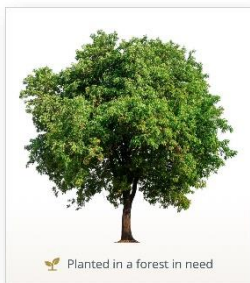


In this Issue

First, we hope you have had a relaxing and rejuvenating holiday season. The pace ramps up again at SSEC as we nail down details of the Morocco conference. This issue will highlight news shared with us by members, and we welcome two new SSEC Officers. The Board has been reflecting on SSEC's future trajectory, as reflected in last June's retreat and the Board's ongoing work to update Bylaws, which will be distributed to members for comment. We are always looking for members who want to expand their role in guiding SSEC's future, especially though service on Board committees. The issue concludes with a piece by **Michael Hartoonian** on wealth and happiness.



Planted in a forest in need

Sadly, on December 14, 2023, SSEC lost a close friend, dedicated SSEC leader, and social science scholar, Executive Director Emeritus **James E. Davis**. His successor, Charlie White, represented SSEC at his memorial service on January 7. The SSEC Board has arranged with the Arbor Day Foundation to plant 100 trees in Jim's memory. See the *In Memoriam* section below.

New Officers

SSEC's Board filled two officer positions since the June meeting – one on the occasion of Jim Davis's retirement and other a long-standing vacancy.



In the fall of 2023, the Board appointed **Kathryn Engebretson**, associate professor at Indiana University, as SSEC **Treasurer**. She had been working with Jim Davis since 2022 as assistant treasurer until his retirement as treasurer last August last. Kathryn is currently discovering the wonders of Quicken and preparing for assuming full financial management and reporting this spring. We REALLY appreciate Kathryn's commitment to SSEC and the added workload involved.

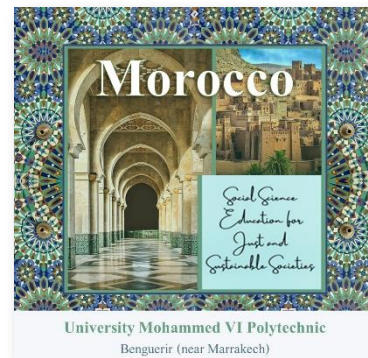


Sarah Mathews, associate professor, Florida International University, was appointed SSEC **Secretary**. The position has been unfilled for a few years, with secretarial tasks taken on by the Executive Director. Sarah serves as Social Studies Education Program Leader at FIU. She says she really enjoyed the Dublin conference and was contemplating ways to become more involved. Glad to have you, Sarah.

Annual Conferences

2024 IN BENGUERIR, MOROCCO

The Conference Committee, under the leadership of Amy Allen, is making excellent progress on plans for the international conference in Morocco (June 25–30, 2024). As we said in a recent email, the conference site is the University Mohammed VI Polytechnic (UM6P) in the city of **Benguerir**, about 48 miles from Marrakesh, a popular excursion destination. The university first opened in 2017 and is playing a key role in Morocco's [Green City](#) project established in Benguerir – an appropriate site given our sustainable development theme.



Conference proposals are due by January 15. The proposal form and conference information are available on the [Annual Conference](#) page. We will be updating information on that page as it becomes available. As in the past,

we will provide guidance on travel options to/from the conference and suggestions for pre- and post-conference travel. Our Moroccan co-chairs, Imad Elarbi and Mohammed Elmeski, can provide helpful information. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Amy at conference@ssec-inc.org.

PAST CONFERENCE – 2023 IN BELLINGHAM, WA

In case you missed it, we have uploaded the [retrospective](#) of the 2023 Annual Conference at Western Washington University in Bellingham, WA. It includes a copy of the program along with photos of presentations and excursions. Check it out.

FUTURE CONFERENCE – WHERE?

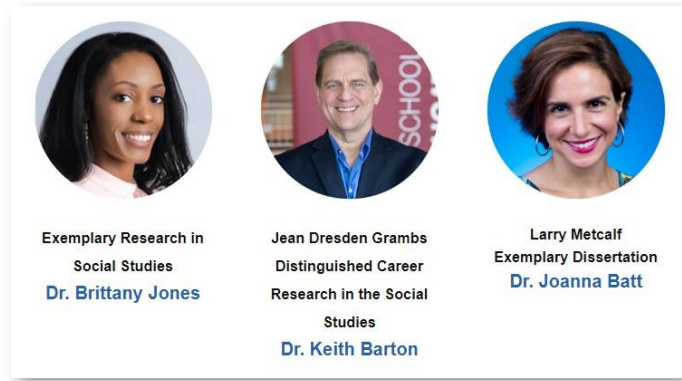
The 2025 annual conference will return to the US. It will be a notable year – 2025 is the 60th anniversary of SSEC's incorporation, founded in Indiana with Irving Morrisett as its first Executive Director. If you have ideas about a location with historical and culture resources to draw from and ripe for inquiry by presenters and families alike, email us at conference@ssec-inc.org.

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Prestige, Publications, Promotions, Positions, and Projects

PRESTIGE

SSEC member Keith Barton received the 2023 Distinguished Career Research in the Social Studies award conferred at the Nashville NCSS annual conference. Additional research recognition went to Dr. Brittany Jones and Dr. Joanna Batt.



PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS

Murry Nelson (Penn State University)

Nelson, M. (2024). **Big time: The history of Big Ten basketball**, 1972-1992. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

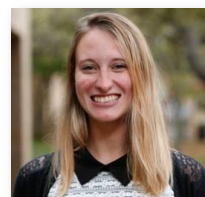
“For some of us, Big Ten basketball will always mean the original ten great teams that comprised the league. But for all fans, the teams during this time period bring back memories of some of the best teams and players that have ever played basketball.

“In the sweeping history of two decades of Big Ten basketball, Murry Nelson chronicles the conference when it was the most successful of any basketball conference in the nation.”

Joann Doering Zadrozny (Texas State University), **Michael Solem**, and others

Zadrozny, J., Crane, M., Boehm, R.G. & Solem, M. (2023) **Teaching climate change through powerful geography**, *The Geography Teacher*, 20:3, 141-149.

DOI: 10.1080/19338341.2023.2261480



“Powerful Geography revolutionizes the traditional notion of geography education and makes it transformative by teaching content that connects with individual students’ future career and life aspirations. We explore the history of prior teacher resources to teach climate change and provide a path to using the new approach to teaching powerful geographic knowledge, offering examples of how to integrate climate change into the classroom by reviewing the various teacher and student resources available on the Powerful Geography website (www.powerfulgeography.org).”



Michael Solem (Texas State University) and **Joe Stoltman** (Western Michigan University)

Solem, Michael and Joseph P. Stoltman. “**National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in Geography Education.**” Oxford Bibliographies, 2023: Oxford University Press.

[DOI:10.1093/obo/9780199874002-0279](https://doi.org/10.1093/obo/9780199874002-0279)

This article in the online bibliography provides annotated reviews of the major reference works that reflect the Geography NAEP from its first administration in 1994 through the most recent in 2018. The Nation’s Report Cards on geography learning, technical reports, assessment design, research emanating from the assessments, policy positions, and responses to the assessment through the media are encapsulated in this well documented account of NAEP geography. This is a meaningful contribution to geography and social studies education through NAEP lens.



Patrick Keegan (Purdue University NW)

Keegan, Patrick Joseph (2023) **What kind of affective citizen? An analysis of state social emotional learning standards**, *Theory & Research in Social Education*, DOI: 10.1080/00933104.2023.2261888

Emotion plays an important role in how young people acquire the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of engaged citizenship, including being able to empathize, listen to multiple perspectives, and build relationships of solidarity with others. This study investigated how social emotional learning (SEL) standards in 17 U.S. states guided the preparation of youth for affective citizenship. Findings indicated that SEL standards conceptualize emotions as individualized experience, teach students to resolve conflicts through civility and cooperation, and favor individual responses to injustice



PROJECTS

Powerful Geography Bringing Together Teachers and Geographers

Every summer, the [AAG’s Geography Faculty Development Alliance](#) hosts a week-long workshop for early career geography faculty. It’s become a tradition to start the program by asking the participants to introduce themselves by sharing their “a-ha!” moment — the point in time when they realized that geography was their calling. Over the years we’ve heard memorable stories about inspirational college professors, study abroad experiences, and other influences during college that led people to discover and choose the geography discipline. How might we inspire similar “a-ha!” moments earlier in geography education?

In response to a recent call issued by the National Center for Research in Geography Education, an educator network has been organized to support state-based collaborations as part of the Powerful Geography movement. The network currently includes geography teachers and academic geographers in nine states, including those with active Geographic Alliances (organizations that were once funded by the National Geographic Society to support geography education and teacher professional development).

Powerful Geography aims to attract diverse youth of all backgrounds to geography learning opportunities and careers, starting in middle

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school and continuing through high school and beyond. Members of the Powerful Geography network met at workshops held over two weekends in September 2023 to initiate the creation of geography educational resources that raise awareness and appreciation among learners of the relevance and usefulness of geography for what they aspire to be and do in the future.

Member Sightings



SSEC is always heavily represented at CUFA and NCSS. In Nashville we found three SSEC veterans; from left to right, Carole Hahn, Keith Barton, and Linda Levstik.



Executive Director Charlie White had the opportunity to visit with two other special SSEC vets. In August, we were meeting in Buena Vista, CO, so we added a visit to Jim and Sharryl Davis and to Suzy Helburn in Boulder.



Prominently displayed in Suzie's apartment are pictures of two of the most influential people in her life and career – her late husband Nick and Karl Marx. Our meeting with Suzie was all too brief, but our stay with the Davis's allowed for more chat time and the trading of old stories.



SSEC Past Presidents (taken at the 2022 Dublin Conference). (From l to r) Sara Demoiny, Greg Samuels, Joe Stoltman, Charlie White, Kathryn Enggretson, Murry Nelson.

SSEC Publications

SSEC/IAP AGREE ON NEW PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

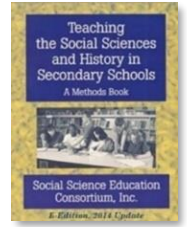
The traditional goal has been to have books sent to members within 12 months of the conference on which they are based, around the time of the following year's conference. Information Age Publishing was hit hard by the COVID pandemic and is still working to catch up. After very productive and positive discussions between IAP and our directors of publication, we have a new schedule for release of near-term conference books, as follows:

- **Moving Beyond a Single Story** (2022 Dublin conference) will be distributed to eligible members in June 2024,
- **Dismantling Spaces of Silence** (2023 Bellingham conference) will be released in late November/early December of 2024 and,
- The yet-to-be-titled book from the 2024 Morocco conference this June will be sent to members the following June (2025), which will put us back on the traditional 12-month schedule.

We will make sure that members receive the books to which they are entitled based on the date of their membership.

TEACHING THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HISTORY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A METHODS BOOK

Formerly published by the Social Science Education Consortium through Waveland Press (2000) and Wadsworth Thomson/ITP (1996), the digital edition (2014) continues to be adopted for pre-service secondary social studies courses. While this edition will continue to be available, the Board has asked the Directors of Publications to embark on a thorough revision and update of **TSSHSS**. The editors are working on a revised Table of Contents for Board review in early spring and have begun to identify chapter authors. We'll have a better idea of the publication timetable later this spring. Stay tuned! You may send questions and comments to the Publications Editors at publications@ssec-inc.org.



Board Activities

FALL WEBINAR

SSEC's Outreach Committee organized an October webinar titled **"Energizing Environmental Education: Offering Truth and Hope,"** hosted by SSEC Board member Brandon Haas. Featured speakers included SSEC member Dr. Michael Solem of Texas State University, Dr. Bretton Varge (California State University – Chico) and Dr. Erin Adams (Kennesaw State University).

Dr. Solem discussed the urgent need for greater geographic literacy in his presentation, "Discerning Truth in the Anthropocene: The Importance of Geographical Knowledge." While a contested concept among scholars today, the anthropocene epoch intends to mark the time of human impact on the global environment.

Drs. Adams and Varga offered an up-close examination of the concept of "extraction" as an environmental phenomenon with far-ranging implications across disciplines. "Intra-Active Relationships of Extractino in Social Studies and Science" considers the multi-dimensional nature and effects of resource exploitation on both cultural destruction and dominance, vividly illustrated through the history of metal extraction.

RE-IMAGINING SSEC'S FUTURE

As described briefly in the summer newsletter, the Board participated in a retreat to consider SSEC's ongoing mission and



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the direction of its work in the coming years. The product of the retreat, a brief report to be shared with members, will be posted soon on the SSEC website. You will see revisions of some text in the "About" page and elsewhere.



The Board has also been working on changes to the Bylaws, to take advantage of many communication technologies not contemplated in the mid-1960s and in recognition of the current environment within which SSEC now operates. The amendments should be completed in

March and available for comment and review prior to the annual meeting in June.

In all of this, the Board is unalterably committed to sustaining and extending SSEC's mission into the future even as the circumstances under which we work change over time.

CHANGES IN DUES AND TRANSACTIONS

Dues and Processing Fees

After five years of rising costs, the Board approved an increase in dues effective on January 1st. We have already contacted renewing members in December and January, and the new rates will appear shortly on the SSEC Membership page for new and renewing members: \$93 for regular members, \$49 for student members, and \$49 for retired members. Another change relates to the use of PayPal. We will no longer add the 3% PayPal transaction fee to members whose payments pass through the PayPal system. So regardless of payment method, everyone pays the same amount.

Change of Address for Mailing Checks

SSEC's finances are now under the direct management of Treasurer Kathryn Engebretson at Indiana University. All payments by check should be mailed to Kathryn Engebretson, SSEC Treasurer, 1444 E. Brunswick Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46227.

NEW: Partnerships Committee

At their December meeting, the SSEC Board established an essential new committee to manage and energize participation in the growing number of partnerships it is forming. Individuals on the committee will recommend and oversee collaborative activities, serve as SSEC's representative in communication with their partner subject to Board oversight, and reach out to members who want to devote time to a partnership that aligns with their research, scholarship, teaching, or service. Here are some examples:

CIVXNOW AND EDUCATING FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

The [Educating for American Democracy](#) (EAD) initiative provides tools to make civics and history a priority so that we as a country can rebuild our civic strength to meet the modern challenges we are

facing. SSEC signed on to be a Champion of Educating for American Democracy (EAD) – one of many organizations that stand in agreement that K–12 education plays a pivotal role in ensuring the next generation is prepared to strengthen and sustain our constitutional democracy. We support the EAD approach and the collective, cross-ideological expertise that has informed the resources put forth towards achieving this goal. Our responsibilities include informing



members about EAD work, encouraging participation in its activities, and contributing SSEC's knowledge and expertise in guiding EAD's work through a variety of task forces (American History, Content Curation, Implementation, K-5, Pedagogy for Constitutional Democracy, Political Science and Civics) and working groups (C3, State guidance) and affinity groups.

We are also part of [CivXNow](#) (a project of [iCivics](#)), national cross-partisan coalition of over 320 organizations focused on improving our nation's K-12 in and out-of-school civic education. A function of the coalition is to identify participating organizations' primary mission and audience and discern how we can best support CivXNow goals. Much of this work is done through affinity groups centered around three groups: **policy** (organizations engaged in federal or state policy or advocacy work), **awareness** (organizations interested in promoting a broader vision and message on the importance of fulfilling the civic mission of schools), and **research and best practices** (organizations that do research and/or identify best practices in the field).

SSEC really needs more hands on deck to contribute meaningfully to EAD and the CivXNow coalition, including an individual to coordinate SSEC's involvement and to recruit colleagues and students interested in tangibly contributing to partner events on behalf of SSEC (for example, the annual national [Civic Learning Week](#)).

INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Our first partnership is in development with the Institute of Professional Competence Development, Academy of Education, Vytautas Magnus University in Vilnius, Lithuania. Its director, Prof. Dr. Giedre Kvieskiene, is also editor of their journal *Social Education*. Prof. Kvieskiene proposed the partnership two years ago, initially based on our common commitment to democratic citizenship. The Board has considered the benefits of our possible collaboration with Dr. Kvieskiene and her colleagues and has decided to move forward with our new partnership.



Our organizations will share announcements of and will seek to collaborate on conferences and publishing opportunities, seek opportunities to conduct cross-national research, post events on our respective organizational calendars, include partner news in our newsletters, spotlight each other's publications, and facilitate communication between our respective memberships. Together, these activities require someone on the Partnership Committee to take leadership, to liaise between the SSEC Board and Vytautas Magnus University and to make members aware of opportunities to collaborate.

Future international partnerships will likely grow from relationships developed through SSEC conferences overseas. We already enjoy regular correspondence via Facebook with our Dublin colleagues (2022 conference). Similar partnerships might emerge from past and future conference host sites. Each will grow more fruitful under the leadership of a Partnership Committee member with a special interest in or connection to international collaborators.



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In Memoriam

James E. Davis

1940 — 2023

Published in the Boulder, CO, Daily Camera, 28 December 2023 (<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/dailycamera/name/james-davis-obituary?id=53929174>)

“Ending an unordinary and consequential life, Jim Davis died December 14, 2023, at his home in Lafayette, CO. His journey began in Idaho Falls, Idaho, but within months he moved to Bozeman, Montana, where he lived with his parents, Dave and Betty Davis, and his sister Kathy through high school. Jim remained a proud Montanan throughout his 83 years, frequently telling colorful tales, truthful and embellished, of life in Big Sky.



“Education became the core of Jim's adulthood. Although his own college experience meandered through several universities, he concluded with two degrees from Montana State and an Ed.D. from the University of Colorado. His early degrees were in economics, but his doctoral studies broadened his interest to the pre-college teaching of all social sciences. A born teacher, Jim taught in various capacities at Pacific Lutheran, University of Colorado, and the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

“Many of Jim's professional years were spent at the Social Science Education Consortium [SSEC] in Boulder, CO where he served as Associate Director and later Executive Director from 2000 - 2018. Begun in the 1960s, SSEC served as a bridge between the New Social Studies being developed in American universities and the elementary/secondary teachers who were encouraged to teach social studies in new ways. At SSEC Jim worked with a talented staff and noted academics to conduct research, write publications, and facilitate professional teacher training throughout the United States and other countries. He was particularly gratified after the dissolution of the Soviet Union to be asked to teach democracy education to teachers in former Soviet republics.

“Jim participated in numerous professional organizations, including the National Council of the Social Studies. He also wrote many articles and several books, most prominently his best-selling middle/high school civics textbook which is used schools across the nation.



SSEC Floral Arrangement

“Along with his profession, Jim loved his family. In 1962, Jim married Mary Lou Montague and to their marriage were born Katherine Elizabeth and David Montague. After their divorce, Jim married Sharryl (Holloway) Hawke in 1981 and became stepfather to Mark Hawke. From their blended marriage, Jim and Sharryl are grandparents to five grandchildren. In addition to parenting together, Jim and Sharryl wrote textbooks and other school materials, presented at scores of professional conferences, and conducted teacher training in the US and internationally.

“Other aspects about Jim he would want you to know: he loved golf, winning 2nd in the Montana High School Golf Competition and playing regularly well into his 70s. He served in the US Army and Army Reserves for six years, traveled to 94 countries, embraced Christian faith in his 50s, and could watch TV sports for hours with his eyes closed (aka napping). He had an inquisitive but exacting mind which was offset by a surprisingly funny, playful side; had a taste for bourbon; was an unabashed Democrat; could shine on any dance floor; and was sometimes prickly.

“Sadly, Jim suffered dementia his last two years but was able to be at home where the family and amazing hospice nurses were treated to occasional flashes of the old Jim.

“Jim is survived by his Wife: Sharryl. Children: Katherine Elizabeth Davis, Lacy, WA; David Montague Davis (Karie), Lacy, WA; Mark Hawke (Elise), Erie, CO; Grandchildren: Kristofer Girton, Lacy, WA; Taylor Davis, Lacy, WA, Noah Davis Lacy, WA, Joshua Hawke, Erie, CO, Ana Hawke, Erie, CO. Sibling: Katherine Clarke (Charles), and her children, Roz Thompson and Bill Clarke, all Lacy, WA.”



A collage of Jim Davis's life, including the Morrisett Award to the "Executive Director Emeritus"

At Sharryl Davis's suggestion, friends and colleagues are invited to make donations to SSEC in support of the [Early Career Award](#) program, which Jim initiated in 2001. We are grateful to have received \$850 to date, in amounts ranging from \$50 to \$500.

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Guest Essay

Michael Hartoonian

Wealth and Happiness are Proportional to the Things a Person Can Afford to Leave Alone

Introduction

Greed is dysfunctional to wealth. Random greed is dysfunctional to happiness. Greed can best be understood as a harbinger of crisis. True at both the individual and social levels, greed leads to victimhood and what Friedrich Nietzsche called the “death of God.”

There is, of course, the more contemporary notion of an opportunity cost connected to both wealth and happiness and a strong and positive relationship between sacrifice and future reward. Economists call savings, for example, “future spending.” You give up something now for a “better” tomorrow. Whatever we think we know about both wealth and happiness, they are ironic and counterintuitive concepts and not well appreciated in today’s world. Further, we can comprehend only as far as our language takes us, meaning that if we don’t have the history, vocabulary and logic of the motive concepts we use to guide our thinking and behavior, we are not fully functioning human beings. Thus, we are unable to stand up ethically and intellectually to the noise and nonsense in the world. As such, we become pushovers for ideas devoid of substance and leaders absent of moral courage.

While wanting to believe in a demigod’s message of greed and self-aggrandizement, there is no direct connection between money and happiness. Research clearly shows that after a modest income, money is unrelated to happiness or to real wealth. We also know that individuals who chase after money or happiness directly seldom, if ever, catch them. These people tend to be driven by the behavior and standards of others, unaware of their internal desires and values. They are “hollow” people without purpose, easily manipulated by others and the media.

We will pursue three interrelated questions in this essay:

- What do we understand as wealth and happiness?
- Why do we need moral strings that bind us in loving relationships with others?
- Are wealth and happiness innate or conditions that we must build through a common social curriculum?

Wealth and Happiness



To start, I offer two truisms: money is not wealth and happiness is not an individual construct. Wealth is not even about class and happiness is not about having X or knowing Y. Wealth is not about the price or cost of your possessions and happiness is not about the number of trips you take to far-off places. What the research is very clear about is that wealth is about purpose, love, integrity and the moral bonds you have with others: family, friends and the larger community. Happiness, we find, is almost entirely about moral connections

manifested in honesty, service, respect for others and gratitude. Let’s look more deeply into both concepts.

Wealth

How is wealth created? I find that this question is baffling to most businesspeople, particularly MBA graduates.

Like you, I know people with a great deal of money who are miserable in their daily lives. They are anything but wealthy. And I have known people with little money who are extremely wealthy. Why?

Well, wealth has much more to do with excellence and character than with money and things. If we apply these criteria (character and excellence) to business, we find some interesting characteristics.

- Patient Capital

One of the fundamental principles of moral capitalism to use capital as a patient element is thinking about excellence and wealth creation. This conception of growth as taking time and care is, of course, an anathema to the get-rich-quick, Wall Street geniuses of the 21st century (note, 2008 – 09). They could all learn a thing or two from understanding compound interest and, of course, history. One must wonder, what’s the hurry? What quality or even quantity are they building? Are they contributing anything to the firm’s growth, to the community? Do they have a sense of purpose? Are they building integrity for self and business? What does their NAME (identity) mean to the community?

These are all straightforward questions, take time to address and must be answered with honesty.

- Freedom and Structure

Wealth can only be created by people who are working and learning within a framework where the goal of the firm is to ratchet up freedom and ratchet down structure. Since only people create wealth, they must be as free and as educated as possible to see the possibilities of creating wealth, where most see only poverty. However, this can only happen within a context of integrity, where people are provided the opportunity to personally grow in knowledge and in responsibility for the firm and support for community health.

- Aligning Practice with Principle

Absent guiding principles, individual and business practices are irrelevant and illiterate. Many believe that we need flexibility in our principles because the world and market are changing so rapidly. Within this mindset, virtue becomes subjective or relative and soon, principles become invisible, leaving practice and process orphans to the winds of vice. Following this destructive path, institutional blow-ups become common. We often talk about one’s brand or reputation, but this discussion is meaningless without the Tao, the way or some transcendent virtue. Practice without principle is nonsense. What are your principles? Should they vary from firm to family? What are these principles anyway? Can you identify, explain and implement them?

Principles are modes of conduct that allow practices to create and grow wealth. This conduct is manifested in honesty, respect for others, both inside and beyond the institution, asking what you, the individual, can do for the family, firm or community before asking what these institutions can do for you, the individual. The first principle of commerce is understanding that your self-interest is tied to the interests of those within the family or firm and you can have no private wealth without contributing to the common wealth. Again,

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wealth means excellence in rational decision-making and aesthetic judgement. Families, firms or communities who are mindful to this way or Tao will harvest generous profits.

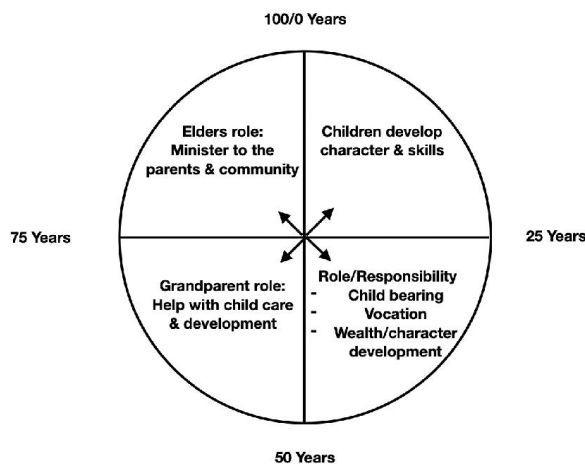
Happiness

There is no and never can be a self-help book on happiness. This is all together true because happiness has little, if anything, to do with self. It is transcendent of self and can only dwell in one's mind or soul through harmonious relationships. Manifested, certainly in personal behavior, happiness is a by-product of living a life of integrity and gratitude, of loving and being loved.

Almost all philosophers, at least from the cultures that I have studied, seem to identify happiness as one of their major themes. These are some common philosophical attributes: a contemplative life; a life of service to others; a life of avoiding pain; a life of creating meaning; through love of vocation; a life of being loved because one is lovely; and the ability to put first things first, i.e., wisdom before knowledge and knowledge before information.

There are also survey data from studies about the happiest countries in the world. For the last six years, that honor has gone to Finland. What we learn here is interesting, but not surprising. Consider:

- Understanding that enough is enough regarding your "take" of the world and the corollary, you are good enough.
- Have the ability to embrace uncertainty.
- Develop the attitude to embrace and enjoy nature.
- Look to honor life today, as well as into the future.
- Be able to create aesthetic places in which to live – as Winston Churchill said – "...first we shape our dwellings, then our dwellings shape us."
- Attempt to buy quality, not quantity.
- Always create meaning in little adventures, like a walk and in larger encounters, like love.



I would also add a third reference from native people in the Americas, Africa and Asia. This reference is about the life span or generation of the family and the sharing of responsibility and wisdom.

I will call it "happiness and generational wisdom."

Within these native cultures, happiness is the by-product of familial responsibility. A child is born into a family where parents are busy working to sustain and grow wealth (quality of life). To help in this

child-rearing task, grandparents do much of the childcare and teach children about their traditions and skills necessary for survival. At the same time, the new parents are in close relationship with the elders, learning about the ongoing development of youth into adults and how to care for and improve the community. These relationships provide meaningful life work. The people find purpose in their identity and service to the larger group. Everyone has a role and attending responsibilities.

One more example may be useful. In 1776, when Thomas Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence, a political statement about revolution, he borrowed a phrase from John Locke – life, liberty and property. He changed the word property to the pursuit of public happiness. The editorial committee, led by Benjamin Franklin, thought that happiness did not need to be modified, as any "enlightened" person would understand happiness as a public construct. It's about the community, the city and commonweal. As with morality, an individual cannot be moral alone. Morality, like happiness, is about relationships: with God, with family, with friends, with the community, etc. Yet, when asked the meaning of the "pursuit of happiness," almost all people believe it's about their personal happiness, which is, of course, a contradiction in terms.

Philosophical and Economic Wisdom Applied to Wealth and Happiness

As we doggedly hold to the conception of happiness and wealth as being personal, we disregard the wisdom of both philosophy and empiricism. A serious look at what we know about happiness and wealth, as stated above, points to a different and more inclusive understanding. In economics and the economy, we see that a healthy material and moral infrastructure is a necessary condition for the creation of wealth. In fact, within civil society, there can be no private wealth without common wealth. Safety, order, transportation and communication must be established as prerequisites to wealth creation. But of equal importance are schools, hospitals, parks, museum, theaters and a high sense of aesthetic/moral judgement. Without this latter set of conditions, wealth goes wanting and so too culture.

We also know that beauty attracts and ugliness repels. All wealth-creating businesses understand this simple fact. Finally, we know that wealth is created by people. Not any people, but those who are educated (not just trained), healthy and find meaning in the good they do for all stakeholders, including family, firm, community, nation and world. In such a mindset, all share – must share – in responsibility and reward, as well as in problem defining and policy solutions. These activities link to happiness, as much as to wealth.

From the literature, we find a similar mindset for happiness. As with wealth, happiness is a byproduct of understanding and acting upon the moral bonds that link us to each other. Without this operational understanding, our markets cannot be free, but become sluggish, expensive and corrupt. There really is an inverse relationship between the ethics manifested in the market and the number of laws and lawyers in society. Capitalists, particularly, must understand this relationship. Again, happiness is achieved in concert, in the wisdom that life is a team effort. A happy, healthy and wealthy individual is one who plays on a "team," where members love each other and they love their craft. Within this context, you always win, even when the social opinion might suggest something different.

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Conclusion

People are rich in body, spirit and in proportion to the things they can afford to leave alone. History would suggest that happiness, as well as wealth, are learned attitudes and behaviors. While we are born with the potential for goodness, this virtue is dependent upon our cultural and environmental conditions and those conditions must include a society where freedom can be practiced and good judgement learned. Love, as hate, is an acquired taste depending on the educated and judgements of citizens. This, of course, can only occur in a democratic/moral capitalist society. So, we must be taught and free enough to be held responsible for the quality of life writ large.

The beginning of wisdom is the ability to learn to say “no.” Happiness and wealth are all about understanding the limits and the expanse of our power to cultivate prudence, integrity, aesthetic judgement and a transcendent sense of self in moral communication and service with and to others, including the land. There is tension here, of course. But true wealth and happiness are always contested, not only by the rational and reasonable, but also by those innocent of any moral standing.

Michael Hartoonian is Associate Editor of Pegasus.

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(Photo: Dehua Laughing Buddha (left, 18th century Qing dynasty) and Caishen, god of wealth (17th century Ming).



Looking Ahead – to Morocco

