

**Metamode
Institute
Publications
*Legacy Series***



Albert Fiorino



***Update
2018***

METAMODE INSTITUTE PUBLICATIONS
LEGACY SERIES
UPDATE 2018

I am pleased to announce that eight of the twelve contemplated volumes of the *Legacy Series* will be available online at some point in 2018. I had hoped for an earlier publication date in this new year. That will not happen due to unavoidable delays in the preparation of final formats and in the identification of the right distribution platforms.

 **Shifting Gears**

Transforming Public Policy

 **Cut to the Chase**

Reinventing Public Education

 **Voice of One**

 **Capitalism and Democracy Revisited**

 **Rationality Papers**

Redirecting rational choice

 **Heading for a crossroads
named *New Beginnings***

A personal journey into the world of Islam

 **Israeli-Palestinian Conflict**

An actual never-ending story

 **Body Politic Reset**

*Tweaking our social and cultural dynamics
for a more peaceful world order*

Shifting Gears

Transforming Public Policy

Albert Fiorino, MA, PhL, MEd, PhD

Commentator and Editor

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Revised and Expanded Edition

Contributors

Albert Fiorino (Commentator and Editor), Charles W. Conn,
Paul Dunn, Monica Walters-Field, William Gairdner,
Claude Garcia, Giuseppe Gori, Samuel Gregg,
W. Glenn Harewood, Elias Helewa, Laurie Jones,
Yaqoob Ashraf Khan, Tim MacNaughton, Garry McKeever,
Ruth Morris, Margaret O'Gara, Joe Peschisolido,
Isabel Showler, John E. Silvia, Andrew Simone,
Imam Abdul Hai Patel, Michael A. Stephen,
John V. Stephens, Peter Van Loan

The book includes summaries of the presentations given at different forums of the Metamode Institute on Public Policy between 1997 and 2007. I was the principal organizer of these forums. The title of the book is intended to underscore the innovative and breakthrough ideas that were put forward by the presenters as possible solutions to some of the critical problems of our times. The volume also includes my personal responses and commentaries following the forum presentations. Sample themes of the forums include: *Electoral Reform in Canada, Corporate Social Responsibility and Public Policy, Ethics in Private and*

Public Life, and The Supreme Court's Ruling on Quebec Separation.

Our present socio-economic systems, based on the principles of self-interest and competition, are precariously wearing thin, having created socio-cultural environments which are now threatening their very efficacy. Their wealth-creating capability and their building capacity for realizing a high standard of living have nurtured conditions that undermine any kind of community building. Human relationships have been defined in adversarial terms and are, in a great number of cases, motivated by self-seeking goals bordering on greed. Truth-telling, a necessary ingredient for the promotion of a good life, has been reduced to a mere commodity like any other good or service. In the extreme, a self-seeking guile has been substituted for it. In other words, this theory of rational choice based upon self-interest and competition-and which we use daily has become dysfunctional to our socio-economic life.

It is my belief that we need to convince decision makers in all sectors of our societies around the world that there is an added value to be had by blending more altruistic elements into the prevailing paradigm based upon self-interest and competition. The sustainability of our free market economies requires a firm commitment to the integration of this added dimension to socio-economic decision making and to the policy development process.

I believe that to achieve this goal involving a significant change in the prevailing paradigm, we urgently need to *shift gears*, move beyond self-interest and competition, and

optimize our choices by embracing a broader purpose for our every decision and action.

Shifting Gears
Transforming
Public Policy

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Cut to the Chase

Reinventing Public Education

Albert Fiorino, MA, PhL, MEd, PhD Contributing Editor

ISBN 978-0-9953300-1-6 -- xvi-138p

Revised and Expanded Edition

Contributors

Albert Fiorino (Contributing Editor), Rose Andrachuk,

Larry P. Arnn, Neil Finkelstein, Milton Friedman,

Lawrence W. Reed

The ideas presented in the various contributing articles are used as the basis for the development of a proposal and a series of recommendations for reinventing public education. While the prime focus of reform is Ontario's system of education, the proposed restructuring and funding mechanism can be applied to other educational jurisdictions as well.

The proposed reform program aims at restoring greater control over educational choice to the family. This is done by way of a budgetary mechanism that would permit the funding of education to follow the student. The voucher system as proposed by the late Professor Milton Friedman or some variation thereof could be used.

This instrument, which monetizes the consumer of educational services, can help at enhancing the customization of education to meet the special needs of the individual student. It would also offer the opportunity to families to opt out of the programs offered by systems of public education, if they believed that their children's needs were

best served by alternative schooling or program delivery modes and/or modules.

The book offers one important option to educational reform. I am quite aware that change in public education has never been easy because of the varied and complex commitments governments worldwide have made to it during the last one hundred and seventy-five years. However, a start in systemic reform must be made before the very dynamics of socio-cultural and technological change forces it upon us.

Cut to the Chase
Reinventing
Public Education

Albert Fiorino, Contributing Editor

Rose Andrachuk

Larry P. Arnn

Neil Finkelstein

Milton Friedman

Lawrence W. Reed

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Voice of One

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The book includes a series of commentaries on a variety of questions relating to governance in the 21st century, the conduct of public policy, the moral imperative for our times, spiritual development and the text, the role of religion in the world, and to other critical areas in the life of contemporary men and women.

I adopt a metamode approach in examining these questions anew with the hope of offering a fresh and innovative perspective. In the process, I invite the reader to engage in his or her very own critical and personal reflections. The title is intended to underscore the need for each one of us to seek out one's own answers to those fundamental questions that directly impact our lives, our society and the world.

I believe that this imperative for the individual has become more poignant than ever in our times. It is now possible for one voice to be heard far and wide, worldwide, instantly, through the Internet and social media. It is now possible for one voice to freely join a chorus of voices around the world, to speak on the most critical issues, to exchange views and solutions, to act in concert to achieve shared visions and goals, and thus to effect positive change in the human condition. My work will be amply compensated even if only one person is inspired to join this ever-growing global chorus of voices as a result of reading this book.

Voice of One

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Capitalism and Democracy Revisited

ISBN 978-0-9953300-3-0 -- x-39p

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This short volume discusses the kind of key choices that are required to make capitalism and democracy work more effectively for the greater good of the commons.

Peter Van Loan chose to address the subject by viewing capitalism and democracy respectively as the ideal economic and political setups for the promotion of the individual as sovereign in the marketplace and the body politic. On the other hand, Dr. Samuel Gregg decided to discuss the topic in terms of the struggle between two different anthropologies to gain predominance over capitalism and democracy: 'orthodox secularism', which presently is prevailing in undergirding the sovereignty of the individual described by Peter Van Loan, and the Judeo-Christian view of man.

In my response to their positions, I provide another alternative to the two anthropological options offered by Dr. Gregg. Put simply, I argue that it is not necessary to choose one view over another to obtain the desired outcomes in the manner capitalism and democracy work:

the Judeo-Christian view of man over an orthodox secularist anthropology. The same outcomes can be obtained by having the individual as sovereign explore his or her full potential through an optimization of his or her choices regardless of the socio-economic station he or she occupies in life.

**Capitalism
and
Democracy
Revisited**

Foreword

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Individual as Sovereign

The Hon. Peter Van Loan, PC, MP
Leader of the Government in the
House of Commons and
Minister for Democratic Reform

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Dr. Samuel Gregg, Director of Research
Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty

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The Optimization of Rational Choice

An Answer to the Anthropological Imperative

Dr. Albert Fiorino, Director,
Metamode Institute on Public Policy

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Rationality Papers

Redirecting rational choice

Albert Fiorino, MA, PhL, MEd, PhD

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Each generation tries to strengthen the fabric of civilization. In the past, this project had a short timeline because of the physical space that divided individuals and communities from each other. Moreover, the speed of social communication and thus of intellectual discourse and information exchange were extremely slow, not to mention people's short life expectations.

In our times, the opposite is the case. We live longer, and space and time have been significantly compressed by faster transportation and electronic communication technologies. Thus, our timeline for realizing this project for expanding, strengthening and deepening the fabric of civilization is much longer. We have an opportunity and the time to effect real positive change on the human condition provided we can execute the required mind shift (redirection of rational choice), the concerted resolve, and most importantly, the good will to do it. We may be thinking critically, be on the same page on the needed solutions, but unless we adopt more altruistic motives for our behaviour and social action,

we will not be able to bring about positive change in the world.

Included in the papers are some ideas which I believe might help us execute the required mind shift, and hopefully contribute to bringing people together to identify befitting solutions for the many critical problems facing humanity in our times. However, only individuals can make those fundamental choices about being kinder, more compassionate, and more caring toward their neighbour and toward the environment and its countless ecosystems. Only individuals, unencumbered by the centripetal forces and influences of the group, can make those important choices.

Rationality Papers

*Redirecting
rational choice*

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Heading for
a crossroads
named
New Beginnings
A personal journey
into the world of Islam

Albert Fiorino, MA, PhL, MEd, PhD

ISBN 978-0-9953300-5-4 -- xi-230p

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This book serves to document an actual personal journey I took with my family in the mid-1990s to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, and our living among the people of the great megapolis of Karachi, in the province of Sindh. The region is known for its rich Sufi history and spiritual traditions.

My trip to Pakistan became also a personal and spiritual exploration. The new context, the constant, inescapable steamy heat, relieved only by the occasional cool breeze from the Arabian Sea, and a deep feeling of abandonment contributed to a deconstruction and purgation process which I seemed destined to undergo and thus unable to avoid or postpone.

The purgation and deconstruction were total: personal, psychological, intellectual and spiritual. During the first

few months in Karachi, I would on occasion get up early, just before dawn, and go to the roof patio and wait for the local Mu'adhhin sing out the first call to prayer from the minaret of the local Sunni mosque, located about one hundred metres from our townhouse. After a while, the call to prayer could be heard from all the mosques within earshot, combining to create a symphony of voices calling on all believers to get up from their slumber and to offer their first words of the day in prayer to Allah.

Over time, the call to prayer, an ordinary event in the lives of most Karachiites, became for me an epiphany. It was not just the impersonal sound of church bells calling upon Catholics to recite the Angelus, which I had experienced everyday growing up in a small village in southern Italy. It was a personal summoning of believers by the local Mu'adhhin to wake up, to remember Allah and to affirm Him as Lord of all creation.

Thus, began another kind of journey. I met other fellow human beings in the streets of Karachi who were kind enough to share their own personal thoughts on our human existence. I also began to religiously 'devour', study and reflect on every word written in the holy *Qur'an*. And as time passed and I continued walking along this new path, I got a glimpse of a crossroads in the distance, which, upon reaching it, I decided to name, "New Beginnings".

"New Beginnings" was the theme of that period in my life. I develop this theme in the Epilogue where I exhort Muslims worldwide to consider seriously the option implicit in this notion of *new beginnings*. I do so by way of a series of reflections on three of the ninety-nine names by which Allah can be called upon by believers.

I hope that Muslims will not delay in making their way toward this very important crossroads. This existential juncture is not only an important destination for Muslims, but for humanity as well.

Heading for a
crossroads
named

New Beginnings

*A personal journey
into the world of Islam*

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Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

*An actual
'never-ending story'*

Albert Fiorino, MA, PhL, MEd, PhD

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The Psalmist rejoices and so shall future generations of Israelis and Palestinians as they start living side by side on the lands of their ancestors in peace and harmony. That is the ideal, the desired outcome of the Middle East peace process.

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! It is like the precious oil upon the head, running down over the beard, the beard of Aaron, running down on the collar of his robes! It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion! For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life for evermore.” Ps 133

This volume consists of a compilation of writings on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which I produced over the last two decades. In a way, they document the personal interest I developed in the conflict through my work in public policy by way of the Metamode Institute, which I founded in 1997. It is also a documentation of my personal exploration, study,

reflection and the positions I have taken on this most tragic conflict.

What I found most fascinating about this political clash is that the conflict mirrors the dynamics that have characterized human behaviour since the dawn of recorded history. It is a dynamic which has revolved around our struggle to survive through the maximization of self-interest and competition. A basic corollary of this brutish tussle has included a constant fight over territory--property--an important asset required by both peoples in the discord to ensure their security and, thus, their continued survival.

As the reader will note in my Epilogue to the book, I believe that ultimately Israelis' and Arab Palestinians' ability to resolve this conflict between them is very much contingent upon their readiness and willingness to shed those primitive algorithms and to embrace an altruistic paradigm in which trust and collaboration between them prevails—when and where “brothers dwell in unity”.

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

*An actual
'never ending
story'*

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Body Politic Reset

Tweaking our social and cultural dynamics for a more peaceful world order

Albert Fiorino, MA, PhL, MEd, PhD

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The book includes most of my political writings which I penned over the years under the auspices of the Metamode Institute on Public Policy. The journey into the field of politics is an integral part of the voyage that started in Karachi, Pakistan in the mid-1990s, as described in the volume *Heading for a Crossroads Named New Beginnings*.

The purgation and deconstruction which started in the 'land of the Sufis' and which I recount in the above volume of the *Legacy Series*, also included my encounter of the *social question** 'in the flesh'. In Karachi, Pakistan, I could see and experience the *social question* literally in the millions of Pakistanis who seemed to have 'flooded' the great megapolis of Karachi from other regions of the country to undertake whatever servile work that they were offered. In many cases, they held several jobs and worked for a few paltry rupees per day to assist their families back home to stave off starvation and to keep extreme poverty at bay.

This powerful encounter with the *social question* in the daily lives of millions of Pakistanis is poignantly reflected in the varied ways I treat it in the different articles included in this volume. All the conditions that nurture and perpetuate it from generation to generation in all socio-economic settings worldwide were magnified for me during that period in my life and especially during my stay in Karachi. As a result, I acquired an ultra-resolution view, discernment, understanding and appreciation of this fundamentally existential question raised by the human condition from time immemorial.

First and foremost, politics is not about power and its distribution, but about the *social question* and the different ways human beings have devised over the millennia to deal with its demands. The establishment of civil society constituted an important political breakthrough on the part of human beings to address the *social question*. Our social systems have never been perfect setups, but they seem to represent the best political contrivances that we have been able to create. At the end of the day, they represent the only political mechanisms that will ensure a constantly vacillating veneer of order, reflecting, as I conclude in the book, our flawed nature as human beings.

It is my hope that the thoughts and ideas I share in this volume will help this and future generations to fine tune our social and cultural systems to create social and political setups in which ‘justice for all’ will be the dominant value inspiring human choice and decision making.

*The *social question* refers to the ability of the existing social systems to bring about justice for all—to realize the common good.

BODY POLITIC RESET

***Tweaking our social
and cultural dynamics
for a more peaceful
world order***

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