



**IDEA OF AMERICA  
INSTRUCTION MANUAL**



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## **ONE: INTRODUCING THE SEMINAR AND SETTING THE STAGE**

The Idea of America seminar is an adult educational and outreach program developed and sponsored by the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation in Williamsburg, Virginia. The premise of The Idea of America is that Americans embrace values that are often in tension. These value tensions—law vs. ethics, freedom vs. equality, unity vs. diversity, common wealth vs. private wealth—are at the heart of a great debate that began with the Founders and continues today.

As the facilitator (leader) of the seminar, your task is not to lecture. Do not assume that you must be a “professor” or “expert” on values or American history or any of the case studies, i.e. economics, education, immigration. You are a “concerned citizen” similar to all of the seminar participants. Your task is to ensure that the seminar is conducted in a safe-environment where all participants feel they can talk and discuss freely without being threatened or belittled or put-down. The intent is to provide a space where participants as colleagues or neighbors or friends can meet and rationally discuss and debate issues that are important to what it means to be an American. What it means to be a citizen in a nation that is built upon values and ideals that protect and promote the “life, liberty and pursuit of happiness” of all.

**The seminar is structured in three major components.**

**Part One: Our Values**

**Part Two: Our Legacy**

**Part Three: Our Future**

In Part One we will examine our values—their meaning and their tensions. Each of us have our own understanding of our values. Not everyone will agree on what is law or ethics or freedom or equality or unity or diversity or private wealth or public wealth. Each value means something different to each of us as Americans. What are the tensions not only between our values, but also within each value? And are these values relevant to the world we live in today?

In Part Two we will explore our legacy—how our values have been reshaped by events and leaders throughout our history. We will focus on “three men and one courageous woman” who have given voice to our values and have deepened our understanding of our values. Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Elizabeth Cady Stanton each were able to express in their words and their actions certain ideals and thoughts that “were in the air” at the time that they expanded our values to be more inclusive of all Americans. What is this legacy from our past? How is this legacy shaping our nation today? And what is “in the air” today that is shaping our nation? Will this become the legacy of our future?

In Part Three we will study and debate our future—what are the major challenges we face as a nation and as individuals living in our communities. We will focus on three specific challenges that we currently face:

<b>Case Study One</b>	<b>Our Economy: A Legacy of Growth and Opportunity</b>
<b>Case Study Two</b>	<b>Education: The Great Equalizer</b>
<b>Case Study Three</b>	<b>We the People: A Nation of Immigrants</b>

The “Study Guide” provides participants the suggested reading material for each session. Note: It is important that all participants read the material in advance of each session in order that the facilitator of the seminar (seminar leader) can guide the discussion and debate so that each person will be able to participate as engaged citizens. This not an “academic seminar” nor a platform for “venting frustrations” with the current state-of-affairs, but an interactive discussion and debate where each participant respects the views of others although they may disagree. It is important that all participants agree to discuss and dialogue and respect the opinions of others and that no individual participant dominate the discussion.

The “case studies” will provide background for each of the three challenges we will discuss and debate as listed above. Each case study will suggest certain questions that each seminar might use. But the questions are only suggested, not mandated! We want each group and their facilitator to exercise the right to pose their own questions for discussion and debate.

Finally, we want to emphasize that the success of the seminar will be largely determined by the extent to which all participants do the homework/reading and come to the session willing to engage in respectful discussion and debate. As Colonial Williamsburg Foundation challenges us:

“We are grateful for our nation’s long history of lively civil discourse and applaud the strength and tenacity with which Americans debate our values. We urge all citizens to join the debate, for such active engagement is the only way to ensure that our democracy will be sustained.”

## **SEMINAR MATERIAL AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION**

The suggested material for distribution before the seminar begins or at the first session includes:

- (1) Copy of book: *The Idea of America: Our Values, Our Legacy, Our Future*  
by John Oliver Wilson (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2017)

This book is the text for the seminar. Instructions for ordering are given below. The book ideally would be purchased in advance by participants. Or as facilitator you can order books to be distributed at first session and collect payment (\$20 per book if order using Promotion Code given below in book ordering instructions).

- (2) Pass out “Study Guide.” The Study Guide can readily be printed from the website “Idea of America Network.” The website can be accessed by entering in the address bar of your computer/laptop [www.ideaofamericanetwork.org](http://www.ideaofamericanetwork.org) or by entering on Goggle Search “Idea of America Index” which immediately brings up the network connection. Note: The first page of the website will show an image of “We the People” and a listing of all of the site connections.

- (3) Pass out various flyers prepared by Colonial Williamsburg Foundation and available through them. These flyers describe the Idea of America Seminar you will be leading, the Onsite Idea of America Seminar program at Colonial Williamsburg (where you should encourage seminar

participants to consider attending and experience for themselves a unique program at Colonial Williamsburg historical site), and a statement regarding the Idea of America program entitled “Making History Relevant” which was published in their magazine *Trend & Tradition* (Autumn 2018). These three flyers can be effectively used with your seminar participants to give them a sense of what the Idea of America program entails. Note: See below on how to order or to view flyers on internet connection.

## **TWO: INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORDERING BOOK**

***IDEA OF AMERICA: OUR VALUES, OUR LEGACY, OUR FUTURE***  
**John Oliver Wilson author (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, 2017)**

The book is only available through: [www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/shop](http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/shop).  
The cost shown on website is: \$25 plus shipping and mailing and taxes (if any in your state). However, if you apply the following Promo Code: “WILSON” at end of checkout process, the total cost is reduced to \$20 which includes free shipping. Note: You will have to pay any applicable sales tax for your state.

Two means of ordering:

(1) Enter [www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/shop](http://www.colonialwilliamsburg.com/shop) and click on “Shop” and then on “Books and Media.” Then click on image of cover of book and proceed through process of placing order. At the final stage you will see a box entitled: “Have a Promo Code.” Enter: WILSON Price will adjust to give the discounted price with free shipping.

(2) Enter website for Idea of America Network [www.ideaofamericanetwork.org](http://www.ideaofamericanetwork.org).  
Click on “Primary resources” on first page of website.  
Click on “Book Order” below book cover image.  
This will take you directly to website for ordering book. Follow checkout procedure above to get discounted price.

Note: This page of ordering instructions can be printed and distributed to participants. Also, the printed page can be scanned into your computer by you and sent as an attachment to seminar participants via email message. Print this page.

### **THREE: ORDERING OR PRINTING**

#### **“IDEA OF AMERICA COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG FOUNDATION” FLYERS**

Colonial Williamsburg Foundation has prepared three flyers describing the Idea of America program. These flyers are very good. Consider distributing them to seminar participants. The three flyers are:

(1) “The Idea of America Seminars: On-Site in Williamsburg, Spring and Fall of 2019”

Note: This flyer describes and promotes the on-site program which offers visitors a unique and special three-day program at the historical site.

(2) “The Idea of America Seminars: Our Values. . .Our Legacy. . .Our Future”

Note: This flyer describes the local community seminar you will be leading. It is a very good statement of the structure of your seminar for your participants.

(3) “Making History Relevant”

Note: *This statement was published in Colonial Williamsburg Foundation magazine Trend & Tradition (Autumn 2018). It is a good statement of the background and goals of the Idea of America program.*

To obtain internet images and instructions for ordering hard copies of these flyers, contact: [johnwilson3395@comcast.net](mailto:johnwilson3395@comcast.net).

## **FOUR: MATERIAL FOR SEMINAR SESSION**

Material has been prepared and is readily available to aid you in preparing and leading your seminar. A disk is available that has:

(1) Power Point presentation that provide information for introducing the Idea of America seminar program as well as slides covering topics in each of the six seminar sessions. The disk can be used to introduce the seminar in session one as well as slides for the following sessions. The disk contains four videos described below that make the seminar more dynamic and entertaining than simply slides. Note: The slides and videos should be used to heighten participant interest for engaging in discussion and debate. They should not be used to passively present the seminar material. Our goal is active engagement in discussion and debate, not a passive TED talk/slide show.

(2) A pdf file of the slides. This enables you to readily print any of the specific slides you may want to distribute to seminar participants in hard copy.

(3) A Video file showing four videos:

BONO -- a video showing musician/philanthropist Bono making a statement on Idea of America at Georgetown University. Very good introduction to the entire Idea of America concept. BONO video attracts immediate attention from audience.

Dr. RAY BLACK (a video from Colorado State University teacher of the year award to Professor Ray Black of the Department of Ethnic Studies). Ray teaches Idea of America Seminars targeted to minority audiences, especially African-American audience. He is a leader in the Idea of America Network.

THE GAME LOFT (a video of our after-school programs teaching history/civics through role playing games and programs). This video shows what can be done in other communities to enhance the teaching and experiencing of history/civics/values real time through role playing games and programs. A very effective means of reaching the younger audience. Also, the video tells a very engaging story of young student engagement. Note: The students in the video all come from at-risk backgrounds (lower income, broken families, drugs, etc.) In the Game Loft programs, we are able to reach and mentor a tough group. But clearly the game loft models are relevant to all social-economic background students.

THOMAS JEFFERSON as portrayed by Bill Barker, a professional reenactor at Colonial Williamsburg. This video brings to life the man who was the primary author of the Declaration of Independence. A powerful statement of the importance of learning about our founding as a nation based on principals and ideals.

(4) The disk can be ordered by contacting: [johnwilson3395@comcast.net](mailto:johnwilson3395@comcast.net).

Note: We intend to have the disk available through our website in the near future.

## **SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDANCE FOR CONDUCTING SEMINAR SESSIONS**

The following suggestions and guidance do not require that you use the disk for projecting the slides on a screen or the videos which require sound equipment. You may not have access to the projection equipment, or it may not be appropriate in your seminar setting. But you can print desired slides (for distribution) and discussion. Or you can use the suggestions and guidance simply to give you some thoughts and material to assist you in preparing your remarks and for keeping the session on target.

To engage participants who have not read the material, you as facilitator can refer to various statements in the book (as identified in the following outline) in the seminar sessions. For instance, in discussing the tension values, refer to each of the highlighted statements in the book associated with each tension value. Also, I have written brief comments that relate to each slide for your use. I would suggest that you make a few comments on each slide, following the lead of my suggestions or writing your own, in order to set the stage for the seminar participants to engage in discussion and debate. Do not go into a long lecture on each slide for the backup to each slide is readily available in the book.

This means that all participants will be required to have a copy of the book: John Oliver Wilson, *The Idea of America: Our Values, Our Legacy, Our Future*. They can easily order the book through the instructions given earlier. Note: You can distribute a copy of these instructions to participants or order sufficient copies yourself and collect payment at opening session.

We have found that nearly all participants will soon find that the book is written in a “reader friendly style” of short sections and to the point. It is written in story form in most parts which makes it interesting reading.

### **SESSION ONE: INTRODUCTION TO SEMINAR AND VALUE TENSION MODEL**

In your opening session:

- (1) Distribute books (unless participants ordered the book themselves)
- (2) Distribute study guide and briefly discuss structure of seminar, i.e, read material in advance, come prepared to debate and discuss, respect opinions of others, get involved. This is not a passive lecture or TED talk. It is a discussion and debate on our values and what it means to be an American. It is action oriented with a focus of what can we do in our local communities.
- (3) Distribute Colonial Williamsburg Foundation (CWF) flyers and discuss the association with CWF.
- (4) To use videos and slides, you must have screen and computer setup with sound.

## LAUNCH SEMINAR

**Show Bono video:** Statement given at Georgetown University. Good introduction to Idea of America concept. Note: If projection/sound equipment not available, you can simply refer to hard-copy of any of the slides which can be printed from the PDF presentation version on the slide.

- (1) Slide one: **Idea of America Network: A Call for Action and Unity**
- (2) Slide two: **Declaration of Premise**
- (3) Slide three: **Goals of Idea of America Network**
- (4) Slide four: **Platform One: Idea of America Seminar Program**
- (5) Slide five: **Platform Two: Coming of Age in America Youth Program**
- (6) Slide six: **Platform Three: Colonial Williamsburg Foundation**

### INTRODUCE “VALUE TENSION MODEL”

- (7) Slide seven: **Value Tension Model**
  - Law vs. Ethics**
  - Freedom vs. Equality**
  - Diversity vs. Unity**
  - Private Wealth vs. Common Wealth**
- (8) Slide eight: **Major Value Bridges**
  - Equality**
  - Freedom**
  - Common Good**

Note to facilitator/leader: What you want to accomplish in session one is to introduce the Idea of America concept and program. The reason for slides one through six. If you don't use slides then you can make the same points in your presentation. Inform your participants that in session one you will lecture more than in other sessions in order to set the stage. You may want to select a few slides to print, such as Slide two Declaration of Premise (important to establish early the values and ideals we embrace in the seminar), Slide three Goals of Idea of America Network and maybe slides four, five and six (the three platforms).

Once you have done this then introduce the “value tension model” by using slide seven (hard copy) and simply just introduce the values. Don't attempt to get into a discussion of their meaning for that is the subject of Session Two. Tell participants that in preparation for Session Two they should read the book (pages 1-39) which discusses the meaning of each value.

Finish this session with Slide eight (hard copy) “Major Value Bridges.” The message here is that eight values are a lot to comprehend, and so the dramatists/historical interpreters involved in the program force us to focus on the most important “value bridges” that take us from our founding to current times. Equality, Freedom, Common Good have been identified as the three most

important bridges. As such, we must more carefully define what each means and their significance as bridges from our past to our present. This will be done in Session Two. All of this sets the stage for Session Two where you will attempt to get the seminar participants to engage in discussion and debate on the eight values and the three value bridges. Tell them that you are going to focus on the questions on page 40 of the book which means the second session will be where the participants really engage in discussion and debate. You, as seminar leader, will simply try to maintain order and respect with open discussion. Let the seminar participants dominate this session. The only slides to be used (hard copy) in this session are Slides seven and eight.

## **SESSION TWO: DISCUSS MEANING OF VALUES AND THEIR TENSIONS**

In discussing the meaning of each value, refer the participants to each page in book where the value is discussed. Ask a participant to read the statement highlighted in bold. Move to other participants to read statements for subsequent values. After reading each bold statement, then discuss the meaning of that particular value. This engages the participants in the discussion even though they may not read the material in advance. Bold statements are on pages 18 etc. The first bold statement deals with law and is the quote from *Marbury v. Madison*.

Engage in a discussion and debate. Refer participants to list of questions on page 40 in the book. You as facilitator can pre-select the questions for discussion or you can create your own set of questions. Addressing the discussion and debate questions will engage your participants.

## **SESSION THREE: OUR LEGACY**

Our legacy is from four major historical figures who gave voice and expanded our founding values to be more inclusive: Thomas Jefferson, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr. Each drew upon ideals and concepts that were “in the air” at the time they spoke. The slides simply states what was “in the air” for each historical figure. The reading discusses each of the legacies.

You as facilitator can make brief comments on each legacy as a means of introducing the topics for this session. However, do not attempt to make this session a crash course on our legacy history. Do not get bogged down in defending or elaborating on each legacy. The justification for each legacy is stated in my book which is available to the reader. Quickly show each slide and say a few words about each legacy. Then move on.

Your task is simply to get the seminar participants aboard the concept of legacies drawing upon the statement by Thomas Jefferson when accused of plagiarizing the Declaration of Independence (paraphrased) that the ideals and values expressed in the Declaration did not come solely from my mind, but “were in the air.” What was in the air were enlightenment ideals. As historians

have written, America is unique in being founded on ideals and values, not a common history, a common culture, a common religion, a common anything other than being a nation created by founders all of whom were immigrants from elsewhere.

In writing the book, I asked myself: What was in the air when each of the men and woman made their historic statements? All of this sets the stage for the most import goal of this session: Discuss and debate “what is in the air today” that is shaping our nation, our society, our future. Get your seminar participants to focus on the questions in page 70 of my book.

(1) Slide one:                   **Thomas Jefferson and The Enlightenment**

**Legacy One:     The Goal of Equality**

**Legacy Two:     Science and Technology**

**Legacy Three:   Education for All**

Similar to earlier sessions, have a participant read the statement highlighted in bold. For example, read the statement on page 45 which is from the Declaration of Independence. While probably well known by participants, it serves to immediately engage them in the current topic for discussion, i.e., what are the most important legacies that Thomas Jefferson gave to us. Follow the same approach for all of the major figures in subsequent slides. You briefly state and say a few words about each of these legacies in order to set the stage for discussion and debate on our current legacies and what is “currently in the air.”

(2) Slide two:                   **Abraham Lincoln at Gettysburg**

**Legacy Four: Freedom**

**Legacy Five: Democracy**

**Legacy Six: Our Union**

Engage in reading highlighted statement and then discuss the various legacies.

(3) Slide three:               **Martin Luther King Jr. and Civil Rights**

**Legacy Seven: The Promised Land**

**Legacy Eight: Nonviolence**

**Legacy Nine: Social Justice**

Engage in reading highlighted statement and then discuss the various legacies.

(4) Slide four:               **Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Women’s Rights**

**Legacy Ten: Human Rights for All**

**Legacy Eleven: Grassroots Organization and Networking**

Engage in reading highlighted statement and then discuss the various legacies.

Having gone through all the slides, you are now ready to engage your seminar participants in discussion and debate on the list of questions on page 70.

## **SESSION FOUR: OUR ECONOMY: A LEGACY OF GROWTH AND OPPORTUNITY**

(1) Slide one: **Our Economy is Born**

**1776**

**Thomas Jefferson: The Declaration Independence**

**Adam Smith: The Wealth of Nations**

Make the following points regarding 1776 and the birth of our economy: (1) Both *The Declaration of Independence* and *The Wealth of Nations* were stated and published in 1776. A pure happenstance! But these two documents shaped our economy as no others. (2) While we tend to focus on the statement of civil and political rights in the Declaration, its impact on the economy is that it freed us from mercantilism and opened the opportunity for a new economy built on free-enterprise. Free-enterprise by individual workers (in seeking their own desires for work and not be bound by serfdom, indentured contracts, social and class constraints etc.) and free-enterprise for economic production (ranging from agriculture to manufacturing). (3) Adam Smith laid out in no uncertain terms the model for this new economy; (4) Americans were quick to embrace both the new opportunities and freedoms from mercantilism as well as fully embracing the free-enterprise tenets of Adam Smith. Note: The new economy is commonly termed “capitalism” which is a “red-flag” term. A “free-enterprise economy” is a more appropriate term to use.

(2) Slide two: **The Legitimate Role of Government  
in Our Economy**

**Hamilton vs. Jefferson**

**A National Bank?**

**Manufacturing vs. Agriculture**

**Wall Street Investment Bankers vs. “The Common Folk”**

George Washington as our first president faced this issue in the form of Hamilton’s proposal for a national bank. Refer to book pages 80-82. Hamilton won against Jefferson. However, the difference between the two goes far deeper regarding the future direction of our economy.

Hamilton favored: (1) National Bank which would fund both public and private investments; (2) Focus on supporting and protecting manufacturing-industrial development, particularly in the northern cities; (3) Assumption of war-time debt of the Colonies (now States) by the federal government which led to Wall Street becoming the dominant financial center of the new economy. But the assumption of such debt would make millionaires of many on Wall Street

such as speculative bankers and investors who had bought the state debt on the cheap, meaning at highly discounted prices to war veterans and state bond holders.

Jefferson favored: (1) Decentralized economy with focus on strengthening agriculture, small farmers, small shops, small craftsmen and local services; (2) Decentralized financial power with state and local banks; (3) Opposed rewarding speculators who had bought state wartime bonds at highly discounted prices; (4) Feared over concentration of economic power at the federal level and by monopolist manufactures and financiers.

Note that these same issues are current today in our economy.

(3) Slide three:

**Abraham Lincoln  
and  
Infrastructure Investment**

**Intercontinental Railroads**

**National Currency**

**Homestead Acts**

**Agriculture Technology**

**Land Grant Colleges**

What Lincoln accomplished regarding our economy is remarkable given that he was fully engaged in a Civil War that threatened our very existence as a Republic. He came from Illinois where he first made his name in supporting infrastructure investment for the burgeoning Illinois and particularly Chicago economies. His primary focus was on transportation infrastructure, particularly in transcontinental railroads. And he wanted those railroads in Illinois to enhance the economy of Chicago as opposed to St. Louis which was the dominant economy in the Midwest at the time.

Once he became president he extended his infrastructure investment policy into a broad range of activities: (1) a national currency to replace state currencies; (2) expanding the homestead acts which gave land to farmers and ensured the settlement and stability of the western lands (at the expense of the native American population that was being displaced from their lands); (3) investing in agriculture colleges and technology which supported the most important economic sector at the time although manufacturing and industrialization in the north benefited even more from the wartime experience of the Civil War. All of this laid the base on which our industrialized economy exploded in the post-Civil War era. It also set the stage for the large concentration of wealth and economic power by the “Robber Barons.”

(4) Slide four:

**Teddy Roosevelt  
and  
Progressive Economic Policies**

**Anti-Trust Actions  
Consumer Protection  
Environment Protection and  
Preservation  
Government Regulation**

Roosevelt “tamed the free-enterprise economy” so to speak. He inherited an economy that was far from “free-enterprise” for the average American worker, farmer, family owned and operated shop or anything that was small and local. It was an economy of great inequality in the distribution of wealth, concentration of economic power in the hands of a few, flagrant display of economic wealth and power, exploiting natural resources for private wealth and producing contaminated food, water and anything else that could be monetized.

Many thought that the economy was headed for “socialism” or even “communism.” Fortunately, Roosevelt proved them wrong. He reined in the economy through aggressive anti-trust legal actions, introduced federal legislation for consumer protection, particularly in the production of food, federal legislation protecting natural resources. For the first time our free-enterprise economy felt the impact of government regulation designed not to make government the dominant economic power (as would be true with a socialized economy), but to ensure that our free-enterprise economy paid the social costs associated with the economy and functioned in the interests of all the major stakeholders in our economy—consumers, workers, investors, communities.

(5) Slide five:

**Franklin D. Roosevelt  
and  
Economic Rights**

**The right to a job  
The right to adequate food and clothing  
The right to a decent home  
The right to adequate medical care  
The right to a good education  
The right to social security**

FDR is best known for his “social safety net” which is long list of programs that established a major role of government in providing economic support for those most at risk in a free-enterprise economy. In particular, the unemployed (public works), the small farmers (agriculture support programs), the elderly (social security) and the list goes on. But what he is not so well

known for is his remarkable statement given in his State of the Union Address in January, 1944 at the height of the war.

He was the first president, or even a significant politician, to surface the question of economic rights in our history. We were founded on civil and political rights. And those rights have received the most attention in the course of our history. But what about economic rights? Do we have a right to a safe work environment? Do we have a right to social security? Do we have a right to health care? Or are these primarily social programs that are subject to the will of the president and the Congress? This was a hot issue in FDR's time. And it is a hot issue today. Discuss and debate!

(6) Slide six:

**Ronald Reagan  
and  
Economic Freedom**

**The freedom to work  
The freedom to fruits of one's labor  
The freedom to own and control one's property  
The freedom to participate in a free market**

Reagan was the second president to focus on economic rights, and he did so in terms of "economic freedoms." These freedoms strongly resonated with a public that had grown to view government as curtailing the rights and freedoms of individual citizens. A government that taxed too much of an individual's fruits of labor and investment. A government that created individual dependency rather than encourage individual responsibility.

Both FDR's and Reagan's statement on economic rights and economic freedoms set the stage for the debate on the appropriate role of government in our economy. Is the role that of investing in our infrastructure? Is the role that of protecting our environment and our consumption of the goods essential to our survival as human beings (food, water, air)? Is the role of government to provide for a "safety net" for those most vulnerable in a free-enterprise economy? Is the role of government to ensure our economic freedoms and instill individual responsibility?

(7) Slide seven:

## **A Legacy of Economic Growth**

**Land of opportunity**  
**Importance of education**  
**Investment in infrastructure**  
**Research and technology**

From the beginning, our economy was built on the assumption of growth. A growing economy provides jobs for a growing population, the means for improving one's quality of life (pursuit of happiness), the opportunity for upward mobility, both socially and economically, and the necessary funds for supporting government.

In our earliest days as thirteen colonies and later as independent States, our primary means of growth came from land and natural resources. The fastest way to economic security if not wealth was the accumulation of land and the production of goods (timber, food, tobacco). But Jefferson well recognized at our founding that education was a major source of potential growth. Washington also at our founding well realized the importance of investing in an infrastructure that supported a growing economy. That investment has taken many forms from canals to roads to an interstate highway system. And finally, a major source of economic growth has come from advances in research and technology. In fact, economists estimate that one-half of our growth historically has come from R&D. All of this meant jobs and opportunity for an economy that has gone through any number of recessions, a great depression and two major cycles of what is termed "industrial revolutions."

Such industrial revolutions occur when the economy is engulfed with new technologies that create new industries and products and greatly expand the potential for the economy to grow. The examples are well known. The train replacing the carriage. The automobile replacing the horse. The steamship replacing the clipper ship. The list is impressive: electricity, electronics, Internet. You name it. But in the process of economic expansion driven by R&D jobs were lost and workers were displaced. Those entrepreneurs on the cutting edge of change became wealthy. But eventually new jobs were created and new investors competed away the wealth and income inequality that initially occurred. The economy settled on a new path of sustained growth that benefited all.

But the latest industrial revolution, termed by the press as "the third great wave" signifying that this is the third major industrial revolution to impact our free-enterprise economy since our founding, has been different. True to course, jobs have been displaced. Great inequality in the distribution of income and wealth has occurred. Those entrepreneurs on the cutting edge, the "high tech" generation in Silicon Valley and Seattle and elsewhere, have accumulated massive economic wealth and power. And millions of new jobs have been created to replace those that lost out. But most of those new jobs are not high paying and secure as the new ones created post-industrial revolutions in the past. The concentration of wealth and power among the new high-tech entrepreneurs has not diminished over time, but has grown. Our economy is becoming

more monopolized, more concentrated, more unequal. Our government is not investing in our infrastructure or in education or in research and technology as it did in the past. And our potential for sustained growth has diminished.

All of this sets the stage for a good discussion and debate on the questions suggested on page 100. Have at it!

## **SESSION FIVE: EDUCATION: THE GREAT EQUALIZER**

### (1) Slide one: **Education at our Founding**

#### **A Mixed Bag! Massachusetts Led the Way Jefferson Set the Goals**

All of this is discussed in the book, so simply make the following points in setting the stage. At our founding education was a mixed bag with schools and colleges established in Massachusetts offering well-off white males reasonably good educational opportunities to southern states offering education by tutors on plantations or small schools led by clergy (primarily Presbyterian ministers) to no educational opportunities for slaves. White females had limited access to “academies” teaching homemaking skills along with some training in music (piano playing for hostess entertainment). Most education was attained through the apprentice program teaching trade skills along with rudimentary training in reading and numbers.

Massachusetts led the way establishing the first public school in America in 1635 (Boston Latin School), first college (Harvard in 1636), making education compulsory for some (1642). And later Massachusetts established the first public high school (1821), the first State Board of Education (1837) which became the model for other states, and the first normal school which was the beginning of teacher’s schools and departments of education throughout the nation (1839).

Thomas Jefferson set the goals for future education in 1787. Those goals were for establishing local school districts offering educational opportunities that went far beyond skill training. Education should be well-rounded in preparing students to become contributing citizens to their communities, their states and to the nation at large as civic-minded and civic-engaged citizens as well as preparing students to be able to attain their individual happiness throughout their lifetime. Later he established the University of Virginia as an enlightened college teaching a broad range of subject matter.

(2) Slide two:

## **Establishing the Institutions**

### **Public and Private Schools Colleges of Higher Education Normal Schools (Teacher Institutes) State Boards of Education Unions for Teachers**

It is one thing to set goals and pass compulsory schooling laws, and quite another to make those educational aspirations a reality. America was rather unique in the world in building a vast network of educational institutions. These institutions ranged from public and private schools that extended far beyond their initial development in Massachusetts (as noted earlier) to colleges (many established by various religious groups) to normal schools that became future teacher colleges and later departments of education in universities. And education moved from being a solely local-community based program to greater State involvement (with State Boards of Education). And one of the most important and powerful institutions was the formation of teachers unions beginning with the founding of the National Teachers Association (1857) and the American Federation of Teachers (1900). These two unions are the largest and most powerful lobby operation in the nation today.

(3) Slide three:

## **Segregation in our Schools**

### **Freedman's Union (1865-1872) Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) Brown v. Board of Education (1954)**

With the end of slavery in the aftermath of the Civil War, educational reformers immediately focused on educating the newly freed slaves. This was done through the Freedman's Union which established schools throughout the southern states and enrolled thousands of former slaves including adults as well as children. But white opposition was strong in both the south and the north. The Freedman's Union closed in 1872. However, the American Missionary Association (established in 1846) carried out the same goals as the Freedman's Union, and in fact was a larger educational program than was the Union.

Unfortunately, our public schools soon became highly segregated with the Supreme Court ruling in *Homer A. Plessy v. John H. Ferguson* better known as "Plessy v. Ferguson" in 1896. This established "separate but equal" as the law of the land for all public spaces, but especially for public schools. However, it was not separate but equal, but separate and unequal as the schools and education offered segregated minorities was greatly inferior to that provided white students.

In 1954, separate but equal schools was overturned by the Supreme Court in *Brown v. Board of Education*. This set in motion nationwide attempts to integrate public schools. But again the white backlash was intense and frequently violent. Public schools in most large cities remain essentially segregated due to housing discrimination and unequal funding of education.

(4) Slide four:

## **Education Reform Movements**

**The Common School Movement (Horace Mann)**  
**Progressive Education (John Dewey)**  
**Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965)**  
**Every Student Succeeds Act (2015)**

Early education generally was rote and structured, essentially students were being lectured to and then memorizing by rote what the teacher stated as the “lesson for the day.” But this was soon to change through the work of many dedicated to broadening both the model of teaching and the goals of education. Two names stand out in particular—Horace Mann and John Dewey. Horace Mann (1846) stated that the goal of education should be universal and free with education focused not only on advancement of skills but also “civic virtue” and “individual character.” He is considered the “father of the common school movement” which meant education for all.

John Dewey (1916) gave birth to what is termed “progressive education” which essentially means that education should aim to instill in students “practical training and ability to continue life-long learning.” Also, students should be taught to question and challenge, to become engaged in the learning process.

Education reform movements were later embraced by the Federal government in 1965 with the Elementary and Secondary Education Act signed by President Lyndon Johnson as part of his “War on Poverty.” The Federal government had funded land grant colleges, GI Bills and higher educational research for many years. But not at the elementary-secondary school levels. The act of 1965 changed this significantly. Now the federal government became deeply involved in funding local education, primarily focused on minorities and lower income and deprived students. But this involvement soon embraced setting teaching standards, imposing requirements for student performance, and other actions impacting how education is taught and funded. This led to backlash by nearly every vested group in education (local school boards, students, parents, teacher unions, state boards of education, politicians). This eventually led to the “Every Student Succeeds Act” signed into law by President Obama in 2015. This act moved much of the control of education back to the state-local community level, greatly reducing the role of the Federal government.

(5) Slide five:

## **Current Education Issues**

**Common Core and Testing**  
**STEM Program**  
**Federal versus State-Local Control**  
**Teacher Unions**

Education remains a highly controversial and challenging program, much as it has since our founding as a nation. In your discussion and debate in this session, you should allow participants in the seminar to raise what they view as the most important current issues. Open up the forum of the seminar for engaged debate on issues participants bring to the table. But you can offer some suggestions with those listed in this slide.

Does “common core” curriculum, generally set by the State, overly restrict the subject matter the teacher can present to the students? Is there too much emphasis on “testing,” especially if the teacher fears that his/her job is at stake on testing results? Or does common core and testing ensure equal access by all students to better teaching?

Is the current emphasis of the STEM program (science, technology, engineering, math) too narrow and limited? Or is this program the “wave of the future” and critical for our “high-tech” driven economy and world?

What is the appropriate role of the Federal government (particularly in ensuring that less privileged and minority students receive adequate attention in the education establishment) versus State and local control? How much control should be given back to local school boards, local communities, local PTA’s (Parent-Teacher Associations), and parents in determining education programs, funding and curriculum?

Are teacher unions more concerned with “tenure” of teachers rather than professionalism, training and quality of teachers? Do the unions represent the “common good” regarding education, or the good of their membership? Are teacher unions critical to ensuring that teachers are appropriately paid, recognized and rewarded?

## **SESSION SIX: WE THE PEOPLE: A NATION OF IMMIGRANTS**

(1) Slide one: **Give Me Your Poor**

### **A City Upon a Hill Statue of Liberty Freedom and Equality of Opportunity**

We like to think of our nation as unique in world history as a nation of immigrants seeking economic opportunity, religious freedom and a new life. That we welcome new immigrants with open arms. That we are indeed “a city upon a hill” as first stated in 1630 by John Winthrop, the leader of immigrants settling in what is now Boston. “For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us” Winthrop preached to the newly arriving immigrants.

This image as a “city upon a hill” with “the eyes of all people (world-wide) upon us” is now embedded in our mythology as the best of our nation. President-elect John F. Kennedy delivered this message in 1961 to the General Court of Massachusetts on his way to inauguration. Many others in our history have embraced this same myth.

No other symbol of the myth is so well-known and embraced as the “Statue of Liberty” in New York harbor. As the poem the “New Colossus” written in 1883 states with its famous lines: “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free” has welcomed millions of immigrants over the years. All were seeking freedom and equality of opportunity in America. But what was the reality?

(2) Slide two:

## **The Reality of Racism**

**African Slaves**

**Scots-Irish and Germans**

**Chinese and Other Asians**

**Italians, Polish, and Most Others**

Most of the immigrants who arrived post the early settlement in Jamestown in Virginia and Plymouth Colony and Boston in Massachusetts were not welcomed with open arms and given freedom and equality of opportunity upon coming ashore. Most of our immigrants had to struggle and fight for the opportunity to become Americans with equal rights to all that we held out as “a city upon a hill” with the outstretched arms of the Statue of Liberty.

None faced more challenges than the African immigrants who arrived in chains and shackles to be sold into life-time slavery with no right to life and liberty whatsoever. But others arrived to face racism and ostracization in less barbaric forms, but still being viewed as “inferior” to those who had come before. This began very early with the Scots-Irish and Germans who landed in the Port of Philadelphia and were quickly forced to move west into the wilderness to find their freedom and land on which to struggle for a better life.

Chinese immigrants came to California first to mine gold but then to work on the railroad being constructed across the nation. They were hard working under the most trying of conditions, and faced increasing racism to the point that they were excluded with the Chinese Exclusion Act passed in 1882 to be followed by a number of exclusion and restricting acts.

During the height of the immigration movement from 1865 to 1918 over 83 million immigrants arrived. They came from nearly every nation, but large numbers were from Italy, Poland, Hungary, Switzerland, Germany, Ireland and elsewhere. Most found their land of opportunity in tenements and hovels in New York and Chicago and other large cities or in small isolated farming communities in the Midwest living under the most oppressive, unsanitary, crowded and dangerous of conditions. Their opportunities were working long hours in sweat shops, meat packing plants, assembly lines for “captains of industry” that were ruthless in their exploitation of this new source of “cheap labor.” Or they worked their small farms facing exploitation by bankers, railroad moguls and crop buyers as they struggled to produce and sell their hard-earned crops. Life was not easy for most immigrants in this new land of opportunity.

(3) Slide three:

## **Immigration Reformers**

**How the Other Half Lives (Jacob Riis 1890)**

**Twenty Years at Hull House (Jane Adams 1912)**

**Cesar Chavez Day (President Obama 2014)**

Most of our oppressed immigrants found refuge in family and friends, people in the same boat as themselves who offered solace and support. But such refuge did not change the system. That took activists who were motivated and driven by a desire to make change in our treatment of immigrants. There were a number of such reformers, but three stand out in our history. Jacob

Riis, a penniless immigrant who arrived in New York in 1870 to find himself living in a tenement room. But he was one of the few to escape and landed a job as a reporter on the police beat for a newspaper. And he befriended a rising politician by the name of Theodore “Teddy” Roosevelt. Riis wrote a book that exposed the life of the “other half” living in tenements and hovels.

Jane Adams was not an immigrant. She came from a wealthy background and attempted to become a doctor with the goal of serving the poor. But she left medical school to found “Hull House” in the west side of Chicago modeled after Toynbee Hall in London, the world’s first settlement house. Hull House served as a model for numerous settlement houses through out America.

Cesar Chavez was not a newly arrived immigrant, nor did he grow up in poverty. He grew up on a small ranch where his father also owned a grocery store. But the Great Depression changed all of that. The Chavez family lost everything and fled to Southern California to work in the fields from dawn to dusk. Cesar did not want to be a “immigrant farm laborer” the rest of his life, nor did he accept the life of those who toiled in the fields alongside. He launched with a female colleague a movement that challenged the repressive farm conditions and laws of California. As President Obama stated in establishing Cesar Chavez Day: “We celebrate one of America’s greatest champions for social justice.”

(4) Slide four:

## **Immigration Issues Today**

### **Latinx Immigrants America as a Safe Haven The Wall We the People**

America has long been a land of opportunity for immigrants from south of our border. Mostly from Mexico, but also immigrants out of Central America. These relatively new immigrants differ from those in the past primarily because they come from lands so close to our border. No large ocean separates them from their homeland. They can simply cross the common border.

These immigrants date back to the early 1900’s so migrants have been crossing our southern border legally or illegally for over a century. And they are changing the face of our nation. More Hispanic. More Catholic. More bi-lingual and multi-culture (not that this is new given our history). Also, many are seeking safety as well as economic opportunity.

We have faced these challenges in the past and responded adopting quota systems and preference systems for determining who we accept as immigrants. But now we are being given the choice of a physical wall of concrete and barbed wire and watch towers and armed guards and all the rest that goes with physical barriers. This is new in our history.

At the same time, we face the challenge, as we have throughout our history, of how to form a nation of “we the people” from a nation of immigrants. Nearly all of us come from immigrant

stock. So this is not new. But it is testing our will--politically, socially, morally--to live up to our ideals as “a city upon a hill” and a nation symbolized by a Statue of Liberty.

Close this session with a discussion and debate on what should be our current immigration policies today? How best can we integrate these new immigrants into our economy, our society, our nation? How should we deal with those fleeing oppressive governments, even facing death and starvation, and coming across our borders seeking a “safe haven?” Are there lessons from our past regarding immigration that speak to our current challenges? These are questions you can pose to your seminar participants if they do not raise them on their own.