A Brief History of the Future – May 5, 2024

https://www.pbs.org/show/a-brief-history-of-the-future/

THREE-WINGED BIRD



No complex system can be controlled from the center.

- Higher rates of isolation.
- The distancing effect is never good.
- The decoupling of a society weakens its ability to thrive and respond to the inevitability of change.

Nothing is common but a common community.

- Urban planning impacts how we connect.
- Humans need contact to hear and see each other.
- All of everything is local and is the base for how we decide/design how we will act with each other for a shared humanity to find the best answers.

Social infrastructure should reinforce our being around each other. Communities should be designed with *organic human connection as the centerpiece.*

The structure of a community defines the health of that community. Segregation is not an element of the healthy flow of an organism's health.

- Encouraging/discouraging us from knowing who our neighbors are. Need a shared sense of belonging. *See the community as a living organism.*
- Humanity is one nervous system.
- Requires the collective will to work together to solve social problems. A better future is not inevitable.
- The more we get to know each other, the greater we trust each other.
- Humanity requires cooperation to survive/thrive. The secret success of humanity is our ability to work together.
- We grow up learning what should be. We live in an unjust society and see it as the norm.
- The norm of generalized reciprocity is so fundamental to civilized life that all prominent moral codes contain some equivalent of the Golden Rule.

***Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, Robert Putnam**

Healthy democracies depend upon social connectedness.

Social trust has deteriorated.

The story of social capital in America during the past 125 years turns out to look like an inverted U-curve – starting the century at nearly the same low we experience today, growing until roughly the mid-1960s, then declining again. . . .mirrored in both shape and timing by trends in income equality, political comity, and even cultural communitarianism.

- Americans felt increased confidence in their neighbors.(1964)
- Sense of shared identity and reciprocity had never been greater in modern America, so the prospects for broad-based civic mobilization to address our national failings seemed bright.

"Social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. Social capital calls attention to the fact that civic virtue is most powerful when embedded in a dense network of reciprocal social relations. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital.

Our lives are made more productive by social ties.

" . . .The individual is helpless socially if left to himself . . . . If he comes into contact with his neighbor, and they with other neighbors, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may immediately satisfy his social needs and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to the substantial improvement of living conditions in a whole community. – L. J. Hanifan

A well-connected individual in a poorly connected society is not a productive as a well-connected individual in a well-connected society. And even a poorly connected individual may derive some of the spillover benefits from living in a well-connected community.

Social connections are also important for the rules of conduct that they sustain. Networks involve (almost by definition) mutual obligations. Networks of community engagement foster sturdy norms of reciprocity.

Trustworthiness lubricates social life. Frequent interaction among a diverse set of people tends to produce a norm of generalized reciprocity. Civic engagement and social capital entail mutual obligation and responsibility for action.

"We come from all the divisions, ranks, and classes of society . . . to teach and to be taught in our turn. While we mingle together in these pursuits, we shall learn to know each other more intimately; we shall remove many of the prejudices which ignorance or partial acquaintance with each other has fostered." Thomas Greene

Bonding social capital constitutes a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40. *Bonding social capital, by creating strong in-group loyalty, may also create strong out-group antagonism.*