

Section 5 – Part AND Part – From Polarization to Optimization

Section 5 - Introduction

“The issues that cross my desk are hard and complicated, and often time involve the clash not of right or wrong, but of two rights. And you are having to balance and reconcile against competing values that are equally legitimate.”

President Barack Obama, Rolling Stone, October 14, 2010. Jann S. Wenner.

President Obama may not have heard of Polarity Thinking yet notice how he, like many others, has combined his life experience and intuition to identify the importance of interdependent pairs. He describes them as “competing values” and as “two rights.”^{R14}

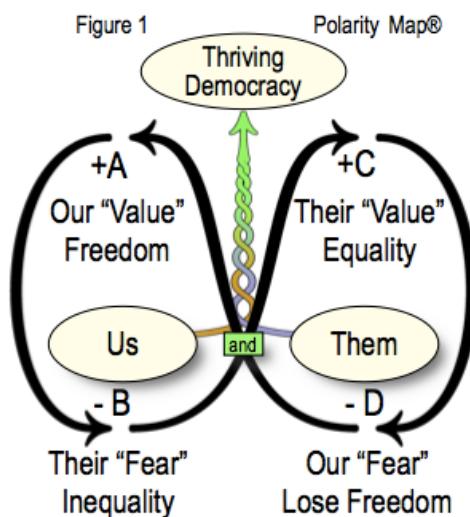
In Figure 1, the polarity of Us AND Them can serve as an organizer of President Obama’s wisdom.^{R34} The two competing “values” are located in the two upper quadrants (+A and +C).^{R47}

The group of Us is holding the value of Freedom that We think is right. The group of Them is holding on to Equality that They think is right. The map is a good example of Obama’s point about “two rights:” Freedom AND Equality. They are also “competing values.” The map offers more. The two values have fears attached to them in the diagonal downsides (-B and -D).

From an OR thinking perspective, either we are right OR they are right. This assumption triggers Us with a fear that we could lose our Freedom (-D). It would be very clear to Us that the Loss of Freedom would be wrong. The same OR thinking triggers Them with a fear that they would find themselves in a situation of gross inequality (-B). It would be very clear to Them that inequality is wrong.^{R59} The stronger the value, the stronger the fear.^{R60} OR thinking about competing values leads to polarization between Us and Them. This creates a vicious cycle where both sides experience a loss of values.^{R42} AND thinking about competing values can create a virtuous cycle elevating the system toward its Greater Purpose.^{R46} In President Obama’s context, a Greater Purpose Statement (GPS) could be a Thriving Democracy.

Section 5 Summary

The map in Figure 1 summarizes the subject of Section 5, the relationship between two Parts of a system, i.e., Part AND Part. One Part could be you and the other Part could be any other person (Self AND Other). One Part could be your group and the other Part could be any other group (Us AND Them). Within a family, the Part AND Part could be



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two partners in a marriage, two children in a family, or a parent and a child. In an organization, the Part AND Part could be two individuals, two teams, or two departments. In the United States, the Part AND Part could be President Trump Supporters AND President Trump Opposition. In the United Nations, the Parts could be two countries or two groups of countries. Regardless of the system size, President Obama's realization applies.^{R10} AND thinking allows us to leverage the natural tension between Us AND Them to build a relationship that works for both. It can help use the natural tension between two Parts to move from polarization to optimization. OR thinking, alone, undermines that relationship.^{R8} Without AND thinking, it leads to an increasingly dysfunctional polarization.^{R7} It also leads to sexism, racism and poverty.

Four Chapters

As discussed in prior sections of this book, there is a need to empower both poles of any polarity.^{R45} With that in mind, Chapter 22 – Claiming Power AND Sharing Power – addresses the Part AND Part polarity and each Part's right to claim its power AND the obligation to share power allowing the other Part to claim their power. Chapter 23 – Organizational – is about the tension within the U.S. Department of Defense concerning its need to provide both security and access to data. In this case, the DOD optimized a polarity to serve and protect the country effectively. Chapter 24 – National – deals with the polarization in the United States between President Trump Supporters AND President Trump Opposition. Chapter 25 – International - is about the global nuclear arms tension between Us AND Them.

Chapter 22 – Claiming Power AND Sharing Power

“Power With Others” Builds Powerful Relationships 1+1=3.^{R8}

Each of us has a right to claim our power. You have that right and so does everyone else. Claiming individual power within a relationship is a positive act AND there is the possibility of much more – the power of the relationship itself. Believing that we can both claim power AND share power creates the possibility for relationship power. This is a power that maximizes each individual's potential AND maximizes the potential of the relationship. This relationship power is only available by supplementing OR thinking with AND thinking in relation to power.^{R8,R45}

Reflect on a relationship where you feel empowered. It could be with a close friend, a colleague at work, a boss or someone who works for you. Regardless of your relative hierarchical status with this person, you feel energized by being with him or her. Most of the time, you feel good about your time together and the creativity that comes out of it. When you disagree, both of you feel like you are heard and respected and can influence the outcome. In this relationship, you feel like you can claim your own power to make a difference AND it feels like the other person is also free to claim their power to make a difference. The relationship itself is powerful. It brings something beyond just what each

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of you bring to it alone. As a two-person team, you each become stronger. There is a synergy between you that is more powerful than the sum of the two of you.

Figure 2, below shows how “Power With Others” might be pictured on a Polarity Map^(R). When Claiming Power/Sharing Power is connected with AND, the natural tension can become a virtuous cycle that benefits you, the other person, and the relationship itself. What could be polarized becomes optimized: $1+1=3$ ^{R8}

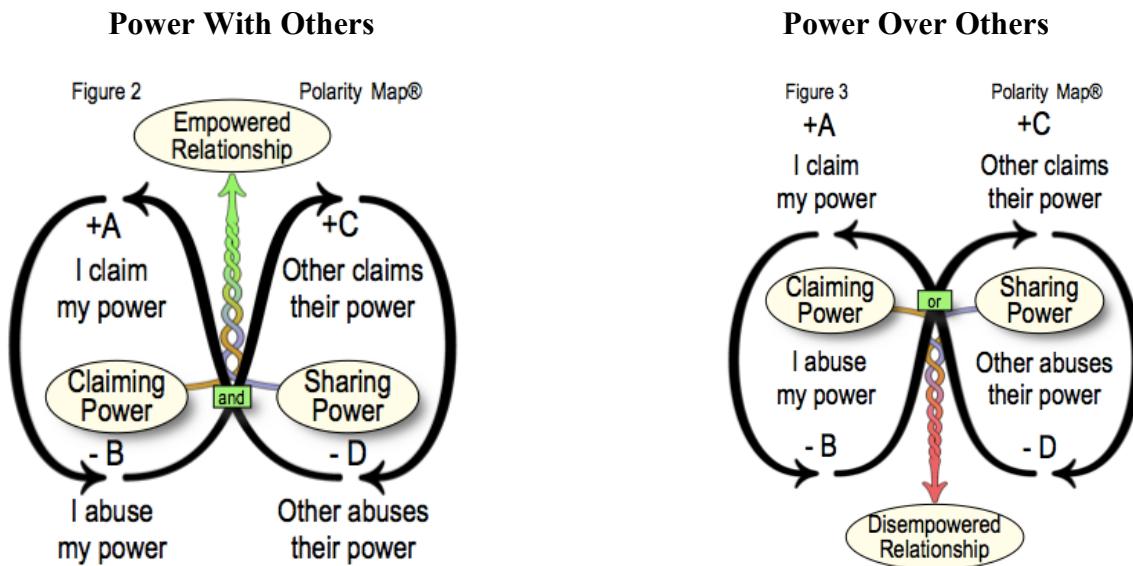
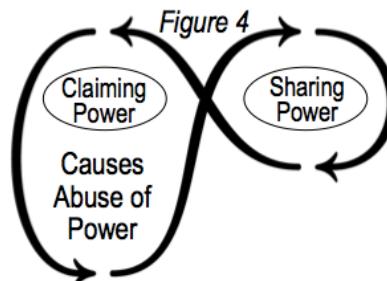


Figure 3, above, shows how “Power Over Others” might be pictured in a Polarity Map.^(R) In this scenario, power in your relationship is seen as a zero sum game – the more power the other has, the less power you have. If there were a limited power of 10 units between you and another person and the other person went from 5 units to 7, you would go from 5 units to 3. With OR thinking, the natural tension between each of you claiming your power becomes a vicious cycle that undermines the relationship and the power it offers.^{R7} The result is not good for you, the other person or the relationship. When we engage in an either/or power struggle, initially one of us “wins” and the other is disempowered.^{R27} Then, both of us are disempowered and the relationship is undermined.^{R42} OR thinking without AND thinking polarizes the relationship and undermines the potential synergy between the two Parts that need each other over time: $1+1=1/2$.^{R7}

Claiming Power Without Sharing Power Causes an Abuse of Power.^{R89} (Figure 4)

I used to become irritated when I would come home late at night from a trip and find our door locked. Why was this door locked? We lived outside a small town and never locked the doors when I was around. My wife, Dana, and I both believed the community was safe for people and property. As a result, I did not even have a key to the house on my key chain.



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We had one hidden to use on the rare occasion when we locked the door. My irritation at the locked door changed radically with one phone call in 1992. It was my 23-year-old daughter, Shalom. In tears, with a sadness I cannot begin to imagine, she tells me she has been raped. After the call, she comes to our home. I hold her gently for a long time as we cry together. Shalom has given me permission to share this story because she knows this abuse of power is far too common and wants it to be acknowledged and addressed.

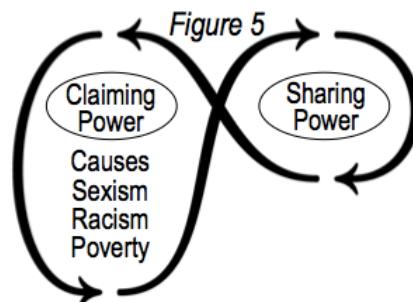
Shalom was raped by a man because he had the power to do it. We men have the power to do that. Why does it take the rape of my daughter for me to really wake up to the power difference between men and women and the regular abuse of that power over women in almost every aspect of the lives of men and women? I do not know. It may be because those of us with power over others lack sensitivity to our impact on those over whom we have the power. I am no longer “irritated” that our door is locked when I come home from a road trip late at night. Dana has just been self-protective in my absence.

The day after holding Shalom in the wake of her attack, I was walking down the halls of a large hospital. For the first time in my life, I was aware that some of the women coming toward me, going the opposite direction down the hall, could be afraid of me and they could even be angry with me. After the rape, I understood. It was not about their vulnerability in the busy hallway of the hospital. It was about the power imbalance between men and women and the regular abuse of that power. I was afraid and angry with us (men) out of concern for my wife, my daughters, granddaughters, women friends, and women everywhere.

Claiming Power Without Sharing Power is a Cause of Sexism, Racism and Poverty.^{R89}

There are many kinds of power. For the moment, I want to focus on explicit power over others. I am talking about raw, physical power – the power to override another person’s “no.” I am talking about the power to dictate the conditions for others’ lives, to put indigenous people on reservations, to define some as white and enslave those defined as black,¹ to put people in concentration camps; to invade another country, to pay some less than others for the same work, to write and enforce the laws, and to escape punishment for breaking the laws.

Figure 5 could relate to any country in the world. In more specific terms we can focus on United States history with those Claiming Power being wealthy white men like me. (By “wealthy” I mean that I have significantly more money than I need to provide the basics for my family.) It shows how Our claiming power for Us without sharing power with Them is a



¹ Battalora, Jacqueline, *Birth of a White Nation, The Invention of White People and Its Relevance Today*. Houston. Strategic Book Publishing and Rights Co. 2013.

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cause of sexism, racism and poverty. It dehumanizes Us and Them. Over time, it polarizes and disempowers Us, Them, and the relationship.

The same could be said about Rwanda with its long history of the minority Tutsi claiming power and not sharing power with the majority Hutu. This history, combined with the intervention of European colonists, became a vicious cycle resulting in the genocide of Tutsis.² These situations are always more complicated than the tensions within a few polarities. At the same time, the underlying tensions and power dynamics with Us OR Them are at play.

At the global level, the basic physical power imbalance men have over women combined with OR thinking about power is a primary cause and perpetrator of sexism. It has contributed to the underrepresentation of women in positions of power in business, politics, and religion. This underrepresentation has led to a host of other inequities for women. It also has led to women living with constant reminders of their power differential with men and its potential abuse.

Within the United States, it is smart and right for wealthy white, men to both claim our unalienable right to power AND share power with women, people of color and relatively poor people as they claim their unalienable right to power. Seeing this power relationship as either We have power OR They have power only makes things worse. Seeing and intentionally leveraging this power polarity will help us more effectively address these chronic issues while affirming the humanity of Us and Them.

One step toward leveraging this power polarity is understanding the role of two, shared human wants and two, shared human needs. These four are not the whole picture. Yet, I think they are important parts of the picture.

We Consciously Want to Protect Us and to Provide for Us.^{R90}

We Consciously Want to Protect Us.^{R90}

Claiming power for Us (whoever Us is anywhere in the world) while denying Them claim to Their power is an abuse of power.^{R89} But where does the drive to claim power over Them come from? It comes naturally through wanting to protect ourselves and our families. It expands as we want to protect our company, our tribe, and our country. If we assume that either We claim power OR They claim power, we will make sure that We claim power while preventing them from claiming power. We must have power over Them to protect Us from Them.

When I work with the U.S. military, I am joining them in their mission to “Serve and Protect.” Many men and women have given their lives to protect their family and their

² The Rwandan Genocide. Modern History Project 2012. History of Hutu-Tutsi Relations. <https://modernhistoryproject2012.wordpress.com/history-of-hutu-tutsi-relations/>

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country. This same desire to protect family and country is a fundamental motivation for the men and women of other countries, both our allies and our enemies. In the United States, this desire to protect has resulted in us spending more on national defense than China, Saudi Arabia, Russia, United Kingdom, India, France, and Japan combined.³

Our desire to protect those we love and the country we love is natural and powerful. This deep, essential desire becomes dysfunctional when it is combined with OR thinking about power. From an OR perspective, my country must have more power than any other country. Alternatively, my country must join with others so that the Us becomes a group of allies with enough collective power over other countries to protect Us from Them. One example of Us is NATO (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), with Them being non-NATO countries.

We Consciously Want to Provide for Us.^{R90}

Protecting Us is not enough. We also want to provide for Us. We want Us to have food, water, shelter, clothing, education, work with a living wage, healthcare and, if possible, the joy of living in abundance. In Chapter 7, I talked about the polarity of Abundance for Some AND Basics for All. If we see this polarity as: Abundance for Some OR Basics for All, we will seek power over Them in order to provide abundance for Us. The natural quest for abundance for us, combined with OR thinking, is a primary cause and perpetuator of poverty.

We Unconsciously Need to Belong with Us and to Project on Them.^{R91}

We Unconsciously Need To Belong with Us.^{R91}

We all have a need to belong. Because this need is not as conscious or as obvious as our want to protect and provide, it is easy to underestimate its influence on how we think and act. Our need to belong is satisfied, in part, by creating an Us. There are different levels of Us in terms of size. Us can be our nuclear family, our extended family, our tribe or our country. No matter where we draw the line encircling Us, there will be a Them on the other side of the line.

The one, significant exception is when we are aware of the unity of everything. From that awareness, we all belong. This unity consciousness has been identified by mystics from various religions over the ages. Martin Buber describes it as the I – Thou relationship.^{4 5}

³ Alston, [Philp](#) (December 15, 2017). "[Statement on Visit to the USA, by Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights](#)".

⁴ [I and Thou](#). Charles Scribner's Sons. 1937. Reprint Continuum International Publishing Group, 2004,

⁵ I will explore this further in Chapter 34.

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One beautiful, positive example of creating an Us AND Them internationally is the opening ceremony of the Olympics. Each team arrives with their own national flag and outfits that proudly identify Our team and Our country where We belong. This sense of belonging as a part of Us can be a great feeling. There is an Us and there are several other teams representing their countries who become Them. When the team from my country (Us) is competing with a team from another country (Them), I cheer for my team and celebrate if they win. In this context, the identification of Us and Them can be a source of enjoyment for all.

Drawing a line in a circle around Us and a circle around Them (differentiating Us from Them) is perfectly natural. Where we draw the line is not as important as how we treat those on either side of the line. In our effort to belong, we draw a circle around Our country, Our race or ethnic group, Our gender, Our sexual orientation, Our religious group, or Our economic group, and call those inside the circle Us. Two questions arise from creating our membership within the circle: “How do we treat those inside the circle (Us)? And, how do we treat those outside the circle (Them)?”

When we ask these questions from an Us OR Them perspective, combined with the need to belong, we are likely to choose Us over Them. In order to belong, we are likely to claim positive things about Us, to contrast Us from Them in ways that favor Us, to agree to protect Us from Them, to be clear to the world that we are not one of Them, and we pledge allegiance to Us.

For example, as a citizen of the United States, I affirm my belonging through Our pledge of allegiance:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

When you read this pledge, which is intended for citizens of the United States, think about the two questions raised earlier: How do we treat those inside the circle (all of our fellow citizens)? And, how do we treat those outside the circle (citizens of other countries)?

From a polarity perspective we recognize the false choice between those on either side of the line no matter where we draw the line. We recognize that to see Us completely is to love Us AND, to see Them completely is to love Them.^{R15} We recognize that it is in Our interest to claim Our power AND to share power with Them. It is also in Their interest to claim Their power AND to share power with Us.^{R58}

In summary, our unconscious need to belong leads to our claiming membership in different subgroups we call Us which creates other sub groups we call Them. We tend to see the relationship as Us OR Them rather than Us AND Them. This is because of our tendency to see things from an “OR” perspective in the first place. Also, seeing the

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relationship as Us OR Them helps secure my belonging with Us. For example, a statement like, “I am not a Muslim, I am a Christian” reinforces my belonging to My group (Christian) by clearly differentiating Myself from Them in another group (Muslim). I can further solidify my **belonging** with Us by demonstrating my commitment to **protect** Us and to **provide** for Us. This combination increases my tendency to embrace Us while decreasing my tendency to embrace Them.

We Unconsciously Need To Project on Them.^{R91}

Chapter 21 discussed our need to identify a Them who looks most different than Us (an obvious “not us”) on whom to project those things we cannot admit are true of Us. For me, as a white male, the two most obvious “not us” groups are people of color and women. The stronger the need to project on Them, the stronger the unconscious need for power over Them.^{R92} If we have power over them, we can define Our “reality” about Us and Them. For example, We can define Us as smart, caring, and industrious and deny our own times of stupidity, ruthlessness or laziness. Just project these negative parts of ourselves on to Them. They thus get defined as stupid, ruthless, and lazy. Our unconscious need to project might be as strong as the want to protect and to provide and the need to belong.

If we can identify Them as evil, savages, gangs, terrorists, infidels, animals, or criminals we can rationalize our right, even our obligation, to claim power over them. The degree of inhumanity we employ to gain and maintain power over Them will be matched by the degree of inhumanity We need to project on Them. They become less than human so We can live with being less than human to Them.^{R93}

Religion Used as a Basis for Power Over Them Leading to Abuse.

For ages, we have used religion as a basis for power over Them. This is a tragic denial of the central message of our religious traditions that all are loved and there are no lines in our ultimate unity. In spite of this ancient wisdom, we have had power struggles between two parts of a religion as between Catholics and Protestants within Christianity or Sunni and Shia within Islam. It has also been between any two religions. In each case, the claim is that “God is on Our side.” One dramatic assertion of power over Them on behalf of the Christian religion was a Bull by Pope Nicholas V 37 years before Columbus sailed West for India.

Romanus Pontifex

(Granting the Portuguese a monopoly in trade with Africa) January 8, 1455

We ...granted among other things free and ample faculty to the aforesaid King Alfonso — to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, ..., and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself

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and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit....⁶

This proclamation, known as the Doctrine of Discovery, was an assertion of power by a Christian leader over people of other religions and it was an assertion of power by a white, male leader over people of color. It reflects the desire to **protect** Our religion and to **provide** for Us. It also provides a reason for **belonging** to the group identified as Christian while creating an opportunity to **project** on non-Christians anything Christians will not acknowledge as true of Us. I use the Christian tradition as an example of Us abusing Them because it is my tradition and Our conduct is important for Us acknowledge. The claiming of power for Us while denying it to Them has been done within and between other religious traditions as well.

So what happens when, in our want to protect and provide and in our need to belong and project, We win in a power struggle and gain power over Them? They are in trouble, the relationship is in trouble, and Our humanity is in trouble.

“To The Victors Go The Spoils.” “Might Makes Right.”

These two quotes reflect the common results for the “winner” of a power struggle. For example, in the early history of European settlers in what is now called North America We, wealthy white men, with the benefit of guns, gained power over Them - indigenous people. With black people, We started off with power over Them as they arrived in chains. We needed land for cotton and removed indigenous people from the land. We needed cheap labor, bought slaves, and kept them in slavery. In the wake of “victory,” We made assertions of superiority about Us and inferiority about Them.

As victors, We claim that We won because We are smarter, stronger, more industrious, more courageous, more committed, more creative, more persistent, more loving of our families and country, and more virtuous. We claim that we won because God is on our side. We can quote the Pope! We deserve what We got and Those who lost deserve whatever We decide they deserve. Our superiority becomes a given that has been blessed by Our Christian leadership.

Power We Have Gained Over Others Must Be Maintained.

The same set of OR assumptions that drive Us to gain power over Them (to protect, provide, belong, and project) drive us to maintain that power. Our legal system protected Us from Them, gave Us financial advantage, established that we belonged and they did not (“White only” signs), and allowed Us to project on Them any negative thing we do

⁶ An English translation of *Romanus Pontifex* as published in *European Treaties bearing on the History of the United States and its Dependencies to 1648*, Frances Gardiner Davenport, editor, Carnegie Institution of Washington, 1917, Washington, D.C., at pp. 20-26. The original text in Latin is in the same volume, at pp. 13-20.

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not want to recognize as true of us. We claimed our power while systematically undermining or outlawing efforts that would allow Them to claim Their power. We became slave owners and They became criminals for attempting to escape while pursuing their “unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”⁷ We became the smart ones and They and their teachers were punished for efforts to learn to read. Teaching slaves to read was made illegal because we would not allow Them an empowering skill. From an OR perspective, sharing the power of reading would have undermined Our power. If They gained power, We would lose it. In Our power over Them, We became the civilized ones and indigenous people became the savages. We became the elected leaders and They were not allowed to vote.

Why I'M Focusing Primarily on My Group and My Country

Examples of abuse of power by Us over Them is not limited to the United States, to wealthy white men like me, or to the 1800's. Abuse of power over Them is happening everywhere that power is viewed from an OR perspective. As a wealthy white man from the United States, it is important to acknowledge rather than deny our historical and present abuse of power. This acknowledgement is not intended to promote guilt in anyone. The intent is to understand how any of Us (Part) can become so cruel to Them (another Part). No matter who we identify as Us and who we identify as Them, the intent of this book is to see Us AND Them more completely. Seeing completely leads to loving Us AND Them.^{R15}

When we can acknowledge our shortcomings, we reduce the need to project those shortcomings onto Them. Acknowledging past and present abuse of power also provides an honest base from which to address that abuse. It helps us understand how we got there without condoning it. With this intent, I will focus primarily on examples of abuse of power by My group in My country.

President Andrew Jackson – Slavery and Removal

President Andrew Jackson is example of how claiming power without sharing power was an abuse of power. Before becoming president, Andrew Jackson was a slave owner, an inherently cruel role imbued with “power over.” Gaining power over slaves by purchasing them led to additional cruelty in order to maintain power over them. This is reflected in the advertisements placed by slave owners.

“Stop the Runaway,” Andrew Jackson urged in an ad placed in the Tennessee Gazette in October 1804. The future president gave a detailed description: A “Mulatto Man Slave,” about thirty years old, six feet and an inch high, stout made and active, talks sensible, stoops in his walk, and has a remarkably large foot, broad across the root of the toes — will pass for a free man....”

⁷ United States Declaration of Independence, 1776

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Jackson, who would become the country's seventh commander in chief in 1829, promised anyone who captured this "Mulatto Man Slave" a reward of \$50, plus "reasonable" expenses paid.

Jackson added a line that some historians find particularly cruel. It offered "ten dollars extra, for every hundred lashes any person will give him, to the amount of three hundred."

The ad was signed, "ANDREW JACKSON, Near Nashville, State of Tennessee."⁸

Power Over Indigenous People in North America - Removal

In 1830, President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, which forcibly relocated most members of indigenous tribes in the South. The power of wealthy white men to "remove" indigenous people from the land worked hand in hand with the power to own slaves. We removed the indigenous people from the land and bought slaves to work it.

At the beginning of the 1830s, nearly 125,000 Native Americans lived on millions of acres of land in Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina and Florida—land their ancestors had occupied and cultivated for generations. By the end of the decade, very few natives remained anywhere in the southeastern United States. Working on behalf of white settlers who wanted to grow cotton on the Indians' land, the federal government forced them to leave their homelands and walk thousands of miles to a specially designated "Indian territory" across the Mississippi River. This difficult and sometimes deadly journey is known as the Trail of Tears...

Scott and his troops forced the Cherokee into stockades at bayonet point while whites looted their homes and belongings. Then, they marched the Indians more than 1,200 miles to Indian territory. Whooping cough, typhus, dysentery, cholera and starvation were epidemic along the way, and historians estimate that more than 5,000 Cherokee died as a result of the journey.

By 1840, tens of thousands of Native Americans had been driven off of their land in the southeastern states and forced to move across the Mississippi to Indian territory. The federal government promised that their new land would remain unmolested forever, but as the line of white settlement pushed westward, "Indian country" shrank and shrank. In 1907, Oklahoma became a state and Indian territory was gone for good.⁹

⁸ "Hunting down runaway slaves: The cruel ads of Andrew Jackson and 'the master class,'" By DeNeen L. Brown, Washington Post, May 1, 2017.

⁹ Trail of Tears. History.com staff.History.com.2009.<http://www.history.com/topics/native-american-history/trail-of-tears>

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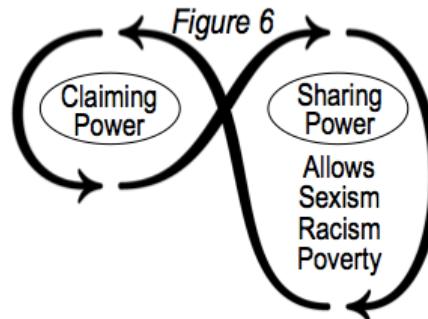
The Cherokee Nation, in an effort to legally claim their power, appealed the plan to remove them from their land all the way to the US Supreme Court and won:

John Marshall's opinion for the Court majority in *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia* was essentially that Georgia had no jurisdiction over the Cherokees and no claim to their lands. But Georgia officials simply ignored the decision, and President Jackson refused to enforce it. Jackson was furious and personally affronted by the Marshall ruling, stating, "Mr. Marshall has made his decision. Now let him enforce it!"¹⁰

This flouting of the Supreme Court was a tragic example of claiming power while denying the Cherokee Nation their legal claim to power. This abuse of power over Them undermined the U.S. constitutional system of government itself.

Sharing Power Without Claiming Power also Leads to Sexism, Racism and Poverty.^{R89}

Often, the intimidation of those with power over those over whom they have power leads to accommodation by those with less power. This accommodation looks like Figure 6. Sharing power without claiming power by those being abused and their potential allies allows Sexism, Racism, and Poverty. The wife who is in an abusive relationship can be afraid of claiming her power because of the violence threatened if she does. The woman accepting unequal pay for the same work can be afraid of claiming her power out of fear of losing a job needed to feed her children. The slave may not claim their power by running away or revolting against the slave owner out of fear of the consequences for themselves and their family. A tribe of indigenous people may not claim their power and right to their land but agree to move beyond the Mississippi River to prevent a slaughter of their people. The poor and disenfranchised may not revolt for fear of its consequences. Potential allies of women, people of color, and poor people may not stand with them out of our fear of the consequences. The result of these understandable fears is that those abusing power are allowed to continue the abuse.



In summary, just as an over-focus on claiming power to the neglect of sharing power leads to a number of dysfunctions including sexism, racism and poverty, so does an over-focus on sharing power to the neglect of claiming power. Below are a few more historical and present day examples of maintaining power abuse and the resulting inequities.

¹⁰ ushistory.org. The Trail of Tears — The Indian Removals. *U.S. History Online Textbook*. <http://www.ushistory.org/us/24f.asp>

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By Barry Johnson with Associates*

OR Thinking About Power, Then and Now, Causes and Perpetuates Sexism, Racism and Poverty

Sexism – In 1920, one hundred and forty four years after the US Declaration of Independence, women were allowed to vote. Yet, in 2016, almost a century later, women's earnings are not allowed to match men's in all states and the [District of Columbia](#) according to a survey conducted by the [U.S. Census Bureau](#). The national female-to-male earnings ratio was 81.9.¹¹ And the outlook is gloomy: at current rates of change, the World Economic Forum estimates it will be 118 years before women around the world can expect equal pay.¹²

Racism - Claiming Power without Sharing Power led to slavery and civil war. The civil war abolished slavery. While this was essential, it did not “solve” the racism inherent in “power over” thinking. The need for power over (to protect, provide, belong and project) remained and showed itself in Jim Crow laws. The civil rights movement overturned many Jim Crow laws, which was essential. Yet it did not “solve” the racism inherent in “power over” thinking. The need for power over remained and led to the mass incarceration known as the New Jim Crow.¹³

Poverty - The Stanford Center on Inequality and Poverty ranks the most well-off countries in terms of labor markets, poverty, safety net, wealth inequality, and economic mobility. The United States comes in last of the top 10 most well-off countries, and 18th amongst the top 21.¹⁴

Since 1980 the top 0.1% have captured as much income growth as the entire bottom half of world’s (adult) population. And for the group of people in between the bottom 50% and top 1%—mostly the lower- and middle-income groups in North America and Europe—income growth has been either sluggish or flat.¹⁵

On the one hand, we have made progress. On the other hand, so long as we are not both Claiming Power AND Sharing Power, our conscious want to protect and provide, along with an unconscious need to belong and project will continue to undermine democracy and perpetuate sexism, racism, and poverty.

¹¹ ["Highlights of women's earnings in 2016"](#) (PDF). U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. August 2017. pp. 53–55.

¹² Jowit, Juliette, "Women will get equal pay... in 118 years." Guardian. US edition. November 18, 2015.

¹³ Alexander, Michelle. [The New Jim Crow](#). New York. The New Press. 2012.

¹⁴ Alston, [Philp](#) (December 15, 2017). ["Statement on Visit to the USA, by Professor Philip Alston, United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights"](#).

¹⁵ Nelson, Eshe (December 14, 2017). ["Thomas Piketty says the US is setting a bad example on inequality for the world"](#). World Inequality Report 2018

Hope for Equity Within and Between Governments

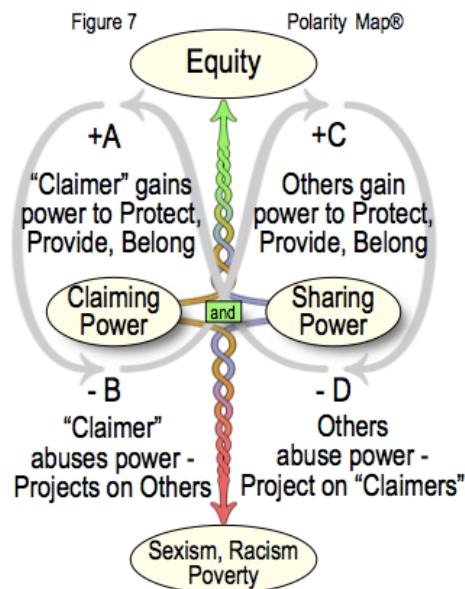
Democracy is at its best when it is successfully leveraging the polarity of Claiming Power AND Sharing Power. Figure 7 summarizes this tension. In the upside of Claiming Power (+A) the “Claimer” gains power to satisfy the desire to Protect, Provide and Belong. The “Claimer” could be any one of us or any group with which we identify: our tribe, our country, our religion, our race, our gender. Claiming our power to protect, provide and belong is a right worth affirming.

AND, what is needed to go along with claiming our power is sharing power with “them” so they can claim their power to Protect, Provide and Belong. (+C). Getting both upsides can help the relationship move toward Equity (the GPS at the top). Increased equity benefits Us, Them and the relationship. It also will reduce sexism, racism, and poverty.

If we look at the rise and fall of apartheid in South Africa through the lens of this map, it will help us appreciate what Nelson Mandela did when he became President. White South Africans claimed their power and with it created apartheid as a systematic way to deny power for indigenous, black South Africans. This moved the country into the lower left quadrant (-B) in which white South Africans abused their power including projecting whatever they wanted to deny about themselves on to black South Africans.

When Mandela became President, he, and black South Africans were claiming their power as full citizens (+A). Rather than abuse his new found power (-B), President Mandela was also sharing power with white South Africans by allowing them to continue to claim their power as full citizens. AND, there was another level of benefit for white South Africans. They were freed from power abuse anxiety. When We have power over Them, with the inherent abuse in gaining and maintaining it, We harbor a fear that if They claim their power, We will experience their retribution. (-D) This power abuse anxiety comes from imagining what We would do if we had been treated like we have treated Them. By avoiding retribution and creating the Truth and Reconciliation process instead, President Mandela freed white South Africans from power abuse anxiety and black South Africans from the burden of perpetual resentment. Thus, President Mandela’s claiming power AND Sharing power (+A & +C) was a gift to both white and black South Africans. It was a gift to his country and to all of us who are able to see and appreciate the potential of AND in relation to power.

What we can learn from Mandela is that We (our group) have a right to claim our power AND They have a right to claim their power even if they have abused their power in the



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past. Anything less gets us into the downside of claiming power without sharing power (-B) in which the abused become the abusers. There are many examples of this with revolutionary shifts in power throughout history. The genocide of the Tutsis by the Hutu in Rwanda mentioned earlier in this chapter is but one example. Looking beyond wealthy white men in the United States and beyond Tutsis in Rwanda, each of us, individually and as part of a group, have claimed power without sharing power resulting in abuse of power. Fortunately, we can understand how this happens without beating ourselves up or condoning it. And, we can be intentional about leveraging this polarity better in the future.

Chapter 20 pointed to the Polarity of Justice AND Mercy and how that polarity was leveraged through the Truth AND Reconciliation process in South Africa after the end of Apartheid. This polarity and the polarity of Claiming Power AND Sharing Power were both important for South Africa moving forward after Apartheid. They will both also be important as we do our best to address sexism, racism and poverty anywhere in the world.

AND thinking is not a solution to sexism, racism, or poverty but it is a process requirement. Without supplementing OR thinking with AND thinking, our most sincere efforts will be radically undermined and no amount of money, commitment, or alignment will make up for it.^{R94}

Power Within AND Power Beyond

There are other dimensions of power. I have talked about Claiming Power AND Sharing Power in terms of physical, military, economic, and legal power. Claiming AND Sharing this power is important. And, I want to acknowledge two other important types of power: power within ourselves and power beyond ourselves.

We each have the power within ourselves to make meaning for ourselves.^{R95} This power to make meaning was a significant support for those during and after their incarceration in concentration camps during World War II. Those with “power over” have our limits. Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 27 years by those who had power over his legal status. While they had power over, he had power within. He created meaning for himself and other prisoners by preparing, together, to lead the country after the end of apartheid in South Africa. This power within is one source of hope as we address power inequities.

Another source of hope is in Power Beyond. This power is inherent within all religious traditions. It is the belief that there is a power beyond us individually and beyond us collectively. This power is not dependent upon us to figure it out or do it right. This power is the gift of universal, unconditional love.^{R96}

Knowing we are loved and those abusing power over us are loved is a power richer, by far, than any “power over.” It is a gift we already possess, a power to receive with gratitude rather than to obtain through any effort. This power of universal, unconditional

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love **Protects** us, our loved ones and our enemies from hate, retribution, and lifelong efforts to obtain that which cannot be obtained because it is already ours. This universal, unconditional love **Provides** food for the soul from an unlimited source, which expands in the giving and receiving. This universal, unconditional love affirms that all of us **Belong** and there is nothing we need to do or think or not do or not think in order to belong. In the belonging, this universal, unconditional love removes the need to **Project** parts of ourselves we cannot acknowledge on to Them. We can acknowledge all of it with accountability (Justice) AND know we are loved (Mercy).

Summary

Power with – Claiming Power for Us AND Sharing Power with Them is possible. When this happens, it creates a virtuous cycle which elevates Us, Them, and the relationship.

Power over leads to abuse - We have a natural, conscious desire to Protect and Provide for those we feel closest to. We also have an often-unconscious need to Belong and to Project parts of ourselves we have trouble acknowledging as true about Us on to Them. This combined with OR thinking about power leads to abuse of power with Us striving to gain power over Them.

The assumption of superiority - Superiority in battle feeds the assertion of superiority in any dimension the victors desire. Victors can assign all sorts of positive attributes for themselves and negative attributes to those they now have power over. The negative attributes assigned to those who lost were used as reasons for gaining power over them in the first place and for maintaining it into the future.

Sexism - Power over women by men has led to abuse including inequity in virtually every dimension of life. **Racism** - In the United States, power over by wealthy white men, like me, manifested itself with slavery of African Americans and removal of indigenous people from their land. **Poverty** - When those with “power over” consciously or unconsciously believe that we must choose between Abundance for Some OR Basics for All, we will undermine efforts attempting to provide basics for all out of fear of its downside = loss of our abundance.

Power Within AND Power Beyond – Power within provides hope in creating meaning for ourselves regardless of the “power over” that others may have. Power Beyond is living in the gift of universal, unconditional love for Us AND Them.

New Realities in this Chapter

Reality 89 – Claiming Power without Sharing Power causes an abuse of power while Sharing power without Claiming power allows an abuse of power. This is a fundamental source and perpetuator of sexism, racism, and poverty.

Reality 90 – We consciously want power over Them to Protect and Provide for Us.

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Reality 91 - We Unconsciously Need to Belong with Us And to Project on Them.

Reality 92 - The stronger the unconscious need to project on Them, the stronger the unconscious need for power over Them.

Reality 93 - The degree of inhumanness we employ to gain and maintain power over Them will be matched by the degree of inhumanness we need to project on them. They become less than human so we can live with being less than human to them.

Reality 94 - AND thinking is not a solution to sexism, racism or poverty but it is a process requirement. Without supplementing OR thinking with AND thinking, our most sincere efforts will be radically undermined and no amount of money, commitment, or alignment will make up for it.

Reality 95 - Power Within -There is a power within each of us in which we make meaning for ourselves in whatever situation we find ourselves.

Reality 96 – Power Beyond - This is the power that shows up within all religious traditions. It is the awareness that there is a power beyond us individually and beyond us collectively. This power is not dependent upon us to figure it out or do it right. This power is the gift of universal, unconditional love.