

PADM 5781
 Speaking Notes
 Week 13

Quote: eternity is a long time, especially toward the end.

Attributed to Woody Allen and others.

WHERE WE ARE

Note posted Oct. 14: We are going to drop the portfolio activity (you will get credit for it in my gradebook) and move the due date for the ACTIVITY to Sunday November 20.				
Week 12	ACTIVITY	Monday October 31	Sunday Nov. 6	
Week 13	Opportunity to redo and resubmit ACTIVITY Discussion 4A due 11/13	Monday Nov. 7	Sunday Nov. 13	Sunday Nov. 13
Week 14	ePortfolio assignment ACTIVITY assignment due	Monday Nov. 14	Sunday Nov. 20	Sunday Nov. 20
Week 15	THANKSGIVING WEEK	Monday Nov. 21	Sunday Nov. 27	
Week 16	FINAL EXAMS	Monday, Nov. 28	Last day of classes, Dec. 1	Sunday Dec. 4
Week 17	Final grades submitted to Registrar's Office Monday, Dec. 12	Monday, Dec. 5		

Activity	Group 1 Bennett, Jada Davis, Derek J. Ferguson, Sylah K. Fowler, Precious G.
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Group 2
Hill, Kelton L.
Heyward, Timothy L.
Hutchinson, Rose G.
Jackson, Tamara A.
Jones, Theresa R.

Group 3
Keith, Kiasia D.
Leggett, Alegra R.
Leroy, Antonio J.
Redden, Cidney Z.
Williams, Catherine N.

Working in groups, select a “wicked” social problem (other than homelessness or climate change). Let me know what you have in mind and let me approve (or at least comment on) the idea.

Identify at least two types of stakeholders and explain their likely perspectives regarding the nature of the problem. (Think in terms of the elephant metaphor). “Interview” (hypothetically) one member of each type of stakeholder and get their perspective of the problem.

Discuss the underlying structure of the problem and the “behavior” of the current system. You can draw this as a visual model but are not required to. In any case, identify the “moving parts” of the current system. (Think in terms of the iceberg metaphor).

Identify at least one delayed flow in the behavior of the current system. (I have not taught this yet, as of Oct. 18th.)

Identify the relevant administrative or political jurisdiction with the scope and powers to address this wicked problem. Identify a strategy of advocacy.

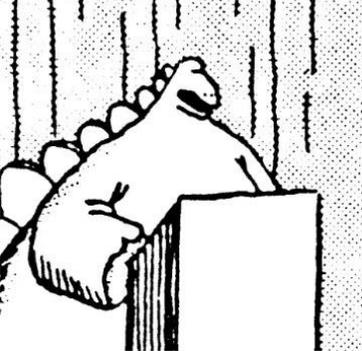
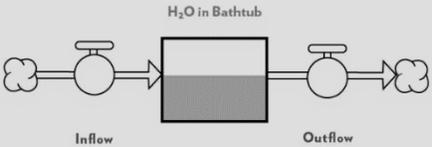
Assume that a choice is taken by “the powers that be” and that a policy change is initiated. Identify that policy change.

From the perspective of systems thinking, anticipate the outcomes of the new policy, including the “fixes that fail” and the “accidental advisories” patterns of outcomes.

Provide me individual reports on roles and the distributions of

	workload among all the members of your group.
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REVIEW:

 <p>A system is likely to be “seen” differently by different stakeholders.</p>	 <p>A system has a structure below of beyond what is apparent.</p>	 <p>The structure of a system has behaviors that are derived from the structure.</p>
 <p>Derived from Gary Larson cartoon published in 1985. Meant here to represent “bounded rationality.”</p>	 <p>FIGURE 4.9 THE BATHTUB ANALOGY. The Bathtub Analogy highlights the importance of understanding stocks and flows when analyzing system behavior. Innovation Associates Organizational Learning</p>	 <p>The lily pond, representing the dynamics of exponential growth.</p>

I will explain the lily pond image later in these notes.

The following explanation of stocks and flows may be helpful.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRIYGDBGcRA>

Systems have BEHAVIORS and are resilient. To change an existing system requires understanding it and laying the groundwork for change among stakeholders. Simply replacing one element is not likely to change the system substantially. The challenge is to find one or more effective LEVERS. The addition of FEEDBACK LOOPS containing the right kind of INFORMATION may be an effective leverage point. Informing and involving citizens are important. People change their behaviors when they have relevant and timely feedback.

NEW MATERIAL – LIMITS TO GROWTH

One of the most common policy prescriptions is GROWTH.

In fact, growth often exacerbates problems rather than solves them.

There are what economists call, **BENEFITS OF SCALE**. Costs to produce items often decrease as the scale of operations increase because **FIXED COSTS** can be distributed across more items produced.

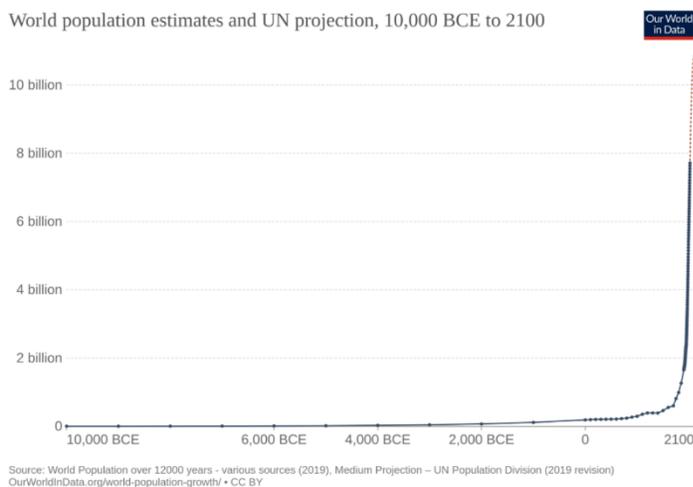
The leaders of a city are likely to think that if our city became larger (more people) it would somehow become a better city.

The **PREDISPOSITION TOWARD THE GROWTH PRESCRIPTION** (in Christian and Jewish cultures) may well date back to the bible.

Genesis 1:28 – Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Well, in the modern age (in developed nations) reproductive multiplication is **EXPODENTIAL**.

In the times of the book of Genesis, few children survived to become old enough to themselves have children.



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_population

Can this continue? NO

The earth itself is a system, and even with new technologies, there are limits.

In the developed nations population growth is tapering off. But in many developing nations population increase is still growing exponentially. Part of the explanation is that modern medical knowledge is being sent to developing nations and increasing the rates of infant survival.

As women become better educated in developed nations, rates of childbirth tend to decrease. To me, this is a LEVERAGE POINT if the policy intent is to constrain rates of child births.

A stable population requires a birthrate per woman of about 2 children each. This does not take into account wars, droughts, starvation, pandemics and so forth.

The global population reality is going to crash. And there will be huge numbers of deaths (from multiple causes). There already are.

There is no government entity that can address this situation. The United Nations has very limited powers. In any case, attempts to control birth rates cannot work in democratic nations.

In the United States, Japan and some other major nations, population is expected to DECLINE sharply in near-coming years. That is going to bring a whole new set of policy challenges.

Consider the interconnections between social policies regarding conception, foreign policy, and immigration policies. Forbidding that foreign aid to other nations from being used for contraceptives is likely to result in additional births and (in the absence of local economic development in foreign nations) increase pressures for immigration to the United States.

Another leverage point – zoning laws can shape and restrain urban growth patterns over time.

City Administrators (like Wes Blecke of Wayne, Nebraska) and city planners participate in helping elected leaders (who come and go) make LONG TERM PLANS for a town or city.

For them (and the elected city leaders) THE MOST IMPORTANT POLICY LEVER is ZONING LAWS. Without zoning laws and related BUILDING CODES the future of a town or city cannot be managed. If someone wants to put a dry cleaning plant next to a place to eat, they can and do. You wind up with a real mess of a city with block after block of land-uses that make no sense. With ZONING LAWS the city council has the power to say, NO to “bad” proposals. The city wants development because they want property tax dollars. But in my opinion, putting dollar stores and self-storage places on PRIME REAL ESTATE LOCATIONS is short-sighted.

A city is a system, and it can be DESIGNED to make sense. There are MANY factors to consider.

In the past few years Albany has become filled with old car repair shops and used tire dealers. I think this is because we have no required emissions testing. Large numbers of used cars get shipped to Albany (though dealer auctions) and (in time) we wind up mini-junkyards all around

us. And the pattern is likely to grow. (Remember the example of exponential growth of lilies on a pond).



Source: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/green-water-lilies-on-water-8817384/>

Source: <https://www.pexels.com/photo/city-road-traffic-landscape-9719116/>

CONCLUSION

The collection of many stories may reveal additional ELEMENTS to the situation and additional possible LEVERAGE POINTS.

An observation of outcomes (evident through stories) can provide evidence of the elements and their relationships. Most of this is under the waterline (reference -- the iceberg) and the structure produces the behaviors of the system. It is not just that the individual instances of the elements have behaviors. It is that an aggregate system (the whole ecology) has patterns of behaviors. And its collective behavior can shift between/among relatively stable patterns called ATTRACTORS.

The key is for humans to try to cause systems to enter relatively benign attractors (patterns of behaviors) and stay there. Policies are about governance and acceptable living conditions require wise governance.