus dictated that were successful in turning the Iraqi people away from supporting Al Qaida and joining forces with the multi-national coalition trying to stabilize the country in 2006.

One of the leadership styles I use follows the model represented by “leader-member exchange theory”³ rather than my ultimate goal of a transformational leader. Furthermore, I believe I have successfully focused employees, peers, and upper management toward embracing and actively participating in achieving goals. This collaborative exchange is critical in successfully leading teams, managing change and developing and implementing policy in organizations ranging from the battlefield to classroom and boardroom to school board and Congress.

The model of leadership theory that I believe is the most effective, and that which I and others utilized in Iraq, is the situational leadership concept by Hersey⁴ I discussed in Chapter III. The U.S. military adapted to the maturity and sophistication of the populace it intended to influence. Rather than dictating and demanding through coercion

¹ Lipman-Blumen (2000).

² Ibid.

³ Northouse (2004).

⁴ Hersey (1984).

or the use of force as Al Qaeda did (and now the Islamist invaders from Syria rebranded as, the “Islamic State”), the coalition partners formed alliances with the local leaders. They gained their trust and learned when to direct, sell or participate based on the circumstances at hand. I practiced the same when dealing with the Iraqis I worked with. In most cases I was able to lead by participating – showing them we were partners who were not going to abandon them. (Tragically the very Iraqis I worked with are now under the iron fist of Islamic fascists – “The Islamic State.”) That said, “selling” the concept of moving oil by rail from Bayji to Haditha was paramount to its ultimate success. The Iraqis had to understand before they could believe.

This same concept is used effectively today in education when change agents are attempting to “sell” the concept of freedom of choice (in schools) to teachers unions and parents. Having parents embrace the logical idea of “freedom to choose” where they want their children educated cascades to classrooms to principals’ offices to school boards and county / city governments, as the case may be. It cannot be “directed” as the parents have no direct authority to force the unions to acquiesce. As in Iraq, influencing through participating is the optimum form of executing effective leadership, regardless of the organization.

I now turn to policy development, formulation, implementation and monitoring as the next element of multicultural organizations.

Policy

It is important to recognize the root of the word “policy” – as this dissertation is about leadership and *policy* studies. It is about politics:

- is the practice and theory of influencing other people on a global, civic or individual level.
- Politics (from Greek: πολιτικός politikos, meaning “of, for, or relating to citizens”)
- achieving and exercising positions of governance — organized control over a human community, (schools) particularly a state.
- Studing or practicing of the distribution of power and resources within a given school / district community (a hierarchically organized population) as well as the interrelationship(s) between communities.

These communities coexisted in Iraq on the plains of Al Anbar Province, the largest in Iraq, most of which is now overrun by invading Islamists from Syria. Our hard-fought territory liberated for Iraqis has not been lost in just two and a half years. How does this happen? Both policy and thinking about policy are produced in political communities. Stone constructs the model of society as a political community. The essence of which is the struggle over ideas. “Ideas are a medium of exchange and a mode of influence even more powerful than money and votes and guns.”¹ Nowhere is this

¹ Stone (2002).

more evident that what took place in Iraq. The struggle of whether or not to invade Iraq is still debated, and only time will tell how it will be finally understood.

We still debate how Pearl Harbor happened, how we let Germany once again commence a world war costing three hundred thousand American lives. We debate how policy formed in the Kennedy and then amplified in the Johnson and Nixon administrations that led the nation to lose sixty thousand more. The policy decision to invade Iraq cost four thousand Americans. And as of April 2014 Afghanistan was up to over two thousand and counting since the US invaded thirteen years ago. By contrast the former Soviet Union occupied Afghanistan for ten years and lost fifteen thousand soldiers. Policy decided and implemented can have dire consequences; thus the importance of learning how policy decisions were made before and during Iraq is paramount to a complete understanding of what we learned.

The political community (one set on the framework of Harry Reid-style politics and the other on the framework of the effective use of force to influence one country to do what the other wants) was divided in the US, as it was worldwide. The western intelligence-gathering apparatus and the resulting analyses and further interpretation of that data led to the policy decision to invade. Though not universally accepted, it nonetheless occurred, and the implications were profound. This dissertation is not to debate the policy-making decision processes in Iraq, but I introduce it here only to emphasize its inherent importance in any multi-cultural educational organization. Well thought out policy formulated and implemented with multiple stakeholders having a say is paramount to effective organizations.

Community

The political communities formed alliances in Iraq to survive. Be they first with the Americans and other coalition forces, then remnants of the Ba'athist regime, then Shia influence by Iran, then Al Qaeda and then ultimately with the Americans to where we now have free elections in Iraq (Appendix 3).

In my opinion, one of the most important take-aways from the war in Iraq was that a sense of community was reestablished without destructive combat demolishing neighborhoods. As long as we stayed out of the cities and made intermittent excursions to patrol, draw fire, return fire, then return to base, we were never going to win the hearts and minds of the populace. The military adopted a process similar to community-based policing and community-based education. Unfortunately, since the Islamist invasion of Iraq from Syria in June 2014, neighborhoods are once again being torn apart; if not literally, figuratively, as Muslim against Muslim and brother against brother is once again the tragic norm in a land where 4,400 Americans gave their life for Iraqi freedom. The most abhorrent factor is that we could have prevented this...If not for the leadership decisions from the Obama administration. This could be the first time in U.S. history where we won a war (Appendix 3) and only two and a half years later lost it (Appendix 4).

The more the service provider is touching the benefactor, the better the service and the better the outcome. Just as teachers are encouraged to reach out and engage their students' families in their own homes away from the schoolhouse, the U.S. military needed to connect with the citizenry, and let the Iraqis come to know us and we them.

What the Iraq war necessitated we do was explore different ways of doing business, looking at the educational community for business practices on how best to engage and train not only military personnel but also the citizenry. Deploying tactics used by education advocates was not just a one-way street. The purpose of this body of work in the form of an SPN is for me to unpack and illustrate how the educational leadership community can enhance its effectiveness by observing and learning how the wartime military plans and implements its courses of actions.

Citizenship was the key factor in achieving Iraqi freedom. The Multi-National Forces reaching out and connecting with the local community – bonding with the citizenry – was what turned the tide in 2007. Spears¹ captures the essence of the argument by recognizing the importance of rejecting monarchy and our belief in the centrality of the leader, which has us ignore collective and communal successes and celebrate the heroism of the individual. Iraqi's rejection of Saddam Hussein was the first step. Once caught by U.S. forces, he was tried, convicted and hung. Furthermore, Spears argues that democracy is not defined by the actions of its elected officials; it is defined by the action of citizens. Reaching the Iraqi citizens in the streets of Baghdad, Fallujah, Ramadi and other cities throughout Iraq was critical to the success of Operation Iraqi Freedom because clinging to our attraction to leadership keeps change in the hands of the few. We want to transfer it to the many. This is the power of citizenship.²

The community's respect for their tribal leaders and moderate clerics was instrumental in tipping the battle for the Anbar province in 2007 from radical Islamists

¹ Spears (1998), Chapter 8).

² Ibid.

(AQI) toward coalition forces. A 1 MAY 2008 American Embassy Baghdad cable E.O. 12958 confirmed that the re-taking of the mosques from radicals was a critical factor in the winning of hearts and minds of the populace. And the fight against AQI goes back to September 2006, when the late Sheikh Sattar Abu Risha and a group of like-minded tribal leaders in Ramadi formed the Anbar Awakening Council – which recruited local youths to join the police force that partnered with U.S. forces. The tipping point occurred when the clerics issued a “Fatwa” (official religious decree) that gave the public permission to oppose AQI and declared that its brand of Islam was false and engaged in un-Islamic practices. This was the beginning of the end for AQI. However, to this day, AQI exerts some control in limited areas of Iraq.¹

I argue that the educational leadership in the country, and those around the world, can learn from other large institutions that have parallel missions. After all, in peacetime the military does nothing but train, awaiting the next war. In wartime, it implements its plans, observes and adjusts as required. The dynamics of the fog of war complicates the provision of firepower and services, which requires flexibility, adaptability and vision for the way forward. In “leadership,” “education” and now “community,” the military establishment and the State Department with their Provincial Reconstruction Teams were constantly searching for better ways to improve their effectiveness through methods the educational community has been using for many years. But without a commitment to the cause, without long-term resilience, without staying the course, effective leadership, meaningful training and community engagement will not reach their full potential and

¹ Guardian (2014).

effectiveness. Next, I will discuss the importance of the Iraqis knowing we would be there as long as they needed us. Without this commitment they very likely would not have made the decision to take the chance and “switch sides” in 2006.

Commitment

It takes extraordinary leadership to stay the course, to see the mission through to completion. Without commitment, all the training and community engagement – be it for securing liberty or providing educational opportunities – is for naught. The strength that our political leaders showed throughout the Iraq war was remarkable. When many were calling the President a liar and that the war was lost (see Appendix 2, *Newsweek*, 3 NOV 2003), he continued to hold the line and stay the course until the Iraqis did not need us any longer. He negotiated our withdrawal to take place in December of 2011. And the next President followed through with that commitment.

The Iraqis were reluctant to change their allegiance and trust to help them rid their country of AQI and associated insurgents. The Iraqis I knew all said they believed about 30% of the insurgents were Iraqis, primarily Ba’ath party loyalist of the overthrown Hussein regime. And that is exactly what AQI wanted – for us to leave. But as time passed and AQI instigated fighting between Sunnis and Shia and murdered tribal sheiks, the critical mass swayed the balance of power toward the coalition forces. Public opinion surveys conducted in February 2008 showed the citizenry’s improved outlook compared to the dark days of the Islamists’ attempted takeover in 2007.¹ It took prolonged commitment, time, cost lives and money was spent necessary to see it through by

¹ Iraq Public Opinion Surveys (2008).

rebuilding infrastructure and providing security and a safe environment for democratic elections. Now Iraq stands on its own (Appendix 3 – *Newsweek*, 8 March 2010).

However, recent events cast doubt on the future (Appendix 4). In June 2014, Islamists and former Ba’athist Sunnis formed loose coalitions amid the chaos in Syria and invaded Iraq, capturing Mosul, Tikrit and the largest refinery (Bayji) that I visited and from which oil was transported to be refined at K3. K3 has also fallen under control of the invading Islamists. The Associated Reported July 19, 2014:

The message played over loudspeakers gave the Christians of Iraq's second-largest city until midday Saturday to make a choice: convert to Islam, pay a tax or face death. By the time the deadline imposed by the Islamic State extremist group expired, the vast majority of Christians in Mosul had made their decision. They fled. They clambered into cars - children, parents, grandparents - and headed for the largely autonomous Kurdish region of northern Iraq or other areas protected by the Kurdish security forces. Their departure marks the latest - and perhaps final - exodus of Christians from the city, emptying out communities that date back to the first centuries of Christianity, including Chaldean, Assyrian and Armenian churches.

This “choice” the Christians were given is rooted in the literal reading of the Quran: (9:29):

“Fight those who believe not in Allah nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by Allah and His Messenger, nor acknowledge the religion of

Truth, (even if they are) of People of the Book, until they pay the Jizya with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued.”

“People of the Book” are Christians and Jews. They are to be violently subjugated, with the sole justification being their religion. This was one of the final “revelations” from Allah and it set in motion the tenacious military expansion, in which Muhammad’s (Messenger) companions managed to conquer two-thirds of the Christian world in the next 100 years. Islam is intended to dominate all other people and faiths (Durie).

This is a horrible turn of events – abhorrent – as the commitment to the cause will now be the decision of the current President, Barack Obama, instead of President George Bush who initiated to the commitment to a free Iraq. Will he aide Iraq to withstand the onslaught of militant Islamists branding themselves first as the “Islamic State of Iraq and the [Levant](#)” (ISIL) that is an area of the Eastern Mediterranean including [Cyprus](#), [Palestinian territories](#), [Jordan](#), [Israel](#), [Lebanon](#), and [Syria](#)), then the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and most recently just the “Islamic State” who are intent on establishing a global caliphate – the first of which would be in Syria and Iraq? Will the US find itself in alliance with Iran and Syria, our sworn enemies who are intent on the destruction of Israel? Only time will tell.

The field of education can learn from this. Once an initiative is started, it is imperative the leader provide as much support through commitment of resources and time to see it through to success. Or, know when to cut losses. Whether it is fundraising for a new high school synthetic-turf athletic field, or supporting the higher education

building boom witnessed in the first decade of this century, commitment to the cause is a critical component of successful leadership in the education community.

Such leadership is often controversial. The Burlington, VT high school rejected corporate support for its new field favoring instead amassing additional public debt by selling bonds to be paid back by the taxpayers for years to come, primarily to the same corporate-world whose aid was rejected. Whereas the nearby community of South Burlington accepted corporate sponsorship at no cost to its taxpayers with the condition the field bare the sponsor's name and logo.

Similarly, the commitment to raise funds for more, bigger and better buildings and infrastructure led to the higher education building boom that was funded in part through private donations, and some not so private donations. Buildings named after wealthy donors giving back to the community are scattered throughout college campuses across the country. And so are buildings bearing the name of politicians who bring other people's money home to their constituents. This extension / application of public money is disconcerting to some; just as foregoing corporate sponsorship in favor of public debt caused discord in Burlington.

When the "Shelby Engineering Center" (Alabama Republican Senator) signage was raised over the complex at my alma mater, Auburn University, many donors, including myself, rejected the notion a politician be rewarded through name recognition. It was not his money. Furthermore, as educational leaders building the scholastic backbone of the future, they must rely on private donations. Usurping private donations in favor of public (be it by debt or appropriation) only exasperates the problem. It is the

law of supply and demand. As buildings are named for politicians, private donations dry up, as name recognition for the legacy of one's contribution to society is supplanted by names of politicians we elect – oftentimes over and over and over. If anything, the constituents who elect the politician should have their names on the building. It takes true leadership and committed values to overcome the temptation of easy money to help ensure the integrity of higher education.

Regardless of the means to the end, perseverance and commitment by our educational leadership is critical to the success of scholastic endeavors ranging from overcoming teachers' unions objections to establishing charter schools to providing parents the freedom of choice to select the best schooling alternative available for our nation's children. Corporations, schools, government, philanthropic organizations, and religions all benefit from strong leaders who stay committed to reaching the goal. They fight the good fight. But they also know, when losing, to react swiftly to change course or retreat. This applies to any organization, not just military, and any person as well. I write this thinking how many times I questioned the utility of completing a degree started in 2005 when I was married with two stepchildren living in Vermont. Now I am single, living in California, but I am committed to completing a product worthy of others' time to read, learn and hopefully have the chance to apply to their particular situation: their work, family, church, school, charity and/or for their own personal project or endeavor.

Conclusion

The educational leadership community is offered a unique opportunity to observe and learn from America's eight-year Iraqi excursion. The literature shows, and the Iraqis

confirmed, that leadership styles are transferable and universal. We have the opportunity to learn from each other. So let us compare and discover the best way of doing business. Through this dissertation, the educational community is able to observe how the U.S. military interacted with the Iraqis. And my personal experience in Iraq was the most rewarding in my life in part due to the fact I was looking for ways to learn by observing and conversing with the intent to transfer this information into writing for others to see. I look forward to sharing and exploring further how education, leadership, policy, community and commitment can best be combined to serve the interests of mankind.

CHAPTER VI: LESSONS

The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.

– Edmund Burke, 1797

In this section I will discuss the synthesis between my life experiences and the abstract conceptualization of the Ed.D. curriculum. I will explore how my growth as a reflective practitioner is grounded in the coursework and literature, and address the implications for leadership theory and practices.

The Reflective Practitioner

My Iraq experience was an ideal setting to carry out reflective practice, which is to integrate experience and concepts in a rigorous and vigorous way in a reflective essay. This dissertation embodies my reflective essay. I was able to reflect while underway, while flying in helicopters day and night, while discussing design and construction challenges with Iraqis, while addressing leadership and policy implications with my fellow sailors and marines, all while “in action.”¹ I was able to reacquaint myself with the issues, ideas, theories and concepts introduced in my Leadership and Policy Studies doctoral program, all of which informed my decisions and brought “deeper meaning and appreciation to” my experience, my coursework and this dissertation.²

My reflections are framed by the examples my parents set as engaged, involved and informed citizens as discussed in Chapter III. In fact, the perception I have of everything in life is grounded in the examples my parents set from political conservatism

¹ Koliba (2004).

² Ibid.

to public involvement to religious faith. I am aware this influence and my near-death experiences form the lens from which I apply my lessons from Iraq.

My Iraq experience provides numerous opportunities to reflect, contrast, compare and apply educational leadership principles. Recognizing Iraqi schoolchildren can be considered “the culturally different ‘other,’”¹ the importance for connection between teacher, student and parents cannot be emphasized enough. This “politics of caring”² exemplified itself in Iraq by our community-based security teams who mixed with the general population. Prior to integrating with the public, these teams essentially served in military combat outposts (COPS) generally segregated from contact with the local community they were there to protect. Using proven concepts from urban police walking the streets in high-crime areas to better connect with constituents, the military began direct public engagement by handing out candies, food, gifts, and tokens during their foot patrols in the streets of Baghdad. Once the children were won over, the adults general followed suite. But the “politics of caring” had to be sincere to be effective. Generally reflected in the photo of children in figure 48, once we began to connect interpersonally we began to see the populace as partners rather than adversaries. And once the Iraqis realized we cared, they slowly came to realize we were there not to harm and control but rather to assist and protect.

However, this search for connection is extremely challenging when applied in “unfriendly institutional structures.”³ These structures range from educational

¹ Valenzuela (1999), 255.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

institutions and government to boardrooms and military units. Whenever leadership is weak it makes it difficult to create and maintain a culture of caring. The unit I served with in Iraq was embedded with the populace and made engaging and connecting with the public their top priority after providing security. We were successful ensuring a safe environment so education, commerce and government institutions could be reestablished and improved. The same can be said for effective schooling in both public and private schools. A safe environment for students, teachers and parents to meet and collaborate is just as important as collaboration among business entities, and I would argue more so, for it is our future and subsequent generations that are at stake.

I learned from the Iraqis I met. I learned how we made a huge mistake by ignoring Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. We dismantled the Iraqi government and military apparatus after destroying Saddam Hussein's regime with little loss of life. People who would have gladly continued to support the invasion turned against us – as I would have – because we suddenly “unemployed” hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. With the US eliminating their jobs, they had no income to support themselves or their family. Many left the country. Others turned to Al Qaeda and other foreign insurgents for aid. And yet others began dismantling their country themselves causing chaos through sectarian violence that I argue would never have occurred to the extent it did if it was not for the State Department's ill-advised, ill-conceived “plan” to segregate Ba'athist party officials, everyday civil servants and the entire Iraqi armed forces. This error would take eight years and the loss of four thousand four hundred Americans to correct. While not the calamity many predicted, losing this many soldiers, airmen, marines, sailors,

government employees and civilian contractors by ignoring the repercussions of eliminating one's means to support themselves is inexcusable. Hopefully we learned our lesson.

Despite the unnecessary loss of Iraqi, American and other coalition partners' lives, I personally learned humbleness that what I have experienced will likely never be replicated. At least I was able to help to win the war (not just "end" it) and hopefully save others from having to go. I remember walking across an airfield north of Baghdad when a Marine I was working with reflected on how, "...this is probably the most significant thing I will ever do in my life." I had not thought of that, but how true. How could anything I do be as important or meaningful? At least I ultimately experienced the delayed gratification by saving this experience until I was fifty-four years old. That is what I learned. That I had just experienced the most significant thing I would do in my life. Which makes it all the more painful to watch jihadists from Syria invade Iraq in June 2014, and occupy the very lands where Americans and coalition partners gave their lives to enable Iraqis to live in freedom. Now they are captive again. I do not know of a war America has won that only three years was later lost – at least the Sunni-dominated parts of Iraq. It is shameful we stood passively by while it happened before our very eyes.

How will I Apply?

I will engage only those willing to engage. After we invaded their country, Iraqis had a choice to engage, or not; to collaborate, or not. At first a majority did, then later, as a consequence of our ill-conceived implementation strategy, many succumbed to AQI

and remnants of the Ba'athist regime and fought the coalition's presence. Yes, they had a choice to collaborate once we were there. It could be called "mandated collaboration"¹ – such as the Federal Government in the US mandates state and industry compliance (collaboration) with automobile safety and environmental regulations or face withholding of federal funds, which of course come from the citizens of the states and employees of the industries being mandated to collaborate. What a tangled web we weave.

Often I would seek to appease, manipulate, persuade, enroll or try to convince others there was a better way. Some will never be convinced there is a better way to address religious and political issues. Both of which have been woven throughout my dissertation. And both of which I cannot be convinced there is a better way. I will not hesitate when convinced I am correct or when I know the best course of action. I want to use the pen as a way to apply what I learned. A primary reason I write this SPN is to convince, share with society and publish for the record what I have experienced in life. To reflect on and document for history's sake an accurate accounting of what happened in Iraq and how the principles of life, liberty and leadership are universal.

I will apply what I have learned over the years and in Iraq to make this world a better place. I will engage, debate, influence and persuade others to see the importance of individuals being allowed to live their limited time on this earth as they like, to pursue the happiness in life they desire and deserve, and to celebrate freedom and individual liberty as the cornerstones of a free, civil society where all prosper regardless of the color of their skin or their personal wealth or perceived privilege. A November 20, 2007 piece

¹ Journal of Environmental Planning and Management, 2010

written by Cal Thomas as I prepared for my military recall and mobilization to active duty best sums-up how I feel and how I will apply my life's experiences during the rest of the time I am afforded to live:

...ask what you can do for yourself and stop asking politicians and government to do it for you. America, always a dream in search of the ideal, has been transformed from a "can-do on my own" to a "can't do without government" culture of victims; a giant government ATM that dispenses redistributed goodies to all comers.

America is a country that offers opportunity, not guaranteed outcomes, because not everyone has the same abilities, intelligence, drive, or interests. Life isn't about acquiring larger homes, possessing more things and ever-expanding government. It is (or used to be) about building character and being content with what you have.¹

Implications

On the plains of hesitation bleach the bones of countless millions who, on the dawn of victory, stopped to rest and died there wondering why.

– Omar Kayam

The implications of doing nothing, not taking a stand when faced with destruction, are clear. Whether it is mass murder or watching passively as our career politicians for life "lead" us and our future generations to oblivion, if we wait on the sideline for the sake of appeasement or "hoping" something will change, we are complicit in the pending disaster. Just as when gays, Jews and gypsies were exterminated by Germany and when 1.8 million mostly Tutsis were murdered in Rwanda and Burundi in 1993-1994 as we stood idly by watching the bones of countless millions bleach on the plains of hesitation. We watched genocide in the Balkans. And now we watch genocide

¹ Thomas (2007).

in Syria and Iraq. We must stand by our convictions of protecting those in harm's way.

The risk of doing nothing is greater than the risk of action.

Looking Back

The great mistake that's made in nation building, particularly in the case of the Bush administration, is to think it can impose its vision of what Iraq would be like on the peoples of Iraq...It was a total failure.

– Clinton Ambassador Peter Galbraith in Burlington Free Press interview September 2009

It was? Reflecting on comments as those make me feel even better about what Iraqis and Americans accomplished. However, as I discussed in Chapter V, abhorrent atrocities are being committed by the jihadists who invaded Iraq from Syria in June 2014. This happened due to our inaction as the Syrian civil war grew and the eastern part of the country became lawless – allowing the formation of the Sunni radical force bent on eliminating those who get in the way of establishing their so-called Islamic caliphate. As Time magazine (June 30, 2014 p. 33) reports: If the “gains prove durable, the de facto Sunnistan they have created will pose a severe threat to the U.S. and its Western allies...thousands of European passport holders have joined the fight in Syria, and no doubt a number of them are in Iraq. Their next step could be anywhere.”

The blame for this can lie in many places. Should we have left a military presence in Iraq as we have for the last seventy years in Japan, Italy, Germany and Spain? Should Obama have acted by aiding moderate rebels after Syria called his bluff on his “line in the sand” and proceeded to use weapons of mass destruction? But on a deeper level, the blame belongs to the hatred evoked by the Muslim against Muslim civil war

that started in the year 632, twenty-nine years after Mohammed's death. As Time magazine (June 30, 2014 p. 34) remarks, the ongoing conflict "plays out in the same region that gave us Cain vs. Abel. George W. Bush spoke of the spirit of liberty, and Obama often invokes the spirit of cooperation. Both speak to something powerful in the modern heart. But neither man – nor America itself – fully appreciated until now the continuing reign of much older spirits: hatred, greed and tribalism. Those spirits are loosed again, and the whole world will pay the price."

This dissertation explored the political, economic and religious distinctions and underlying similarities between perceptions and reality as they relate to life, liberty and leadership in disparate cultures framed by war and peace, and it provided practical leadership applications that educational administrators, public servants, politicians and corporate managers can use in their multicultural organizations. It also gave voice to a population (politically / fiscally conservative college students) and a narrative (disparate cultures share leadership traits / practices and a common desire for life / liberty that should be embraced by higher education, not ridiculed / ignored) that has largely gone unnoticed or ignored because it did not "fit" the narrative of the academy. I now look to my future and personal next steps in life's journey.

Going Forward

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race...

– 2 Timothy 7

Or have I? There is more to come. I refuse to go gently.¹ My way forward in life, now at the age of sixty, is to focus on valuing life and the situation God has blessed me with. I do this by balancing life and living it to its fullest through the values I am dedicated to live by:

- Learning
- Loving
- Leading
- Legacy

I believe I can experience and apply these values by entering the grand profession of teaching, following my mother’s journey begun seventy years earlier. As with *winning hearts and minds* in Iraq in the quest for life and liberty, teaching offers the “magnificent opportunity of *saving hearts and minds* because its intellectual and emotional impact can be both magical and life-transforming.”² I value diversity of political thought. I understand the “transformative power of ideas.”³ I want to provide “contending truth narratives and perspectives to bump up against one another.”⁴ I want to offer our students “opposing truth perspectives,” to dismiss myths that those such as I who supported the invasion of Iraq blindly believe in causes that liberal campus “progressives tend to see as reactionary conservative stances, simply beneath the interests of an enlightened, intellectual elite.”⁵ If I can leave a legacy of enhancing higher

¹ Nash (2002), 5.

² Ibid., 4.

³ Ibid., 2.

⁴ Nash (2004), 40.

⁵ Ibid.

education by leading the introduction of differing ideas, offering opposing political, societal and spiritual perspectives, and enhancing the diversity of thought, then I can truly say, “I have finished the race.”

Finally

My personal narrative on life, liberty and leadership concludes with a somewhat painful reminder of the humanity in all of us. Despite our best intentions, our actions are not always perfect. We strive for perfection but it is futile. I am deeply concerned that our Republic, founded on the principles of human nature and civil society as aptly explored and reflected by Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Montesquieu and Hume from 469 BC through 1776 AD, is in danger of collapsing under the weight of good intentions (at best) or by the successful execution of a calculated plan of statist vying for tyrannical control (at worst). I go forward in life (some of it was magic, some of it tragic – Jimmy Buffet, “He Went to Paris”) remembering and reflecting on my observations of liberty at work in Iraq, and of witnessing the distinct manifestation of leadership principles in varying organizational and cultural settings across the world. There were many lessons taught, and there will be many more to learn. I just hope and pray I (and my students) learn from them.

So I now go forward, continuing my act of life and quest for liberty, with serenity about the past, optimism for the future and a passion in the present about something we as educators find meaningful for ourselves and the world¹.

¹ Barrett (2010).

REFERENCES

- Aiken, Judith A. Comments on draft dissertation, Iraq: My Stories of Life, Liberty and Leadership. 2013.
- Atlantic, The. Hillary Clinton: 'Failure' to Help Syrian Rebels Led to the Rise of ISIS, August 10, 2014.
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/08/hillary-clinton-failure-to-help-syrian-rebels-led-to-the-rise-of-isis/375832/>
- Bandow, Doug. Cato Institute, Washington, DC.
- Barrett, Elizabeth Ann Manhart. "Power as Knowing Participation in Change: What's New and What's Next. *Nursing Science Quarterly*, 23(1) 47-54, Sage, 2010
- Block, Peter. *The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987.
- Bowles, S. Unequal education and the reproduction of the social division of labor. In *Review of Radical Political Economics* (Vol. 3, pp. 17-43), 1971.
- Brown, Donald. Warren Bemis: *On Becoming a Leader*. Cambridge, MA: Basic Books, 2003.
- Burke, W. Warner. *Organization Change: Theory and Practice*. London: Sage Publications, 2002.
- Bush, George W. <http://video.foxnews.com/v/3768333397001>
- Cohen, Richard, Iraq's Inevitabilities. Washington Post Op-Ed. 25 SEP 2007
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/24/AR2007092401321.html>
- Covey, Stephen R. *Principle Centered Leadership*. New York: Free Press, 1992.
- _____. *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Free Press, 1989.
- Covey, Stephen, A. Roger Merrill, and Rebecca R. Merrill. *First Things First*. New York: Free Press, 1993.
- Daloz, Laurent, C.H. Keen, J.P. Keen, & S.D. Parks. *Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1996.

- DeMethra, LaSha Bradley (2009) UVM Dissertation, "Outside second-generation, inside first-generation: Shedding light on a hidden population in higher education."
- Deming, W. Edwards. *Out of the Crisis*. Boston: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1986.
- Dewey, John. *Experience and Education*. New York: Collier Books, 1966 (1938)
- Dreher, Diane. *The Tao of Personal Leadership*. New York: HarperCollins, 1996.
- Drucker, Peter. "The Community of the Future." In the *Drucker Foundation Future Series*. Edited by Francis Hesselbein, Marshall Goldsmith, Richard Beckhard and Richard F. Schubert. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998.
- Durie, Mark. "The Third Choice: Islam, Dhimmitude and Freedom" Deror Books. 2010
- Federalist Papers. 85 articles published in New York: various newspapers, 1787 – 1788, <http://www.foundingfathers.info/federalistpapers/>
- Feldmann, Linda. "What kind of leader is he?" In *The Christian Science Monitor Weekly*, (January 27, 2014): 31.
- Fullan, Michael. *Change Forces: The Sequel*. London: Falmer Press, 1999.
- Gamson, William A. *Talking Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
- Gornick, Vivian. *Situation and Story: Art of Personal Narrative*. New York: Macmillan, 2012.
- Greenleaf, Robert K. *Servant Leadership*. Robert K. Greenleaf Center, 1982.
- Guardian, The. Deadly Bombings Sweep Iraq, 2014
<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/may/10/iraq-deadly-bombings-sweep-iraq-fallujah>
- Hall, R., & Tolbert, P. *Organizationsns: Structures, Processes, and Outcomes* (9th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2005.
- Hersey, Paul. *The Situational Leader*, 1984.
- Iraqi Public Opinion Survey. D3 Systems. Vienna, Va. and KA Research, Istanbul, Turkey. 2008. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/images/pdfs/0308opinion.pdf>

- Krauthammer: Obama 'threw away the victory' in Iraq:
<http://video.foxnews.com/v/3768333399001/krauthammer-obama-threw-away-the-victory-in-iraq/#sp=show-clips>
- Jensen, Sterling. "Lessons from an Anbar Sheik." <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/09/28/AR2007092801554.html?wpisrc=newsletter>
- K3 Refinery, Haqlaniya, Iraq. LA Times:
<http://articles.latimes.com/2008/mar/10/business/fi-iraqoil10>
- Koliba, Christopher J. "Assessing Reflection Assignments for Public Affairs Courses: Implications for Educating Reflective Practitioners." In *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 10 (2004): 295-309.
- Laqueur, Walter. *Voices of Terror: Manifestos, Writings and Manuals of AL Qaeda, Hamas, and Other Terrorists from Around the World and Throughout the Ages*. Naperville, IL: Sourcebooks, Inc., 2004.
- Levin, Mark. *Liberty and Tyranny*. New York: Threshold Editions, 2009.
- Lipman-Blumen, Jean. *Connective Leadership: Managing in a Changing World*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Mixon, Justin Ray. Killed by IED. Support Our War Heroes:
http://supportourwarheroes.net/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=59&Itemid=4
- Munier, Gilles. *Iraq: An Illustrated History and Guide*. Northampton, MA: Interlink Publishing, 2004.
- Nash, Robert J. *Helping College Students Find Purpose: The Campus Guide to Meaning-Making*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2010.
- _____, *Liberating Scholarly Writing: The Power of Personal Narrative*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2004. Nash, Robert L. *Spirituality, Ethics, Religion, and Teaching: A Professor's Journey*. New York: Peter Land Publishing, 2002.
- _____, *Personal Writing Matters: Telling Our Stories as Educators and Scholars*. Unpublished Manuscript, 2003.
- Northouse, Peter. *Leadership: Theory and Practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2004.

- O'Reilly, William. <http://video.foxnews.com/v/3766210751001>
- Parks Daloz, Laurent, Cheryl Keen, James Keen, and Sharon Parks. *Common Fires: Lives of Commitment in a Complex World*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1996.
- Patriquin, Travis. Presentation on *How to Win the War in Al Anbar* http://abcnews.go.com/images/US/how_to_win_in_anbar_v4.pdf. abc News, 2003
- _____, Story of Leadership in Iraq. 2003: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/a-tribute-to-captain-travis-patriquin>
- Reid, Harry. "This War is Lost." (from abstract). http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJm62zcQAhs&feature=player_detailpage YouTube, 2007
- Roorback, Bill. *Writing Life Stories*, Cincinnati, OH: Writer's Digest Books, 2008.
- Schaeffer, Francis. *How Should We Then Live? The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*, Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1976
- Smith, Niel & MacFarland, S. *Anbar Awakens: The Tipping Point*" - Military Review, March – April 2008.
- Social learning in a policy-mandated collaboration: Journal of Environmental Planning and Management
Vol. 53, No. 6, September 2010, 681–699
- Spears, Larry. *Insights on Leadership Service, Stewardship, Spirit and Servant-Leadership*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1998.
- Stengel, Richard. *Mandela's Way – Fifteen Lessons on Life, Love, and Courage*. New York: Crown Publishers, 2009
- Steyn, Mark. "Iraq less unwon than other wars." Investor's Business Daily, March 22, 2013. <http://www.oregister.com/articles/iraq-500890-war-america.html>
- Stone, D. A. *Policy Paradox: The Art of Political Decision Making*. Boston: W.W. Norton & Co, 2002.
- The Holy Bible. *New Living Translation*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2007.

- Thomas, Cal. "Double Jeopardy."
http://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2007/11/double_jeopardy.html
- Time Magazine, Iraq's Eternal War, June 30, 2014.
- United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). "Iraq – Education in Transition: Needs and Challenges." Paris, 2004.
- United States Embassy, Baghdad. Unclassified cable of May 1, 2008: Anbar Moderate Clerics Share Views on Engaging the U.S.
- United States Institute of Peace. Harb, Imad. Higher Education and the Future of Iraq, Special Report 195, Washington, D.C., January 2008.
<http://www.usip.org/publications/higher-education-and-the-future-iraq>
- _____, Gienger, Viola. Iraqis Back Elections, Democracy Amid Violence and Political Turmoil, Washington, D.C., April 21, 2014.
<http://www.usip.org/olivebranch/iraqis-back-elections-democracy-amid-violence-and-political-turmoil>
- Valenzuela, Angela. *Subtractive Schooling: U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999
- Vella, Jane. *Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.
- Veterans Today. "Widow of Marine Corp Colonel Launches Campaign"
<http://www.veteranstoday.com/2012/02/01/widow-of-marine-corps-colonel-involved-in-haditha-trials-launches-campaign-to-prove-her-husband-was-murdered/>
- Waldman, David A. "A Theoretical Consideration of Leadership and Total Quality Management." In *Leadership Quarterly*, 4, no. 1 (1993): 65-79.
- Weiss, Carol. *Nothing as Practical as Good Theory: Exploring Theory-Based Evaluation for Comprehensive Community Initiatives for Children and Families* (Connell, J, Kubisch, A, Schorr, L, and Weiss, C. (Eds.) 'New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives' ed.). Washington, DC: Aspen Institute, 1995.
- Wheatley, Margaret. *Leadership and the New Science: Learning about Organization from an Orderly Universe*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler, 1999.

Zenger, John H., et al. "Leadership Under the Microscope." Extraordinary Performance Group. Orem, UT, 2004.

APPENDIX 1



KEN,

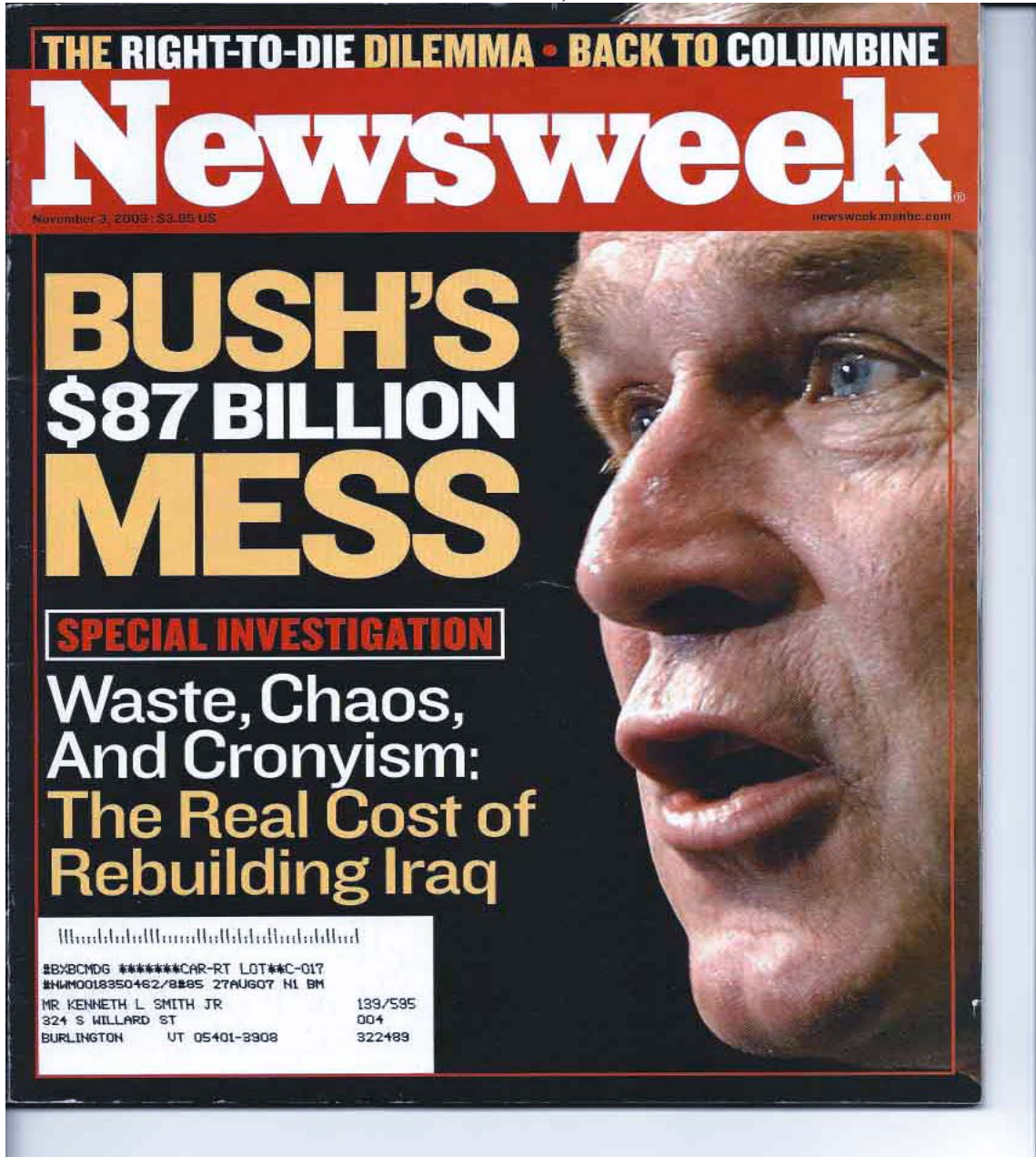
31 July 2008

WANTED TO AGAIN THANK YOU FOR
THE TREMENDOUS WORK AND EFFORT
TO BRING K3 BACK TO LIFE! IT
WAS YOUR DIRECT EFFORT THAT
MADE THIS HAPPEN. ALL THE
BEST TO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY
IN THE COMING YEARS.

TAKE CARE AND BE SAFE

SEMPER FI
BOEW "WILEY" POST

APPENDIX 2
November 3, 2003



APPENDIX 3
March 8, 2010



APPENDIX 4

Time Magazine June 30, 2014



