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## Supremely Worthwhile: Two Decades of Dave Frohnmayer Teaching Leadership

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### INTRODUCTION

**D**ave Frohnmayer began teaching a freshman seminar on theories of leadership during the first year of his presidency at the University of Oregon (UO). As he approached retirement, he also taught an Honors College colloquium on the same topic. And then, after his retirement, he added an intensive, weeklong course for law students

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and authored a book on teaching leadership.<sup>1</sup> The twentieth year of the freshman seminar had just begun its last week when he died. I was the co-instructor in the seminar and the colloquium and the coauthor of the book.

Some posit that the best teachers teach who they are. Frohnmayer's choice of material and teaching style provoked philosophical self-examination and deep scholarly questioning from his students. He wanted the students to be better observers, consumers, and practitioners of leadership. He believed this understanding was essential to a fuller life. He wanted to broaden the students' understanding of leadership beyond the CEO or president to see leadership in the context of family, friendships, and all human relationships.

Leadership as relationship was central to Frohnmayer's approach. He taught because it kept him engaged with what he believed mattered most at a university: what happens in the classroom for a student. He taught leadership theory because he believed it could be taught and learned and that doing so was "supremely worthwhile."<sup>2</sup>

His own leadership was most prominently on display in his fifteen years as president of the UO and during his terms as the State's elected attorney general—buttressed by the many appearances of words such as president, chair, founder, cofounder, board chair, member of the executive committee, and so forth in his *curriculum vitae*.<sup>3</sup>

He did not have a one-size-fits-all definition of leadership. Leadership was, to him, "always a part of a messier, less disciplined human reality. Leadership is discovered, nurtured, and developed in [an environment in which] imperfect leaders attempt to unite flawed followers amidst serious disagreement over means, ends, egos, or all three. Leaders struggle to mobilize inadequate resources using imperfect information and against the constraints of too little time and often formidable resistance."<sup>4</sup> For the students who signed up for one of the courses because they thought being a leader was cool and provided the opportunity to boss people around, his description was somewhat dispiriting.

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<sup>1</sup> DAVE FROHNMAYER & BARBARA WEST, EXPLORATIONS IN LEADERSHIP THEORY: A LIBERAL ARTS PERSPECTIVE (2014).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.* at 3.

<sup>3</sup> Curriculum Vitae, Dave Frohnmayer, President Emeritus and Professor of Law, University of Oregon, <http://frohnmayor.uoregon.edu/sites/default/files/frohnmayor/documents/resume.pdf> (last visited Mar. 2, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 3.

He was clear that the courses would avoid the folly of trying to give every major school of leadership its just due, especially in light of *Bass & Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership* listing more than 250 working definitions of leadership.<sup>5</sup> He was fond, though, of using one phrase as a starting point: "Leadership is getting something important done with or through others."

His scholarly interest in leadership and its theories went back at least to his undergraduate days at Harvard. He may well have begun developing the content for the leadership courses then, as well as when he was a graduate student at Oxford. In his undergraduate paper, *The Concept of Totalitarianism in Present Day Russia*, he listed the six characteristics of totalitarianism as defined by C. J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski<sup>6</sup>—Brzezinski was his professor at Harvard. Students in the seminar read and discussed the two authors' work early in the course. Frohnmayer's senior thesis at Harvard included a section on Friedrich Nietzsche; the students in the freshmen seminar read excerpts from *Will to Power*.<sup>7</sup> They also read *The Originality of Machiavelli* by Sir Isaiah Berlin,<sup>8</sup> from whom Frohnmayer took courses at Oxford. From those days forward, he combined scholarly and professional engagement with the topic. He personally knew many of the modern theorists of leadership the students were assigned to read, including: Adam Bryant (*The Corner Office*), John O'Neil (*The Paradox of Success*), James Posner (*The Leadership Challenge*), Thomas Cronin (*The Paradoxes of the American Presidency*), and Steven Samples (*The Contrarian's Guide to Leadership*).

## I

### THE FRESHMAN SEMINAR

Freshmen students taking *Theories of Leadership* faced a daunting reading list that corresponded to Frohnmayer's voracious reading habits. They read Niccolo Machiavelli's *The Prince*, James Kouzes and Barry Posner's *The Leadership Challenge*, and a 482-page course packet with thirty-eight articles and excerpts by writers such as

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<sup>5</sup> BERNARD M. BASS, *BASS & STOGDILL'S HANDBOOK OF LEADERSHIP: THEORY, RESEARCH, & MANAGERIAL APPLICATIONS* (3d ed. 1990).

<sup>6</sup> David Frohnmayer, *The Concept of Totalitarianism in Present Day Russia* 30 (unpublished senior thesis, Harvard University) (on file with author).

<sup>7</sup> FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, *WILL TO POWER* (Walter Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale eds., Random House 1967) (1901).

<sup>8</sup> ISAIAH BERLIN, *THE ORIGINALITY OF MACHIAVELLI* (G.C. Sansoni ed., 1972).

Nietzsche, Hannah Arendt, Max Weber, and Friedrich and Brzezinski.<sup>9</sup> The packet included articles connecting leadership to a range of the liberal arts and other academic areas: history, literature, political science, sociology, philosophy, anthropology, game theory, psychology, and neuroscience, among others.<sup>10</sup> The seminar was in part an intellectual history focused on the antecedents of some of the key topics in leadership theory—ethics, knowing thyself, nurture versus nature, and the role of power.

The students were assigned two group projects: a marathon evening playing the board game *Diplomacy* and a final project that involved interviewing two leaders, integrating those interviews with various leadership theories, writing a paper, and making a formal oral presentation in front of the class. They were required to participate in class discussions and were graded on their contributions. In addition, the students wrote nine papers, one each week.

One of Frohnmayer's favorite phrases was "focused attention." That is what he, I, and the graduate teaching instructor for the seminar provided the students. Each of us read every paper the students wrote, making extensive comments about the march of the argument and the use of evidence as well as grammar, spelling, and punctuation. We insisted that the students meet with us to discuss their papers. This focused attention may well have played an important role in the success of the course; members of the class consistently ranked it "exceptional" on student evaluations.

Frohnmayer believed in giving the students access to a wide variety of thoughtful voices on leadership, and, because of his close relationships with leaders across the country, the course included seven or eight guest speakers each term. The students listened to, talked with, and wrote about these guests, including former executives with AIG, the Red Lion Hotels, and AT&T; an Olympic marathoner who wrote a biography about Bill Bowerman; an NFL quarterback; two authors of best-selling books on leadership; the founder of the nonprofit Stove Team International; and the former chair of the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics. These speakers talked about their accomplishments as leaders and about their own theories of leadership. They brought up topics often avoided in airport books and magazine articles: failure and renewal, ethics and honesty, disappointment and

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<sup>9</sup> Course Syllabus for Leadership Seminar, PS 199, Winter Term 2015, University of Oregon (on file with author).

<sup>10</sup> Course Syllabus for Topics in Leadership, HC 421, Fall Term 2014, University of Oregon (on file with author).

having a good time. Many were UO alumni. The speakers showed up year after year without honoraria.

In spite of the workload and Frohnmayer's high expectations for the quality of their writing, the students persevered. Only a handful withdrew from the course in the twenty years it was taught. After they completed the course, a remarkable number of students kept in touch with the instructors, in many cases even coming back to visit for years after graduation.

Frohnmayer began the freshman seminar with a review of the foundational theories of leadership and the many definitions of leadership. He then introduced basic questions that often arise in discussions of leadership: is it learned or innate, situational or enduring, possessed by the rare great man or woman or widespread, or the result of specific traits? The seminar then moved to seven topic areas: ethics, "know thyself," charisma, the hero as leader, Nietzsche, totalitarianism, and modern theories.

#### A. Ethics

Does leadership have an ethical component? This discussion began with Machiavelli's *The Prince*<sup>11</sup> and the theory of leadership it embodies. In one of the course readings, Sir Isaiah Berlin argued, and Dave agreed, that Machiavelli was the first to propose a sharp break between religious and other ethical perspectives and the requirements of leadership.<sup>12</sup> Machiavelli was devoted to unifying the Italian city-states; for him the only path forward was the consolidation of political power, and leadership in this arena required "the consuming politics of surgical violence."<sup>13</sup> Machiavelli required cruel behavior by his leader and noted that "on this question of being loved or feared . . . a wise prince should rely on what he controls, not on what he cannot control."<sup>14</sup> He also advised the prince to pretend to be kind and caring (and religious) when doing so was to his advantage. In conjunction with reading *The Prince*, the students played the board game *Diplomacy* at

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<sup>11</sup> NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI, *THE PRINCE* (Tim Parks trans., Penguin Books 2009) (1532).

<sup>12</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 50–51, 60.

<sup>13</sup> *Id.* at 43.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.* at 46. (quoting MACHIAVELLI, *supra* note 11, at 68 ("[M]y conclusion is that since people decide for themselves whether to love a ruler or not, while it's the ruler who decides whether they're going to fear him, a sensible man will base his power on what he controls, not on what others have freedom to choose. But he must take care, as I said, that people don't come to hate him.")).

Frohnmayr's home. They were assigned to one of seven nations battling to control Europe through diplomacy, negotiation, and strategy. Each nation-team staked out a room in the house as its headquarters and emissaries raced from room to room negotiating, bargaining, and at times lying to one another. The game tests each team's judgment of whether and how long to trust another team and how best to deploy assets in concert with or in opposition to others. When discussing Machiavelli in class, students often expressed hostility or even ethical repulsion to his arguments. However, in the game, they often (and with enthusiasm) adopted his tactics (without the violence). The students grappled with a key question in discussion, their papers after the readings, and the game: can a leader (or anyone) live a compartmentalized life in two moral universes simultaneously?

Honesty was central to the ethical questions raised by *The Prince* four hundred years ago, and questions about the role of honesty in leadership are still pertinent today. Kouzes and Posner in *The Leadership Challenge* found that followers consider honesty to be the most crucial characteristic of their ideal leader.<sup>15</sup> In his book *The Corner Office*, Adam Bryant recounted interviews with more than seventy CEOs.<sup>16</sup> The interviews led him to conclusions consistent with Kouzes and Posner.<sup>17</sup> But many things make honesty difficult for leaders, among them self-righteousness, shades of gray, slippery slopes, and seductive environments.<sup>18</sup> There are possible fixes, including a strong peer group and followers who are emboldened to be straightforward. Frohnmayr believed, though, that the best way to avoid such pitfalls was to know thyself. In fact, he questioned whether one could be a good leader without adequate self-knowledge.

### *B. Know Thyself*

Frohnmayr often described the seminar as a spiral rather than a straight line, with new material both springing from and further illuminating previously discussed ideas as well as providing a foundation for material still to come. The section on knowing thyself

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<sup>15</sup> JAMES M. KOUZES & BARRY Z. POSNER, *THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE* 28–33 (4th ed. 2007).

<sup>16</sup> ADAM BRYANT, *THE CORNER OFFICE: INDISPENSABLE AND UNEXPECTED LESSONS FROM CEOs ON HOW TO LEAD AND SUCCEED* 5 (2011). A full list of Bryant's interviewees is available in the book. *Id.* at xi–xiv.

<sup>17</sup> *See id.* at 6.

<sup>18</sup> *See* FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 59.

looked back to the insights of Machiavelli and forward to Nietzsche, charisma, and even totalitarianism.

Writers in the Age of Enlightenment believed in the power of reason as a source of inevitable ethical progress. They would have been disheartened by the work of modern researchers in neuroscience and other social sciences that seems to show we regularly undermine, sidestep, or utterly disregard reason. For example, we may engage in biased thinking and irrational decision making more often than we are consciously aware;<sup>19</sup> we are far more influenced by the situation and authority figures than we admit;<sup>20</sup> our reason is regularly overridden by gut intuitions to our detriment;<sup>21</sup> and we often deceive ourselves, which gives us an evolutionary advantage because it makes it easier for us to deceive others.<sup>22</sup> Steven Pinker's article in the *New York Times Magazine* titled *The Moral Instinct* was also useful in pointing out the difficulties of knowing thyself.<sup>23</sup> He argued that people, with surprising regularity, engage in moral rationalization rather than moral reasoning; we often begin with the conclusion and work backward to a plausible justification.<sup>24</sup> Taken together, these tentative findings suggest a far greater number of traps for the ethical leader than the optimists of an earlier era might have assumed.

Frohnmayer suggested in the seminar that if you do not know yourself, you are often neither resilient nor authentic and there is often a mismatch between your perception of yourself and others' perceptions of you. Others may exploit that vulnerability with, for example, flattery. Further, a leader without self-knowledge may not be able to accept (or worse will misunderstand or misinterpret) criticism. This perceptual mismatch can have an array of crippling results: instability, loss of control, debilitating stress. Another aspect of not knowing oneself is the refusal to recognize one's own dark side. This

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<sup>19</sup> DANIEL KAHNEMAN, *THINKING, FAST AND SLOW* 20–24 (2011).

<sup>20</sup> See generally STANLEY MILGRAM, *OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY: AN EXPERIMENTAL VIEW* (First Harper Perennial Modern Thought ed. 2009) (discussing the role and effect of obedience in society); PHILIP ZIMBARDO, *THE LUCIFER EFFECT: UNDERSTANDING HOW GOOD PEOPLE TURN EVIL* (2008) (examining the Stanford prison experiment from a social-psychological perspective).

<sup>21</sup> JONATHAN HAIDT, *THE RIGHTEOUS MIND: WHY GOOD PEOPLE ARE DIVIDED BY POLITICS AND RELIGION* 43–49 (2012).

<sup>22</sup> ROBERT TRIVERS, *THE FOLLY OF FOOLS: THE LOGIC OF DECEIT AND SELF-DECEPTION IN HUMAN LIFE* 4 (2011).

<sup>23</sup> Steven Pinker, *The Moral Instinct*, N.Y. TIMES MAG. (Jan. 13, 2008), [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/magazine/13Psychology-t.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/01/13/magazine/13Psychology-t.html?_r=0).

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

avoidance often involves attributing that dark side “to the modern ills of culture, poverty, pathology, or exposure to media violence.”<sup>25</sup>

So in the face of all this, how can one undertake the project of knowing thyself? Frohnmayer believed there were useful approaches in psychoanalysis; neuroscience and the social sciences; and mindfulness, including emotional intelligence.<sup>26</sup>

“Psychoanalysis began with the pioneering work of Sigmund Freud at the turn of the twentieth century.”<sup>27</sup> Freud and Carl Jung developed two schools of psychoanalysis in the years that followed.<sup>28</sup> The “two men either coined or gave new meaning to such [concepts] as introvert, extrovert, ego, projection, shadow, repression, denial, and the unconscious.”<sup>29</sup> Following Nietzsche in at least some ways, they both emphasized the value of reflection or mindfulness—bringing to the surface, when possible, those unconscious thoughts, concepts, and urges that they argued powerfully influence our actions, our relationships, and our sense of self.<sup>30</sup> Jung formulated notions such as the shadow (the dark side that we hide from ourselves) and projection (the tendency to project onto others those things we fear to admit about ourselves).<sup>31</sup> Both Freud and Jung argued that through better understanding of the unconscious, at least some things could change for the better; by being mindful, one could learn to recognize the shadow and stop projecting it onto others.<sup>32</sup>

A century after Freud and Jung, discoveries of neuroscience and other social sciences bolster, at least in some ways, psychoanalytic thought while adding new observations and support for existing insights.<sup>33</sup> There appears to be a growing consensus that the unconscious is a larger component of the self than even Freud and Jung hypothesized.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, their idea that certain methods can bring

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<sup>25</sup> David M. Buss, Response, *The Evolution of Evil*, EDGE (2006), <https://edge.org/responses/what-is-your-dangerous-idea> (responding to the question “[w]hat is your dangerous idea?”).

<sup>26</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at ch. 12.

<sup>27</sup> *Id.* at 78.

<sup>28</sup> *Id.*

<sup>29</sup> *Id.*

<sup>30</sup> *Id.*

<sup>31</sup> *Id.*

<sup>32</sup> *Id.*

<sup>33</sup> *Id.*

<sup>34</sup> See generally THE NEW UNCONSCIOUS (Ran R. Hassin et al. eds., 2005) (describing modern developments in the study of the unconscious).



unconscious material into consciousness appears to be sound.<sup>35</sup> One modern study concludes that unconscious, negative reactions to an “out-group” can be modified by promoting a “social goal” of not stereotyping others.<sup>36</sup> Other research seems to show that mindfulness of the power of unconscious behaviors at the time of decision-making can beneficially influence a person’s choices.<sup>37</sup>

Another approach to knowing oneself is based on a concept brought to public notice by Daniel Goleman in his book *Emotional Intelligence*, first released in 1995.<sup>38</sup> This type of intelligence is the ability to be aware (or mindful) of one’s own and other people’s emotions and to use that information to guide thinking and behavior.<sup>39</sup>

A similar idea was explored in a 2013 *New York Times* report on a *Science* article that found that subjects who had just read literary fiction performed better on tests measuring empathy, social perception, and emotional intelligence.<sup>40</sup> The author, Pam Belluck, wrote: “The researchers say . . . literary fiction often leaves more to the imagination, encouraging readers to make inferences about characters and be sensitive to emotional nuance and complexity.”<sup>41</sup>

Psychological understanding of self and others (from various points of view) was central to the seminar because Frohnmayer considered it central to leadership. However, there are limitations to all these approaches. He always advised students to understand these limitations by asking such questions as: Where is the “evidence”? What is “evidence”? How much has a finding been exaggerated by the news media? Have the statistics been skewed? How many subjects were involved in the experiment? He stressed that students needed to be critical readers and wise consumers.

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<sup>35</sup> See *id.* at 434–35.

<sup>36</sup> See Mary E. Wheeler & Susan T. Fiske, *Controlling Racial Prejudice: Social-Cognitive Goals Affect Amygdala and Stereotype Activation*, 16 *PSYCHOL. SCI.* 56, 56 (2005).

<sup>37</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 79.

<sup>38</sup> DANIEL GOLEMAN, *EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE* (1995).

<sup>39</sup> *Id.* at 34.

<sup>40</sup> Pam Belluck, *For Better Social Skills, Scientists Recommend a Little Chekhov*, *N.Y. TIMES: WELL* (Oct. 3, 2013, 2:15 PM), <http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/03/i-know-how-youre-feeling-i-read-chekhov/>.

<sup>41</sup> *Id.*

### C. Charisma

The section on charisma began with Max Weber's classic definition. Since that definition includes a person with extraordinary gifts, a radical solution to a crisis, and transcendental powers,<sup>42</sup> many students were attracted by the model—wanting either to be a charismatic leader or to be swept away by one.

Frohnmayr often described himself as a determined (or radical or fervent) moderate. He was ill at ease with the extremes in leaders and leadership theory and always broached the topic of charisma with some caveats. Having his life threatened by the followers of a charismatic leader might have played a role in his continued interest in and approach to the topic of charisma. Frohnmayr noted to the classes that, in 1985, law enforcement officials described the plans of the followers of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh to assassinate him as “well advanced.”

Frohnmayr's caveats about charismatic leadership included the following: it may ignore the substructure that supports the leader; it is susceptible to amplification by staging and setting; and it is unstable.<sup>43</sup> In addition, the charismatic leader is often free of moral constraints, rarely devotes time or effort to organizational functions, often misuses his or her appeal, and his or her failure or defeat can be unusually devastating to followers.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, he believed it is useful, as part of any study of leadership theory, to ponder the powerful empathetic bond that can be created by the charismatic.

### D. Hero Theory

Next the students delved into hero theory, which proposes that leadership requires a hero—the great man or great woman. Though heroes are key elements in our earliest stories and myths, the hero theory of leadership was codified as a counterweight to the determinist theories of history and social development of Marx and some Darwinians in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. William James, a proponent of the “great man” theory, challenged the then conventional wisdom of social Darwinism in a famous late

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<sup>42</sup> MAX WEBER, FROM MAX WEBER: ESSAYS IN SOCIOLOGY 51–55, 245–52 (H.H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills eds. & trans., 1948); see also FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 84–85.

<sup>43</sup> *Id.* at 87–88.

<sup>44</sup> *Id.*

nineteenth century essay.<sup>45</sup> Several generations later, Sidney Hook and Friedrich von Hayek echoed James in arguing that individual self-determination was the prime mover of historical events and rejected Marxist-Leninist historical determinism.<sup>46</sup> This battle (which is at its core free will versus determinism) has surfaced again in our time, driven by neuroscience discoveries that expand the realm of unconscious control and are argued by some to virtually eliminate any notion of human free will. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* devoted its entire March 18, 2012, issue to the topic: “Is Free Will an Illusion?”<sup>47</sup> Every author said yes.<sup>48</sup>

What are the shortcomings of hero theory? At its worst, it can greatly oversimplify complex events and allow followers to escape their own accountability for bad choices. It can also permit them to ignore larger social threats that, if not responded to early enough, can gain too much momentum to be resisted. On the other hand, the theory does provide a framework for understanding the grand themes to which great legends, great history, and great literature repeatedly return: personal responsibility and meaningful human action. Norman Mailer, in his 1960 *Esquire* article on John Kennedy, *Superman Comes to the Supermarket*, captures something of the hero's essence.<sup>49</sup> He described Kennedy as carrying himself “with a cool grace which seemed indifferent to applause, his manner somehow similar to the poise of a fine boxer.”<sup>50</sup> However, “there was an elusive detachment to everything he did.”<sup>51</sup> “[He] was a hero America needed, a hero central to his time, a man whose personality might suggest contradiction and mysteries . . . because only a hero can capture the secret imagination of a people, and so be good for the vitality of his nation.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> William James, *Great Men, Great Thoughts, and the Environment*, ATLANTIC MONTHLY (Oct. 1880) (on file with author).

<sup>46</sup> See generally F.A. HAYEK, *THE ROAD TO SERFDOM* (1944) (arguing that individualism leads to a loss of freedom); SIDNEY HOOK, *THE HERO IN HISTORY: A STUDY IN LIMITATIONS AND POSSIBILITY* (1943) (arguing that humans construct the social world around them and transform the natural environment).

<sup>47</sup> *Is Free Will an Illusion?*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC. (Mar. 18, 2012), <http://chronicle.com/article/Is-Free-Will-an-Illusion-/131159/>.

<sup>48</sup> *Id.*

<sup>49</sup> Norman Mailer, *Superman Comes to the Supermart*, ESQUIRE, Nov. 1960, at 119.

<sup>50</sup> *Id.* at 124.

<sup>51</sup> *Id.*

<sup>52</sup> *Id.* at 123.

Why are we drawn to the hero theory? It explains history, celebrates the individual, and reassures us that greatness is possible. Psychologically, we may need heroes; they serve as exemplars of success we may want to emulate, and heroes provide a focal point for our ethical values of accountability and responsibility. Heroes can also provide a focal point for our blame: a failed hero can become our convenient scapegoat.<sup>53</sup>

### *E. Nietzsche*

Friedrich Nietzsche influenced major intellectual currents of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and, Frohnmayer argued, both built upon and influenced many of the important theories of leadership.<sup>54</sup> His insights into the existence of powerful unconscious forces were precursors to the work of Freud and Jung.<sup>55</sup>

Nietzsche likely read Machiavelli and undoubtedly went a step further. Machiavelli proposed a moral universe in which one could step aside from religious ethics when leadership required it.<sup>56</sup> Nietzsche was overtly anti-Christian, famously asserting that God is dead.<sup>57</sup> He advocated a rule by the elite and would have found both the hero and the charismatic leader good models for leadership.<sup>58</sup> He had no interest in team building or group empowerment or democratic forms of governance.<sup>59</sup>

Some of the students in the seminar found his writing (filled with aphorisms, parables, and biting sarcasm) difficult and perplexing. Others were fascinated by his notion of the will to power. Nietzsche's advocacy of leadership by a culturally superior elite consciousness has been interpreted (and misused) by significant social and political causes. And, in the freshman seminar his work furnished a natural bridge to totalitarianism.

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<sup>53</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 101–02.

<sup>54</sup> *Id.* at 103–04.

<sup>55</sup> *Id.* at 104.

<sup>56</sup> *Id.* at 48.

<sup>57</sup> *Id.* at 104, 110; FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, *THE GAY SCIENCE* 181 (Walter Kaufmann trans., Random House 1974) (1887).

<sup>58</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 105–06, 127.

<sup>59</sup> *Id.* at 105–08.

### F. Totalitarianism

The classic definition of totalitarianism by Friedrich and Brzezinski lists six elements of this twentieth-century mechanism of control: “[a] single mass party”; a bureaucratic system of “terror by the police and secret police” that “encourages personal spying and gossip as pervasive national policy”; “[a] monopolistic control of the mass media”; “[a] near monopoly of weapons”; “[c]entral control of the economy”; and “[a]n elaborate ideology that [proposes] to describe all aspects of man’s existence” and includes a “powerful messianic or religious [element].”<sup>60</sup> Totalitarianism relies on two tropes: scapegoating an enemy (internal or external) and an all-encompassing notion of a utopia to come.<sup>61</sup> Eric Hoffer in *The True Believer* offers the powerful insight that mass movements do not need a God but do need a devil.<sup>62</sup>

The totalitarian leader has goals beyond those of the Machiavellian leader, not just control of the followers’ actions but also control of their very thoughts and beliefs.<sup>63</sup> So, for the totalitarian, control of the educational system and media is vital, as is control of artistic expression in all its forms.<sup>64</sup> Students read Friedrich von Hayek and Hannah Arendt among others on the topic.

For Frohnmayer, fiction provided one of the best ways to learn about totalitarianism. He recommended to the students such works as *1984*<sup>65</sup> and *Animal Farm* by George Orwell;<sup>66</sup> *Arrival and Departure*<sup>67</sup> and *Darkness at Noon* by Arthur Koestler;<sup>68</sup> *The Captive Mind* by Czeslaw Milosz;<sup>69</sup> *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep*<sup>70</sup> and *The Minority Report* by Philip K. Dick;<sup>71</sup> and *The Brothers Karamazov* by Fyodor Dostoevsky.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> *Id.* at 114–15.

<sup>61</sup> *Id.* at 115.

<sup>62</sup> ERIC HOFFER, *THE TRUE BELIEVER* 95 (1951).

<sup>63</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 115.

<sup>64</sup> *Id.*

<sup>65</sup> GEORGE ORWELL, *1984* (1949).

<sup>66</sup> GEORGE ORWELL, *ANIMAL FARM* (1946).

<sup>67</sup> ARTHUR KOESTLER, *ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE* (1943).

<sup>68</sup> ARTHUR KOESTLER, *DARKNESS AT NOON* (1941).

<sup>69</sup> CZESLAW MILOSZ, *THE CAPTIVE MIND* (Jane Zielonko trans., 1953).

<sup>70</sup> PHILIP K. DICK, *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP* (1968).

<sup>71</sup> PHILIP K. DICK, *THE MINORITY REPORT* (1956).

<sup>72</sup> FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY, *THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV* (Edward Wasiolek trans., Univ. of Chi. Press 1971) (1935).

Why did Frohnmayer have students study what many view as a twentieth-century phenomenon? Because, as he told the class, he believed it had not disappeared, stating it was still present in, for example, North Korea.<sup>73</sup> Furthermore, technological advances may vastly extend its reach and strengthen its grasp, as many science fiction authors have suggested. Most important, though, Frohnmayer believed the study of totalitarianism and its manifestations can illuminate our own society, raising important questions about such topics as the power of peer groups, new threats to personal privacy, the possibility of monopolistic media control, and the behaviors of some police forces.

### G. Modern Theorists

First among the modern theorists for Frohnmayer was Robert Greenleaf and his approach, Servant Leadership.<sup>74</sup> Greenleaf provides a tool kit of insights, not a series of prescriptive commands, as a way of understanding leadership theory.<sup>75</sup> When pushed by students in the term's last class session to tell them which theorist he preferred, Frohnmayer would admit a fondness for Greenleaf. He especially liked Greenleaf's statement that, "[r]esponsibility . . . requires that a person think, speak, and act as if personally accountable to all who may be affected by his or her thoughts, words, and deeds."<sup>76</sup>

Frohnmayer also found much to admire in Barbara Kellerman for her work on both followers and bad leadership,<sup>77</sup> and John O'Neil for his description of the "shadow" in organizations.<sup>78</sup> Two other theorists also distilled leadership in ways Frohnmayer found particularly helpful: Stan Long with his "Black Prince" model of four leadership styles with ascending motivation cores and conduct outcomes (brute force, stripes, expertise, esprit),<sup>79</sup> and Adam Bryant of the *New York Times* with his five competencies (passionate curiosity, battle-hardened confidence, team smarts, a simple mind-set, and fearlessness).<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 118.

<sup>74</sup> ROBERT K. GREENLEAF, ON BECOMING A SERVANT-LEADER (Don M. Frick & Larry C. Spears eds., 1996).

<sup>75</sup> *Id.*

<sup>76</sup> *Id.* at 41.

<sup>77</sup> See BARBARA KELLERMAN, BAD LEADERSHIP: WHAT IT IS, HOW IT HAPPENS, WHY IT MATTERS 29–48 (2004); see also FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 56.

<sup>78</sup> JOHN R. O'NEIL, THE PARADOX OF SUCCESS 66–84 (1993); see also FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 78.

<sup>79</sup> See Dave Frohnmayer, President, Univ. of Or., Leadership and the Ethical Challenges of Government, Address at the Conference of Western Attorneys General (July 28, 2002).

<sup>80</sup> BRYANT, *supra* note 16, at pt. 1.

Frohnmayer also especially appreciated the insights of Peter Drucker<sup>81</sup> and John Gardner.<sup>82</sup>

Frohnmayer shared with students recurring themes and leadership characteristics suggested by these theorists that he believed could be valuable:

1. The importance of knowing thyself.
2. The skills that enable management of self—self-discipline, emotional control, and the capacity to “shift gears” quickly as contexts change.
3. The ability to scan social and environmental horizons and to assess and generalize about the larger environment.
4. The ability to organize one’s time, staff, and priorities.
5. The capacity through personal efficacy to set, articulate, and execute goals.

Frohnmayer taught the freshman seminar for nearly two decades. It provided the basis for two other courses at the UO: the Robert D. Clark Honors College colloquium on *Advanced Topics in Leadership and Leadership for Lawyers* in the School of Law. The students in those two courses were required to read the 218-page book, *Explorations in Leadership Theory: A Liberal Arts Perspective*,<sup>83</sup> that covered in detail all the elements of the freshman seminar.

In the conclusion of the book the co-authors noted the following:

Leadership theory always has been uneasily poised between the world of knowledge and reflection, and the sometimes separate world of advising and doing. Only the most rigid determinist would claim that we cannot learn leadership or at least learn to lead better. We retain an underlying faith that through ourselves or others, we can improve leadership skills and therefore affect lives and this world for the better.<sup>84</sup>

## II

### ADVANCED TOPICS IN LEADERSHIP

The Honors College colloquium, *Advanced Topics in Leadership*, focused on the same topics as the freshman seminar but addressed them with additional materials and included a section on the university

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<sup>81</sup> See FROHNMAYER & WEST, *supra* note 1, at 144–45.

<sup>82</sup> See *id.* at 147–49.

<sup>83</sup> *Id.*

<sup>84</sup> *Id.* at 183.

presidency. The colloquium consisted of extended class discussions and writing both a research paper and an annotated bibliography. Students were required to read the book by Frohnmayer and West and a 422-page course packet,<sup>85</sup> as well as Dostoevsky's *The Brothers Karamazov*,<sup>86</sup> and Eric Hoffer's *The True Believer*.<sup>87</sup> The chapters and excerpts in the course packet included authors such as Czeslaw Milosz, Tzvetan Todorov, and William James.<sup>88</sup>

The readings for the section on university presidencies included the first chapter in Warren Bennis's 1989 book *Why Leaders Can't Lead: The Unconscious Conspiracy Continues*.<sup>89</sup> The chapter focused on a story close to home for the students. "One Job, One Year, One Life," chronicles the final year (1969) of Charles Johnson's UO presidency and his death while still in office.<sup>90</sup> Frohnmayer never shied away from the real-world difficulties of leaders and leadership. But he always tried to leaven the harshness. He often quoted the advice he received in 1994 when he was named president. It came from Jerry Bogen, then a UO professor: "Universities are like oil tankers. They sit low in the water, they have a cargo which is difficult to handle at best . . . and is slippery at worst . . . and they are nearly impossible to steer away from disaster."<sup>91</sup>

In the colloquium, Frohnmayer expected graduate-level work as well as a sophisticated and scholarly analysis of the topics and theories discussed. The colloquium was not as experiential as the freshman seminar. The students did not interview leaders, ask questions of guest speakers, or work in groups outside of class discussions. But they did receive the same level of focused attention and exposure to a range of writers and thinkers who challenged and even inspired them. The evaluations of the colloquium were much like those of the freshman seminar, effusively positive. Perhaps one measure of whether

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<sup>85</sup> Course Packet, Advanced Topics in Leadership, HC 421H, Fall Term 2014, University of Oregon (on file with author).

<sup>86</sup> DOSTOEVSKY, *supra* note 72.

<sup>87</sup> HOFFER, *supra* note 62.

<sup>88</sup> Course Packet, *supra* note 85.

<sup>89</sup> WARREN BENNIS, *WHY LEADERS CAN'T LEAD: THE UNCONSCIOUS CONSPIRACY CONTINUES* 3–13 (1989).

<sup>90</sup> *Id.* President Johnson died in an automobile accident and "[m]any thought he . . . committed suicide." *Id.* at 3. Bennis uses this tragic story to introduce the internal and external pressures that leaders routinely face. *Id.* at 4–13.

<sup>91</sup> Letter from Jerry Bogen, Professor, University of Oregon, to David B. Frohnmayer, President, University of Oregon (1994) (on file with author) (ellipses in original).



Frohnmayer succeeded in his goals for the colloquium can be found in the titles of a few of the final papers:

- *The Practical Application of Neuroscience in Leadership Development*;
- *Stupid Girls: The Impact of the Media's Portrayal of Women on Aspirations and the Ability to Become Leaders*;
- *Nietzschean Leadership Theory Through the Eyes of Descartes, Locke, and Hume*;
- *Exploring the Survival of Dynastic Totalitarianism in North Korea*; and
- *The Emotion of Moral Dilemmas*.<sup>92</sup>

As was the case with the freshman seminar, the colloquium students (most of whom were seniors in the Honors College) kept in touch with the instructors and some got together in study groups after the colloquium ended to continue reading and talking about topics from the course.

### III LEADERSHIP FOR LAWYERS

Frohnmayer's third leadership course was *Leadership for Lawyers*, an intensive weeklong distilled version of both the freshman seminar and the colloquium with some "lawyer-only" add-ons and practical advice. In his introduction to this course Frohnmayer noted,

[A]t least since the publication of Democracy in America by Alexis de Tocqueville in 1832, it has been assumed as an article of national faith that lawyers occupy a preeminent role as leaders. Lawyers 'lead' in law firms . . . [and] are called upon, indeed expected, to head non-profit organizations, corporations and even major universities.

Yet there is . . . almost nothing . . . in modern legal education that prepares lawyers for formal leadership roles . . . . Indeed, there is much about metaphors for lawyering that impede an understanding of how to lead successfully (consider "gunslinger[.]" "parliamentarian[.]" "process freak[.]" "risk averter[.]" "hairsplitter[.]" "stickler for rules[.]" and "obstructionist[.]" to name a few).

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<sup>92</sup> These student titles were used with permission, and the papers are on file with the author.

[In this seminar] [w]e will examine various major schools of leadership theory and explore models of leadership that actually work.<sup>93</sup>

The aspiring lawyers in the course read the book by Frohnmayer and West based on the freshman seminar, watched the film *To Kill a Mockingbird*,<sup>94</sup> and read Robert W. Gordon's article, *Are Lawyers Friends of Democracy?*<sup>95</sup> Class sessions alternated between theory and enhancing personal and professional skills. The latter included analyzing one's own leadership behavior in the context of Adam Bryant's competencies: conducting meetings, making presentations, discussing whether legal professionals are trained in ways that hinder the development of leadership competencies, and conducting individual SWOT analyses (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats).

One of the competencies often expected of those who lead is strategic planning. Though he grew to appreciate it, Frohnmayer had some hesitations, which he sometimes expressed to his law students with the following story:

Dakota tribal wisdom says when you discover you are riding a dead horse, the best strategy is to dismount. However, in business we often try other strategies with dead horses, including the following:

- Change riders.
- Say things like "This is the way we have always ridden this horse."
- Appoint a committee to study the horse.
- Arrange to visit other sites to see how they ride dead horses.
- Change the requirements, declaring "This horse is not dead."
- Harness several dead horses together for increased speed.<sup>96</sup>

As in the freshman seminar, Frohnmayer did not advocate for one theory of leadership in the law class. He did offer one mnemonic, Dave's five L-words: live, love, learn, laugh, and leave a legacy. Mark Frohnmayer noted at his father's memorial service that there were

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<sup>93</sup> Proposed Course Description by Dave Frohnmayer for Leadership for Lawyers, January Term Course, University of Oregon School of Law (on file with author).

<sup>94</sup> *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD* (Universal Pictures 1962).

<sup>95</sup> Robert W. Gordon, *Are Lawyers Friends of Democracy?*, in *THE PARADOX OF PROFESSIONALISM: LAWYERS AND THE POSSIBILITY OF JUSTICE* 31 (Scott L. Cummings ed., 2011).

<sup>96</sup> Jeffrey H. Cafauda, Storyteller, Ass'n Mgmt., *Riding a Dead Horse* (Jan. 2001) (as restated by Slim Sommerville, President, UO Found. (Nov. 2001)) (on file with author).

actually six L-words in the list; arithmetic was not the elder Frohnmayer's strong suit.

In addition to his mnemonic, he gave the following advice to lawyers who want to lead:

1. A good lawyer (and leader) speaks from principles such as rights, responsibilities, and community when others are talking nonsense.
2. Your position must be anchored in law or policy.
3. Know how to summarize, explain, and synthesize.
4. Follow Peter Drucker's "three deep breaths advice": listen first, speak last.
5. Be someone who builds.

Did teaching, especially teaching leadership, accomplish what Frohnmayer hoped—to keep him engaged while he was president with what mattered most at a university? I believe it did. His fifteen-year tenure, which far exceeds that of most university presidents, is evidence that it did. Teaching also kept him engaged in the intellectual pursuits that began for him very early in life. His last e-mail to me, sent the day before he died, was a link to an article titled *Heidegger's Philosophy of Violence*.<sup>97</sup> The students in the freshmen seminar read Hannah Arendt, Heidegger's student, as part of the section on totalitarianism, and Frohnmayer was always scanning for articles to add to the class reading assignments. His note ended with "I couldn't open."<sup>98</sup> Using his computer functions was not a strong suit either.

#### CONCLUSION

It seems appropriate to give Frohnmayer's students the last word. These are excerpts from their class evaluations and letters they sent me after he died.<sup>99</sup>

*[The] class challenged me to think and act in ways I will be lucky to encounter again. Dave's own leadership was immediately apparent in the class and it was an embodiment of the theories as well as his encompassing knowledge of them that left an impression on us. In*

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<sup>97</sup> Richard Wolin, *Heidegger's Philosophy of Violence*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC. (Mar. 2, 2015), <http://chronicle.com/article/Heideggers-Philosophy-of/190389/>.

<sup>98</sup> E-mail from Dave Frohnmayer to author (Mar. 9, 2015, 12:28 PM) (on file with author).

<sup>99</sup> On file with author.

*reminiscing, one of the things I immediately remembered was his way of taking students' questions and seemingly understanding them better than the person who asked them. Without a trace of condescension he could re-present the questions eloquently and articulately while at the same time making you feel as though you'd asked it in his words. Perhaps that's the key to real education: breathing life into something not yet fully formed and watching what emerges. His ability to enthrall our classroom both with his demeanor and also his oratory prowess was something I will not forget and am thankful to have experienced. His attention to detail and ability to challenge us kindly as well. . . . Both of you modeled so much for me and helped me envision what could be possible.*

*[I]t was mesmerizing to listen and interact with you [both] through class discussions[,] [w]ith every reading, theorist, [and] guest speaker. . . . I loved the class—so much that every day I called my parents or sister or grandma and told them everything I learned in class, read and explained to them the key quotes from the readings, and described (in elaborate detail) everything that the guest speaker had to say. They loved it, and especially enjoyed that I had found a class that was so engaging to me.*

*Professor Frohnmayer is genius, thoughtful, inspirational—every part of the reason I came to study at the Honors College. . . . I was captivated and more than excited for every class period. . . . I felt respected, which in turn led to quite a bit of self-discovery. . . . [I]ncredible.*

*This class challenged me more than I ever thought possible. It was one of the most rewarding things I've ever done.*

*[F]riggin' awesome.*

*Life changing course. Improved my writing and critical thinking skills ten fold.*

*[T]here are no words to encompass the . . . gratefulness I feel for the small miracle that landed me as your student. This class has forced me to rethink the way I perceive just about everything.*

*Dave was such an inspiration to me. He was an unbelievable leader, who coached people to their full potential. He saw . . . the greatness in others when they weren't able to see in themselves. . . . I still can't believe he will never teach another lesson, never have another debate over coffee, or meet to recount my adventures from being abroad in*

*Switzerland. . . He was truly an inspiration to us all, and he continues to live through the people whos[e] lives he's impacted.*

