

2023

The American Founding Documents and Democratic Social Change: A Constructivist Grounded Theory

A I. Forde
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Walden University

College of Health Sciences and Public Policy

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A.I. Forde

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Walden University
2023

Abstract

The American Founding Documents and Democratic Social Change: A Constructivist

Grounded Theory

by

A.I. Forde

MS, University of Tennessee, 2005

BS, University of Tennessee, 1996

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

May 2023

Abstract

Existing social disparities in the United States are inconsistent with the promise of democracy; therefore, there was a need for critical conceptualization of the first principles that undergird American democracy and the genesis of democratic social change in America. This constructivist grounded theory study aimed to construct a grounded theory that provides an understanding of the process of American democratic social change as it emerged from the nation's founding documents. A post hoc polytheoretical framework including Foucault's, Bourdieu's, and Marx and Engels's theories of power was used to understand power dynamics. The research question focused on understanding the process of democratic social change in America. The sample comprised the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers, and the U.S. Constitution. The documents were retrieved from the National Archives and Library of Congress. The data analysis plan incorporated successive comparison, situational and dramaturgical analysis, deconstruction, and perspective taking as strategies. The result was the construction of a democratic social change process theory preceded by five grounded theories: (a) first principles of democracy, (b) first principles of democracy conceptual framework, (c) socio-ethical principles of democracy, (d) demoralizing process, and (e) either-or approach to democracy. Positive social change implications include applying a democratic social change process to future social change endeavors across domains and levels of analysis, a normative framework for a republican form of government, and a tool to analyze and minimize the latent consequences of social justice policies.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to Him, who alone comes before family and nation, God. This is also dedicated to my family. “If God is for us, who can be against us?”

My mother, you walked to work knee-deep in snow for less than \$3.50 an hour to sow the seed to see this day. My love and gratitude are extended to you for your continued support. This is in memory and honor of my father and grandparents, who are no longer here. However, they saw this day before I did. They never doubted my potential and trusted me. This, too, is dedicated to them.

To my children, Sunshine, my days have been cloudy without you. Thank you for your love and sacrifice. Sonny, stay youthful. My heart swells with joy when you smile. I know you got me. I love you both.

This is #ForThePeople, for whom I advocate fiercely under various monikers, particularly Den Activist.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to my academic advisor, Binh Nguyen, who guided me through many challenges. Thank you, committee members, for your support and allowing me to be the first in many ways. Dr. Morris, I am grateful for your advocacy and faith in me. A special thank you to my chair. Dr. Lane, thank you for your support and feedback. Thanks to you, Dr. Stout, for your warm leadership. Dr. Gredler, you are no ordinary Joe. Thank you for your commitment to us students!

A warm thank you is due to my nephew, Emile; friends; and colleagues, Shirley McCulley, Dr. Rosanna Rivero-Marin, Dr. Carla Ibanzo, Akua Davis, Adrien, Gina, Samantha, and Jermahl. Thank you to the editors who brought me closer to the finish line.

Finally, thank you to Sr. Miriam Blake and all the little engines that could.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In all he does, man seeks good as an end or means.

—Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 353 BCE/1992

Critical conceptualization of certain principles in the American founding documents, which have provided the foundation for American democracy, served as the basis for a democratic social change theory that could address social inequality. This study was conducted to create a grounded theory that expands the field's understanding of the process of American democratic social change. I integrated democratic principles into a deliberate process of social change at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Democracy, the cornerstone of social well-being and national prosperity, requires principles that preserve and respect its beneficiaries. With continued social injustice and oppression, a democratic social change theory based on principles from the founding documents could serve as a strategic framework that could assist individuals, society, institutions, and organizations to realize positive social change. Currently, two social change theories incorporating American democratic values exist, one proposed by Butts (1980, 1988) and the other by Benet (2006, 2013). Although the frameworks emphasize democratic values, they do not incorporate the first principles of democracy or a strategic social change process to achieve their social change goals.

Butts created a social change theory to help students develop a commitment to civic values. Butts's social change theory proposed 10 democratic values and two supporting values to promote civic citizenship: justice, freedom, equality, diversity, authority, privacy, participation, due process, truth, property, human rights, and personal

obligation for the public good, which was later changed to patriotism (Butts, 1988).

Butts's (1980, 1988) avenue for social change was primary and secondary school because his goal was for students to learn about the 12 concepts to later participate in the democratic process. In the polarities of democracy, Benet (2006) embraced nine of Butts's (1980) democratic values: freedom, authority, justice, due process, diversity, equality, human rights, participation, and personal obligation for the public good as communal obligations. Benet developed a comprehensive framework to help workers achieve social change using democratic values, making his avenue for social change organizations. Butts's democratic civic values theory gained appeal in academia in the state of California, whereas Benet's polarities of democracy theory gained appeal with doctoral students in public policy and administration (Agbormbai, 2021; Carter, 2017; Caulfield, 2019; Clarke, 2019; Ezeocha, 2016; Greene, 2021; Griffith, 2017; Hacker, 2021; Hayes, 2019; Kaka, 2018; McDaniel, 2019; McMillan, 2020; Nalumango, 2019; Price, 2021; Sanchez, 2021; Strouble, 2015; Svobodova, 2019; Tobor, 2014; Udeagbala, 2020; Weaver, 2018).

In both Butts's (1980, 1988) and Benet's (2006, 2013) theories, traditional American democratic values were employed to achieve social change. Butts's selection of democratic values came from America's founding documents, as did the democratic values of scholars who explored democracy (Allen, 2014; Black, 2018, 2020, 2022; Butts, 1980, 1988; Christiano, 2003; Christiano et al., 2022; Connolly, 2010; Dahl, 2001; De Tocqueville, 1839/2002; Kendi, 2016; Mencken, 1926). There were gaps in the literature in which no scholar had used the founding documents to introduce a framework

of the first principle of democracy or constructed a strategic democratic social change process. However, data analysis revealed gaps unrelated to the main research question, which were addressed in this study.

Using the qualitative methodology and the constructivist grounded theory design, I construct a grounded theory that provides an understanding of the process of American democratic social change as it emerged from the nation's founding documents. Historically, the founding documents have been the repository of democratic values for America's republican form of government and may lead to an understanding of revolutionary social change. In Chapter 1, I introduce the study's background, research gaps, theoretical framework, and philosophical assumptions. I also explain why it was critical to construct a democratic social change process from principles that emerged from America's founding documents.

Background of the Study

As measured by well-being markers, social disparity has long been a problem in the United States. Members of other nations with economic development comparable to the United States fare better than Americans according to their well-being scores (OECD, 2020). By understanding the process of social change using the democratic principles in the founding documents, I hoped the study findings might be used to replicate the process of social change, reduce social disparity, and improve the nation's well-being score. Democracy has long been associated with quality of life (Radcliff & Shufeldt, 2016; Wang et al., 2019) and human rights protection worldwide (Lacey, 2016). In addition, researchers have established a correlation between the level of democracy and well-being

scores (Radcliff & Shufeldt, 2016). The level of democracy is based on 11 dimensions that measure well-being: civic engagement, environmental quality, health, housing, income and wealth, knowledge and skills, safety, social connections, subjective well-being, work–life balance, and work and job quality (OECD, 2020). These well-being markers are supported by the UN General Assembly’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) and its UN Framework Principles on Human Rights and the Environment (Knox, 2018). To get a more meaningful measure of well-being, the OECD (2013) moved away from solely considering factors based on economic-system measures of well-being (inputs and outputs, country averages, and objective measures) and now also assesses people, outcomes, well-being distribution among group populations, and objective and subjective measures of well-being.

The Swiss have historically enjoyed higher well-being scores than other nations despite the United States being the world’s largest economy and the eighth most expensive country to live in (OECD, 2019). In contrast, Switzerland ranked as the 20th largest economy but the third most costly country to live in (OECD, 2019). Swiss nationals gave life satisfaction a grade of 7.5 (OECD, 2020). Americans graded life satisfaction 6.9 out of 10, only 0.2 points higher than the OECD average of 6.7 (OECD, 2020). Although it is impossible to determine whether Switzerland’s direct democracy is solely responsible for its high life satisfaction score because the 11 dimensions are not absolute markers for democracy, the lower quality of life score assigned by Americans indicates a breach in well-being and the need for improvements in the areas of human, social, economic, and natural capital (OECD, 2020). The low well-being score for the

United States may indicate a need to improve the American feeling of well-being by reducing social inequalities to improve well-being markers. With the OECD's (2013) goal to alleviate oppression and achieve sustainable social change, it was essential to understand the American democratic social change process using the Founders' strategy. Understanding the events that led to revolutionary social change in America facilitated the social change paradigm selection. The five dominant social change paradigms follow.

Social Change Paradigms

There are five dominant social change approaches used by scholars interested in social change theories: conflict theory, cyclic theory, evolutionary theory, modernization theory, and structural-functionalist theory (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992). Despite a substantial number of theories of change designed to address specific problems in substantive areas, social change theory designs are typically guided by one of the five approaches. Marx and Engels (1848/2001) proposed that dynamic tension between opposing forces led to revolutionary social change. Marx and Engels believed that class differences resulted in class struggle and the proletariat (working class) being oppressed by the bourgeois (the owners of the means of production). This idea of underlying conflict was the approach used in the polarities of democracy (Benet, 2006, 2013), democratic civism (Butts, 1980, 1988), and the polarities management (Johnson, 1996) frameworks.

The dynamic tension in Butts's (1980, 1988), Benet's (2006, 2013), and Johnson's (1996) works is evident in unum versus pluribus, in the paired polarities, and in the crusaders against tradition bearers. Marx and Engels's (1848/2001) critical

approach was the current study's most relevant social change perspective. Marx and Engels asserted that revolutionary social change that results in a radical change in the governing system requires a revolution by the proletariat with the assistance of members of other classes. The American Revolutionary War can be understood from this point of view because the Founders changed the system of government from a monarchy to a republican form. The conditions that facilitated social change in America resulted from oppressive class differences, as evidenced between the colonizer and the colonized (see Marx and Engels, 1848/2001). From a critical perspective, the colonists represented the proletariat class, and Great Britain represented the bourgeois owner of the means of production. As such, the king determined the value of labor and goods produced by the colonists through taxation.

Proponents of the cyclic theory of social change propose that social change is recurrent and cyclical (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992). In contrast, social change in evolutionary theories progresses linearly, with every sequence of change producing increasingly better social change outcomes (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992). In both approaches, social change is a natural process that promotes progress. Modernization theory is an evolutionary social change model based on triggering mechanisms that take society through two stages: traditional and modern (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992). Innovation is the triggering agent for social change in modernization theory (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992). The structural-functionalist perspective is based on society being a structure composed of interrelated parts in which evolving societal needs drive social change from the functionalist perspective (Haferkamp & Smelser, 1992). Although an

argument can be made from a structural-functionalist standpoint about the general nature of social change being cyclical, it is inadequate as a lens because there has been only one revolution in the United States.

American Democratic Values and Social Change

Among American scholars whose work was reviewed for the current study, traditional democratic values have remained constant since De Tocqueville published *Democracy in America* in 1835. A review of seminal works on democracy from scholars in the fields of education (Benet, 2006; Butts, 1980), government (Allen, 2014), history (Butts, 1980; Giridharadas, 2018; Kendi, 2016), law (Black, 2018; Dahl, 2001), political science (Benet, 2006; Black, 2018; Dahl, 2001; Giridharadas, 2018), journalism (Giridharadas, 2018; Mencken, 1926), philosophy (Butts, 1980; Christiano, 2003), political philosophy, history (Connolly, 2010; De Tocqueville, 1839/2002), and sociology (De Tocqueville, 1839/2002) revealed that it is uncommon for scholars to mention more than a few American democratic values. Only a few listed scholars mentioned or alluded to human dignity, education, equity, and unity. The most common values discussed were equality and liberty. None of the listed scholars discussed democratic social change or the first principles of democracy as a framework. Also, the U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, and The Federalist Papers have often been studied as individual documents.

Butts (1980, 1988), whose work forms the foundation of Benet's (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy theory, presented what Butts referred to as a decalogue of civic values that represent the "substantive ideas and concepts that form the common core of

American citizenship” (Butts, 1980, p. 132): authority, diversity, due process, equality, freedom, human rights, justice, participation, privacy, and property. Butts (1988) later introduced two more concepts that changed the decalogue into the 12 tables of civism for the modern American republic: truth and patriotism. In contrast, Benet’s framework included nine concepts used in Butts’s work. A concept used by Benet (2013) but not used by Butts (1980, 1988) is representation, which was previously regeneration (Benet, 2006). Benet’s (2006) addition of representation was facilitated by Johnson’s conceptual framework. However, neither scholar discussed the first principles of democracy in their works, although both discussed human rights, justice, due process, equality, and other values undergirded by democratic principles. The importance of democratic principles to current studies of democracy and democracy practice is that only in recent decades has it been acknowledged that a clean environment is a democratic right. It is, therefore, intuitive that presenting the first principles of democracy in society’s vocabulary expands democratic values and rights. This is done by broadening language to include the first principles of democracy that protect democracy and promote democratic social change.

Democratic Social Change Theories

Although Benet (2006, 2013) introduced the idea of democratic social change, Butts’s (1980, 1988) theory became a democratic social change theory by default. Benet (2006) adopted Butts’s decalogue of civic values and Butts’s axioms. Their theories demonstrate the first attempts at social change based on democratic values derived from America’s founding documents. A summary of their democratic social change theories follows.

Butts (1980) was an educator, historian, and philosopher who sought to bring about social change through citizenship education in America's public schools during the 1980s when the idea of private education was most polemical. Butts labeled these two schools of thought as civism and pluralism. Pluralists insisted on respect for diversity and education authority left to "diverse pluralistic communities" (Butts, 1980, p. 9). In contrast, civists supported public funds directed toward public education to nurture equality and teach students the principles of responsible citizenship in a republic (Butts, 1980). Butts believed that educators must accept the goal of educating students to be "informed, thinking citizens" and incorporate "values of democratic citizenship" (p. 132) into the curriculum, as proposed in his democratic civic values framework. Butts asserted that students who fully assimilated the values would become adults of sound character who would fulfill their civic duty. However, I could not locate studies that support social change outcomes using Butts's and Benet's frameworks.

Benet (2006) was an educator, theorist, and former politician who used Johnson's (1996) polarity management theory to manage dilemmas as the conceptual framework for his polarities of democracy theory. Benet (2013) believed democracy is the means to end oppression and achieve sustainable democratic social change. Benet (2006) incorporated five-paired democratic values into the polarities of democracy, assuming that no single democratic value can lead directly to democracy. The concept behind Johnson's conceptual framework is that paired polarities (e.g., diversity and equality) are to be leveraged in such a way as to maintain the polarity pairs in the upper two quadrants where the services in place produce the most positive outcomes. Leveraging the poles is

essential to achieving the maximum benefits and reducing the negative aspects of the managed polarities (Johnson, 1996).

Organizations can use the polarities of democracy as a framework to manage polarities (Benet, 2006, 2013), and teachers can use the democratic civism framework to teach students civic values (Butts, 1980). However, their frameworks lack a strategic process based on the first principles found in the American founding documents to facilitated democratic social change. I propose that by relieving oppression, individuals and organizations can achieve sustainable social change more efficiently by using a process of democratic social change based on the first principles of democracy. In addition, I referred to Butts's (1980, 1988) civic values and Benet's (2013) democratic values to illustrate how the first principles of democracy undergird democratic values.

Problem Statement

Scholars in public policy and administration lack an understanding of how a democratic social change process based on democracy's first principles can lead to democratic social change. Existing social disparities in the United States are inconsistent with the promise of democracy; therefore, there was a need for a critical conceptualization of the first principles that undergird American democracy and the genesis of democratic social change in America. A social change process theory could be useful in addressing social disparities in various ways: at the micro, meso, and macro levels.

Purpose of the Study

This qualitative constructivist grounded theory study aimed to construct a grounded theory that provides an understanding of the process of American democratic social change as it emerged from the nation's founding documents.

Research Question

How do the first principles of democracy in the American founding documents provide an understanding of the process of American democratic social change?

Theoretical Framework

A polytheoretical framework was chosen to support the critical inquiry approach and to present the findings using multiple power perspectives: relational, symbolic, cultural, and systems. Marx and Engels's, Foucault's, and Bourdieu's theories of power were used to construct this framework. Marx and Engels (1848/2001) framed class conflict as triggering revolutionary social change. They analyzed revolutions in various nations and included the United States in their sample. Their theory was useful in interpreting the power relationship between the colonists and the king from the perspective of the oppressed class who were denied social justice and then revolted against the king, who owned the means of production. Marx and Engels asserted that the "ruling and oppressed classes" progress through a "series of evolutions" (p. 6) from which the proletariat is unable to be freed by the ruling class. Marx and Engels argued that to make a system-wide change, the working class must lead a "total social change" (p. 5) because all previous "historical movements were movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities" and the "bottom stratum cannot raise itself up without the

whole superincumbent strata” (p. 20). “As a result, the struggle of the proletariat is at first a national struggle” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 20).

Foucault’s (1980) theory of power was the second of the three theoretical frameworks that served as the interpretive lens for the findings. Contrary to Marx and Engels’s (1848/2001) macro-level theory of social change, Foucault proposed micro-level social change by making individuals aware of how power is leveraged in relationships. This framework is well-suited to understanding power strategies used in interpersonal relationships. Foucault rejected the idea of a permanent central power source, a proposition supported by the Founders as evidenced by the power sources in the Revolutionary War because anyone can leverage power at any given time. Foucault argued that normalized power is pervasive in institutions and has become invisible to most people because most individuals have come to accept things as they are. Foucault (1980, 2019) discussed several forms of power in his power theory. Discipline power, sovereign power, and power/knowledge are of special significance to this study.

Although Foucault’s (1980, 2019) theory of power is well-suited to power relations, social field theory was used because it framed symbolic and cultural power in specialized fields among a larger audience, allowing power exploration at the meso level (Bourdieu, 1984, 1991). Power at the meso level allows the exploration of how an agent’s habitus, or worldview, correlates with culture and socioeconomic status and determines practice in specialized fields (Bourdieu, 1984, 1991). Moreover, strategies of distinctions, noma (field-specific norms), and doxa (unquestioned and accepted social constructions) legitimize the dominance of the lower classes by the upper class (Bourdieu, 1984, 1991).

In an overly simplified version, Bourdieu aimed to inform his audience that societies create and reinforce illusions of worth based on distinctions. These distinctions serve as strategies of symbolic power for one class to dominate all other classes with the consent of the dominated, who perceive the illusion as doxa. This phenomenon becomes evident when analyzing relationships between specialized fields, e.g., politics, law, and education. The polytheoretical framework in the current study facilitated the explication of power dynamics in the political sphere from a holistic perspective: hierarchical power, relations of power, and symbolic and cultural power.

Definitions of Terms

In grounded theory, definitions are derived from the data to avoid conscious assumptions about the constructs (Charmaz, 2006). This means that scholars may have to use neologisms by coining a novel concept, or extending the meaning of an existing concept during conceptualization (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In the current study, democracy, democratic principles, democratic social change, nativism, and anti-democratic tenets are derived from the founding documents and were conceptualized and defined by me. The definition of democracy reflected the socio-ethical requirement of the democratic ideal of government for the people that social justice advocates require from the government. However, because democracy has been defined both narrowly and broadly, various definitions of democracy are provided. The concept of democratic principles was distinguished from culturally laden democratic values because democratic values are expressions of democratic principles. This is an original definition that includes various concepts. The definition of democratic social change is a modified

definition of social change. In addition to its traditional association with national sentiments, nativism now includes subcultures characterized by strictly defined parameters. Several power strategies have been incorporated into the definition of anti-democratic tenets, thus broadening the scope of anti-democracy.

Anti-democratic tenets: Divide and conquer strategies that include misinformation, dehumanization, social distinctions, subjugation, nativism, and fear are leveraged in an attempt to control, govern, or hinder democracy and social change.

Democracy: “Government for the people” (Lincoln, 1863, p. 1). Addams defined the “conception of Democracy” as “that which affords a rule of living as well as a test of faith” that leads to “a standard of social ethic ... attained by mixing on thronged the common road where all must turn out for one another, and at least see the size of one another’s burdens” (Addams, 1905, p. X). Addams also stated that “social morality” results in “the practice of democratic spirit, for it implies that diversified human experience and resultant sympathy ... are the foundation and guarantee of Democracy” (Addams, 1905, p. X). Democracy as a political system is “government to the preferences of its citizens considered as political equals” (Dahl, 1971, p. 2). To meet this characteristic, “all full citizens must have unimpaired opportunities to formulate their preferences [and] signify their preferences to their fellow citizens and the government by individual and collective action” (Dahl, 1971, p. 2). Citizens must also “have their preferences weighed equally in the conduct of government, that is, weighed with no discrimination because of the content or source of the preference” (Dahl, 1971, p. 2). There are “eight institutional guarantees” (Dahl, 1971, p. 2) to meet the key

characteristics of democracy. Dahl (1971) listed these as (a) freedom to form and join organizations, (b) freedom of expression, (c) right to vote, (d) eligibility for public office, (e) right of political leaders to compete for support and right of political leaders to compete for votes, (f) alternative sources of information, (g) free and fair elections, and (h) institutions for making government policies that depend on votes and other expressions of preferences. Democracy has also been defined as civil and political rights as measured by the flourishing of freedom and government accountability (Freedom House, 2022).

Democratic social change: A strategic social change process driven by principles woven into the founding documents.

First principles of democracy: “The first basis from which [democracy] is known” (Terence, 1988, p. 22), and supports the democratic ideal of government for the people. The first principles of democracy include knowledge, human dignity, fairness, hope, unity, and security.

Levels of analysis: Three continuums within or across which practitioners solve problems: micro (i.e., individual, motivation), meso (i.e., networks, group, organization), and macro (i.e., social institutions, public policy, culture; Kennedy, 2021).

Nativism: A strategy that promotes an us-versus-them ideology based on strict criteria for inclusion.

Power: “Actions on others’ action” (Foucault, 1991, p. 5). “It is the name that one attributes to a complex strategical situation in a particular society” (Foucault, 1990, p. 93).

Principles: “The first basis from which a thing is known” (Terence, 1988, p. 22).
 “The basic initial assumption of any theory, teaching, science, world view, or political organization ... the basic characteristic of the structure of any mechanism or apparatus” (Principle, 2005).

Promise of democracy: “Government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” (Lincoln, 1863, p. 1).

Social change: “A deliberate process of creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to enhance dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies” (Walden University, n.d., p. 1).

Values: “Culturally approved, internalized wishes that motivate our actions” (Jaspers, 2016, p. 1).

Nature of the Study

I used Charmaz’s (2006) constructivist grounded theory methodology to explore the founding documents and construct a grounded theory to address the research question. The initial sample was historical documents found in the public domain. The substantive content underwent grounded theory’s iterative compare-and-contrast analysis until theoretical saturation was achieved (see Charmaz, 2006). I used reflexivity and memos throughout the study to establish methodological rigor (see Charmaz, 2006). Supporting literature was presented for trustworthiness (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985), and grounded theories representing abductive inferences were constructed. For a holistic interpretation of power, I incorporated a polytheoretical framework: Marx and Engels’s hierarchical power, Foucault’s relational power, and Bourdieu’s symbolic and cultural

power. The literature review included two democratic social change theories developed using American democratic values: Butts's democratic civism and Benet's polarities of democracy theory.

Assumptions

The central assumption of this study was that the founding documents set the foundational groundwork for American democracy. Another assumption was that the level of democracy in a nation is linked to well-being as measured by 11 dimensions: civic engagement, environmental quality, health, housing, income and wealth, knowledge and skills, safety, social connections, subjective well-being, work-life balance, and work and job quality (OECD, 2020). Furthermore, I assumed that Butts's (1980, 1988) civic virtues are American democratic concepts. I further assumed that the founding documents could be explored for explicit and implicit mentions of democracy (see Charmaz, 2006) and that implicit meanings contributed to higher levels of abstraction leading to the first principles.

From an ontological perspective, I assumed reality is relative to historical, experiential, educational, cultural, and political influences. I also assumed the understanding of the world is socially constructed and facilitated by various vehicles, namely authority figures, politicians, media, judges, academics, educators, physicians, psychologists, clerics, and other social influencers (see Foucault, 1980). Culture was assumed to be the primary conduit affecting language, societal beliefs, attitudes, systems, institutions, and processes, bolstering the interpretation of social and political realities (see Bourdieu, 1984; Foucault, 1980). Multiple socio-political realities constitute

democratic values. Their saliency depends on how they are buttressed. Epistemologically, I assumed knowledge was acquired through observation, discourse, and text and constructed through subjective, cultural, social, and political experiences (see Foucault, 1980).

Ethics and methodological integrity are essential to any research; however, because theories explain the world around us, ethics and methodological integrity are imperative to grounded theory because data emergence must precede and lead to theory construction (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Charmaz's (2006) constructivist grounded theory assumes knowledge is produced through multiple social realities by the participant and the observer. The researcher acknowledges her influence in constructing the theory and interpreting data as the researcher's experiences and biases become interrelated and manifest. Interpreting the text of the founding documents necessitated critical inquiry into historical data. However, I preserved the study's trustworthiness and rigor through triangulation, memoing, and reflexivity throughout the data analysis and theory construction process (see Charmaz, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Scope and Delimitations

This study's scope was limited to the first principles of democracy found in the American founding documents that can be used to understand the process of democratic social change. The sample was restricted to U.S. founding documents. The founding documents included the Articles of Confederation, the Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers, and the U.S. Constitution.

The delimitations included the scope of the documents used for data analysis because there was a desire to obtain data from the nation's founding when national development was still in its early stage. I excluded legal interpretations of the founding documents because this study was not an investigation of the historical and legal foundations of the founding documents. I also excluded constitutional theories (i.e., constitutionalism, originalism, and textualism) and historical depth (i.e., details regarding drafting the founding documents).

Limitations

Limitations included limited access to the authors of the founding documents. Using textual data posed a problem with clearly interpreting the Founders' original meaning. Constraints inherent to grounded theory methodology include credibility, the interpretation of data, and limited generalizability (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Hussein et al., 2014). I made every effort to make sense of and frame meaning within the context of the era and text and seek harmony within and across the founding documents. Researcher bias was mitigated through memos (see Charmaz, 2006) and various triangulation methods (see Lincoln & Guba, 1982, 1985).

Significance of the Study

Significant outcomes of this study include the emergence of the first principles of democracy and a replicable democratic social change process to address social inequalities. Positive social change empowers individuals in local and global communities (Delahaye et al., 2021), and institutional and organizational changes could influence public policy and improve social conditions for disadvantaged groups by

contributing to factors that impact sustainable social change. As a result, a democratic social change process was constructed using the first principles of democracy found in the American founding documents to fill the literature gap. This was done by providing an understanding of American democratic social change. The first principles of democracy social change process theory could be applied across multiple knowledge domains. These include psychology, education, criminal justice, social work, medicine, social services, and business.

Additionally, the first principles of democracy social change process framework could be used as a social movement strategy that could bring about parallel and regulated revolutionizing democratic social change. This could be done using an integrated approach: structural, institutional, community, and individual. Other social change implications include improved community interaction, improved self-esteem, and improved feelings of well-being. The findings may prove significant in enhancing institutional and organizational culture by employing a democratic social change strategy centered on American democratic principles.

Summary

There is a growing concern about the social disparities various groups face in American society. The purpose of the current study was to construct a grounded theory that would assist with understanding the process of democratic social change from the American founding documents to address these disparities. Public policy administrators may benefit from a framework based on democratic principles in framing organizational and institutional goals and policies for positive and sustainable social change. This study

explored the American founding documents for principles that could lead to a democratic social change process. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature and the post hoc theoretical framework that will frame the study's findings.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This qualitative constructivist grounded theory study was intended to construct a grounded theory that assists in understanding the process of American democratic social change. This process emerged from the nation's founding documents. Many scholars have examined the topic of American democracy and its values using the founding documents (Allen, 2014; Benet, 2006; Butts, 1980, 1988; Connolly, 2010; Dahl, 2001; De Tocqueville, 1839/2002; Kendi, 2016; Mencken, 1926). However, only Butts and Benet (2006) proposed social change theories using concepts from the founding documents. The concepts were originally proposed by Butts (1980, 1988). Of the two social change theorists, only Benet referred to his theory as a democratic social change theory. The social change theories of Butts and Benet form the entirety of the literature review. The theoretical framework is presented first, followed by a literature review covering social change theories addressing traditional American democratic values from the founding documents.

Literature Search Strategy

Public search engines were used to locate American founding documents for the initial sample. Google Search was used for The Anti-Federalist Papers, Articles of Confederation, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution, and The Federalist.

Theoretical Framework

The grounded theory methodology requires the researcher to disregard selecting a theoretical framework until after the construction of the grounded theory (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The most appropriate post hoc theoretical framework that supported the

current study's findings was a polytheoretical approach. Critical inquiry revealed the power dynamics innate to the field of politics. Therefore, the power theories of Marx and Engels (1848/2001), Foucault (1980), and Bourdieu (1991) framed the findings.

Marx and Engels's Social Change Theory

Marx and Engels's (1848/2001) social change theory was used to explain societal transformation as influenced by a conflict between two opposing forces, as discussed by Butts (1980) regarding the tension between the goals of civicists and those of pluralists (Benet, 2006, 2013) in terms of paired polarities, and by historians regarding revolutionary social change resulting from the armed conflict between the colonies and Great Britain. Marx and Engels's (1848/2001) revolutionary social change theory was based on a class struggle between those who own the means of production and rule society (the bourgeois class) and those who serve the ruling class (the proletariat). The conflict can be summarized as "contests between the exploiting and the exploited, ruling and the oppressed classes" that undergo a "series of evolutions" (p. 6) from which the proletariat cannot rely on the ruling class for emancipation or on the promises of socialist "quacks" to redress social grievances with the support of the "educated class" (p. 5) so long as they are mindful of "capital and profit" (p. 5). Socialists' lack of commitment to the proletariat's struggles led Marx and Engels away from the socialist party toward their drafting of *The Communist Manifesto*, which called for a more radical and "total social change" (p. 5) to be led by the working class. Because the "bottom stratum cannot raise itself without the whole superincumbent strata," all "historical movements were

movements of minorities, or in the interest of minorities:” The proletariat’s struggle is “at first a national struggle” (p. 20).

The proletariat’s reaction to the means of production in claiming emancipation led some scholars and politicians to restrict Marx’s social transformation theory to revolutionary social change (Christiansen, 2009). However, the history of “all past society has consisted of the development of class antagonisms” that “assumed different forms at different epochs” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 29). Antagonists like religion, law, philosophy, political science, and morality that served the ruling class’s interests survived all social change efforts (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001). Moreover, there are a myriad layers of power, the epochal evolution of social hierarchies, and power strategies used by the ruling class ((Marx & Engels, 1848/2001). These layers of power can be found in the ruling class, the educated class, the clergy, and politicians (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001). Historical Roman class hierarchy included “patricians, knights, plebeians, and slaves” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 9). In the Middle Ages, social rank consisted of “feudal lords, vassals, guild-masters, journeymen, apprentices, serfs; in almost all of these classes ... subordinate gradations” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 9). Social cleavages define class boundaries and how those higher up in the social hierarchy can treat those lower down. I used this macro theory to understand the power dynamics that led to revolutionary social change and a republican form of government in the United States based on representative democracy.

Historically, Marxism has been associated with socialism by politicians who reframed Marx’s ideas to distract constituents from voting for their interests. However,

Marx's ideology is much more radical than the socialist agenda described by Marx in *The Communist Manifesto*. In comparing Marx's description of socialism with modern ideologies, Giridharadas (2018) suggested that the neoliberal brand of the American Democratic Party puts capital and profit ahead of education, human dignity, equity, and security and is, therefore, a close description of the socialist ideology Marx rejected in favor of communism. As a critical theory that seeks to transform whole systems of power, Marx and Engels's theory of revolutionary change continues to be used to frame theories of social movements prompted by conflict (Della Porta & Diani, 2006), relative deprivation (Flynn, 2011), and by advocates of social change who seek structural changes affecting marginalized groups through a more compassionate capitalist society, socialist society, or communist society.

Foucault's Theory of Power

Charmaz (2016) advocated using Foucault's conception of power to identify power relations and situational analysis with constructivist grounded theory. Foucault's (1980) concept of power served as another interpretive lens for the current study's findings. Foucault proposed that there exists "no permanent repository of power" (1980, p. 4). Therefore, anyone can leverage power strategies in any given situation.

The ubiquity of power means that power does not disappear but reconstructs itself in different forms or strategies (Foucault, 1980). However, resistance to power can be found in every reconstruction of power in the "role of adversary, target, support, or handle in power relations" (Foucault, 1977, p. 95). Moreover, these strategies are contingent upon the societies from which they emerge (Foucault, 1980). The

pervasiveness of power in institutions can be attributed to socialization in multiple settings, particularly in educational settings (Foucault, 1980). This results in normalizing power, as opposed to the traditional representation of power, which is repressive power that takes the form of aggression or coercion. The master–subject relationship between Great Britain and the colonies was characterized by repressive power. In resisting power, the colonies responded with boycotts and riots. Repressive power in the United States appeared as lynchings, floggings, and the rape of captives (Kendi, 2016).

Noting the evolution of power strategies, Foucault (1977) became interested in normalizing power. Normalizing power on the subject contributes to adapting to the dominant culture’s norms, values, beliefs, attitudes, and law-abiding behaviors (Foucault, 1977). Individuals who have accepted normalizing power recognize, believe, and adhere to social hierarchy and authority rules (Foucault, 1977). Normalizing power is how the sovereign keeps an ever-watchful gaze on subjects (Foucault, 1977). Repressive power is useless against subjects bound by normalizing power (Foucault, 1977). For example, normalizing power in the colonies prevented more rebellions like Nat Turner. Today it prevents criminal offending. Normalizing power is the most subtle and used form of power because subjects are socialized to this form of power using rewards and punishments (Foucault, 1977).

Foucault’s (1980) power/knowledge assisted me in understanding normalizing power. Power-knowledge is knowledge collected, created, and disseminated by people in positions of power (Foucault, 1980, 2019). Knowledge is linked to power because power determines what is deemed knowledge, what can be known and considered scientific

knowledge, and how people can know (Foucault, 1980). Scientific knowledge is inseparable from power (Foucault, 1980). Higher education institutions create normalization standards through heuristics and are sources of normalizing power (Foucault, 1980). Institutional power teaches subjects how to think and behave (Foucault, 1980). Power-knowledge provides the sovereign with strategies to leverage power/knowledge for managing subjects, innovation, and social control (Foucault, 1980). As a result, the sovereign must have ever-increasing access to quantitative and qualitative knowledge in the interest of governance and security (Foucault, 1980).

Bourdieu's Field of Power

Bourdieu's (1991) power theory was the third framework used to analyze the findings, and, like Marx and Engels, and Foucault (1977, 1984, 1991), he explored power dynamics in government and politics. Bourdieu (1991) approached power in the context of specialized fields whereby power emerges from cultural beliefs, dispositions, and behavior, thereby making power culturally and symbolically created. Like Foucault, Bourdieu (1991) agreed that power is usually overt, with human behavior arising from socialization, displaced dichotomous either-or thinking, and relational thinking. As a result, Bourdieu (1994, as cited in Grenfell, 2008) asked, "how can behavior be regulated without being the product of obedience to rules?" (p. 50). Although Foucault (1977) used normalizing power to describe obedience to rules not resulting from repressive power, Bourdieu (1991) used doxa, unexamined assumptions, beliefs, and opinions in a field, to describe the same outcome: the control of individuals by the government without the use of repressive power. According to Bourdieu's theory from a holistic lens, there is the

concept of habitus. Bourdieu (1984, 1991) proposed the equation [(habitus)(capital)] + field = “practice to show the interrelationship of constructs to practice” (p. 101).

Habitus is an internalized system of dispositions individuals engage in to “act and react in certain ways” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 12) because of agency and cultural determinism (Bourdieu, 1984). Habitus is the schema for individuals intuitively playing their role in any given field from dispositions acquired through socialization (Bourdieu, 1991). Dispositions “mold the body and become second nature” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 12). As a product of socialization, dispositions reveal their cultural origins (Bourdieu, 1991). The embodiment of dispositions can be seen in a “durable way of standing, speaking, walking . . . feeling and thinking” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 13). A link between disposition and socioeconomic class influences a person’s disposition (Bourdieu, 1984). These dispositions are reflected in Bourdieu’s conceptualization of capital. For Bourdieu (1984), capital is a wider system of exchange that includes economic, social, and cultural capital as assets to be exchanged within networks and within and across fields. The value of capital is field specific in that certain species of capital are valued more in one or more fields than others. For example, economic capital is not the primary value presidential candidates seek. In Bourdieu’s (1991) framework, economic capital is goods, property, wealth, money, stocks, and bonds. In contrast to the traditional view of assets, social capital is a network of familial, personal, and professional connections that may grant access to another’s social connections for support (Bourdieu, 1984). Cultural capital relates to educational qualifications, knowledge, skills, technical qualifications, and

“other cultural acquisitions,” such as the fine arts that can produce value (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 14). Economic and cultural capital are the dominant forms of power (Bourdieu, 1984).

Symbolic capital, like symbolic violence, is not a species of capital but is relevant for understanding Bourdieu’s (1991) field theory. Symbolic capital represents accumulated prestige or glory. Symbolic violence, on the other hand, describes the effect of social domination and “enables relations of domination to be established and maintained through ... softened and disguised strategies and conceal domination beneath the veil of an enchanted relation” (p. 24). This relationship was observed while exploring gifting among the Kabylia. In symbolic violence, the relationship of dominance is exemplified by the adage “gift corrupts,” where the recipient may feel indebted to the giver (Bourdieu, 1991).

Three dynamics are critical to understanding Bourdieu’s field theory and the legitimization of power. *Nomos* is unspoken, field-specific norms understood by players in the field that legitimize systems of division or hierarchy by creating a vision of the world as one that is legitimate (Grenfell, 2008). This principle of vision and division is seen in social class systems and systems of hierarchy in institutions. Related to *nomos* is *doxa*. *Doxa* is accepted as the natural order of things (Bourdieu, 1991). *Illusio* is the third dynamic important in Bourdieu’s field theory. *Illusio* is the general belief in a field held by agents that the rewards in that field hold value (Bourdieu, 1984).

Fields are hierarchy-based specialized spheres of action in which agents occupy positions primarily determined by *habitus*, an organizing structure that manages practices and perceptions generalizable in different fields (Bourdieu, 1991). As a structuring entity,

habitus renders a schema of practices, beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, categorization, and prejudices based on socialization and field experiences, and it can predetermine agential practice and feelings (Bourdieu, 1977, 1984). The amount of capital an individual has affects their position in the field. Whereas *nomos* regulates field practice, *nomos* and *doxa* support the power structure within a field (Bourdieu, 1984). Given these options, agents enter fields to maintain or transform power relations. Although Bourdieu's, Foucault's, and Marx and Engels's theories address power, Bourdieu (1991) saw his work as different from Foucault's and Marx and Engels's. Bourdieu (1991) distinguished his work from Marx and Engels as multidimensional in contrast to the singular focus on class. Moreover, Bourdieu (1991) perceived his work as superior to Foucault's and Habermas's works because Bourdieu relied on quantitative versus qualitative analysis.

The three theories of power served as an interpretive lens through which to frame the current study's findings. Bourdieu, like Foucault, was interested in symbolic power. Bourdieu (1991) discussed power from a cultural perspective in specialized fields and dispositions. The power dynamic within politics and the symbolic power of the king made Bourdieu's (1991) field theory a suitable framework for examining power embedded in the political field. Foucault (1977, 1980) focused on systems of power relationships from strategies of power to normalizing power. Foucault (1977, 1980) believed power was best understood through relationships between individuals where power is constructed and reconstructed. The ability to interpret power strategies embedded in the political field made Foucault's theory of power an appropriate

framework for the current study. Relational power strategies are leveraged by one side, while the other side leverages counterstrategies.

Marx and Engels's theoretical framework provided the foundation for explaining social change due to conflict. Their lens facilitated the exploration of the Founders through the prism of class struggle. The Founders were the proletariat who revolted against the bourgeoisie for freedom. In addition, theories of power have been developed through observations during routine interactions within relationships where power relationships are at play.

Review of the Literature

Although there are countless superficial mentions of the founding documents and scholars citing the contributions of the Founders, political philosophers, politicians, clerics, and academics on the subject of the nation's founding documents, there was a dearth of research on the analysis of the founding documents as a document group investigating the concept of democratic social change in America. In other words, the U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and *The Federalist Papers* have been analyzed more exhaustively as individual documents than as a collection of works. In addition, the founding documents have not been examined for the first principles of democracy.

Some scholars have rendered democracy synonymous with one to three democratic concepts. The usual concepts used to represent democracy in total are equality or liberty (Eisgruber, 2007). We see this phenomenon in Allen (2014), Connolly (2010), Dahl (2001), De Tocqueville (1839/2002), Giridharadas (2018), Kendi (2016),

and Mencken (1926). However, although the authors shared their ideas about democracy in America, they did not present a social change theory using the values they examined. In contrast, Benet (2006), Butts (1980, 1988), and Christiano et al. (2022) presented a more integrated approach to democracy and listed seven, 10, and 12 American democratic values, respectively. Butts (1980, 1988) referred to them as civic values for a democratic society. Benet (2006) referred to the elements of his social change theory as democratic elements. No author listed in this study or that I was able to locate has contributed a democratic social change process theory based on the first principles of democracy in the founding documents, which is the research aim of this study. The following social change theories used democratic values, not the first principles of democracy, to drive social change. Butts's civic values and Benet's polarities of democracy theory were summarized, compared, and critiqued.

Democratic Value-Based Social Change Theories

For this study, a democratic social change theory is one that used democratic values from America's founding documents. Based on this construction of democratic social change theory, two theories qualified: democratic civism (Butts, 1980, 1988) and polarities of democracy theory (Benet, 2006, 2013). Butts used civic values from America's founding documents and discussed the tension-producing dynamic between the values. The tension-producing dynamic can be found between *unum* and *pluribus* (Butts, 1980) and between the paired polarities (Benet, 2006, 2013). Butts's work is presented first because it predates Benet's polarities of democracy theory, and Benet appropriated his concepts and axioms.

Democratic Civism

Butts was an internationalist who dedicated his life to education. Butts (1980, 1988) sought social change through education during the primary and secondary school years. His social change goal was to create moral and civic-minded citizens and improve public judgment (1988), a mission that Butts attributed to the Founders' goal of public education. Butts proposed democratic civic values in the mid-1980s when enthusiasm for educational reform peaked.

Butts divided education reformers into pluralists and civicists. Pluralists, often critics of public education, held varied interests, including calling for educational reform that legitimized community schools that served racial, religious, and ethnic groups (Butts, 1980). Ethnic minority leaders lauded the Irish, Italian, and Polish Catholics who attended parochial schools for their "financial success and middle-class status" within "a few decades of having arrived in the U.S." (p. 11). Alternatively, civicists, the group of reformers Butts aligned with, sought legitimacy and for education to rest with the common civic community (Butts, 1980). Civicists argue that public education is responsible for preparing students with the knowledge and skills participants need to "maintain and improve the democratic political community and for strengthening [democratic] values" (Butts, 1980, p. 10).

Butts referenced the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, The Federalist Papers, and The Anti-Federalist Papers, and the U.S. Constitution, but he used a historical approach. Benet (2006), on the other hand, borrowed heavily from Butts's (1980, 1988) works and reported using grounded theory (Benet, 2013). The

original civic values contained two sets of values. Butts identified the five values as the obligations of democratic citizenship (*unum*): justice, equality, authority, participation, and personal obligation for the public good or patriotism (Butts, 1980, p. 128), and the five values as rights of democratic citizenship (*pluribus*): freedom, diversity, privacy, due process, and international human rights (Butts, 1980, p. 128). The civic virtues were endorsed by major “professional and public” organizations (Butts, 1980, p. 132).

Butts (1988) later presented the 12 tables of civic values for the modern American republic after incorporating two additional civic values proposed by the State of California Framework Committee on History/Social Science to the original 10 values: truth and [respect for] property. The last two civic values fall under the obligations of democratic citizenship. The *unum* values were placed on the left, while the *pluribus* values were on the right. Butts (1980, 1988) considered the values of democratic civism as having both positive and corrupt aspects, an axiom later adopted by Benet (2006, p. 164). The corrupted forms of democratic obligations include law and order, conformity, totalitarianism, majoritarianism, plausible falsehood, and chauvinism or xenophobia (Butts, 1988). The corresponding corrupted forms of democratic rights include anarchy, unstable pluralism, privatism, being soft on criminals, the superiority of materialism over human rights, and cultural imperialism (Butts, 1988). These corrupt forms of *unum* and *pluribus* can only be evaluated by analyzing the definition of the underlying constructs of democratic civism.

The democratic civic values are historical American democratic values that emerged from the nation’s founding documents (Butts, 1980, 1988), although Butts was

not always concise in defining them. However, he often explained the history and/or relevance of including the values on the 12 tables of civism for the modern American republic. Moreover, although the values may appear paired and in a hierarchical order, Butts did not specify a particular order in which students should learn the values (Butts, 1988). The table format was selected to enhance teaching efficiency and render the counterpoints between the obligations of citizens and the rights of citizens readily visible (Butts, 1988). Of the 12 democratic civic values, I will discuss justice, property, and truth because the concepts lead to dissonance and are particularly relevant to the study. However, later in this chapter, the concepts are compared with Benet's (2006, 2013) rendition of the democratic element borrowed from Butts while considering his use of Johnson's polarity management as his conceptual framework.

Butts (1988), who adopted Rawls's definition of justice, recommended considering justice as fairness as the foundation of a moral democratic society. When conceived of as fairness, justice must meet two principles: the right of each person to enjoy an equal right to basic rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution and social and economic justice (Butts, 1988). Justice principles rely on equality and fairness: The most disadvantaged should benefit from basic fairness and equal opportunity (Butts, 1988). However, unlike Rawls, Butts (1980, 1988) and Benet (2006, 2013) adopted the belief that a corrupted form of justice exists in the form of law and order.

The history of property in America as it relates to suffrage, social hierarchy, the use of property as a measure of human dignity, and humans as property made it a democratic civism value of interest, particularly in this study. Butts (1988) provided a

summary of the importance of the history of property in the United States and how property was leveraged to expand the role of the federal government as the entity responsible for protecting individual property from theft and state intrusion.

In adopting truth as a democratic civism value, Butts (1988) equated truth with knowledge, distinguished it from deliberate misinformation, and suggested that freedom of thought is the “foundation of all other freedoms” (p. 166). The freedom to access free knowledge, suggested Butts (1988), would place primary importance on evaluating public knowledge and allow students to distinguish between Southern teachers’ version of truth versus genuine truth (Butts, 1980, p. 59). In addition, students must learn to distinguish the truth from beguiling half-truths, plausible deniability (Butts, 1988), and moral character (Butts, 1980). Like privacy and property, truth was not among the democratic values adopted by Benet (2006, 2013) as a polarity to be managed. Butts’s goal in pursuing social change is practical in that it is feasible to teach students civic education by presenting the 12 democratic civism values with political support. However, Benet’s ambitious goal of social change by leveraging opposite pairs appears more philosophical than practical.

Polarities of Democracy Theory

William Benet (2006) initially applied Butts’s (1980) civic values toward achieving workplace democracy. Since Benet published his theory in the *Journal of Sustainable Social Change* in 2013, 21 students have used the polarities of democracy theory as a theoretical framework for their doctoral research. Despite Benet having borrowed broadly from Butts’s 1980 publication, he has contributed to the polarities of

democracy theory. Furthermore, although Butts (1988) discussed the tension between justice and equality, freedom and equality, and freedom and privacy, the democratic civism values were not paired. Moreover, the idea of leveraging tension produced by paired values was not found in Butts's 1980 and 1988 published works. To implement the conceptual framework, Benet paired the 10 elements and bound them as both-and polarities to be managed, indicating that both values were necessary for democratic governance (Benet, 2006).

Benet (2006) drew upon Johnson's (1996) polarity management concept for the conceptual framework of his polarities of democracy theory. The framework functions similarly to a SWOT matrix in which four quadrants draw upon an organization's positives (strengths and opportunities) and negatives (weaknesses and threats), except in Johnson's framework, the top quadrants indicate positive aspects, and the lower quadrants indicate negative aspects. This arrangement gave rise to the infinity loop where poles dip and pull depending on the attention given to leveraging the polarity pairs (Johnson, 1996). If the infinity loop were a bowtie placed in front of a backdrop of a SWOT analysis quadrant, either end would be on the x-axis, tension would cause the tie to fluctuate up and down on the Y-axis. Furthermore, like the adaptation of the SWOT matrix, Johnson incorporated Ferdinand De Saussure's linguistic concept of binary opposition (see Holdcroft, 1991; see Putri & Sarwoto, 2016), termed polar opposites by Johnson (1996). Binary opposition reflects relational thinking that often occurs by examining differences (Joseph, 2011; Putri & Sarwoto, 2016). Concepts are juxtaposed to reveal their polar opposite: black/white, man/woman, evil/good, sweet/sour, and so forth

(Joseph, 2011; Putri & Sarwoto, 2016). This juxtaposition creates the tension evidenced by dilemmas, or what Johnson (1996) called dynamic tension.

Hence, the polarity management theory was developed for managing dilemmas in which one problem cannot be neglected in favor of the other (Johnson, 1996). Johnson proposed a two-pronged test to determine whether the problem suits the polarity management framework by emphasizing the importance of tension. The test requires an affirmative response to the following questions: “Does the problem persist?” and “Are the poles interrelated” (Johnson, 1996, p. 81)? In other words, Johnson’s polarity theory manages unsolvable interdependent dilemma-posing problems (Johnson, 1996). The tension results from pairing the polarity poles (Johnson, 1996). Johnson presented three generic pairing polarities: whole/part (the family as a unit versus the individual who is part of the family), self/other (me versus you polarity; Johnson, 1996, p. 218), and the doing/being polarity (deed versus word; Johnson, 1996, p. 221). In explaining dilemma-posing problems, Johnson (1996) stated that polar opposite problems create tension as they push between the north and south poles of the quadrants. Thus, to manage the dilemma effectively, the tension must be leveraged towards the upper two quadrants as much as possible while avoiding a push into the lower quadrants where the negative aspects reside (Johnson, 1996). The tension-causing forces are from two opposing values. Tension results from one group experiencing or anticipating the problem pushing down while the group attracted to the solution push up (Johnson, 1996). True to managing a dilemma, no problem can be neglected or become the focus of a solution for too long (Johnson, 1996). This situation inevitably causes pushing from the group experiencing or

anticipating the problem (Johnson, 1996). The relationship could be explained as a high school coach training his football team. Neglecting one group while giving too much attention to the other will earn the coach the accusation of unfairness and favoritism and affect any gains made. Not recognizing and managing the problem can result in an infinity loop (Johnson, 1996).

Conversely, power imbalance caused by fear of getting caught in the opposite pole or favoritism has a detrimental effect on leveraging the polarities (Johnson, 1996). Therefore, in leveraging the polarities, opposing interests must be addressed so that both groups experience and anticipate the positive aspects of the top two quadrants as much as possible versus the bottom negative quadrants (Johnson, 1996). In short, there is an interdependent relationship between the values of one pole and the other. For both sides of the pole to produce benefits, poles must be positioned to reduce tension and maximize benefits for both polarities (Johnson, 1996).

Three fundamental ideas emerged from Benet's (2006, 2013) use of Johnson's polarity management. First, the polarities of democracy assist in managing social and workplace problems to build tenable, fair, and healthy organizations and communities. Second, all the paired democratic values must be successfully leveraged to maximize the positive aspects and minimize each pole's negative aspects. Third, to effectively leverage each pair, interrelatedness must be understood. When using Johnson's (1996) conceptual framework, Benet's paired concepts become animated. The leveraging of the polarities of democracy is intended to allow individuals and organizations to achieve the poles'

maximum positive aspect while reducing the negative aspects of the poles as much as possible (Benet, 2006, p. 30).

Moreover, Benet (2006, p. 9) drew on three reasons why expanding democracy to the workplace is important: democracy as it relates to occupational stress, the democracy concept as it relates to human evolution, and the relationship between workplace and societal democracy. Benet (2006) asserted that borrowing from these areas made the use of polarities of democracy appropriate for addressing organizational and social problems. Benet's polarities of democracy theory is used to manage and reduce incidents of oppression, violence, and the corrupting influence of power (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 17, 2021, p. 2), when facing "an unsolvable problem rather than a problem to be solved" (Benet, 2006, p. 57).

Benet's polarities of democracy theory is a critical theory that supports positive social change, overcoming institutional oppression, and the various forms of violence (2013; W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 17, 2021, p. 2). The overall social change goal for using the polarities of democracy is to assist individuals and organizations in forming healthy, just, and sustainable communities (Benet, 2013, p. 26). Benet incorporated nine of Butts's 12 civic values into the polarities of democracy theory (freedom, diversity, due process, human rights, justice, equality, authority, participation, and personal obligation for the public good, but as communal obligations). The polarities of democracy framework makes evaluation, planning, guiding, and social change possible (Benet, 2006, p. 30).

Critique of the Democratic Value-Based Social Change Theories

Butts's (1980, 1988) contributions to social change include an educated citizenry that understands democracy and the history of democracy in America, the importance of civic engagement and participation, assessing truth from a plausible falsehood used by politicians and mainstream media, and broadening of concepts related to civic virtue. Likewise, successful contributions to social change under Benet's (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy would include a framework whereby organizations and institutions could plan and evaluate proposed social change using American democratic concepts, widen the scope of democratic possibilities for people abroad who have otherwise not enjoyed the same quality of democracy as Americans, and provide a blueprint for an in-transit democratic journey. On the other hand, there are several limitations to their democratic social change theories. As previously noted, Benet (2006, 2013) borrowed Butts's (1980, 1988) democratic concepts and axioms. Therefore, weaknesses with Butts's theory of social change are evident in Benet's polarities of democracy theory. However, Benet's theory also has its limitations. The limitations of the theories are conceptual and axiomatic. They appear in the application of theory to practice, and are related to the polarities of democracy's conceptual framework.

Challenges of Corrupt Forms

Various shortcomings emerged from Butts's theory that Benet (2006) incorporated into the polarities of democracy theory. The concept of a corrupt form, which could be interpreted as the opposite of the value, for example, justice or any of the democratic civic values, conjures the image that corrupt forms are at the interstices

between an ideal form of a democratic civic value and the opposite extreme of that value. The corrupted form of justice is not equated to its traditional corresponding opposite, injustice. Allowing for a corrupt version of justice that is not equated with injustice is contrary to the very essence of what constitutes fairness and is a reframing common in national and international politics (Chomsky, 1995; Edelman & Edelman, 2001; Lasswell, 1938/1971) where definitions become “vague and wavering” (Lippmann, 2017/1922, p. 93). It also goes against Butts’s (1980, 1988) idea of a democratic society with a moral foundation based on fairness. Adopting a corrupt form of justice represents an ideological shift from critical theory’s position on justice as fairness and its social justice goal. If the corrupt form of justice is reframed as simply as law and order versus the violation of due process rights, such an interpretation could readily lead to legitimized oppression and incidents like George Floyd, or the withholding of the right to trial by jury (*Hurtado v. California*, 1984). Alternatively, law and order may be required to ensure security: And may, at times, be the goal of authority and freedom when leveraging the freedom and authority polarity pair.

Likewise, the idea of a corrupt form of due process that is soft on crime presents problems not addressed by Butts in the 1980 or 1988 publications. It is through codified fairness in the United States Constitution’s Bill of Rights that this alleged extreme form of due process supports human rights and protects against governmental abuse of power. The perceived leniency granted by the court has been to protect citizens’ due process rights against abuse of power by government officials. The Bill of Rights treats due process rights as an inalienable right representing security in government and equal

treatment under the law. The “train of abuses and usurpations” in the Declaration of Independence illustrate the many violations of due process by Great Britain. Therefore, the challenge with accepting a corrupt form of due process is determining which of the defendant’s due process rights officers and judges can violate and simultaneously comply with substantive and procedural rights and not be accused of inequality or considered soft on crime.

Concerning human rights, in its corrupt form, it appears as cultural imperialism (Butts, 1980, 1988). The concern for human dignity expressed as “all men are created equal” led to conscientization (Declaration of Independence, 1776). It is suggested that conscientization or moral reasoning led the Founders to revolt against Great Britain, gain independence, and become a sovereign nation (see Freire, 1970/2018). Therefore, the Founders included the Bill of Rights in the U.S. Constitution. Furthermore, Butts’s (1980) and Benet’s (2006) violation of human rights robs the people of democracy. The protection of human rights to achieve a sense of security has been the goal of most, if not all, social movements in America since the Revolutionary War. Conscientization reveals the inherent dignity of human beings and the policies that promote it.

Furthermore, Butts (1988) referred to the corrupt form of truth as a “beguiling half-truth” or “plausible falsehood,” not falsehood. In comparing the relationship between truth and its corrupt form, beguiling half-truths and plausible falsehoods are socially acceptable forms of deception but lies, nonetheless. There is some argument to be made that these are not extreme forms of falsehood since there is a lack of consensus on what is a trivial lie and what is a beguiling half-truth. Although Butts (1980, 1988) referenced

and included corrupt forms of civic values, he did not define or provide a rationale for most corrupt forms of democratic civic values. Butts (1988) provided more detail about the corrupted form of diversity than other civic values. Butts discussed diversity at length under pluralism, the heading of diversity, and the history of civic education (Butts, 1980, p. 140). Butts said diversity “is one of the major values to be studied, analyzed, and honored in any program of civic education for American schools” (Butts, 1980, p. 140).

Plundering Rights

Although Butts praised Rawls’s definition of freedom for prioritizing equal civil liberties and suggested that intellectual freedom undergirds all other freedoms (Butts, 1988), several democratic values create tension for Butts (1980) in furthering civic education. Butts (1980) praised diversity, even though he vehemently opposed pluralists, the group which sought legitimacy for education in different communities serving “religious, racial, ethnic, linguistic, or cultural groups” (p. 9). As a historian and philosopher informed in the First Amendment rights, Butts (1980, 1988) left no indication on handling situations involving religious rejection of politics or how to balance due process rights against the appearance of being soft on crime (Benet, 2006, p. 168).

Missing Means

Benet’s (2006, 2013) theory of polarities of democracy faces other challenges unrelated to Butts’s axioms. Other major weaknesses emerged from the use of Johnson’s (1996) conceptual framework: (a) where to locate a problem that has shifted to another polarity pair; (b) how to predict which polarity pair will experience a new problem as a

result of managing multarities, true to managing dilemmas (Benet, 2006); (c) determining whether all the polarity pairs have reached their maximum benefits, and (d) determining which democratic value an organization can sacrifice to preserve the other(s). The task becomes monumental when the goal is to leverage the five interdependent paired values (Benet, 2006). Predicting outcomes is critical in a data-driven world. For example, how would an organizational leader determine which human rights could be forfeited when leveraging communal obligations, which polarity pair has been affected by a shifting or newly emerged problem, or if the solutions applied to the problem that required the use of the framework have been leveraged to achieve the maximum benefits?

The Balancing Act

Benet asserted (2006) that the 10 democratic elements are interdependent and are impacted when other elements are leveraged. For instance, the corrupt versions of justice and due process violate basic fairness, and the corrupt version of human rights violates human dignity. Although the corrupted version of human rights is included in Benet's (2006) framework (p. 307), he vehemently denies a corrupt version of human rights. Introducing one or more pairs to diversity and equality to achieve equity and the multarities could overload organizational problem solvers and result in an organizational nightmare. This is because leveraging the polarities require extra time and resources. Although leveraging one polarity pair at a time would permit a focused assessment and evaluation of applied remedies and result in better control and management of the problem and tentative solutions, Benet (2006) removed managing one polarity pair as an option. To help understand the problem of leveraging polarities, I will use the analogy of

a marionette. This analogy could illustrate the polarity pairs' interdependence, the requirement to leverage all polarity pairs (Benet, 2006), and how these factors reflect on the marionette. Using the marionette will hopefully allow the reader to understand the complexity of leveraging polarities. In leveraging polarities, the nostrils represent justice and due process; the eyes represent freedom and authority; the hands represent diversity and equality; the legs represent human rights and obligations; and the ears represent participation and representation. If the marionette's nostrils are flared, all other parts move simultaneously at varying degrees. Because this is the case, predicting how a polarity pair affects various parts of the marionette would prove exceptionally helpful to organizations interested in driving positive social change using the polarities of democracy.

Although Benet (2006, 2013) assumed it would be possible to manage all polarity pairs simultaneously, of the 21 students who used the polarities of democracy as their theoretical framework, none has tested the practical implications of using the conceptual framework when leveraging multarities, or how to predict the emergence of a new problem in other areas because of the shifting nature of dilemmas. Currently, leveraging multiple pairs using the polarities of democracy is strictly theoretical. Testing the interdependence of polarity pairs could contribute to developing a measurement method, guide theory modification for practical application, provide instruction on which polarity pairs are affected when the pair of interests is leveraged, and if the polarities of democracy is practical or philosophical. However, as it stands, Johnson's polarity management is an inappropriate framework for human emancipation and democratic

social change. Using Johnson's tension-driven framework would negate or minimize any gains. A different conceptual framework could help manage all polarity pairs simultaneously without shifting problems. It is proposed that a parsimonious conceptual framework based on the first principles of democracy can reduce dynamic tension, eliminate concerns about moving and creating problems for other polarities, and the need to leverage two or more polarity pairs to achieve the goal of fairness (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 3, 2022) and human emancipation. This study also filled this gap.

The Unknown and the Controversial

Although the primary purpose of this research was to fill the literature gap with a grounded theory drawn from the first principles of democracy in the nation's founding documents, other unknowns emerged as well. There was a lack of conceptualization of the first principles of democracy, a lack of a non-political conception of democratic social change, and a lack of a parsimonious conceptual framework that leverages the polarities of democracy with the goal of sustainable social change for human emancipation (see Benet, 2006). Epistemologically, labeling concepts creates awareness, ensures measurement and evaluation, and allows others to contribute to research; therefore, the concepts are defined in Chapter 1 under Definitions of Terms. Three principles were used to construct a framework to achieve human emancipation and democratic social change with the polarities of democracy: human dignity, fairness, and knowledge.

It was also discovered that Benet's (2006) framework might have other controversial issues. Butts (1980, 1988) and Benet's (2006, 2013) theories serve political

interests rather than social ones. There is a lack of ethics in applying authority, justice, due process, human rights, diversity, and equality. This is because Butts (1980, 1988) and Benet (2006, 2013) adopted corrupt forms of these values. The justice and due process pair must be leveraged to achieve fairness with at least two or more paired polarities (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 3, 2022). However, Johnson (1996) “points out that we will never experience the upside of both poles simultaneously, and that in fact, the more time we spend focused on one pole, the more time we will spend in the downside quadrant of that pole” (Benet, 2006, p. 60). One must assume fairness is contained in conjunction with the justice and due process pair and two or more unnamed paired polarities. If it is impossible to “experience the upside of both poles simultaneously” (Benet, 2006, p. 60), what concessions must be made when leveraging justice and due process, diversity and equality, or human rights and communal obligations using the polarities of democracy theory? Can the polarities of democracy lead to emancipation and social change using polarities management as its conceptual framework (see Benet, 2006, 2013; Johnson, 1996)? I suggest a strategy is needed to address tension effectively to prevent paired elements from fluctuating across the Y-axis to realize the upside of both poles.

Diversity and equality are an “unsolvable problem” (see Benet, 2006, p. 57): another controversial aspect of Benet’s framework. Originally, diversity was defined as an having an elite status among a majority of non-elites instead of a racial, ethnic, or religious group (Benet, 2006). Since then, diversity has been applied to a variety of minority statuses. “Diversity leads to the wielding of power in ways which make

democracy untenable” (Benet, 2006, p. 187) and that “to the extent that diversity is at the expense of equality” (Benet, 2006, p. 188), diversity becomes a downside. Historically, women, disabled, LGBTQ, people of color, non-Protestants, and ethnic minorities were excluded from participation and treated unfairly. In this sense, the government’s efforts to remedy de jure and de facto discrimination make democracy tenable. Moreover, the practical implication of pairing diversity with equality as dilemmas to be managed runs against “all men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) and the promise of democracy made by Lincoln during the Gettysburg Address in 1863, that a “government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth” (p. 1). Habermas (Muller, 2007) proposed constitutional patriotism to remove the tension between the two pairs and uphold the equality spoken of by the Founders in the Declaration of Independence: equality based on human dignity.

Johnson’s (1996) polarity management framework was developed to address dilemmas (Benet, 2006, p. 57), not achieve human emancipation. Hence, the most controversial aspect of Benet’s (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy theory is that it uses Johnson’s conceptual framework for managing democratic values as "dilemmas" to be addressed. Benet suggests democracy is an either-or problem that requires a both-and approach. How can an organization use a both-and approach to democracy without trading off diversity for equality, for example, since they "will never experience the upside of both poles simultaneously" (Benet, 2006, p. 60)? By leveraging one pair of democratic values, other democratic values are also affected. This makes instability a fundamental problem when managing multiple democratic values with Johnson’s (1996)

framework. It is unclear how Johnson's conceptual framework holds up when dealing with numerous interdependent polarity pairs. This means that emancipation and social change may be hindered by the shifting of problems to one or more unknown areas considering that “under these circumstances,” Johnson (1996, as cited in Benet, 2006) points out, “we will never experience the upside of both [democratic values] simultaneously” (p. 60). Although Butts’s and Benet’s social change goals are noble, research on the progress made using their framework is unavailable. This made the evaluation of the practical utility of their theories impossible. Consequently, to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the polarities of democracy framework, it was necessary to scrutinize Butts’s, Benet’s, and Johnson's theoretical axioms.

Summary

Butts and Benet facilitated notable contributions to academic literature, particularly in education, public policy, and political science. Butts’s (1980, 1988) social change goal was to create ethical citizens who can participate in public decisions and improve the lives of Americans. The Center for Civic Education staff is forging forward with Butts’s goal of making civic education available to students everywhere. Benet’s social change goal extended to improving the lives of his global neighbors. Benet continues with his goal for democratic social change as the dissertation chair for most students who use the polarities of democracy as their theoretical framework. He also supports democratic social change through the Institute for the Polarities of Democracy. However, neither theorist developed a democratic social change process from the first principles of democracy using the founding documents. Therefore, there was a need for a

critical conceptualization of the first principles embedded in the American founding documents that undergird the nation's democratic values and the genesis of democratic social change in America. This qualitative constructivist grounded theory study aimed to construct a grounded theory that provides an understanding of the process of American democratic social change as it emerged from the nation's founding documents. The following chapter will discuss research and methodology, data analysis method and strategies, and establishing rigor.

Chapter 3: Research Method

There was a need for a critical conceptualization of the first principles that undergird American democracy and the genesis of democratic social change in America. The literature lacked a democratic social change theory based on the principles in the nation's founding documents. The constructivist grounded theory approach was used to construct a grounded theory that explained the principles and process of American democratic social change as they emerged from the nation's founding documents. The findings emerged from successive, constant, comparative data analysis consistent with grounded theory methodology. The founding documents were explored for instances leading to democracy using sensitizing concepts, searching for gerunds, and asking questions regarding processes and culture (see Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). This study was conducted to answer the following research question: How do the first principles of democracy in the American founding documents provide an understanding of the process of American democratic social change? The definition of democracy emerged from the founding documents. Social change is a "deliberate process of creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to enhance dignity and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies" (Walden University, n.d., p. 1). This chapter presents the research design and rationale, the researcher's role, the methodology, and how research integrity was maintained.

Research Design and Rationale

I followed the constructivist tradition of grounded theory. The aim was to construct a grounded theory of democratic social change to help others understand the social change process that emerged from the founding documents. The research question was answered using qualitative methodology. The constructivist tradition was preferred over other grounded theory traditions because it allows critical inquiry, which was key in promoting social change, and it also recognizes the experience of the researcher in the construction of grounded theory (see Charmaz, 2016), as opposed to Glaser and Strauss's (1967) and Corbin and Strauss's (1990) traditions. Critical inquiry involves systemic thinking, multiple perspectives, reflective skepticism, and problem-posing (Bermudez, 2015).

Other Qualitative Approaches

The case study design was an alternative method of theory construction, but it was less rigorous than grounded theory. Eisenhardt (1989) described the case study method as a means to generate theory by borrowing grounded theory's constant comparison and theoretical sampling to develop the case study method into a method used for theory generation. Although using the case study method for the generation of theory may be less challenging than grounded theory methodology (Eisenhardt, 1989), Yin (2009) argued that theory in the case study approach differs from theory in the grounded theory approach because the case study method requires the user to have a theory to guide the study before data collection. In contrast, grounded theory researchers avoid using theory to guide the study (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Yin, 2009).

The general qualitative inquiry is less structured than the case study method (Patton, 2014). Researchers who use general qualitative inquiry are free from adhering to strict methodologies and theoretical orientations such as phenomenology, grounded theory methodology, and hermeneutics (Caelli et al., 2003). Like most qualitative research, general qualitative inquiry includes surveys, focus groups, interviews, observations, and archival data as data collection tools (Patton, 2014). Data analysis takes the same form as other qualitative designs (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019). The general qualitative inquiry is open to the deductive data analysis approach in which the researcher employs predetermined codes that are selected after the review of literature or that are associated with a theoretical or conceptual framework, and the inductive coding approach whereby the researcher allows the codes to emerge from the data (Linneberg & Korsgaard, 2019; Patton, 2014).

Differences exist between the grounded theory approach and other qualitative approaches. The major distinctions are theoretical sampling, theory generation, data analysis method, and literature review (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, 2012). Charmaz's (2006) tradition is more relaxed about when a literature review should be undertaken. Theoretical sampling is theory-driven sampling whereby the researcher intuitively selects the next sample for the iterative compare-and-contrast process (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Coding and Data Analysis Using Constant Comparison

The methodology begins with abductive reasoning and continues with the data analysis of the first sequence of theoretical samples (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The sample is analyzed using various data analysis strategies until the next theoretical sample is selected, which involves a constant comparison between the first and second theoretical samples. When data analysis commences, the data are separated, categorized, analyzed, and synthesized using open, selective, and axial coding (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As abductive reasoning and coding continue, they lead to theorizing about the theoretical codes (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Categories and subcategories emerge, as do new research questions (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (2006) encouraged researchers to follow emergent research questions because they can lead the researcher to the next theoretical sampling and facilitate theory construction.

Theoretical sampling is a specialized purposive sampling whereby the researcher can engage in a creative process (Charmaz, 2006) wherein data collection and analysis are successive processes led by intuition (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Whatever captures the researcher's curiosity drives the researcher to select a new sample (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Selecting the next sample based on whichever phenomenon piques the researcher's curiosity leads to achieving theoretical saturation, the point at which all concepts have been identified and no new insights or codes are emerging (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

As theoretical sampling was engaged in the current study, the substantive data of the founding documents were analyzed, compared, and contrasted against each other within layers of systematic questions about the data (see Charmaz, 2006). This iterative process of coding, analysis, theoretical sampling, constant comparison analysis, and memoing was repeated until a theory could show the relationship between the emerged concepts and the propositions that explicate a process (Charmaz, 2006; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Grounded theorists see coding as a tool that leads to grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; J. Mills et al., 2006).

Memos

In grounded theory, data analysis incorporates more than coding. The analysis combines the emerged constructs, theoretical samples, theoretical insights, memos about the construct and the process, and the researcher's reflections (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006). Memos are a particularly useful tool. In the current study, memos were used in the constant compare-and-contrast process in which data and memos were analyzed iteratively (see Charmaz, 2006). Memos assist with rigor, category development, constructs, establishing relationships between emerged constructs, and theory construction (see Charmaz, 2006). Grounded theorists are encouraged to use memos to reflect on constructs, the researcher's thoughts about the construct and process, and plausible explanations (Charmaz, 2006).

Theory in Grounded Theory

The definition of theory, like many social science constructs, varies among scholars because it varies among grounded theory traditions. In defining grounded theory,

classical grounded theorists Glaser and Strauss (1967) aligned with the positivist school. Glaser (2002) defined grounded theory as “the generation of emergent conceptualizations into integrated patterns ... denoted by categories and their properties” (p. 23). Positivists who treat constructs like variables emphasize generalization and explain the concepts’ relationship (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Corbin and Strauss (1990) leaned toward the positivist school. However, they acknowledged, like the interpretivists, that “theories provide interpretive frames from which to view realities” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 140) and deconstruct how the researcher interprets the social realities relayed to them by participants (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Like Glaser and Strauss (1967), Corbin and Strauss (1990) saw theory as abstract rather than descriptive. Contrary to theory discovered in the positivist tradition of grounded theory, interpretivist theory, which is the tradition constructivist grounded theory is a part of, calls for imagination, emphasizes understanding patterns and associations, allows for indeterminacy, assumes subjectivity and multiple realities, and “articulate[s] theoretical claims on scope, depth, power, and relevance” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 127). Interpretivist theory assumes truth is provisional, social life is a process, and “facts and values are inextricably linked” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 127). However, whether the theory follows the positivist or interpretivist tradition, theories are constructed of “arguments about the world and relationships within it” and attempt to persuade readers that the argument made leads to a logical conclusion (Charmaz, 2006, p. 128).

The constructivist grounded theory design explores how or why meanings are constructed in a particular situation. In discovering how meaning is constructed, the

analyst may discover or pursue the “why” (Charmaz, 2006). Inherent to the constructivist grounded theory tradition is the pursuit of hidden structures, processes, and communication that reveal social distinctions, power, and how “differences and distinctions arise and are maintained” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 131). Although the rendition of the grounded theory depends on the researcher’s values and positionality (Charmaz, 2006), the constructivist approach is used to demonstrate the “complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 132) by looking for substantive processes and relationships and establishing connections between the “conceptualized relationships and experiences and events” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 136).

Formal and Substantive Theories

Grounded theory methodology generates both formal and substantive theories grounded in the data. A substantive theory is restricted to an empirical area of inquiry and is group- and place-specific (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Formal theory, however, is not bound to a group or place. Formal theory transcends a substantive area and has broad social application (Glaser, 2002; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), addressing “concerns and problems across situational contexts” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 246). On the other hand, substantive theories can lead to the construction of formal theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The two strategies typically used in theory generation are abstraction and abductive reasoning.

Abstraction

One strategy that can assist in elevating a substantive theory to a formal theory is increasing the level of abstraction through theoretical sampling and successive comparisons (Glaser, 2002). Abstraction is a cognitive process whereby a concrete object that is otherwise empirical now symbolizes an idea that the five senses cannot perceive. Moving away from a concrete element toward a concept and a higher level of abstraction enhances generalizability (Glaser, 2002) and “eliminates the need for situating the data in its context” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 36). Higher levels of abstraction move the grounded theory from a substantive to a formal theory. Elevating the level of abstraction is important in constructing grounded theory because concepts, or their conceptualizations, are laced with the data in constructing the theory. In the current study, every attempt was made to raise the abstract level of the emerged concepts. Any discussion of theory construction would be incomplete without covering the strategy and process of abductive reasoning.

Abductive Reasoning

Abductive reasoning plays a significant role in theory generation (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Abduction is a logical, methodological, and scientific means of inference that enables social scientists to generate new knowledge (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007) as one of the three types of inferential reasoning: induction, deduction, and abduction (Halpin & Richard, 2021). As a cognitive process, abduction creates associations between things that had not been associated with each other before and allows inferring implied facts from a given fact (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Pfister, 2022).

Abduction has played a leading role in philosophical debates and is notable in the philosophy of science and epistemology (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Zalta, 2021a).

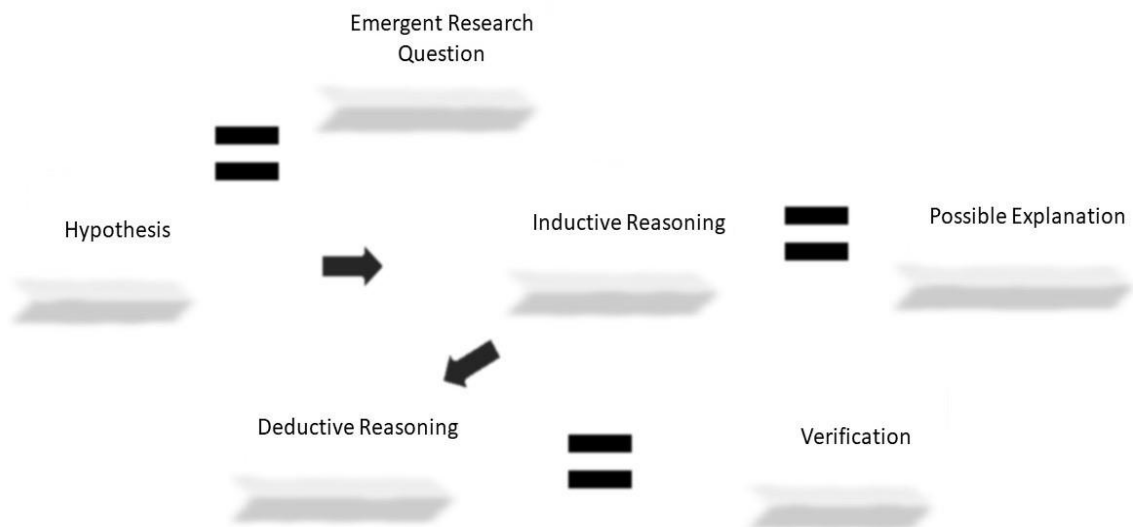
The term “abduction” was coined by Pierce, an American founder of pragmatism (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Pfister, 2022) in the early 1900s. Although there is no consistent definition of abduction, abduction is considered an explanatory reasoning power that can generate or justify a hypothesis (Zalta, 2021a). Moreover, abduction is guided by inference rules (Zalta, 2021a) and is a doubt-driven process that leads to a satisfying explanation that eliminates doubt (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Even though the debate regarding the definition of abduction and the cognitive difference between abductive discovery and abductive preference (Plutynski, 2011) is ongoing, the cognitive process leading to abduction can be understood if an analogy involving the completion of a puzzle is applied. The placement of each puzzle piece is based on inferences about the shape, size, and image of the puzzle pieces, deductive reasoning, and the available locations on the puzzle board in finding feasible (abductive discovery) options or the best fit (abductive preference). Throughout the puzzle-solving process, the person completing the puzzle engages in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) punctuated with occasional leaps of insight known as intuition. The placement of pieces is done considering the puzzle (hypothesis, deductive analysis), the puzzle piece in the person’s hand (inductive analysis), and the adjoining puzzle pieces the individual puzzle piece must fit into (hypothesis, inductive analysis with flashes of deductive analysis). At both stages of abductive analysis, evaluation occurs before selection from available options and after the placement to determine whether the chosen

option is the best fit. Abduction uses inductive and deductive reasoning and insight to generate the best plausible theory (Halpin & Richard, 2021; see Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Abductive Reasoning Process



In applying the puzzle analogy to grounded theory, the ability to perceive the puzzle pieces is the emergence. However, recognizing emerging theoretical concepts requires theoretical sensitivity, theoretical insight, and how to use such insight (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The recognition of concepts is associated with inductive reasoning, which, together with deductive reasoning, facilitates conceptualization. In constructing a grounded theory, deductive analysis utilizes tried facts or prior knowledge to evaluate abductive discovery and preference (Plutynski, 2011). This prior knowledge drives the emergence of concepts and generates the hypothesis. Depth of familiarity with association facilitates abductive reasoning and, therefore, theory construction.

Abductions can be classified into two types: selective and creative. Selective abduction permits the inference of the antecedent for a particular fact when the conditional is known (Pfister, 2022). Creative abduction permits a new plausible explanation by inferring an antecedent for a particular fact (Pfister, 2022; Zalta, 2018). Depending on the proposition introduced in an antecedent, creative abduction can take the form of two creative types: conditional-creative abduction and propositional-conditional-creative abduction (Pfister, 2021). Conditional-creative abduction has its proposition defined in the theory, whereas the latter “introduces a new, undefined proposition” (Pfister, 2021, p. 14). In short, abduction permitted the construction of plausible grounded theories that facilitated the main theory that answered the research question.

Methodology Selected

In this study, grounded theory was selected as the research methodology. Grounded theory is a flexible yet systematic approach to gathering and analyzing data to construct a theory. The constructed theory must be derived from the substantive content (Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). There are several grounded theory traditions. All three grounded theory typologies adhere to basic grounded theory principles: abstraction, abductive reasoning, theoretical sampling, constant comparison, memoing, categorizing, and theory generation (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Glaser and Strauss’s grounded theory is classic (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Corbin and Strauss developed the post-positivist tradition and used the interpretivist paradigm to systematically analyze the data

using coding paradigms and conditional matrices (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Charmaz's grounded theory started the constructivist tradition (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Classical grounded theory is part of a positivist paradigm, where the researcher remains objective (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The interpretivist perspective, as with constructivist grounded theory, recognizes the researcher's role and the influence of the researcher's background on interpretive analysis (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007), and scholars are encouraged to read between the lines (Mills et al., 2006). Despite sharing the interpretivist perspective with other grounded theory traditions, the constructivist grounded theory is the most open to critical analysis.

Charmaz's constructivist tradition was selected for this study because it is the most appropriate tradition for critical inquiry (Charmaz, 2016). It allows researchers to introduce "questions concerning social justice" (Charmaz, 2016, p. 3) into the data analysis process, as well as explore implicit meanings (Mills et al., 2006). This made it optimal for exploring democracy and social change as it provides a way to study "power, inequality, and marginality" (Charmaz, 2016, p. 11). For these reasons, Charmaz's grounded theory was the most appropriate approach for constructing a theory of democratic social change.

The Researcher

Using the constructivist grounded theory methodology in this study, the researcher becomes the instrument by which she can use her knowledge and background to interpret the content based on the data before her (see Charmaz, 2006). The researcher's perspectives, values, position, and privileges, or lack thereof, are revealed in

the constructed theory (Charmaz, 2016). Methodological self-consciousness was used to reduce bias and reflect on positionality issues throughout the data analysis process by engaging in a “deeply reflexive gaze” (Charmaz, 2016, p. 3) upon myself, the research process, and the content of the study. A predisposition worth noting was that Noam Chomsky’s works had shaped my views. Meaning, I am skeptical about politicians’ intent, the media’s role, and the present state of democracy. To further address any biases, I selected an eclectic group of colleagues that represent a diverse group of scholars and professionals with various ideological preferences with whom I frequently discussed my work and asked them to challenge my positions (see Charmaz, 2016). I documented my biases in memos. Due to a rich background representing multiple cultural perspectives, work experiences, and transdisciplinary knowledge, it was possible to develop highly abstract theoretical codes that led to a fresh perspective.

Initial Data Sample

The grounded theory methodology uses a species of purposive sample called theoretical sampling (Charmaz, 2006). Given that grounded theory is an endeavor aimed at theory construction, this type of sampling is inherent to the methodology (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). As primary sources, the founding documents contained the first principles and values that led to transformational change. This selection, versus secondary data, allowed an analysis of the documents with scant regard for others’ interpretations of American democracy. Therefore, legal analyses of the founding documents were excluded from this study due to their scope.

The sample comprised the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Declaration of Independence, The Federalist Papers, and the U.S. Constitution. The documents were retrieved from the National Archives and the Library of Congress.

The Declaration of Independence was adopted on July 4, 1776, when the Revolutionary War was ongoing. The document, which was to serve a political purpose, and later influenced the creation of the Bill of Rights, was written entirely by Thomas Jefferson under the guidance of the Continental Congress (Allen, 2014) and expressed the then-current political zeitgeist and the American mind (Staff, 1976, p. 201).

The Articles of Confederation was the United States' first constitution and became enforceable in 1781 (Staff, 1976). A committee of 13, one representative for each colony, participated in its creation. The Articles of Confederation (1778) were to serve as a perpetual union among the 13 original colonies (Staff, 1976, p. 239).

The Federalist Papers are essays published between October 1787 and April 1788 (Staff, 1976). The articles were written by John Jay, Alexander Hamilton, and James Madison and published in various New York newspapers under the pseudonym Publius. The essays were to persuade readers of the excellence of the proposed form of government (Staff, 1976).

The U.S. Constitution was written in 1787, ratified on June 21, 1788, and became effective in March 1789 (Staff, 1976). The Constitution is the supreme law of the land. The first 10 amendments are known as the Bill of Rights. Although most individual rights are found in the 10 amendments, other protected rights exist in the remainder of the document. The Bill of Rights protects individual liberties and places limits on

government. The remaining 17 amendments describe the separation of power, government process and procedures, and extend civil rights.

There is debate regarding sample size and the ability to generate a grounded theory based on sample size (Charmaz, 2006). There is no fixed rule for sample size, as sample size does not determine the ability to construct a theory from the data (Charmaz, 2006). Moreover, an adequate number of samples or cases is determined by generating a grounded theory from theoretical codes that emerge from substantive data (Charmaz, 2006). The disparity between sample sizes is wide. Some researchers claim that five cases are enough to develop a substantive theory, while others claim 25 cases are sufficient, yet others suggest 114 cases (Charmaz, 2006). Combining the 85 Federalist Papers and the three other founding documents ensured an adequate initial sample. Despite the wide disparity of recommended samples for theory construction, grounded theorists aim for theoretical saturation instead of traditional saturation in qualitative research (Charmaz, 2006). The process of theoretical saturation was formalized when substantive theories were constructed based on the emerged concepts (Charmaz, 2006).

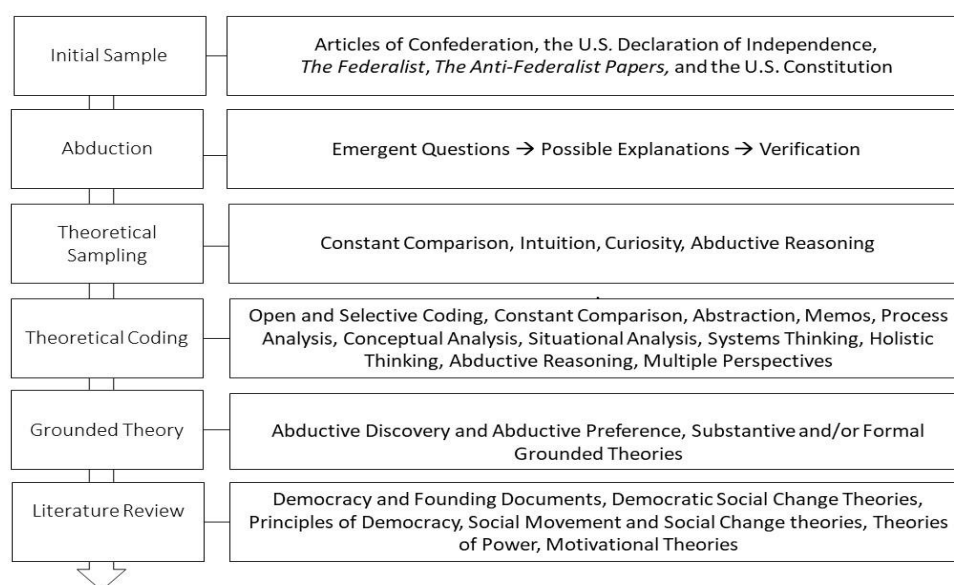
Data Collection and Analysis Plan

Because the data are primary historical sources in the public domain, no data collection required advanced permission. Data analysis was conducted manually to facilitate coding and control the process during theoretical coding. Printed memos, handwritten notes, and audio recordings facilitated data analysis and theoretical sampling. As with hermeneutics and deconstruction, careful attention was given to explicit and implicit meanings associated with the prevalent cultural norms of the time for each

document analyzed (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006). Details of the coding, memoing, and concept analysis processes are presented in this section, along with the plan for theoretical sampling and abductive reasoning. Justification for the handling of discrepant data was provided. Figure 2 previews the data analysis plan.

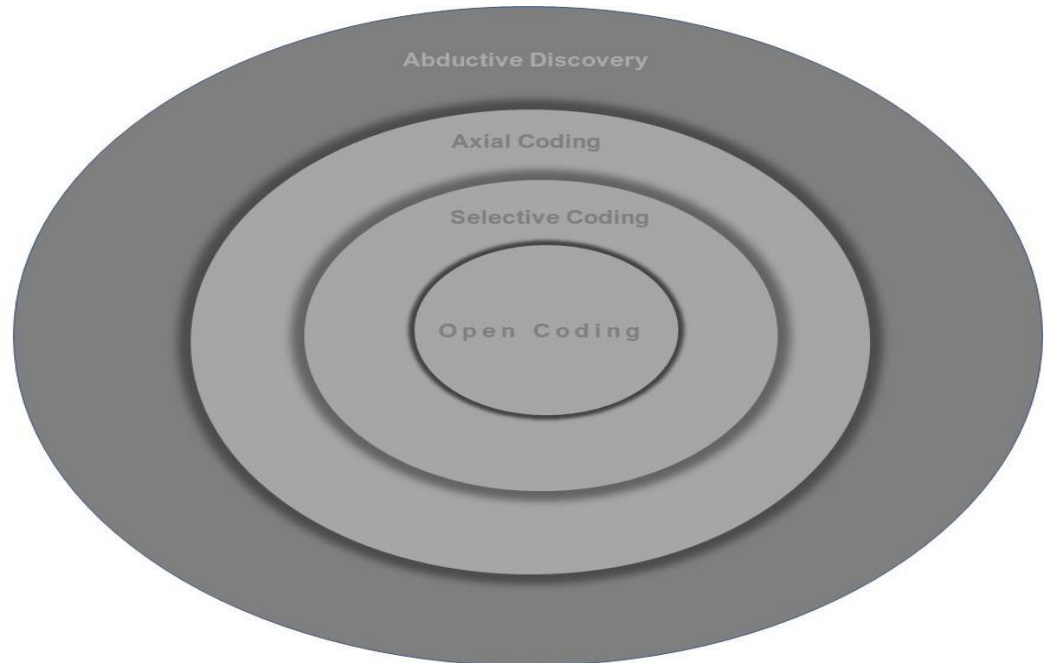
Figure 2.

Data Analysis Plan



Data Analysis Process: Coding, Memoing, and Concept Analysis

Charmaz's line-by-line technique was modified slightly. I used an open coding technique which progressed from general coding (giving large sections of text a theme or code) to more specific line-by-line and incident-by-incident coding (see Figure 3). This general-to-specific process made the dissonance between the overall meaning and emerging concepts visible. While analyzing the data, I searched for gerunds to understand actions and processes that could lead to constructing a social change theory (Charmaz, 2006).

Figure 3.*Theoretical Coding Process*

As words caught my attention, I wrote memos about the emerged concept in a coding diary, engaged in reflexivity, and used the technique of methodological self-consciousness to explore biases (see Charmaz, 2016). During this period of reflexive memoing, coding was interrupted to allow the deconstruction of the concept and allow me to view the concept from multiple perspectives. These perspectives included those of the government and those of the governed. Sensitizing strategies and situational analyses guided the iterative comparison, coding, and memoing process.

Sensitizing Strategies

The constructivist grounded theory permits the researcher to use already developed and tested generic questions tailored to the explored phenomenon as a point of departure for exploration (Charmaz, 2006). Democracy, as a facilitator of social change,

comprises multiple constructs and requires systematic questions about culture, systems, institutions, and processes to understand democracy better. Because the phenomena under exploration are processes, I incorporated Charmaz's (2006) questions during the selective coding process to facilitate theoretical sensitivity. The questions were about (a) defining the process, (b) process development, (c) behaviors of actors and reified objects during processes, (d) initiation of process change, (e) what the actors or objects profess during the process, (f) what their behavior indicate, and (g) consequences of the process (Charmaz, 2006, p. 51).

Situational Analysis and Maps

A situational analysis was used as a supplemental strategy to help generate concepts leading to grounded theory. This strategy allowed the analysis of interpersonal processes grounded in situations (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Situations were deconstructed into parts, then analyzed to make the relationships between elements more apparent, giving rise to multiple perspectives (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Clarke et al., 2016). Situational analysis is expressed empirically through three maps: relational, social world arena, and positional (Clarke et al., 2016). The relational analysis allowed the exploration of relationships among different actors and elements (see Clarke et al., 2016). Social world analysis facilitated interpretations of human interactions, including interactions with nonhuman components (see Clarke et al., 2016). The positional analysis helped me explore multiple perspectives and contradictions that helped explain actors' behaviors (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 370; Clarke et al., 2016). Once constructed, the situational maps provided opportunities for reflection on concepts, social connections,

and relationships. They also permitted me to evaluate contradictions and positions taken or not by the Founders. I adopted several questions from Bryant and Charmaz to facilitate the emergence of theoretical codes, categories, and theories. Bryant and Charmaz (2007, pp. 370–374) recommended the following questions:

- Who cares, and what do they want to do about it?
- Who and what are in this situation?
- Who and what matters in this situation?
- What elements ‘make a difference’ in this situation?
- What facilitates access?
- What hinders its access?

Theoretical Sampling

After the initial purposive sample was analyzed, I proceeded with the recursive process of theoretical sampling. I read all written memos, reflected on my ideas, and decided which document would be selected for the proceeding analysis. Selective coding facilitated the discovery of emerging patterns, prominent terms, or missing concepts that should have been included. The initial sample led the first theoretical sample (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). As Charmaz advised, I selected the next theoretical sample based on intuition or some underlying similarity or difference (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006).

The analysis proceeded as described above, but the difference in this next stage was that the initial sample was successively compared with the first theoretical sample until theoretical codes emerged. As coding progressed, the selection of theoretical sample

was led by theoretical sensitivity, emerged questions that piqued my interest, questions associated with the research question, or other reasons consistent with grounded theory methodology (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The next theoretical sample followed the same process and underwent constant comparison with the initial sample, the first theoretical sample, the second theoretical sample, the third ... The process is iterative and continued until reaching theoretical saturation (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Theoretical sampling facilitated the emergence of theoretical codes, which led to abductive reasoning and the construction of grounded theories (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Application of Abductive Reasoning

Abductive reasoning is an intellectual act that assists the researcher in pursuing novel discoveries (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Scholarly literature does not provide a consistent definition of abductive reasoning, but it can be described as a process that leads to a satisfying explanation that eliminates doubt (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Though there continues to be philosophical debate regarding the differences between abductive discovery and abductive preference (Plutynski, 2011), abduction is believed to have the power to generate or justify a hypothesis (Zalta, 2021a). Nevertheless, abductive reasoning does not guarantee that a discovery will be made, but it significantly improves theory generation. Two opposing strategies may facilitate abductive reasoning (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). The first is cognitive stress, fear, or uncertainty, and the second is meditation (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). For this research, my preferred technique was meditation. In order to deduce the applications of the emerging concepts, meditation

included deconstruction and family resemblance, the process of exploring word usage across boundaries, because these strategies had previously assisted me in abductive reasoning (Zalta, 2021).

Issues of Trustworthiness

The qualitative method uses one set of criteria for establishing research rigor, whereas grounded theory approaches employ different trustworthiness criteria. Practicing grounded theory in the interpretivist tradition and embracing critical inquiry, constructivist grounded theory supports the constructivist model of truth (Charmaz, 2006, p. 130). The constructivist tradition uses four criteria: credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021).

Credibility

Credibility was the criterion by which I established the reliability of the findings to reality or what was happening in the data (see Lincoln & Guba, 1982, 1985). The initial step in this study for establishing internal soundness was to use an all-inclusive approach to data on the phenomenon under investigation (see Charmaz, 2006). Internal and external data triangulation supported credibility (see Lincoln & Guba, 1982, 1985). There are 85 essays in *The Federalist Papers*, providing a comprehensive sample to assess the range, depth, and various observations. Variety in number, depth, and range allowed the grounded theories to fit the substantive content (see Charmaz, 2006). These links are evidenced by thick in vivo codes illustrating empirical grounding across documents (see Glaser, 2002). In addition, as required by qualitative research in general and grounded theory specifically, methodological self-consciousness was engaged throughout the

process because the researcher's views influence credibility and actions (see Charmaz, 2016; Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021, p. 315).

Originality

Originality as a criterion in constructivist grounded theory was used to evaluate the freshness of novel insights (see Charmaz, 2006). The freshness of insights was determined by assessing whether the grounded theories contributed to new ways of conceptualizing and recognizing problems (see Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021) and how the constructed grounded theories challenged, extended, or refined "current ideas, concepts, and practices" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 182). Thus, originality facilitated establishing the significance of the grounded theories (see Charmaz & Thornberg 2021). One technique that enhanced originality was delaying the literature review (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The post-literature review allowed me to verify that the emerged constructs are not associated with existing theories. I also used my experience interpreting the data because originality in constructivist grounded theory relies on interpretation (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Therefore, I presented several alternative explanations using the same theoretical codes.

Resonance

Resonance in the interpretive tradition refers to the researcher's openness and receptivity to embedded meanings within the text (Given, 2008). According to Charmaz and Thornberg (2021), resonance provides deeper and transferable insights into explored lived experiences. Resonance was achieved when the lived experiences of the Founders were transferred to the lived experiences of victims of bullying, workplace violence, and

intimate partner violence (see Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Satisfying this criterion required that I transfer the “fullness of the studied experience” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 182) to the emerged theoretical codes by revealing concealed and drawing links between individual lives, the collective, and institutions (see Charmaz, 2006). I used various scenarios common in daily life to illustrate the fullness of the studied experience (see p. 182).

Usefulness

The usefulness of a grounded theory is judged by understanding local experiences, setting a foundation for the application and practice of policy, contributing to positive social change, and creating new avenues of research and sensitivity to conditions that can facilitate “social movement organizations in mobilizing crowds” (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021, p. 317). The grounded theory's application to multiple scenarios demonstrated its usefulness in promoting social change at three levels (see Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021; Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Ethical Procedures

There were no ethical concerns regarding human participants because the sample was composed of historical data in the public domain. To mitigate research bias, I engaged in methodological self-consciousness (see Charmaz, 2016). However, an avenue for conflict of interest that required disclosure was the mentor–mentee power relationship between my former dissertation committee member and myself. The committee member, Dr. Benet, authored a democratic social change theory explored in this study. Disagreements about how to interpret his theory were bound to arise. However, efforts

were made to maintain intellectual independence. My commitment to the integrity of the research methodology was fully disclosed at the beginning of the dissertation process. Certain controls were implemented to maintain intellectual independence throughout the dissertation journey. Controls included journaling the dissertation journey, archiving recorded Zoom meetings between Dr. Benet and myself, an email trail, and routine correspondence with trusted faculty members. Subsequently, Dr. Benet left the dissertation committee to avoid any appearance of undue influence or conflict of interest. Dr. Bidjerano replaced Dr. Salgado as the methodologist, and Dr. Salgado replaced Dr. Benet as chair.

Summary

This chapter covered constructivist grounded theory methodology and the rationale for selecting that tradition as this study's research design. I also discussed abstraction, abductive reasoning, and data analysis strategies. In addition, the trustworthiness criteria of the constructivist tradition and ethical considerations were discussed. In the next chapter, I will discuss the formal procedures followed during data analysis and present the findings.

Chapter 4: Findings

This qualitative constructivist grounded theory study aimed to construct a grounded theory that provides an understanding of the process of American democratic social change as it emerged from the nation's founding documents. There was a need for a critical conceptualization of the first principles that undergird American democracy and the genesis of democratic social change in America. To answer the research question: How do the first principles of democracy in the American founding documents provide an understanding of the process of American democratic social change? I created a constructivist grounded theory entitled the first principles of democracy social change process.

Six grounded theories resulted from this study. The construction of the first principles of democracy social change process was facilitated by three of the four grounded theories. The first principles of democracy social change process could be used as a stand-alone strategy or as a counterstrategy triggered by anti-democratic tenets: misinformation, social distinctions, dehumanization, subjugation, nativism, and fear. The counterstrategy to the anti-democratic tenets consists of six empowerment strategies: knowledge, fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security. Knowledge is the starting point of the process, which ends with security and is sustained by it. Common among all of the constructed grounded theories are the empowerment concepts, often referred to as principles throughout the study. Listed below are the six grounded theories in the order in

which they were constructed:

- first principles of democracy
- first principles of democracy conceptual framework
- socio-ethical principles of democracy
- demoralizing process
- either-or approach to democracy
- first principles of democracy social change process

Later in the chapter, four of the six grounded theories are called abductive discoveries. The democratic social change theory is referred to as the abductive preference. Chapter 4 includes the steps in constructing the grounded theories, beginning with abductive reasoning, followed by theoretical sampling, data analysis, and the narrative of the six grounded theories. A discussion of rigor and a summary conclude the chapter.

Procedures Followed

The data analysis procedures are organized differently from Chapter 3 because Walden University grants students some organizational freedom in Chapters 4 and 5. Permission to conduct the study was obtained from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (No. 01-06-23-0508186). The research question and problem statements emerged from the substantive data analysis required by the grounded theory methodology (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Memos and reflections on those memos followed successive comparisons to establish rigor (see

Charmaz, 2006; Appendix A). The theoretical saturation point was reached after the Declaration of Independence, the fourth document among the founding documents.

Sample Content

The Anti-Federalist Papers were excluded from the sample because theoretical saturation had been achieved without introducing the essays. The 18 founding documents included the Articles of Confederation, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Declaration of Independence, and 14 essays (Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 10, 14, 22, 38, 42, 43, 51, 54, and 83) from The Federalist Papers. In the subsequent section, I will discuss the data analysis method, followed by data analysis strategies, theoretical sampling, and theoretical coding processes.

Data Analysis Method

Understanding the emergence of any theoretical code requires understanding the interaction between thought and language, and “the predominance of sense over meaning, of sentence over a word, and context over sentence are rules of inner speech” (Vygotsky, 2012, p. 37). The meaning of a word is general and relies on socialized discourse. All things being equal, there are fewer misunderstandings over a word’s meaning than in making sense of the text. The sense of a word (e.g., cold) is determined by its context (i.e., temperature, affect, tone). With changes in context, there are changes in sense (Vygotsky, 2012). Sense “is the sum of all the psychological events aroused in a person’s consciousness by the word” (Vygotsky, 2012, p. 37) that originates in inner speech. Psychological arousal may assist in identifying the next theoretical sample and code.

With sense and meaning in mind, grounded theory's constant compare method and other data analysis strategies were used.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) developed the principles of grounded theory's data analysis method. The process starts with the successive comparison strategy, where samples are selected with the goal of theory construction and are compared to other selected samples iteratively while engaged in various data analysis techniques. The sample selection process is referred to as theoretical sampling. The theoretical coding process is aimed at theory construction. Theory construction is not the only purpose of theoretical coding. A central purpose of theoretical coding is elevating concepts to high levels of abstraction to make the concepts generalizable across substantive areas (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constructivist grounded theory uses two coding levels, open and selective coding (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Underlying the data analysis process is abductive reasoning. The following sections discuss data analysis strategies, theoretical sampling, and discrepant data. The section Review of Analysis will provide a synthesis of the findings.

Data Analysis Strategies

No changes were made to the data analysis techniques, deconstruction, holistic thinking, systems thinking, and situational analysis mentioned in Chapter 3, except for the addition of dramaturgical analysis and perspective taking. These strategies facilitated my interpretation of the text of the founding documents. The primary goal of using deconstruction in this study was to explore the underlying assumptions of power in traditional definitions (see Critchley et al., 2003), political reframing, and word choice.

An example of a deconstructed phrase is “all men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776), in particular, the word “equal.” The meaning of equality in “all men are created equal” was successively compared between documents.

Holistic thinking involves looking at the whole picture to gain insight into a phenomenon in contrast to looking at its parts (Zhang & Christie, 2021). In the current study, holistic thinking was used to understand the role of democracy in American society. From a holistic perspective, hope undergirds democracy. This includes its political processes, the symbiotic relationship between the government and the governed, and democracy’s empowerment and disempowerment strategies. However, analyzing units of democracy distracts from the basic and holistic function of the hope innate to democracy. Holistic thinking leads to systems thinking, the exploration of units, processes, and their relationships to the whole (Grohs et al., 2018). These thinking styles are evident in the construction of grounded theories. Democracy and social change were reified, and theoretical codes and their relations to both were examined from a whole and parts perspective. This led to understanding the relationship between dividing and uniting and alienating and acknowledging as they relate to democracy and social change. These relationships are discussed in the either-or approach to democracy later in the chapter. The anti-democratic tenets and the either-or approach to democracy emerged after analyzing how various units interacted and contributed to a process that moved from disempowerment to democracy to social change to hope.

Situational analysis facilitated three types of analysis: relational, social world arena, and positional (Clarke et al., 2016). The relational analysis allowed the exploration

of relationships among different actors and elements. Examples of relationships explored include the relationship between documents, the king and the Founders, and the theoretical codes within individual categories (empowerment, disempowerment) and across these categories (see Clarke et al., 2016; Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Situational analysis between Great Britain and the colonists allowed a power analysis that revealed valued strategies. A social world analysis facilitated interpretations of the interaction between Great Britain and the colonists and the various roles of the Founders across multiple documents (see Clarke et al., 2016). This analysis highlighted negotiation attempts made by the Founders through requests for a redress of grievances and appeals to native justice (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Additionally, it revealed the colonists' role as the proletariat and the king's role as the bourgeoisie (see Marx & Engels, 1848/2001).

The difference between situational analysis and dramaturgical analysis is that dramaturgical analysis considers impression management and disruptions (see Goffman, 1956). A lack of harmony between documents was evident in the current study; for example, "all men are created equal" (Declaration of Independence, 1776) did not always apply. The Articles of Confederation nullified recognizing the human dignity of "paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice" (art 4, p. 1), as did The Federalist Papers (1787/1998) in considering African Americans as property. The U.S. Constitution illustrates an incremental approach to recognizing human dignity through suffrage rights. The positional analysis enabled the exploration of actors' positions and explanations for their behavior. The positional analysis included the role of the Founders in the four

founding documents: The Federalist Papers, the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution.

The dramaturgical analysis includes the theater metaphor to explain the presentation of self to others. During routine exchanges, individuals manage their impressions to communicate the image they want to relay to their audience (Goffman, 1956). For example, the Founders' and king's presentations reflected the presentation they wished to reflect on each other and their present and future audiences, as reflected in these passages: "by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us" and "has dissolved Representative Houses ... for opposing with manly firmness" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The dramaturgical analysis was restricted to the limited interaction between the king and the Founders in the context of the unjust treatment discussed by the Founders in the Declaration of Independence and in the Founders' presentation in drafting the U.S. Constitution, the Articles of Confederation, and The Federalist Papers.

Perspective taking is a technique to understand a situation from the cognitive and emotional perspective of another (Muradova, 2021). Perspective taking is putting oneself in place of others, including assuming the skills, characteristics, and values of those whose vantage points are sought to be understood. The use of perspective taking allowed the exploration of theoretical codes as outcomes and their effect on the Founders' psyche and emotions. The social transformation and theoretical codes were seen through various cultural filters, and the documents were explored for concepts, phrases, and behaviors that elicited emotions and responses. Examples of words analyzed through this lens were

“manly firmness” and the “quartering of British troops in civilian homes” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). During the theoretical sampling process, perspective taking was used to decide the starting point for theoretical sampling.

Theoretical Sampling Process

Theoretical sampling is a process that includes a purposive sampling strategy whereby samples are compared with one another in an iterative manner. Appendix B contains an illustration of the process used in the current study. The process started with a comparative mental analysis of which founding documents would be the first among many to be analyzed. The decision was made to begin with The Federalist Papers because it is the least discussed. Anti-democratic tenets emerged from my analysis of The Federalist Papers. This peculiarity was noted, followed, and further analyzed during memoing. Memoing is the process whereby researchers speak to themselves regarding interpretations of the text, emerged questions, concepts, and feelings that may surface during data analysis. The Federalist Papers were compared with the Bill of Rights, and the essays were compared with the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Constitution was then included in the rotation of documents to be compared with the Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation. The coding of the substantive data and the corresponding theoretical codes can be found in Appendices C through H. Situational analysis, holistic thinking, and systems thinking were employed during the constant comparison method. Theoretical coding is a process that incorporates data analysis strategies that lead to theoretical codes. The theoretical coding process is next.

Theoretical Coding Process

Theoretical coding is the process used in grounded theory that facilitates theory construction. From a process perspective, theoretical coding proceeds after the start of abductive reasoning and theoretical sampling. Theoretical coding is processual because each stage involves data analysis strategies (abductive reasoning, comparative analysis, memoing, methodological self-consciousness, meditation, and pausing active thinking) to allow ideas and theoretical codes to emerge. There are three theoretical coding levels in grounded theory depending on the grounded theory tradition. Charmaz (2006) recognized two coding levels: open coding and selective coding. Saldaña (2021) referred to selective, focused, and axial coding as second-level coding strategies. The theoretical coding process for the current study started with open coding, followed by selective coding and axial coding, eventually leading to strictly abductive reasoning. Grounded theorists recommend developing theoretical codes at the highest level of abstraction to render generalizable theoretical codes (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser, 2014; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The current study aimed to achieve high-level abstraction in categories and theoretical codes, whereas the theoretical coding goal aimed to construct grounded theories (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Abstraction increases the span of a theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), but abductive reasoning acts as the thread connecting concepts to propositions that lead to plausibility. As a result of the selection of highly abstract codes, several grounded theories were constructed. The process of discovery started with open coding.

Open Coding

Open coding is based on the idea that the data analysis starts with a blank slate and allows the codes to emerge from the substantive data (Saldaña, 2021). Data analysis techniques were used throughout the coding process to facilitate the abductive reasoning process. In *The Federalist Papers* (1787/1998), nativism, security, and a new form of government emerged as national and political empowerment and social change. However, there were incidents in which content from *The Federalist Papers* disempowered groups. For example, the representation and human dignity of African American captives were affected by being enslaved people and “divested of two[-]fifths of the man” (No. 54, p. 550). Another example in *The Federalist Papers* is how the Founders sought to control factions “by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests” (No. 10, p. 33). Although it could be argued that reducing African American captives to two[-]fifths favored them by disempowering Southern states, the politics surrounding the divestment affected the treatment of African Americans by non-African Americans.

The inability to conceptualize democracy using a traditional political definition led to democracy being conceptualized as it emerged from the founding documents. Developing a politically neutral concept of democracy was crucial because a construction of democracy unrelated to the substantive content might have led to discovering theories associated with the predefined, selected concept (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In addition, an overly broad definition could have contributed to a significant amount of time being spent in an unconscious attempt to fit the theory into the traditional political

conception of democracy (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967). When democracy emerged as empowerment from the U.S. Constitution, it became the foundation of the definition of democracy in the current study. Empowerment, like disempowerment, meets Blumer's (1969) definition of sensitizing concepts. It was also crucial for the promise of democracy to emerge from the substantive content rather than the interpretation others might hold regarding Lincoln's (1863) promise of democracy (see Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Further analysis of the U.S. Constitution resulted in the emergence of codes including empowering hope, incrementalism, and government stability. The substantive data from the Bill of Rights emerged as a check on government to prevent governmental tyranny (i.e., right to trial by jury, warrants issued upon probable cause, due process, one cannot be compelled to be a witness against oneself). In contrast, codes from the Declaration of Independence emerged as colonial/national empowerment, unity, security, and disempowerment strategies leveraged against the colonies by Great Britain and against the king by the Founders. Data from the Articles of Confederation emerged as national development, federalism, and nationalism, coded as unity. Disempowerment strategies created two societies: the empowered elite and the disempowered other, the "paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice" (Articles of Confederation, 1777, art 4, p. 1). Some initial codes across documents that indicated a reduction of power included: disempowering, fear, factions, security, nativism, misinformation, objectification, unity, and strategy. Empowerment concepts included ideas, awareness, personhood, hope, courage, freedom, religion, protection, respect for life, and diversity.

Codes with multiple meanings were branched with subcategories and held to compare after generating memos and reflexivity. Reflexivity is a process used in qualitative analysis whereby the researcher acknowledges how her views, attitudes, and beliefs interact with the emergence and interpretation of data (Charmaz, 2016). Codes with multiple meanings were categorized to facilitate the emergence of distinct subcategories, if necessary. However, open coding soon merged with selective and axial coding. For selective coding, incident-by-incident (empowering and disempowering) coding was used (Charmaz, 2006, p. 54), followed by a microscopic view of phrases and terms (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Because selective coding is subordinate to theoretical coding because it is an instrument of theoretical coding, they merged until the categories and subcategories were informally grounded (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007).

Selective Coding

Selective coding is the de facto theoretical coding process in the constructivist grounded theory tradition (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Selective coding is the data analysis process whereby the researcher analyzes selected texts or themes in-depth while focusing on theory construction (Charmaz, 2006). The process is led by intuition, curiosity, and theoretical sensitivity (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Selective coding is usually followed by open coding. However, it is pertinent to note that theoretical coding began with theoretical sampling in this study. This is because I followed emerged research questions throughout data analysis. As a result, this concluded with me constructing a series of grounded theories. The review of drafted memos was paramount throughout the data analysis process because the memos generated novel ideas for theory

construction (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). As categories were being grounded, there were longer periods between data analysis and meditation. This facilitated ruminating using various perspectives to create pathways to abductive discovery and the construction of plausible grounded theories that linked the emerged theoretical codes to the substantive data (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). Reviewing memos was a navigation tool during this stage of the theory construction process (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). This allowed me to situate myself theoretically and uncover different previously unexplored perspectives (Charmaz, 2016).

The anti-democratic strategy framework emerged during the process of selective coding. Additionally, democratic principles emerged that had not been discussed by Allen (2014), Benet (2006), Butts (1980, 1988), Connolly (2010), Dahl (2001), or by De Tocqueville (1839/2002), Giridharadas (2018), Kendi (2016), or Mencken (1926). The documents were then analyzed to interpret Lincoln's (1863) promise of democracy. Data analysis using systems thinking led to democracy being perceived as a machine subject to obstruction by anti-democratic strategies that lead to, result in, and preserve democracy, as well as undergird the lesser-known forms of disempowerment. In this way, democracy is seen from a more holistic perspective instead of seeing democracy through the traditional lens of American democratic values and typically described as anti-democratic strategies.

The connection between explicit and implicit meaning within and across documents was explored. The democratic principles and anti-democratic tenet categories were saturated, each having six subcategories. Lastly, this process facilitated depth and

breadth of theory because the emerged concepts were analyzed at the macro, meso, and micro levels. Much of the focus during selective coding was on exploring how the Founders wrestled with the tyranny of the crown. The relationship between the Founders and the king piqued my interest and became the field to examine political language and contrast it with other founding documents. As a result, several discrepant cases emerged during the selective coding process. These included statements made by Madison in *The Federalist* (1787/1998), encompassing concepts such as unity, trial by jury, and electors, referred to as the Electoral College (see Table 1). A discussion of these cases follows.

Table 1.

Theoretical Coding

Empowerment code	Democratic principle	Disempowering code	Anti-democratic tenet
Faction protection	Security	Dehumanization	Dehumanization
Free press	Knowledge	Objectification	Dehumanization
Free speech	Knowledge	Subjugation	Subjugation
Personhood	Human dignity	Oppression	Subjugation
Property rights	Security	Power	Subjugation
Freedom to act	Empowerment	Fear	Fear
Vote	Empowerment	Dominance	Subjugation
Participation	Empowerment	Nationalism	Nativism
Fairness	Equity/fairness	Control	Subjugation
Due process	Equity/fairness	Disparity	Social distinction
Religion	Knowledge	Alienation	Dehumanization
Ideas	Knowledge	Exclusion	Dehumanization
Community	Unity	Elitism	Social distinction
Protection	Security	Discrimination	Social distinction
Safety	Security	Misinformation	Misinformation
Hope	Empowerment	Privilege	Social distinction
Diversity	Equity/fairness	Master–subject society	Subjugation
		Advantages	Social distinction

Discrepant Data

Context-related discrepant data was difficult to find for two reasons. First, as the data interpreter, it was challenging to detect whether there was bias in preferring a single lens or if multiple lenses failed to provide novel perspectives (Patton, 2014). At the same time, using various perspectives during data analysis was necessary to understand the phenomenon at various levels of analysis. At the macro level are the disempowerment and empowerment categories; at the micro level are the empowerment theoretical codes that create awareness of the transformation process at the individual and meso levels. Incidents were dichotomized as either empowering or disempowering at the individual, collective, or institutional level. Another reason that discrepant data were difficult to discern is that with governance, shades of truth (Butts, 1980, 1988) are used by politicians to manipulate citizens into conforming with the government's agenda (Chomsky, 1995, 2002; Edelman & Edelman, 2001). For example, I treated statements made in *The Federalist* (1787/1998) regarding banning slavery in 20 years and "all men are created equal" (Declaration of Independence, 1776) as the Founders conceding to the will of stakeholders in the furtherance of national and economic development.

Another discrepant case with an alternate interpretation includes electors in the U.S. Constitution. Electors are used as a check and balance on direct democracy and, thus, as a mechanism to safeguard the common good. At the institutional level, it is an empowerment strategy demonstrating the Founders' knowledge, wisdom, and political strategy to secure the nation's interest and supremacy. However, at another level, it effectively invalidates the political philosophy of the consent of the governed, an

informal social contract described in the Declaration of Independence. This is because electors act as intermediaries between the will of the people and the common good. As a result of the mixed message, there is democratic dissonance, an unsustainable breach in political practices, and a decline in voter expectations (Gargarella, 2022).

Conceptually contradictory cases include the concepts of unity and trial by jury. Unity emerged early during data analysis and was initially associated with nativism and patriotism. As a concept, unity may empower by disempowering those who do not have the strength of numbers. Unity was treated as empowering because unity strengthens resolve and promotes democracy and national well-being. Eliminating unity would alter the empowerment category since democracy is an ideology based on collective experience.

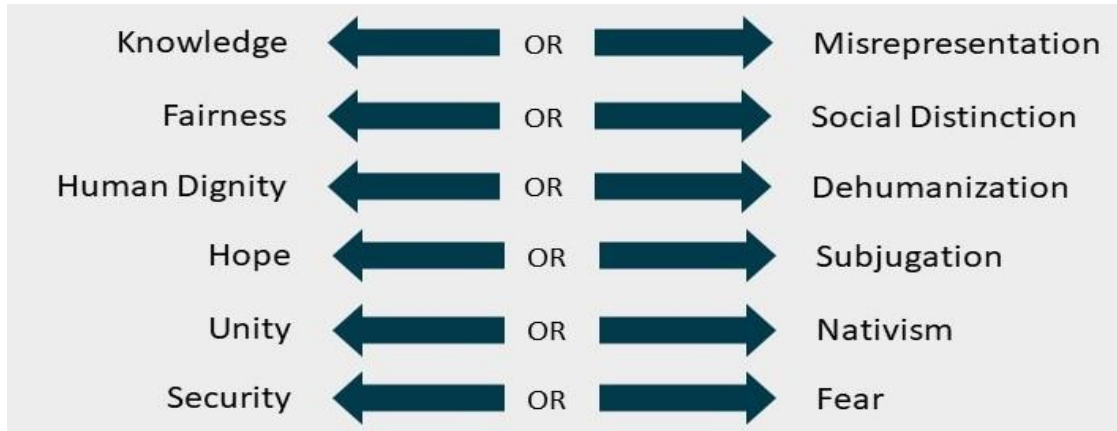
As with unity, trial by jury has both empowering and disempowering effects. An advantage of trial by jury is that it allows the decision of guilt or innocence to be spread among members of the offender's community. It protects the human dignity of community members and offenders given a fair trial. Alternatively, trial by jury can be disempowering for defendants who do not share the values of the jury of their peers. The values they cherish would be subordinate to those of another. The fugitive slave trials revealed a difference in values between the jurors and the defendants. In general, the discrepant cases did not affect the categories or the construction of grounded theories because there was sufficient support for the theoretical codes across documents to achieve credibility.

Axial Coding

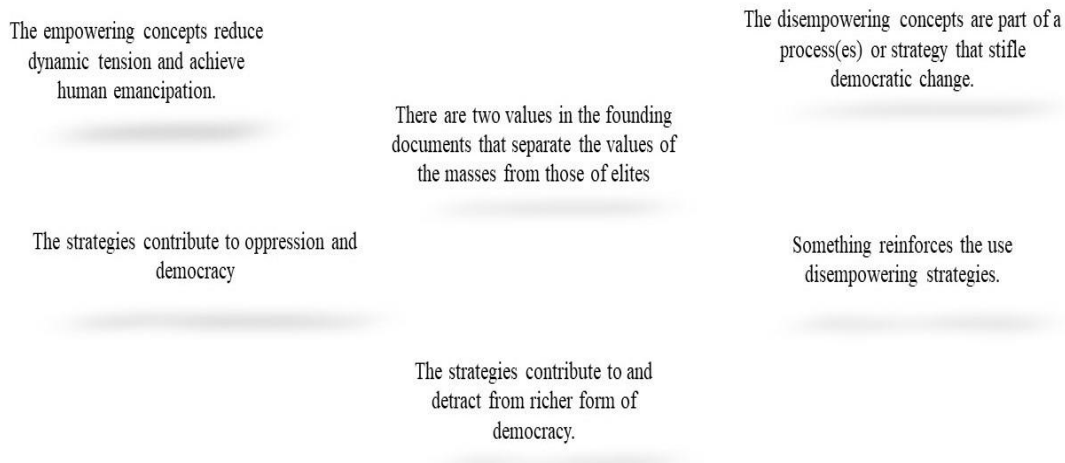
In axial coding, relationships between theoretical codes are identified within and across categories (Saldaña, 2021). The coding technique was implemented as soon as the categories had reached saturation. In order to formalize the relationships within and between categories and theory construction, I explored the codes in greater detail. Axial coding and situational analysis emerged during selective coding. However, during this supplemental coding stage, I explored the relationships between the theoretical concepts. This analysis identified species of empowerment and disempowerment. The theoretical codes within the empowerment categories are interconnected in various ways. For example, security supports the other theoretical codes within the category once security has been achieved. This relationship is evident in children. It has been shown that children who feel secure, whether it is through secure attachments, a safe living environment, or a safe learning environment, are more likely to learn (security's association with knowledge) and are, therefore, more likely to develop friendships (security's association with unity) than students who feel insecure (see Donkin & Kynn, 2021; see Maslow, 1954/1987). Security is also associated with a sense of justice, fairness, respect for human dignity, unity, and (empowering) hope. All other empowerment concepts shared this relationship pattern: unity, hope, fairness, and human dignity (see Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). Except for human dignity, all subcategories had sustainable relational categories. This is because construing human dignity as anything other than innate worth supports dehumanization through the "capricious will of another" (The Federalist No. 54, 1787/1998, p. 354). There is more to these principles than

generalized relationships. They are the foundation of a "government for the people" (Gettysburg Address, 1863) as well as serving the ethical interests of a republican form of government (U.S. Const. art. IV, §4). Additionally, each concept in the empowerment category is motivating and could contribute to positive and sustainable social change. Motivational principles contribute to autonomy, self-determination, and self-actualization (see Christiansen, 2009; Deci & Ryan, 2012; Goodwin et al., 2001; Maslow, 1954/1987; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). Reconceptualizing democracy as empowerment served as a sensitizing concept.

I also analyzed the disempowerment category and its subcategories. A divide-and-rule strategy underlies each disempowerment theoretical code. Apart from politics and war, disempowerment processes are associated with the behaviors of Incel and intimate partner violence offenders (Geiger, 2002; Pizzirani et al., 2019; Salter & Hall, 2022; Ross, 2017; Rozeboom & Sangiovanni, 2018). The disempowerment theoretical codes were found to be dehumanizing and aimed at subjugating people. Thus, disempowerment concepts are in direct opposition to political empowerment and self-determination. By pairing the anti-democratic tenets with the principles, the importance of upholding the ideal of "government for the people" by the trustees of the people becomes evident (Gettysburg Address, 1863; see Figure 4). According to my interpretation of the data, the Founders employed disempowerment strategies to elicit a reaction from the king and initiate revolutionary social change. Subcategories were linked to propositions as a result of this deep analysis of relationships.

Figure 4.*Conflict Model*

The process of data analysis led to the emergence of several "conscious-raising questions" (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 523). The raised questions were addressed by seeking multiple explanations. (See Figure 5). Even though the principles were interpreted as ethical, there is no guarantee that they will not be used for nefarious purposes. Furthermore, the principles have counterfeits. Pride and entitlement may be confused with human dignity, politicized science for knowledge, exploitation for unity, harassment for security, delusions for hope, and selfish interests for fairness. In order to refute the hypotheses, various data analysis techniques were employed. The result of the data analysis follow.

Figure 5.*Hypothesis from Emerged Research Questions***Results of Analysis**

In the Results section, I will describe how the emerging research questions led to the grounded theories and their construction and the role of empowerment principles and anti-democratic tenets. Following the summary, a detailed discussion of grounded theories will be presented. However, before, I will reiterate that the disempowerment effect of the anti-democratic tenets magnified the empowerment effects of democracy and revealed the motivational, ethical, and strategic values of the empowerment principles (see Bloch, 1959/1986; Christiansen, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Freire, 1970/2018; Killen & Dahl, 2021; Maslow, 1954/1987; Pleeing et al., 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020; Snyder, 2000). The empowerment codes are the first principles of democracy and are called socio-ethical principles of democracy, power strategies, or principles. Due to the high level of abstraction and generalizability, categories are

referenced differently in different substantive fields (e.g., education, social work, and business).

The empowerment concepts were instrumental in developing the democratic social change grounded theory. The evolution of the grounded theory social change process theory began at the micro level. The Founders were regarded as intrinsically motivated (see Chang et al., 2017). As agentic individuals, they were assumed to follow a process of empowerment: democratic social change. As a result of taking into account the cultural values of the Continental Congress, the scope of the theory was elevated to a meso level (see Bourdieu, 1984). The Continental Congress was assumed to represent the values and strategies of the power elite. The framework was applied to Founders' social justice movement. The strategic motivational process developed into a macro-level social change theory. Results from post-data analysis research indicate that values can be transferred through internalization and integration—the process of adapting the values of others as one's own (Deci & Ryan, 2000, 2012). A number of social change advocates, politicians, and the media rely on this phenomenon in order to gain the public's support and to serve as a governance strategy (see Christiansen, 2009; see Flynn, 2011). The motivational disposition of the concepts was a major contributing factor to the success of the Founders' response to Great Britain. Motivation is associated with self-esteem, self-determination, and self-actualization (see Bloch, 1986; Christiansen, 2009; Deci & Ryan, 2012; Goodwin et al., 2001; Maslow, 1954/1987; Snyder, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). Consequently, a democratic social change process was constructed based on the

first principles of democracy. It is suggested that positive and sustainable social change can be achieved through the first principles of democracy social change process.

In contrast, anti-democratic tenets could provoke individuals into action and benefit individuals who leverage them as power strategies (see Edelman & Edelman, 2001). They can also destroy hope, perpetuate oppression, delay democratic change, put human emancipation at risk, and create a dichotomous society of masters and servants. On the other hand, the first principles of democracy could (a) lead to emancipation, (b) promote political hope, (c) usher individuals, organizations, and policies towards an empowerment praxis, and (d) promote sustainable positive social change.

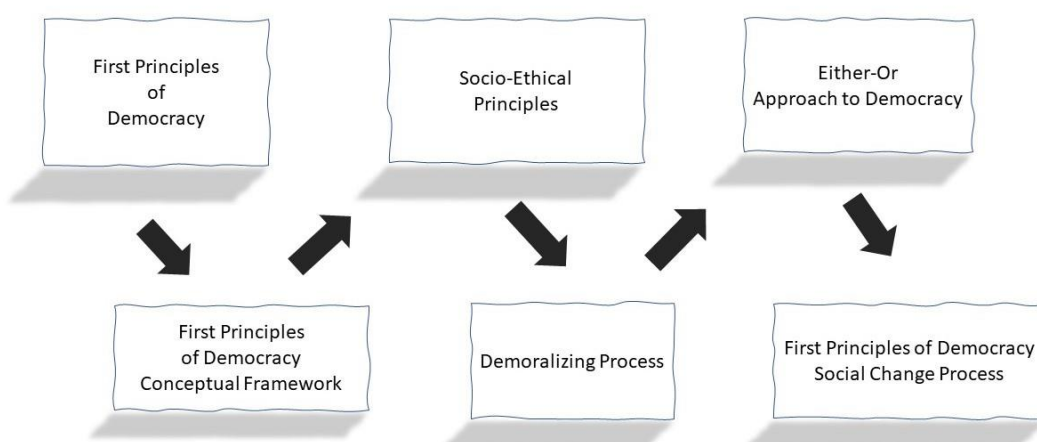
The ethical aspects of the principles become salient when the empowerment principles are paired with the corresponding disempowerment tenets. Disempowerment strategies are unethical because they divide society. They also serve to undermine respect for human dignity. As research questions were pursued and concepts analyzed, it became clear that these core principles undergird democratic values. In turn, this led to a theory of democracy grounded in principles.

Originally, exploring the ethical aspects of the first principles of democracy was intended to address the missing ethical component of Benet's (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy. Pursuing another research question led to constructing the democratic principle conceptual framework to reduce the dynamic tension between Benet's paired polarities. The idea that the principles are ethical made me consider whether the principles might have been part of a framework of ethics interwoven within the founding documents by the aristoi. In thinking of the principles as part of a personal or group ethic,

the socio-ethical principles of democracy emerged, and a grounded theory by the same name was constructed. Normative and motivational concepts form the basis for this grounded theory. Juxtaposing the categories and pursuing other emerged research questions led me to meditate and memo about subcategories and their relationship to Great Britain and the colonists. I also contemplated their role in the political arena and their emergence in the founding documents. This led to the construction of the either-or approach to democracy after analyzing the incremental approach to social policies and their effects on members of society, as evident in the progressive passage of suffrage rights in the U.S. Constitution. Upon constructing the first principles of democracy social change process grounded theory, the subcategories and the supporting grounded theories were empirically grounded in the data. The constructed grounded theories in Figure 6 will be presented subsequently in narrative form to illustrate the theories' grounding.

Figure 6.

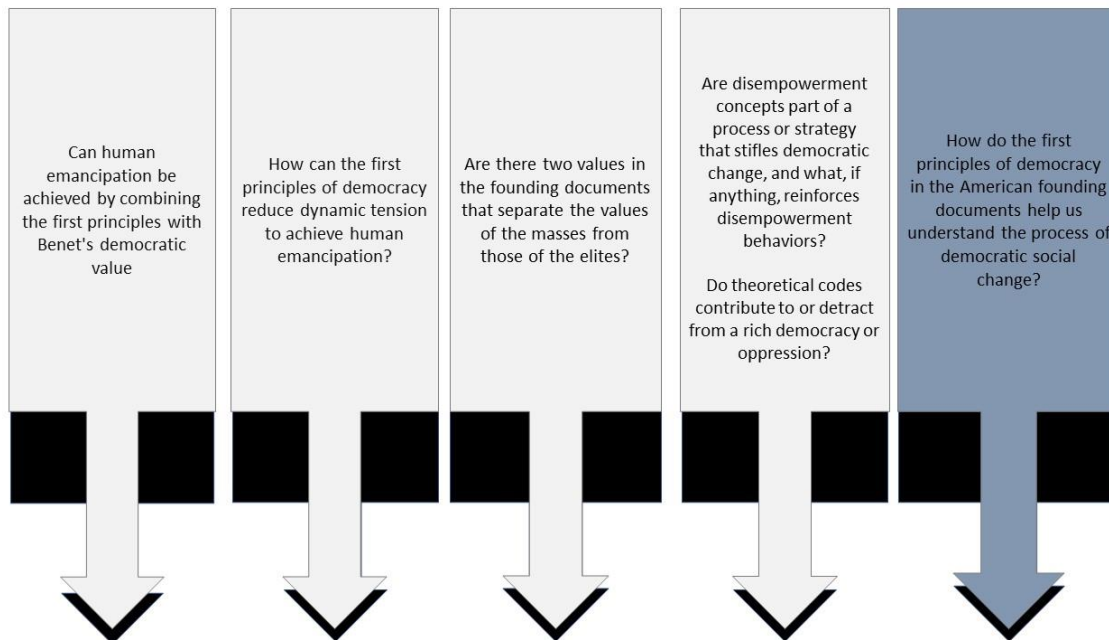
Abductive Discoveries



The construction of the first principles of democratic social change grounded theory emerged as an evolution of three of the first four grounded theories: the first principles of democracy, the first principles of democracy conceptual framework, the socio-ethical principles, and the either-or approach to democracy. The grounded theories will be summarized below before introducing them in narrative form. The summary will begin with the first principles of democracy and end with the first principles of democracy social change process grounded theory.

The thesis of the first principles of democracy grounded theory is that principles are more abstract and generalizable than values. They are the basic first principles of democracy. Therefore, the first principles of democracy undergird the democratic values proposed by Butts (1980, 1988) and those that appear in the UN General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). They also represent the spirit of the U.S. Constitution. In contrast, the principle of democracy conceptual framework is a parsimonious framework that proposes that respect for human dignity, common fairness, and the most accurate and up-to-date knowledge are sufficient to develop and evaluate social policy in democratic societies. Conversely, the conceptual framework may alleviate tension when used with Benet's (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy framework. The theoretical codes of the socio-ethical framework are normative and set the government standard for the people. The either-or approach to democracy is a framework to analyze the effects of incremental social change in America throughout history, to help users identify strategies of power and disempowerment, and how to reduce the impact of disempowerment by leveraging the first principles of democracy.

Finally, the democratic social change grounded theory is a social change theory that could be used at the micro, meso, and macro levels. The premise is that the principles are simultaneously motivational and strategic. At every level of the social change process, the individual is empowered. Empowerment begins with knowledge when the individual becomes aware that a problem might be emerging or already exists. The process's second stage is fairness, where conscientization occurs and elicits a response (attitudinal, behavioral, affective; Christiansen, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Following this stage, the person moves on to the human dignity stage of the social change process. The individual acknowledges that they deserve to be treated equally as a sign of respect for human dignity. The next stage is hope. During this stage, a person can plan and imagine courage-imbued solutions that can be carried out with the support of others (Snyder, 2000). Unity is the penultimate stage of the social change process. It is a strategic stage whereby help from others leads to security and positive, sustainable social change. The final stage of the process, security, is the goal of the social change process. Security is "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The grounded theories are organized in the remainder of this chapter as they evolved (see Figure 7) and led to the abductive preference, the preferred grounded theory in this study, as it answers the research question. I will discuss the first principles of democracy in the following section.

Figure 7.*Emerged Research Questions***Abductive Discovery 1: The First Principles of Democracy**

The first principles and causes are most knowable; for by reason of these, and from these, all other things come to be known, and not these by means of the things subordinate to them.

—Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 350 BCE/1924, p. 3

Research Question 1: How might the first principles reduce dynamic tension or leverage Benet's polarity pairs?

Research Question 2: How might pairing the first principles with Benet's polarity of democracy elements achieve human emancipation?

The first principles of democracy are fixed and universal and support democratic values and the democratic government doctrine for the people. First, principles are

contrasted with their particulars. In this case, those particulars are democratic values. Particulars and first principles differ because while related, first principles are independent of and the supraordinate of particulars (see Aristotle, 350 BCE/1924). Nevertheless, particulars make it possible for the first principles to become known because they link to the substance to which they and other particulars within that knowledge domain are linked. First principles are the substance of their particulars (Aristotle, 350 BCE/1924). This substance is referred to as the spirit of the law.

For example, fairness is the spirit of participation, representation, and the Bill of Rights. Fairness is the reciprocal respect governments give their people for ceding power to the government. It is fair for people to participate in elections and vote for their representatives. This is an innate power humans possess and was echoed in the idea of the "Right of the People to alter or to abolish [government], and to institute new government" in the Declaration of Independence (1776). The Founders wanted to establish fairness in government and between the government and the governed. Fairness was absent, as evidenced by the type of government and the list of abuses and usurpations. Fair participation and representation required the king to consider and represent the people's interests. Under different conditions, participation and representation could be undergirded by knowledge because, in this case, it is suggested that people who participate in their civic duty have some knowledge regarding what is most beneficial for them and/or the nation when selecting the candidate who supports their views (Butts, 1988). Principles are characterized by their (a) universality, (b) irreducibility, (c) essence in particulars, (d) uniqueness, and (e) level of abstraction (Aristotle, 350 BCE/1924). The

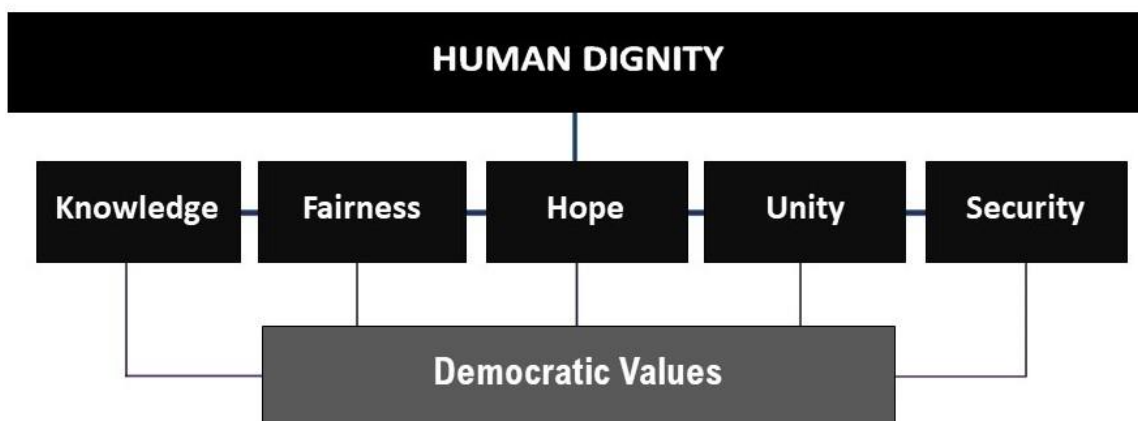
universality of concepts separates them from and binds them to particulars. For example, in the criminal justice field, there are basic principles particular to that field. These principles are rights, due process, justice, fairness, punishment, human dignity, offenders, and victims. By increasing the level of abstraction of criminal justice, we can move one step closer to fairness: for the victim, offender, community, and nation. The irreducibility of principles means they cannot be reduced to an exact equivalent or synonym. Because they are at such an elevated level of abstraction, it is not easy to articulate the shared essence between principles and their particulars (Aristotle, 350 BCE/1924).

The first principles of democracy are knowledge (an empirical measure of truth), human dignity (see Kant, 1785/2011), fairness (see Aristotle, 353 BCE/1992), hope (see Bloch, 1959/1986), unity (see Aristotle, 350 BCE/1924; De Leonardis, 1998), and security (see Erkiner & Akoudou, 2021). Together they are the custodians of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776; see Figure 8). In order of importance, the first principles of democracy start with (respect for) human dignity, then security, fairness, unity, knowledge, and ends with hope. The logic behind the order is based on a pathway to security—individual and national. Respect for human dignity implies that the other five principles may be secured. Among the remaining five principles, security, as measured by well-being, undergirds and secures the other four principles. Among the remaining four principles (fairness, unity, knowledge, and hope), fairness undergirds knowledge as truth is the essence of fairness and nurtures hope. Unity is more critical than the last two because division threatens the first three and depresses hope, and knowledge often depends on consensus. Knowledge is next because hope

requires imagination, a type of knowledge, to find a viable pathway to what is hoped for (Snyder, 2000). It is pertinent to note that although truth is more abstract than knowledge, the latter is measurable, whereas the former may seem complicated to some.

Figure 8.

First Principles of Democracy Undergirding Democratic Values



The idea of the universality of principles drives this framework. This is to say that particulars are subordinate to principles. As a supraordinate principle, respect for human dignity is the foundation of ethics (Autiero, 2020) in democracy, medicine, jurisprudence, and social and political frameworks. As principles, they are fixed but elastic and undergird American democratic values and those in the UN General Assembly’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). In their fixed state, they uphold respect for human dignity, which is “self-evident” and is supported by the words of the Founders that “all men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). In their elastic state, they accommodate democratic values that lead to human security. A democratic government based on anthropocentric principles is the essence of the democratic ideal.

The assumptions of the first principles of democracy are:

- Except for knowledge, the concepts are at the highest level of abstraction.
- The principles represent the spirit of the U.S. Constitution.
- Respect for human dignity is the essence of democracy.
- The final end of respect for human dignity is security.

Absent a framework based on fixed, non-culture-specific principles, democracy will be contested by the group whose values are not represented. Hence, there is a need for a framework based on principles that transcend culture and political ideology and support the ethos of democracy and primary respect for human dignity that leads to security (see Kotzur, 2017). Such a framework would place human dignity at its center and facilitate the internalization and integration of respect for humanity (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020).

The principles reflect the spirit of the U.S. Constitution. They are concretized in the U.S. Constitution's Bill of Rights, voting laws, and social policies. Their democratic aspect becomes salient when the first principles of democracy are juxtaposed with opposing anti-democratic strategies that violate respect for human dignity. Respect for human dignity is a persistent democratic goal. However, not every nation's constitution contains explicit or implicit respect for human dignity. Shulztiner and Carmi (2014) state that only 97 countries refer to human dignity in their constitutions.

Human Dignity

Introducing human dignity in the political lexicon is important because, at the highest level of abstraction among principles, it undergirds democratic values proposed

since De Tocqueville (1839/2002). For example, although justice is an abstract concept, human dignity is more abstract than justice because justice serves to preserve respect for human dignity. Human dignity ranks higher than human rights because human rights serve to preserve human dignity (Goodhart, 2018). For instance, the exclusion of “paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice” (Articles of Confederation, 1777, art 4, p. 1), Native Americans (“the merciless Indian savages;” Declaration of Independence, 1776), African Americans (“slave as divested of two[-]fifths of the man;” The Federalist No. 54, 1787/1998, p. 550), and immigrants (“treated by the others in no better light than that of foreigners and aliens;” The Federalist No. 22, 1787/1998, p. 182) deprived these groups of being recognized as being imbued with human dignity. In doing so, colonists violated human dignity out of contempt for their humanity and socially constructed worth.

Knowledge

A characteristic of respect for human dignity is the “decent respect for the opinions of mankind” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) and the implied sharing of knowledge throughout the First Amendment. According to my interpretation, individuals have the right to obtain and share knowledge for self-improvement and society advancement in support of and respect for human dignity under the Freedom of Exercise Clause (“no law respecting an established religion or prohibiting its free exercise” (U.S. Const., 1787)). By leveraging different types of knowledge, people can gain a greater appreciation for their own and others' worth. Knowledge extends beyond the scope of education as a vehicle of technological progress and innovation. Jefferson, like many

other Founders, regarded a “well-informed populace” (Staff, 1976, p. 221) as essential to democracy and the preservation of human dignity. Knowledge facilitates deliberative democracy, petitioning the government “for a redress of grievances” (U.S. Const., amend. I), voter participation and representation (U.S. Const., amend. XV, XIX, XXIV, and XXVI), due process rights (U.S. Const. amend. IV through IX) and other rights, social ethics, social responsibility, and liberty, among others. This is because knowledge, as a principle of democracy, encapsulates its moral essence truth (capital and lowercase t truth). Truth, the highest level of knowledge abstraction, ranks higher than justice because it is the foundation of justice. Judgments based on less than the truth are subject to appeal.

Because of the importance of knowledge and its relationship to human rights, 196 nations have democratized education, with 51 countries committing to a constitutional right to education (Ben-Bassat & Dahan, 2008). More recently, the World Policy Center published that 83% of nations have some aspect of education as a constitutional right (Heymann, 2020). However, today, over 200 years later, the U.S. Supreme Court continues its disregard for fairness by ignoring the First Amendment as the basis for a right to education and the Fourteenth Amendment as the mechanism through which to enforce said right (see Black, 2018, 2020, 2022; Kessler & Pozen, 2018). The Court’s view contrasts with Thomas Jefferson’s position in a letter to Richard Price on January 8, 1789: “Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government; that whenever things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, they may be relied on to set them to rights” (Founders Online, n.d.). In the case of San Antonio

Independent School District v. Rodriguez (1973), the U.S. Supreme Court politicized and problematized education as a state jurisdiction issue and upheld barriers to free and appropriate education for low-income children. This results in the Court destroying the bridge that leads to knowledge, which contributes to a poorly informed populace with little alternative other than to turn to the media and politicians for direction (see Chomsky, 1995, 2002; Edelman & Edelman, 2001).

Fairness

Fairness becomes the measure used to judge all actions and reactions in democratic societies (i.e., “nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law” (14th Amendment). In contrast, unfairness is tension-producing and distances those producing the tension from those being stressed (see Christiansen, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Della Porta & Diani, 2006; Freire, 1970/2018; Killen & Dahl, 2021). Without regard for fairness, authority becomes tyranny; justice becomes injustice. Equality becomes favoritism; participation becomes ritualistic. Representation becomes exclusion. Liberty becomes insecurity, and human rights become separate but equal. Communal obligations become burdensome, and the like. Fairness implies knowledge of all relevant facts in formulating policies, procedures, and judgments (“he has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records” and “he has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our Constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws” (Declaration

of Independence, 1776). As a democratic principle, fairness supports respect for human dignity and promotes well-being, unity, and security by nurturing a sense of equal worth.

Unity

Democratization and modernity have forced constitutionalists and others to reevaluate the democratic principle of unity (Kotzur, 2017). Unity is the social bond that sustains democratic principles as much as it does democracy. It links humanity “through bonds of mutual concern,” making “the good of all ... the goal of each;” creating “a community animated by a spirit of active commitment to the overall well-being of both the community as a whole and each constituent member of the community” (De Leonardis, 1998, p. 137) by accomplishing common goals (Kotzur, 2017, p. 40). Unity fosters a sense of communal obligation, equality, fairness, and justice (Pleeging et al., 2022). This was evident with the unified effort of the Founders: “we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Politicians use unity strategically, as in “it is not a new observation that the people of any country (if, like the Americans, are intelligent and well-informed) continue firmly united under one federal government, vested with sufficient powers for all general and national purposes” (The Federalist No. 3, 1787/1998, p. 12). Unity is critical in maintaining social order and protecting society from injustice, isolation, alienation, and social disintegration (Durkheim, 1982; Maslow, 1954/1987; Pleeging et al., 2022; Ross, 2017). In addition, my reasoning is consistent with Kotzur (2017) in recognizing that “all policies in the area of freedom, security, and justice are based upon the principle of

solidarity” (p. 42). Moreover, unity is “contextualized with democracy ... loyalty, sustainability, and citizenship” and “creates joint rights and obligations” to be strategically used when promoting public policy (Kotzur, 2017, p. 40). The strategic use of unity is evidenced in the use of “we the people” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) in forging a common bond based on citizenship, loyalty, freedom, security, and fairness. Unity led to independence from Great Britain.

Hope

Hope in the Declaration of Independence is empowering:

The right of the People to alter or to abolish [destructive government], and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness.

—Declaration of Independence, 1776

Similarly, for Hobbes and Spinoza, hope translated into political power that motivates individuals to act (Blöser et al., 2020; Pleeging, 2022). In the U.S. Constitution, the power that motivates people to act is seen in the XV Amendment: “the right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.” In times of hardship, hope transcends the current situation and combats apathy by instilling the courage to imagine better future circumstances (Pleeging, 2022; Snyder, 2000).

In contrast, others see hope as prolonging human suffering (Pleeging, 2022). For example, Sophocles, Nietzsche, Plato, Benjamin Franklin, and Sir Francis Bacon have

described hope “as an evil force” (Snyder, 2000, p. 4). At one end, hope can be perceived as evil because hope can prolong human suffering and does not have to be linked to an object for people to eventually imagine a genuine possibility for a positive outcome by internalizing and integrating the hope of others, a process that could be exploited to transfer false hope (Blöser, 2020; Pleeing, 2022; Snow, 2018). From a philosophical perspective, hope has been described as emphatically optimistic, courage imbuing, regenerating, and as an emotion that is not-yet-conscious and not-yet-become (Bloch, 1959/1986). It has been referred to as a “foolish counselor” by Plato, a “curse upon humanity” by Euripides, and a “good breakfast, but a bad supper” by Francis Bacon (Snyder, 2000, p. 4). Although internalized and integrated false hope may be problematic, it may be preferred to hopeless individuals who become despondent, alienated, and likely to engage in maladaptive behaviors that threaten their well-being and the security of others (see Agnew, 1992; Durkheim, 1982; Pleeing et al., 2022; Snyder, 2000). Hence, hope fuels democracy and preserves human dignity. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the politics of hope led to vaccinations, public distancing, and mask-wearing (Dwyer, 2020; Kelly, 2020). It is this conception of hope as pathways plus agency (Snyder, 2000) that empowers democratic societies, and it is this conception that is used to support hope as a democratic principle.

Security

Security, as a democratic principle, plays a significant role in the well-being of individuals and communities. Security is the final cause of government and government policy (Arvanitis & Kalliris, 2017; Erkiner & Akoudou, 2021). Security is the “pursuit of

life, liberty, and happiness (Declaration of Independence, 1776). It is happiness, a good life, or well-being (Arvanitis et al., 2017). The importance of security is evidenced in the preamble of the U.S. Constitution. Security appears as [establishing] justice, [ensuring] domestic tranquility, [providing] for the common defense, [and promoting] the general welfare” (U.S. Const.). Security is a process, outcome, and motivating factor in advancing social transformation. It played a key role in promoting freedom, self-determination, independence, national development, safety, and the unification of colonists against the British Empire. The 1994 Human Development Report lists seven types of human security: community, economic, environmental, food, health, personal, and political (Kaul, 1995). Still, the principal aim of human security is well-being, with economic security as the primary means of achieving well-being. Although the report excludes national security (Kaul, 1995), it is included in how security is conceptualized in this study because it was a theme that appeared in the nation’s founding documents.

Furthermore, the Organization for Economic Co-operation (2020) measures security using 11 dimensions of well-being to obtain a level of democracy score: civic engagement, environmental quality, health, housing, income and wealth, knowledge and skills, safety, social connections, subjective well-being, work–life balance, and work and job quality. Moreover, objective and subjective measures are used for a more meaningful well-being assessment (OECD, 2013). Well-being encompasses the mental, spiritual, emotional, psychological, social (Ruggeri et al., 2020), and physical (Capió et al., 2014). Security is a common essence in the “pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776), well-being, and the common good. Well-being is a subjective

construct, and not all pursuits of happiness promote well-being or the common good. As a security measure, well-being has been associated with fewer maladaptive behaviors, mental and physical health problems, and healthier communities (Radcliff & Shufeldt, 2016; Ruggeri et al., 2020; Wang et al., 2019). Well-being encourages coexistence (Ruggeri et al., 2020) and reduces wasteful government expenditures on services, which less adept and less ethical policymakers may interpret as adversely affecting economic development.

In addition to being ethical, the principles are motivational, processual, transformational, and democratic. They undergird the American democratic values discussed since De Tocqueville and those in the UN General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Traditional democratic values narrow the parameters of human rights and, as a result, what constitutes respect for human dignity. By restricting individual worth, then the social policy becomes restrictive. More importantly, the narrowing of human value is linked to reduced individual potential, perception of self-worth, self-esteem, self-determination (see Bakan, 1996; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954/1987). The narrowing of human potential may run contrary to the ambitions and goals of the Founders of America's republican form of government. Hence, a first principles of democracy approach would empower citizens to fulfill their familial, communal, and governmental responsibilities. To that end, the first principles of democracy framework embraces a philosophy of fairness, unity, hope, knowledge, and security aimed at cultivating respect for humanity

through preserving human dignity. Following this discussion is the first principles of democracy conceptual framework, a parsimonious framework that uses three principles.

Abductive Discovery 2: The First Principles of Democracy Conceptual Framework

Research Question: How can the first principles of democracy reduce dynamic tension to achieve human emancipation?

To achieve human emancipation, Benet's (2006, 2013) polarity of democracy requires that five pairs of polarities be managed simultaneously using Johnson's framework for managing polarities. In analyzing the polarities of democracy theory and polarity Management frameworks, it was found that multarities exacerbate the problem shifting and creating effect inherent to Johnson's (1996) tension-driven framework. Johnson's framework is not appropriate for managing or achieving social change. The polarity management framework facilitates the shifting of problems and the creation of new ones, which may negate any gains that may have been made. While there are six principles, only three principles are actively used in the framework: Security, unity, and hope were not directly included in the framework, but remain integral. Security was excluded since one or more species is the outcome of all social change or organizational goals intended to improve the human condition. Unity was omitted from the model as corporate and nonprofit leaders internalized and integrated several species of unity: cooperation, collaboration, and coordination. Today's organizations require local, state, national, or international support to achieve their objectives. In all aspects of the framework, hope is evident: in the planning of how the organization will reach its social

change goal, in collaboration with stakeholders, and in the provision of goods and services to consumers.

The purpose of pursuing the emerged research question was to determine how the first principles of democracy can reduce dynamic tension to achieve human emancipation by constructing a grounded theory. The proposed conceptual framework is a practical way to manage dilemmas and social problems. Policy and social change solutions should be judged on respect for human dignity, fairness, and knowledge. It is suggested that they are the principles required for planning, decision-making, and evaluating social change and policies as they promote empowerment and foster security and unity. This is because knowledge—the foundation of all decisions, ethical, democratic, national, organizational, personal, or otherwise—must uphold respect for human dignity in ethics, public policy, democracy, administration, and justice. Fairness is a concept that spans across domains of knowledge and plays a role in organizational justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), educational justice, social justice, criminal justice, and every other area of life. As such, respect for human dignity imposes the duty to treat others fairly in upholding respect for human dignity. The assumptions of the first principles of democracy are:

- Human dignity is the central focus of democracy.
- Fairness facilitates security.
- Knowledge is required to preserve human dignity and fairness.

Human Dignity

As the most abstract concept among the first principles of democracy, all democratic principles and democratic values are buttressed by human dignity as their

goal is to preserve humankind. Therefore, the conceptual framework must include human dignity as the highest inalienable endowment and the greatest equalizer of persons, irrespective of socially constructed characteristics. Human dignity belongs at the top of the pyramid. Absent respect for human dignity, human rights are invalid and expose individuals to oppression. As a result, human dignity is the focal point in planning, analyzing, and evaluating policies and social change efforts lest we forget the criminal disrespect for human dignity evidenced in slavery, eugenics in America, unethical research, the Holocaust, the Nanjing Massacre, the Darfur genocide, and Palestinian casualties.

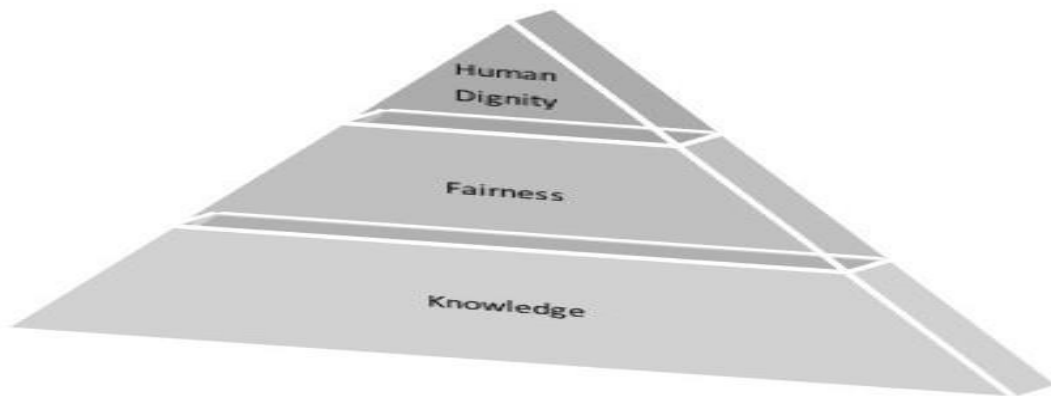
Fairness

At the center of respect for human dignity is fairness. Fairness surfaces as the moral essence of equality and as the process and outcome of justice (Aristotle, 353 BC/1992). Aristotle viewed fairness as a stepping-stone to reaching the highest sum of all virtues (Aristotle 353 BC/1992). To him, fairness refers to a deviation from set standards to ensure equality in applying the standard in the face of extraordinary circumstances. To the Founders, fairness is evidenced in the Bill of Rights and the doctrine of the consent of the governed in the Declaration of Independence, 1776. Therefore, fairness in society considers extraordinary circumstances that would otherwise cause unequal treatment and, as a result, injustice. These circumstances are evident in judicial proceedings and recognized as mitigating circumstances, extra-legal factors, the insanity defense, and self-defense.

Likewise, extraordinary circumstances are recognized in education, employment, and public places to afford accommodations to people with disabilities or to level the playing field due to de jure discrimination. Fairness is a basic need individuals seek to satisfy (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Maslow, 1954/1987; see Figure 9). It is deliberately at the center of the pyramid because decisions to preserve respect for human dignity must be centered on equity. In upholding justice and fairness, the Founders believed that constitutional “rights [are necessary] to control the abuses of government” (The Federalist No. 51, 1787/1998, p. 333). They understood that the government is “the greatest of all reflections on human nature. Thus, if men were angels, no government would be necessary” (No. 51).

Figure 9.

Democratic Social Change Conceptual Model



Knowledge

At the plinth of the pyramid is knowledge, the foundation upon which decisions are often made based on science, intuition, pragmatism, or ideology. Nevertheless, the most effective decisions are made using reliable scientific evidence and sound reason. By

centering democratic social change decisions on knowledge, preserving human dignity, and upholding fairness, the first principles of democracy are maintained, as well as the cherished democratic values proposed by Butts (1980, 1988) and the UN General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). Additionally, knowledge is the building block of innovation, a major contributor to the United States' geopolitical standing (i.e., "some of the most distinguished members of that Congress ... who have grown old in acquiring political information were also members of this convention and carried into it their accumulated knowledge and experience;" The Federalist No. 3, 1787/1998, p. 11), and a source of competition in intelligence gathering.

In lieu of using Johnson's conceptual framework to manage democratic values paired as dilemmas, problem managers can use the framework to assess, plan, and guide social change on various levels. Abstractly, Johnson's conceptual framework could leverage dilemmas to achieve the poles' maximum positive aspect while reducing the maximum number of negative elements possible (Benet, 2013, p. 30; Johnson, 1996). However, tension shifts between the poles as one pole anticipates a problem while the other has identified a solution (Benet, 2013, Johnson, 1996). Forces compete as the positive aspects of the democratic values destabilize the negative aspects of the opposite democratic values and produce fear (see Benet, 2013, p. 28). The upsides of both democratic values are not experienced simultaneously (see Benet, 2006; Johnson, 1996). Hence, the benefits gained from democratic values on one polarity pole are lost due to overemphasis and neglect of the democratic values on the other polarity pole (Benet, 2006, 2013). It is difficult to see the whole polarity due to anticipated loss (Benet, 2006).

The instability caused by the dynamic tension between two poles spreads to paired democratic values without exception because Johnson requires dilemmas (see Benet, 2006, 2013; Johnson, 1996). Other major weaknesses emerged from the use of Johnson's (1996) conceptual framework: (a) where to locate a problem that has shifted to another polarity pair; (b) how to predict which polarity pair will experience a new problem as a result of managing multarities, true to managing dilemmas (Benet, 2006); (c) determining whether all the polarity pairs have reached their maximum benefits, and (d) determining which democratic value an organization can sacrifice to preserve the other(s). It is suggested that the first principles of democracy could be used to develop and evaluate social policies and manage the paired polarities of democracy while acknowledging their interconnectedness without concern about affected pairs or how to measure the disparity between affected polarity pairs to address newly created problems. When using this conceptual framework, there are three essential questions to ask and answer: Does the policy under consideration lead to the respect of human dignity, is it fair, and is it based on the best available information?

One can assume that the model is useful in preserving human dignity, the essence of democracy, because the American Psychological Association (2017; Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct), the American Medical Association (2002; Declaration of Professional Responsibility: Medicine's Social Contract with Humanity), and the American Bar Association (2020; Model Code of Judicial Conduct) have the three principles incorporated in their professional conduct framework. The professional codes of conduct call for respect for human dignity, impartiality, and competence. As

such, the three principles will be used for assessment, planning, problem-solving, and evaluation. The democratic social change framework is a parsimonious model better suited for planning and evaluating policy and social change efforts and leads to emancipation and empowerment. It can be used to manage, plan, and evaluate policies and social change endeavors. Next is a discussion of the socio-ethical principles of democracy, an ethical framework for government leaders.

Abductive Discovery 3: Socio-Ethical Principles of Democracy

The problem of power is how to achieve its responsible use rather than its irresponsible and indulgent use—of how to get men of power to live for the public rather than off the public.

—Robert F. Kennedy, *The Pursuit of Justice*, 1964

Research Question: Are there two values in the founding documents that separate the values of the masses from those of the elites?

Socio-ethical principles of democracy support the democratic ideal of government for the people. It is grounded in the democratic philosophy of what is considered beneficial or non-injurious to society on the principle of innate human worth. The framework is useful for those who are “concerned with justice, rights, respect for human dignity, the autonomy of the individual[,] and respect for the community” (Gabr, 2009, p. 2). The socio-ethical principles of democracy could serve as a framework that reflects the spirit of the Constitution, in keeping with a republican form of government. In a letter from Adams to Jefferson in 1813, Adams recognized that “nobility in men is worth ... much ... [but that] birth and wealth together have prevailed over virtue and talents in all

ages ... [He believed] the ‘aristoi’ [are] ‘the wise and good.’ But [in contrast] the world, mankind, have, by their practice, always answered [that the aristoi are] “the rich, the beautiful, and well-born. The artificial aristocracy is a mischievous ingredient in government, and provision should be made to prevent its ascendancy” (Staff, 1976, pp. 228, 229, 230).

Therefore, considering the promise of democracy as “*government for the people*” (Lincoln, 1863) [emphasis added], it was not accidentally that socio-ethical principles of democracy were woven into the founding documents as the principles citizens ought to require and expect of public servants, in the development of public policy, and the counterstrategy used against a demoralizing process. Additionally, they should be incorporated into the national lexicon to become internalized and integrated. However, these first principles of democracy have been obscured and yet sustained by concrete democratic values that have limited citizens' imagination regarding their rights. The framework serves as a human-centric code of conduct for public servants, empowering them as leaders and constituents to improve the individual and collective experience. Moreover, “universal ethics does not primarily play a numbers game” but “balances benefits against harms” (Foldvary, 1980, p. 133). However, it is not a utilitarian “greatest good to the greatest number scheme” (Foldvary, 1980, p. 133) and does not “replace personal or cultural ethics” (p. 53). The assumptions are:

- The framework is a strategic and empowerment process that leads to security.
- Humans must feel empowered to reach their fullest potential.

- Government for the people requires a principled and empowering approach to democracy.

The grounded theory demonstrates the empowering nature of the first principles: knowledge, fairness, dignity, empowerment, unity, and security. As a result of the oppressive experiences of the colonists, this theory emerged from a government that lacked respect for the dignity, fairness, and security of its citizens (“a long train of abuses and usurpations;” Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders used the Declaration of Independence to “declare the causes” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) that led them to separate from Great Britain. The king violated the Magna Carta concerning the colonists’ human rights, particularly their right to due process. “The history of ... the king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The colonists’ “repeated petitions” for “redress of grievances” were “answered only by repeated injury, destroying their faith in the monarch, a faith needed for effective governance of the people” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). I suggest that conscientization made the principles a valuable socio-ethical strategy to rid the colonies of despotism and advance toward revolutionary social change.

The relationship between the colonies and Great Britain illustrates the need and the value of a socio-ethical framework based on democratic principles centered around respect for human dignity. This grounded theory is an attempt at the construction of a universal democratic ethic framework. Knowledge, human dignity, hope, unity, and security are socio-ethical democratic principles and guardians of humanity. Together the

principles promote a culture of ethics, resilience, and liberation. Research supports the empowering influence of the principles (see Christiansen, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Freire, 1970/2018; Killen & Dahl, 2021; Maslow, 1954/1987; Pleeing et al., 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). As a result, motivational theories will be used to meet institutional requirement: self-determination theory, self-actualization, theory of hope, and equity theory. These works support interpreting the first principles as motivational, processual, and transformational. While not described as motivational theorists, the works of Cuza (De Leonardis, 1998) and Durkheim (1982), and Bloch (1959/1986) support the empowering aspect of unity and hope, respectively. The principles uphold democracy as respect for human dignity as agentic, autonomous individuals who ought to be unhindered by arbitrary, political cleavages. They establish the essence of government for the people.

The disempowerment strategies or anti-democratic principles (misinformation, fear, nativism, dehumanization, subjugation, social distinction) shape perceptions of justice and, conversely, fairness. As unfair power strategies, when leveraged by those who hold more resources and power than those against whom they are leveraged (Rozeboom & Sangiovanni, 2018), they may endanger “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They are associated with the goal of “absolute despotism” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). As normalized apparatuses of power, disempowerment strategies foster beliefs, attitudes, and values that correspond to a culture of pride, privilege, and superiority among those who endorse and leverage them, thus maintaining power asymmetry (Robin, 2018). An imbalance of power is the

antithesis of democracy as it detracts from the promise of democracy and human emancipation and contributes to the perception of uniquely different interests among social classes (The Federalist, 1787/1998).

Employing the socio-ethical framework could reduce the effects of asymmetric power associated with the disempowerment strategies and promote fairness by upholding the assertion that “all men are created equal and are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Moreover, support for the socio-ethical framework was found in the Founders’ proclamation of “the people’s right to alter or abolish [government] and to institute a new government ... most likely to affect their safety and happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Motivational Value of the Democratic Principles

A discussion of the principles and their motivational value will follow. However, fairness will get the most attention as it effectively describes the strain in the relationship between the colonists and Great Britain. It supports the argument that the perception of justice is motivational and tied to negative emotions that may lead to vengeance, affect self-respect, and affect individuals’ respect for others (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Motivation theory assumptions support the empowerment elements of the principles.

Knowledge. The substantive data covers various species of knowledge and illustrates why knowledge is power. Sir Frances Bacon (1597/1996) established the universal truth that “knowledge itself is a power” (p. 20). The Founders used distinct types of knowledge for national and economic development. However, knowledge is imperative for personal growth, social development, professional development (Dewey,

1923), self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1956/1987). This is because, as stated by John Adams, “if the people are sufficiently enlightened to see all the dangers that surround them, they will always be represented by a distinct personage” (Staff, 1976, p. 208). Although epistemologists discuss factive and procedural knowledge, wisdom and prudence are discussed in philosophy as intellectual virtues (Aristotle, 353 BC/1992).

In the realm of philosophy, prudence is intuitive and the source of scientific knowledge that is time, moment, and person-specific, whereby the decision made about the individual and one’s affairs at a specific juncture is the best decision at the time and years after (Aristotle, 353 BC/1992). The Founders made prudent decisions “in every stage of these oppressions, [seeking] redress in the most humble” terms (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They acknowledged that “prudence ... [dictates] that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Another type of knowledge, like prudence, is wisdom. Conversely, wisdom relies on factual knowledge and intuitive reasoning (Aristotle, 353 BC/1992). Both were alluded to in *The Federalist* (1787/1998), referencing “a national government whose wisdom and prudence will not be diminished by the passions which actuate the parties immediately interested” (No. 3, p. 15).

An effective function of knowledge is communicating ideas and forming bonds through things people have in common (Dewey, 1923). The Founders emphasized the importance of sharing knowledge as “a decent respect to the opinions of mankind [that] required that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation”

(Declaration of Independence, 1776). To communicate with literate colonists, the Founders wrote *The Federalist* and made use of it as part of a deliberative process to allow the people to interact and forge a bond with the government; moreover, they formed a bond that led them to “mutually pledge to each other their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Knowledge as a conduit of progress is evidenced by the Founders becoming progressively more prudent on their journey towards economic and national development, contracting alliances, and establishing commerce. The evolving nature of knowledge is stark when comparing the style of writing of the Articles of Confederation with the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution. For example, awareness of the dynamic nature of knowledge led the Founders to include an elastic clause in the U.S. Constitution, which was necessary to create new legislation (Article 1, §8, Clause 18). The first principles of democracy are generalizable enough to serve originalist and living constitutionalist interpretation of law. This is because the principles, as essential to the government for the people, cut across cultures to uphold fairness and respect for human dignity. The Founders endorsed this perspective in *The Federalist* (1787/1998):

The power of construing the laws according to the SPIRIT of the Constitution, will enable ... [the U.S. Supreme Court] to mould them into whatever shape it may think proper; especially as its decisions will not be in any manner subject to the revision or correction of the legislative body. (No. 81, p. 529)

The concept of strategic knowledge is an amalgamation of many types of knowledge, including procedural knowledge (know-how), propositional knowledge

(know-that), wisdom, prudence, and understanding ("as mankind is more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, rather than right themselves by abolishing the forms they are accustomed to" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders' strategic knowledge was evidenced in all the founding documents, but most notably in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution (a new form of government with checks and balances). While outside the scope of the substantive content but related to the Declaration's drafting, geopolitical issues weakened Great Britain's position as a superpower (Crowley, 2019), allowing the Founders to leverage this knowledge to their advantage.

Fairness. A principle partly responsible for well-being is fairness. The perception of justice forms the foundation of organizational equity research, referred to as organizational justice. Cohen-Charash and Spector's (2001) meta-analysis will be the main source of this discussion to provide a broad view of perceptions of justice. Research on organizational equity has expanded beyond distributive justice to procedural and interactional justice (Charash & Spector, 2001). Distributive justice is concerned with the distribution of outcomes such as rewards, salary, promotion (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001), rights, obligations, and resources (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983). Distributive justice includes an examination of affective, behavioral, and cognitive reactions to specific outcomes in measuring outcomes because the perception of fairness affects those areas (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001, p. 280).

Equity theory is relevant to understanding colonists' experience because they were managed like "beasts of burden" (Adams, 1776/2022, p. 1). As a result, their

experiences paralleled those of employees who experienced organizational inequity and sought organizational justice. Great Britain allocated the colonists specific rewards such as resources, rights, and obligations (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983). The colonists provided Great Britain with labor and resources for which Great Britain imposed “taxes on us without our consent, dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people, and abdicated government here by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Thus, the distribution outcome was perceived as unfair.

A factor that may have affected the distribution rule between the colonies and Great Britain was that the colonists perceived themselves as attitudinally similar (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983). This was suggested in the Declaration of Independence, as “all men are created equal.” Moreover, as equals, there is an entitlement to fairness. Equality versus equity is preferred in four areas: perception of attitudinal similarity, perceived likelihood of future exchange, affective closeness, and relationship duration (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983). “After such dissolutions, [the king] refused for a long time to cause others to be elected ... in the [meantime] exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without and convulsions within” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Colonists “conjured them by the ties of ... common kindred, [but] they, too, have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). However, evidence suggests the king did not perceive the colonies as attitudinally similar throughout their relationship. Moreover, the colonists experienced

inequity in “other types of justice judgments,” procedural and interactional justice (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983, p. 219).

Research in organizational justice shifted to exploring the role of process in organizational justice. Therefore, in procedural justice, affective, cognitive, and behavioral reactions to unfairness are organization-focused (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Procedural justice is equity in the procedure that facilitates performance outcomes (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Procedural justice may, at times, be the principal factor of organizational justice and the most complex, consisting of six principles that, when followed, yield a more equitable work environment than otherwise (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). There are six principles of allocation. They are paraphrased as follows:

- The consistency rule (consistency over time and across employees),
- The bias suppression rule (measures to suppress bias in the process to reduce the self-interest of decision-makers),
- The accuracy rule (reliability of information used in the process),
- The correctability rule (means of correcting an unfair rule),
- The representativeness rule (representation of the interests of the affected parties in the process),
- The ethicality rule (ethical and moral values of the perceiver are represented; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001, p. 280).

Much like distributive justice, perceived unfairness affects cognition, emotions, and the behavior of the aggrieved employee. In contrast, distributive justice triggers an outcome-focused reaction by the affected perceiver, and responses to perceived

unfairness in the organizational process trigger organization-focused reactions (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). On the other hand, the principles of procedural justice relate to the colonists' experience. Great Britain has consistently, over time, increased the colonists' taxes without their consent. Procedurally, the king has "called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Furthermore, he deprived colonists "in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury [and sent them] beyond seas to be tried for pretended offenses" (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Colonists "have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, petitioned for redress in the most humble terms, [and] conjured them by the ties of their common kindred to disavow [the] usurpations" as measures to suppress the king's bias (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Nevertheless, "their repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Great Britain refused to represent the interest of the colonies: "The king [has] refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people unless those people relinquish the right of representation in the legislature [and have] dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Moreover, procedural justice is deliberately lacking based on the king's "repeated injury," refusal to "assent to laws," and contributions to "a long list of abuses and usurpations" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Not only did the king violate the colonists' democratic principles, but he also

evinced “a design to reduce them under absolute despotism” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

In addition, poor distributive and procedural justice outcomes are affected by the quality of interactional justice, the third type of justice judgment. Interactional justice relates to the interpersonal aspect of organizational fairness and is an extension of procedural justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Some factors considered in interactional justice, the interaction between the person who controls rewards and resources and the receiver of justice, are communication, politeness, respect, and honesty (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Cognitive, emotional, and behavioral reactions to perceived unfairness in interactional justice focus on management or its representatives (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). As such, the interactional exchange between the colonists as tax-paying subjects of the king was strained. Interactional justice, then, affected the quality of communication between the colonists and Great Britain. While communication was respectful, it was one-sided and affected interactional justice. The colonists “appealed to” and “conjured” the king and his representatives “in the most humble terms but were met with feigned disinterest,” but the king was “deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity, declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Great Britain’s interaction with the colonists was dismal.

Therefore, procedural and interactional justice are the two organizational justice measures most relevant to the Founders' experience with Great Britain and the democratic social change process. Moreover, Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) found

that males, more so than females, were interested in protecting their interests in reward allocation, were more likely to react strongly to an unfair outcome, and were more likely to have increased self-esteem in the face of unfairness. It is suggested that the Founders' strong reaction to unfair outcomes resulted from a predominantly male characteristic associated with response to organizational justice and the group value of increased self-esteem when faced with injustice. The interpretation of the Founders' reaction to justice is supported by research in motivation (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Maslow, 1954/1987; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020) and the role of emotion in motivation and social change (Christiansen, 2009; Goodwin et al., 2001).

The very indignation with Great Britain's dehumanizing strategies of subjugation fomented moral consciousness and stirred emotions (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Freire, 1970/2018; Goodwin et al., 2001) that mobilized the Founders to "effect their safety and happiness" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders noted that whereas preceding generations were "disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed," this generation had a high evaluation of themselves in the face of inequity, evidenced by "all men are created equal" and the war for independence (Declaration of Independence, 1776). To that end, they mutually pledged their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor to each other and emerged victorious (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Human Dignity. Indignation from being treated inhumanely is motivational (Hojman & Mirandad, 2018; Vinthagen, 2015; Ziedonis et al., 2016). Human dignity motivates a sense of pride in self, self-respect, self-determination, and well-being

(Hojman, 2018; Ziedonis et al., 2016). Human dignity undergirds all ethical principles (Autiero, 2020). Human rights are the empirical markers that support the principle of human dignity. Nothing can be added or subtracted from innate human worth. “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) is commensurate with human dignity. Absent respect and recognition of the worth of human life, there will be human trafficking, enslavement, human experiments, violations of human rights, toxic drinking water, and other abuses. However, the demand for respect for human dignity led to the Revolutionary War. Few behaviors disempower and assault respect for human dignity more than being treated as “beasts of burden” (Adams, 1776/2022, p. 1).

In self-determination theory, a motivation theory developed by Richard Ryan and Edward Deci, knowledge is expressed as competence. According to Ryan and Deci (2020), three basic psychological needs foster positive processes: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Autonomy may be defined as “taking responsibility for one’s own actions ... supported by experiences of interest and values” (p. 2). Competence is rooted in mastery, success, and growth, whereas relatedness is rooted in the sense of belonging engendered by respect and care (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Although all three concepts uphold human dignity, specific socio-ethical principles reflect autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Knowledge is reflected in Ryan and Deci’s (2020) concept of competence, unity is reflected in relatedness, and hope is reflected in intrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation extends the capacity to explore, seek challenges, and enjoy oneself (Ryan &

Deci, 2020). The first principle of fairness corresponds with their findings on motivation in performance and feedback.

Positive performance feedback correlated with “enhanced intrinsic motivation, whereas negative performance feedback diminished it” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). Intrinsic motivation leads to competence because motivation emerges from within the individual, allowing individuals to seek out novelty and challenges, extend the capacity to explore and learn, and “represent a principal source of enjoyment and vitality throughout life” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). Intrinsic motivation is more likely to flourish when the individual feels a sense of security and belonging and that their feelings are acknowledged (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In all likelihood, the Founders were intrinsically motivated based on how they leveraged many species of knowledge and achieved independence.

On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is non-autonomous and does not produce inherent satisfaction but is instrumental in that behaviors depend on external rewards (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Values can become self-determined if internalized and integrated (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). Internalization refers to adopting or “taking in” the behavior, idea, or value (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). Through integration, individuals identify with and adopt the value as their own, whereby the behavior or value can be considered “truly self-determined” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 71). Moreover, internalization is facilitated through acknowledgment of the feelings of others and the experience of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). It is suggested that the internalization and integration of Patrick Henry’s (1775) and Samuel Adam’s (1776) values in their *Liberty or Death* and *American*

Independence speeches, respectively, empowered colonists in their continued fight for respect for human dignity and independence. Similarly, the Founders used the Declaration of Independence to motivate colonists extrinsically. The “long train of abuses and usurpations” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) contained appeals to “a landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, and a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 34).

Maslow’s (1954/1987) self-actualization theory of motivation contrasts with the self-determination theory. Self-actualization theory posits that individuals first satisfy basic needs and then satisfy other less immediate needs through a process that leads to self-actualization. Safety (security) and physiological needs (food and water security) are the two most fundamental psychological needs impacting motivation and well-being, along with love and belonging (unity) and esteem (human dignity and knowledge; Maslow, 1954/1987) as psychological needs that must be met before achieving self-actualization. When basic physiological and safety needs are met, they motivate the individual to satisfy higher needs such as love, belonging, and esteem and become fully autonomous (Maslow, 1954/1987). Although human dignity can be extrapolated from Ryan and Deci’s (2000, 2020) need for autonomy, human dignity in Maslow’s (1954/1987) work is esteem; however, competence may lead to the expression of esteem. Esteem has two components: the need for competence, mastery, and respect from others (p. 45). Individuals, suggested Maslow, need high self-evaluation, “self-respect, or self-esteem, and the self-esteem of others” (p. 45) that, when satisfied, lead to “feelings of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability, and adequacy, of being useful and necessary

in the world” (p. 45). In this framework, Ryan and Deci’s (2000, 2020) relatedness needs are similar to Maslow’s need for love, belonging, and unity.

Hope. Snyder (2000) formulated a motivational theory of hope. He defined hope as “the sum of perceived capabilities to produce routes to desired goal, along with the perceived motivation” (p. 8). Another definition Snyder, Irving, and Anderson have used for hope is “a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy) and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals);” Snyder, 2000, p. 8). Snyder et al. (2000) proposed a third definition of hope as “a cognitive set that is based on a reciprocally-derived [sic] sense of successful agency (goal-directed determination) and pathways (planning to meet goals;” p. 8, 9). As a result of the trilogy of goals, pathways, and agency proposed by Snyder (2000), hope is as motivational as it is goal-driven, and the individual’s conscious mind is focused on and determined to achieve its goal despite uncertainty. Snyder (2000) describes this uncertainty as being based on absolutely certain and truly untenable goals, which he describes as counterproductive. Pathways are scenarios where people can imagine plausible routes to attaining their goals. Agency is the mental willpower that motivates people towards their “imagined pathways to goals” (p. 10). Hope is not a mere mental representation or an exercise in imagination of goal setting but the ability to create plausible routes by which the individual can achieve their goal given the willpower to do so (Snyder, 2000).

Hence, hope leads to action based on the belief of a favorable outcome (Bloch, 1959/1986; Snyder, 2000), leading to security, expressed in the Declaration of

Independence (1776) as “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” In disposing individuals to act (see Blöser, 2020; Pleeging, 2022), hope has a role during elections and social change movements (see Blöser, 2020). Furthermore, during hardship, hope transcends the current situation and combat apathy by instilling the courage to imagine better future circumstances (see Bloch, 1959/1986; Pleeging, 2022; Snyder, 2000). Conversely, hope can prolong human suffering (Pleeging, 2022). Eventually, people can visualize a genuine possibility of a positive outcome by internalizing and integrating the hope of others (see Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020; Blöser, 2020; Pleeging, 2022; Snow, 2018), a process that can be exploited to transfer false hope (Snow, 2018). Hope is imperative not only because it bonds the governed with the government, increases voter participation, encourages groups to demonstrate peacefully, or empowers the government when citizens defer authority to the government instead of taking matters into their own hands. Hope is important because hope is imbued with faith and relentless courage. (Bloch, 1959/1986) It nurtures the democratic ideals that “governments are instituted among men and derive their just powers from the consent of the governed” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) and that “government of the people, by the people, and for the people shall not perish from the Earth” (Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, 1863). Finally, hope nurtures trust in political leaders, as evidenced during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is generalizable and applicable in any area where people aspire, set goals, find pathways, and take action that leads their hope to achievement.

Unity. Unity is the social glue that supports the other socio-ethical principles. It is “an arranged order which is intended to promote individual fulfillment” (De Leonardis,

1998, p. 137). It “advances the communal good as a means of individual fulfillment” (De Leonardis, 1998, p. 137). Unity maintains social order and protects society from injustice, isolation, alienation, and social disintegration (Durkheim, 1982; Maslow, 1954/1987; Ross, 2017). A spirit of community promotes a “commitment to the overall well-being of both the community as a whole and each constituent member of the community” When individuals accept that they have “personal responsibilities for enhancing the life of [their] community ... others enhance their own life as well” (De Leonardis, 1998, p. 138). Unity links humanity “through bonds of mutual concern,” making “the good of all ... the goal of each,” creating “a community animated by a spirit of active commitment to the overall well-being of both the community as a whole and each constituent member of the community” (De Leonardis, 1998, p. 137) by accomplishing common goals (Kotzur, 2017, p. 40). The spirit of community is witnessed in the text of the Declaration of Independence (1776): “We mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor,” and in the text of Articles of Confederation (1775), “to secure and perpetuate mutual friendship and intercourse among the people of the different States in this Union, the free inhabitants of each of these States.”

Security. Security, like the other principles, is a motivational factor, a process, and an outcome that may advance social transformation (Maslow, 1956/1987). The need for security played a principal role in freedom, self-determination, independence, national development, safety, peace of mind, and uniting colonists against Great Britain. Security was a goal of the Declaration of Independence (“to institute a new government;” 1776), the Articles of Confederation (“to secure and perpetuate mutual friendship and

intercourse among the people of the different States in this Union;” 1777), the U.S. Constitution (“in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty”), and The Federalist Papers No. 2 (1787/1998; “It is not yet forgotten that well-grounded apprehensions of imminent danger induced the people of America to form the memorable Congress of 1774;” p. 10). Security is the essence of “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Security contributed to the Revolutionary War, the drafting of the Articles of Confederation and the U.S. Constitution, and to changes in the American system of government. It was also a continuous theme of The Federalist, the nation's survival (see NSS), and the preamble of the U.S. Constitution. As the nation's founding document, the U.S. Constitution addresses security issues: “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Security “is the final cause of political society” (Erkiner & Akoudou, 2021).

The Human Development Report of 1994 lists various elements of security. It lists well-being as the general measure of human security (Kaul, 1995). Types of security include economic, food, health, environment, personal, community, and political (Kaul, 1995). Security is associated with well-being and the common good. Like security, well-being is a multifaceted concept with various components: spiritual, mental, emotional, psychological, social (Ruggeri et al., 2020), and physical (Capio et al., 2014). The OECD (2013) uses a more meaningful measure. It assesses people, outcomes, well-being distribution among group populations, and objective and subjective measures of well-

being. However, national economic security is a primary mode of achieving human security and well-being. The principles and their species can be found in the National Security Strategy Report of the United States of America (NSS): A report mandated by the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 (Secretary of Defense, n.d.) and published by every administration since President Reagan's. The Act requires that reports "include a discussion of the United States' international interests, commitments, objectives, and policies, along with defense capabilities necessary to deter threats and implement U.S. security plans" (Secretary of Defense, n.d., p. 1). The first report was sent to Congress during President Ronald Reagan's tenure in 1987. They are written in general terms but provide an overview of the national security strategy to achieve the nation's national security goals.

The reports were found intuitively searching for the phrase "White House Reports" to explore whether the empowerment principles and anti-democratic tenets have been institutionalized. The first report created during the Reagan Administration was selected to compare with the other randomly selected reports. They were randomly selected by year. Subsequent reports were more sophisticated and contained more principles than earlier reports (Appendix K). The findings suggest that power strategies have been institutionalized, giving some credence to institutionalizing a culture that promotes oppressive strategies. However, the function of the anti-democratic strategies in the report is to assess foreign threats to national security and monitor the consent of the governed in the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address as "government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth" (Lincoln,

1863). In much of American jurisprudence history, few legal scholars have accepted the principle of human dignity as having been integrated into the nation's founding documents. This principle was permanently embedded as a national principle. However, experience, the Declaration of Independence, and The Federalist Papers have shown that it has never been from a lack of knowledge that human dignity has been unrecognized.

Nevertheless, government reflects the finest and worst of human nature. Law and policymakers have recognized human dignity through an incremental process, with the most recent examples being *Dobbs v. Jackson's Women's Health Organization* (2022) and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015). However, the national leaders and Congressional members have not presented a unified socio-democratic framework particular to the nation's republican form of government, nor have they integrated democratic socio-ethical principles into the American political lexicon. A socio-ethical framework would allow Americans to hold their representatives responsible for upholding ethical conduct that preserves and promotes respect for human dignity. Motivational theories supported the empowerment component of the principles, and the assumptions of the democratic principles framework reaffirmed the ethical component. The principles transcend cultural barriers and could guide policy decisions, strengthen democracy, and promote social change. In the following section, I will discuss the demoralized process, a framework of the anti-democratic power strategies that emerged from the founding documents. The strategies are still used today to demoralize victims of intimate partner violence, school bullying, and workplace hostility. In addition, fringe groups leverage anti-democratic strategies to demoralize foreigners perceived as economic and security threats.

Abductive Discovery 4: Demoralization Process: The Underbelly of Democracy

Society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests, and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority.

—The Federalist No. 51, 1787/1998

Research Question 1: Are the disempowerment concepts part of a process or a strategy that stifles democratic change, and what, if anything, reinforces the disempowerment behaviors of those who use them?

Research Question 2: In what ways might the theoretical codes contribute to and detract from a richer form of democracy or oppression?

The demoralizing process is the grounded explanation of the process leading to subjugation. The founding documents have two overarching strategies: Divide-and-rule and unite-and-rule. The divide-and-rule strategy slows social change, whereas the unite-and-rule strategy aims to control factions by promoting a shared interest (The Federalist, 1787/1998). In concert with the Founders' belief, the demoralizing process starts with "a design to reduce them under absolute despotism" (Declaration of Independence, 1776) and uses the natural psychological process whereby people tend to prefer those most like them. Unless socialized to welcome differing others, the individual bonds more closely with those with a similar worldviews, attitudes, values, and customs. Individuals can be easily recruited through nationalism because loyalty to a nation can be integrated and internalized (see Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). The process starts with nativism, a sense of being an extension of a familiar status quo versus being "treated by others in no better

light than that of foreigners and aliens” (The Federalist No. 22, 1787/1998, p. 182). This strategy can be leveraged to empower the nativist to disempower the out-group by promoting an us-versus-them ideology based on strict criteria for inclusion.

For example, in the Declaration of Independence, nativism was used to unite different factions in the colonies, including foreigners, by pointing to the king’s obstruction of “Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners” and appealing to their common fear of “the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.” Conversely, Great Britain “constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.” The process proceeds to social distinction, misinformation, fear, and dehumanization and ends with subjugation (see Figure 10). Social distinctions provide a similar sense of unity and shared culture felt by nativist in-group members.

Figure 10.

Disempowering Process



Social distinctions ideology is a mass dehumanization strategy based on various socially constructed hierarchical attributes. The positive effect of social distinctions is its motivational value. This is shown by the doxa that the higher up on the hierarchy, the more worthy the person is of being recognized as human and the happier the individual.

The disempowering effect of social distinctions is the erroneous belief that human dignity is measured by material possessions or knowledge. This is because they disregard the value of those deemed useless. Developing hierarchies that empower some while disempowering others serves a dual purpose: divide-and-rule strategy through nativism and unite and rule through identity politics by "giving each citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests" (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 33). The unite and rule strategy leads to incremental social change. In addition to creating a faulty perception of human worth, social distinctions also weaken political power by creating the perception of "different interests necessarily" existing "in different classes of citizens" because "if a common interest unites a majority, the rights of the minority will be insecure" (The Federalist No. 51, 1787/1998, p. 245).

In contrast to the Founders uniting along political interests and nativism, the king socially distinguished himself through his position and authority by building alliances with others "to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws" and by "giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Despite the king's attempt to reduce colonists, colonists responded with their greatest act of distinction by acknowledging that, unlike the king's perception of them being beasts of burden, "all men are created equal" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). These five words were spoken to all oppressed subjects subjected to the abuses and usurpations of the monarchy.

Misinformation is often referred to as fake news. Misinformation interferes with an individual's self-determination by depriving them of the decision they would have

otherwise made informed by facts. The strategy is used to prevent the effects of factions, to reconstruct the other politically, to gain control and obedience (see Declaration of Independence, 1776; *The Federalist* (1787/1998), to reinforce fallacies associated with social hierarchies, and to control the narrative with the assistance of the media (Chomsky, 1995, 2002; Edelman & Edelman, 2001). Misinformation has promoted the belief that African Americans are inferior and at the level of animals (see Kendi, 2016), despite Madison arguing the contrary in *The Federalist* No. 54 and the self-evidence that “all men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

The Founders dispelled the misinformation that subjects could not oppose and wage war on the monarchy. This doxa was vigorously challenged by proposing that “Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed” and waging war with Great Britain (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders’ political astuteness was displayed using the strategy of misinformation in declaring themselves a self-determined people living in a sovereign nation before having won the Revolutionary War.

Fear is both paralyzing and motivating. Fear has been used to control and promote certain behaviors as a strategy to disempower. Throughout the founding documents, fear has been associated with lack of safety, national and domestic threats (U.S. Const.), fear of others (Great Britain’s soldiers, colonists murdering their compatriots, and the “Indian Savages;” Declaration of Independence, 1776), fear of change and novel experiences, fear of loss of power, fear of being under the control of Great Britain, and the fear of real and perceived loss of money, property, and/or opportunities by Great Britain (Articles of

Confederation, 1777). Then again, Great Britain's fear of losing control of the colonies was evident throughout the acts of abuses and usurpations in the Declaration of Independence.

In the Declaration of Independence (1776), dehumanization appeared as acts of violence, ignoring the plight of others, and a "long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism." Dehumanization could lead to resistance, psychological abuse, and unhealthy coping mechanisms, resulting from attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors disregarding respect for human dignity. However, attempts at dehumanization are not always successful. Successful dehumanization requires that individuals being degraded internalize and integrate the dehumanizing words and actions. Because power works both ways, the Founders countered the king's attempts with their attempt at dehumanization by referring to him as a despot and a "Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant." The Founders were more motivated to gain independence than to internalize and integrate the king's opinions, words, and actions (see Declaration of Independence, 1776; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

Subjugation uses various strategies that lead to the person leveraging the strategies to gain psychological, spiritual, and/or physical control. The anti-democratic tenets are all subjugation strategies and, thus, divisive strategies. The founding documents illustrate several strategies of subjugation. Great Britain and the Founders tried to subjugate each other through various strategies of disempowerment, with the Founders and colonists winning control of their destinies (see Declaration of

Independence, 1776). As part of its "Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity," the U.S. Constitution includes laws and mechanisms that some scholars believe are restrictive and anti-democratic (see Dahl, 2001).

Lastly, the various anti-democratic strategies are evidenced by the Trail of Tears, slavery, the Chinese Exclusion Act, the Mexican Exodus, Japanese internment camps, and the continued disempowerment of minorities, blue-collar workers, and others. These policies point to the genesis of the institutionalization of power strategies that remain part of the social and organizational cultures because "mankind is more disposed to suffer, whereas evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed" (Declaration of Independence, 1776; see Articles of Confederation, 1777, art. I, p. 1; *The Federalist*, 1787/1998). The disempowerment strategies rely on the psyche for long-term control of individuals' thoughts, actions, and behaviors.

Understanding the process of and the reasons for disempowerment, be it control, fear, or as a means to an end, makes using the empowerment strategies intuitive. As an intuitive counterstrategy, democratic social change at the individual and relational levels is likely. A re-analysis of history and social structure may remind people why these strategies were used then and are no longer necessary in America's distinct and modern democracy. Taking part in reliving America's historical past tarnishes the nation's dignity and undermines the unity of a multicultural society based on the U.S. Constitution. A

discussion of the either-or grounded theory, a framework that could be used to analyze social policies between implementation and social acceptance, will follow.

Abductive Discovery 5: Either-or Approach to Democracy

Suppose an administrator is given responsibility for formulating policy ... he might start by trying to list all related values in order of importance ... then all the possible policy outcomes ... Public agencies are in effect usually instructed not to practice this first method. The second method [incrementalism] ... [is] a common method of policy formulation ... and superior to any other decision-making method available.

— Charles E. Lindblom, *The Science of “Muddling Through,”* 1959

Research Question 1: Are the disempowerment concepts part of a process or a strategy that stifles democratic change, and what, if anything, reinforces the disempowering behaviors of those who use them?

Research Question 2: How might the theoretical codes contribute to and detract from a richer form of democracy or oppression?

The either-or approach to democracy focuses on longstanding and new species of disempowerment strategies during points of transition, during social unrest leading to democracy, and after the passage of national policies promoting social equity. The framework is an analytical and decision-making tool to determine whether democracy or oppression is being pursued. The goal is to establish which power strategy or strategies are being leveraged at the juncture of democratic social change and societal acceptance. The approach is useful for understanding the process of democracy as it relates to social

change and the effect of gradualism in supporting and perpetrating social division and the reliance on official recognition and empowerment to imbue oppressed classes with human dignity (North, 1990; see US Const. amend. XV, XIX, XXIV, XXVI, art. 1–3, Articles of Confederation, 1777, art. 4; *The Federalist*, 1787/1998). As is evident, gradualism slows the pace of democratic social change.

The approach applies to the Founders' graduated resistance, contributing to their oppression. While the king "exposed [them] to all the Dangers of Invasion without and Convulsions within," sent "Swarms of Officers to harass our People, and eat out their Substance," quartered "large Bodies of Ames Troops among us," and transported "large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the Works of Death, Desolation, and Tyranny," at "every stage of these Oppressions," the Founders "Petitioned for Redress in the most humble Terms," and "conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Nevertheless, "these too have been deaf to the voice of justice and consanguinity" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The king incrementally increased the severity of oppressive strategies against the colonists while the colonists were petitioned for redress.

Oppressive strategies, or the anti-democratic tenets—misinformation, dehumanization, social distinction, fear, nativism, and subjugation—and their species represent unfairness when leveraged against the less resourceful or powerful. The disempowerment strategies serve multiple functions: strategy of war, social control, divide-and-rule, pace democracy, trigger social change, and maintain the status quo. These power strategies are contrasted with their counterstrategies, the first principles of

democracy: knowledge, human dignity, fairness, hope, unity, and security. The counterstrategies could lead to empowerment by neutralizing disempowerment. Although determining which specific strategy or group of strategies neutralized the various historical disempowerment techniques could pose some challenges, the framework could easily be used to evaluate anti-democratic strategies as far back as the colonial era when the strategies were used on everyone except for the status quo. As an approach to democracy, users can determine which power strategy is being leveraged and use a counterstrategy to pursue life, liberty, and happiness. The effective use of the counterstrategy requires understanding how specific disempowerment strategies affect individuals, communities, and organizations and how and when to use specific species of knowledge. The assumptions of the either-or approach to democracy are:

- The human dignity of all people must be respected.
- Incrementalism is the ritualization of democracy at the expense of the people.
- A comprehensive approach to democracy is unlikely, even when recognizing the human rights of victims of inhumanity.

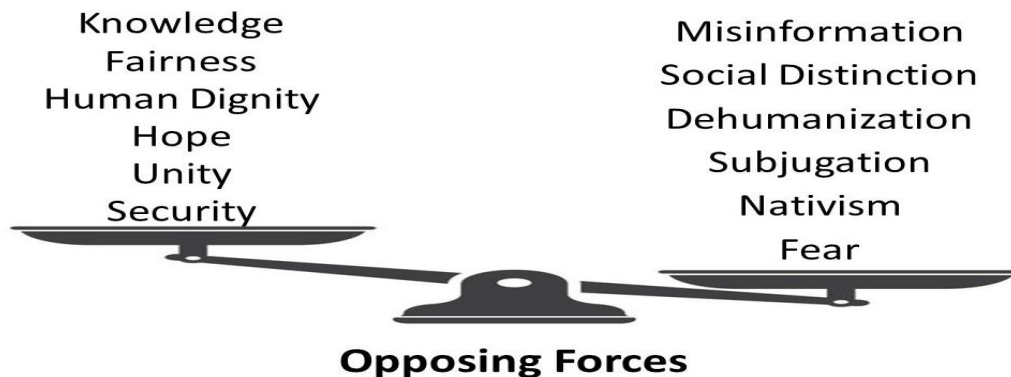
The title of the framework reflects the disconcertion individuals may have felt at the interstices of social change and social acceptance due to the gradual approach to democracy. Although minority groups might be empowered on one side, they experience disempowerment on the other. The paring of the concepts was deliberate and based on substantive data in the founding documents. Moreover, whereas disempowerment strategies can often harm the oppressed, they can also empower individuals motivated to

act due to assaults on their human dignity caused by inequity (see Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2021). The motivating effect of the disempowerment strategies was evidenced by a sort of empowerment that led to the Revolutionary War. The rationale for the pairing of the concepts follows.

Knowledge was paired with misinformation due to the liberal use of political language. Security was paired with fear as a logical opposite and as fear is a consequence of insecurity (i.e., “security for the preservation of peace and tranquility, as well as against dangers from foreign arms and influence, as from dangers of the like kind arising from domestic causes;” The Federalist No. 3, 1787/1998, p. 12). Fairness was paired with social distinctions in light of the social distinctions made in Article 4 of the Articles of Confederation (i.e., “paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice;” p. 1), the legal example in The Federalist (1787/1998; i.e., “no woman should dispose of any estate of a determinate value without the consent of three of her nearest relations, signified by their signing the deed” (No. 83, p. 545). Knowledge of the “landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, and a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, was mixed with misinformation in that the Founders wanted Americans to believe that class differences “arise out of necessity in civilized nations and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views;” The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 34). Additionally, misinformation about the “merciless Indian savages” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) can be sorted out by inquiring about the reason behind “excluding Indians not taxed” (U.S. Const.) Human dignity was paired with dehumanization as a logical opposite due to the historical lack of recognition of specific classes of people at

one time or another, except for property owners. Likewise, hope was paired with subjugation as its logical opposite. Furthermore, unity was paired with nativism, as nativism of any species is a divisive strategy.

The usefulness of the either-or approach to democracy can be assessed by analyzing historical events. The history of disempowerment and dehumanization of African Americans started with the transatlantic slave trade in the 1600s and continued with the help of pseudoscience and the politics of Black inferiority in the 1800s (Kendi, 2016). While the slave trade ended with the Act to Prohibit the Importation of Slaves in 1808, it took decades for emancipation (1863; Kendi, 2016) and about two years to pass the 13th Amendment in 1865. “It ought to be considered as a great point gained in favor of humanity” that slavery as we knew it ended (The Federalist No. 42, 1787/1998, p. 256). However, new alternative strategies of oppression were enforced: prison chain gangs (Hammad, 2019), Jim Crow laws, continued lynchings, separate but equal, underfunded predominantly Black schools, housing discrimination, and economic discrimination (Kendi, 2016). Historically one type of disempowerment strategy or its species that caused less harm replaced harsher species in advancing social policy when the less empowered progressively feel less insecure. The reaction to insecurity was evidenced in the king’s reaction to the feeling of disempowerment when met by colonial resistance or, conversely, empowerment. (See Figure 11).

Figure 11.*Either-or Approach to Democracy*

The king’s strategy went from “imposing taxes on us without our consent” to “depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury or tried for pretended offenses” to sending “swarms of officers to harass our people and eat out their substance, burned towns, and destroyed the lives of our people” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). He also made fellow citizens “executioners of their friends and brethren or to fall themselves by their hands” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Likewise, “Black resistance caused lynchings to spike in the early 1890s” (Kendi, 2016, p. 175). However, the first principles of democracy and their species: particulars that point to the first principles—can replace the program of disempowerment by countering their effects with positive, sustainable social change.

Contrary to increased oppressive strategies caused by feelings of insecurity, fear, or protectionism, the U.S. Constitution bears witness to the incremental release of social tension. Incremental release of social pressure is a common method and the “principle reliance of administrators as well as of other policy analysts” in policy formulation

(Lindblom, 1959, p. 88). It is considered a “highly sophisticated form of problem-solving and denounced as no method at all” (p. 88). Gradualism is evidenced by the empowerment of the people with the enfranchisement of African Americans, women, and individuals 18 years and older. Although not in the Constitution, non-property-owning White men had to wait for their humanity to be recognized before being allowed to vote. Other examples of incremental recognition of human dignity include the people of same-gender attraction and women, particularly the silence around the victimization of women. American history and the annals of science (Shamoo, 2022) are replete with examples of the dehumanization of the marginalized to benefit the most powerful yet vulnerable and fearful group.

The tension of oppressive power was gradually released with the LGBTQ population after the demedicalization of same-gender attraction and removal from the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual in the 1970s. With demedicalization and oppressive control, the U.S. Supreme Court criminalized same-sex intimate relationships between men in 1998 and reversed the landmark decision in *Lawrence v. Texas*, 539 U.S. 558 (2003). During the 1994 presidential administration, the U.S. adopted the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell military policy and weaponized The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) against the LGBTQ community. Ten years after the *Lawrence* decision, the U.S. Supreme Court held that §3 of DOMA violated the equal protection and due process clause in *United States v. Windsor*, 570 U.S. 744 (2013).

The tension that created the desire for the recognition of, and respect for, human dignity led to social change in America. The United States government has recognized

the human dignity of the disabled, children, workers, minorities, and prisoners. As a result, several policies have addressed desegregation, education equity, inclusive classrooms, LGBTQ rights, organizational justice, social welfare programs, substance abuse programs, and other attempts that lead to addressing the needs of the people (see Pleeing et al., 2022), albeit incrementally. It may seem that the effects of incrementalism affect only minority groups. However, gradualism affects non-minorities as often as it threatens minorities, as it is a strategy that supports the status quo and maintains society divided (Rajagopalan et al., 1995). Evidence exists for the gradual approach to the federal sentencing guidelines, healthcare policy (see Snowden et al., 2022), blockchain (see Johnstone, 2022), and other policy areas (see Rajagopalan et al., 1995). Whereas incrementalism suggests securing political support, the opportunity to correct unforeseen problems, minimizing social conflict, and considering the skepticism of those whose interests are not represented (Rajagopalan et al., 1995), it focuses attention on one area or group to the neglect of others. The problem with substance abuse among afflicted White Americans illustrates the effect of incrementalism and discrimination. This is evidenced in doctors historically refusing to treat African Americans with anxiolytics like Valium and opioids for pain. However, a significant number of White middle-class women had become addicted to Valium and alcohol before in the 1970s, with former First Lady Betty Ford admitting her prior addiction to the cocktail (Herzberg, 2006, p. 79).

Nevertheless, the addictive effects of prescribed medications have been ignored for decades. The focus turned to the minority population with the War on Drugs in the

1980s as policymakers focused on the crack epidemic and dehumanized African Americans, infants, and children, including prescription drugs that quietly ravaged White communities. Today, more than 88% of Whites than African Americans and Latinos with opioid substance use disorders are likely to die from an overdose (Rudd et al., 2016). Unlike addiction to illicit substances, Valium and opioid analgesic addiction could be called state-sponsored substance use disorder. Although the Food and Drug Administration has regulatory oversight and sought prosecution of the responsible pharmaceutical companies, their drug approval process is less than optimal. The “manufacturer controls the organization and execution of the trials,” and while “manufacturers can, and frequently do, consult with FDA staff at various times to receive advice on trial design and outcomes,” it is not a requirement (Phillips et al., 2017, p. 362), a practice that is akin to giving someone with addiction the key to the pharmacy.

Furthermore, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved short-acting opioid analgesic pain management prescriptions since the 1960s and 1970s, with long-acting formulations in the 1980s and 1990s (Phillips et al., 2017). Fifty or more years was more than enough time to gather information on the use and abuse of opioids and anxiolytics. In 2010 the FDA approved a cohort of abused-deterrent opioids, including non-abuse-deterrent hydrocodone (Phillips et al., 2017). Additionally, the Food and Drug Administration Modernization Act of 1997 amended the Food and Drug and Cosmetic Act to allow “efficacy” to be demonstrated by one adequate and well-controlled trial under certain circumstances (Phillips et al., 2017, p. 363). Despite oversight improvements made in the recent past, Phillips et al. (2017) published that “opioid

analgesics warrant a unique regulatory approach” (p. 386). A focused, incremental approach ignored licit and illicit substance abuse among White Americans, despite decades of red flags that informed the FDA of the silent crisis the government ignored, much like the exception of “paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice” during the colonial era (Articles of Confederation, 1777, art 4, p. 1). The silent crisis is a type of othering, and neglect, and as a result, a species of dehumanization that leads to the subjugation of mind and spirit, not unlike the experience of addiction and victims of incest.

The either-or model of democracy should serve as a reminder that democracy will never supersede respect for human dignity because the very essence of democracy is respect for human dignity. The association between democracy and government is fair outcomes. Democracy is a vehicle of hope centered around the idea that the people consent to be governed, and in return, the government provides the full spectrum of security worthy of preserving respect for human dignity. Therefore, absent respect for human dignity, “the patient sufferance” of the people (Declaration of Independence, 1776), like that of the Founders, is bound to run out awaiting social justice. The either-or approach is a healthy and sustainable way to alleviate tension for people awaiting social justice. The following grounded theory integrates the previously discussed plausible explanations using the emerged theoretical codes.

Abductive Preference: First Principles of Democracy Social Change Process

Research Question: How do the first principles of democracy in the American

founding documents provide an understanding of the process of American democratic social change?

This grounded theory answers the main research question. It is based on the first principles of democracy, socio-ethical principles of democracy, and an either-or approach to democracy. The principles of democracy social change process emerged as a strategy that integrates the first principles of democracy in “a deliberate process of creating ideas, strategies, and actions to enhance the worth, dignity, and development of individuals, communities, organizations, institutions, cultures, and societies” (Walden University, n.d., p. 1). The process emerged as the strategy used by the Founders to win the Revolutionary War to achieve various species of security leading to “Life, liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776; see Figure 12). The democratic social change process begins with knowledge, proceeds to fairness, human dignity, hope, and unity, and ends with security.

Figure 12.

Social Change Process



The principles are motivational. As such, the values, attitudes, and beliefs associated with them can be internalized and integrated (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2022). The transformational process becomes intuitive once (a) human dignity has become an internalized and

integrated principle, (b) the person can assemble an effective support network to achieve security and (c) enculturation.

Research supports the theoretical codes' role as motivational factors that encourage agentic, deliberate, and purposive action that leads to self-determination (see Shogren et al., 2017), the co-construction of the future, and social change (see Cavazzoni et al., 2021), thus, indicating the empowerment aspect of agency (Richardson, 2015). As a result, agentic action highlights power in how individuals co-construct their lives and whether the co-constructions of social context support empowerment or disempowerment (see Richardson, 2015). Agentic action can take the approach or avoidance of motivational orientation (Beghetto, 2021). The approach motivational orientation refers to is taking "positive actions vs. moving away from (i.e., avoiding) a negative outcome or feared outcome" (Beghetto, 2021, p. 3). The approach orientation and the blend of "deferential action (approach-avoid orientation)" is known for producing "creative outcomes" such as those achieved by the Founders (Beghetto, 2021, p. 3). The Founders were notable for establishing a republican form of government, checks and balances, incremental democracy, and a political strategy leading to independence. Hence, intrinsically motivated individuals construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct their actions and the consequences of their actions (Chang et al., 2017). Moreover, agentic individuals are more likely to have high self-esteem, more likely to act to preserve feelings of well-being, more likely to seek resources (Cavazzoni et al., 2021; Chang et al., 2017), and more likely to "take advantage of certain resources" to accomplish goals and seek solutions (Chang et al., 2017, p. 285). They master challenges (Chang et al., 2017) and

secure their goals (Cavazzoni et al., 2021). The Founders embraced a strategic process to overcome their challenge and achieve security. The following are the assumptions of the first principles of democracy social change process:

- The first principles of democracy social change process is a framework based on a strategic process that leads to transformation.
- Security (i.e., physical, psychological, financial, environmental, social, spiritual, and political security) is the final cause of respect for human dignity, what human behavior is predicated on, and the reason “governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

The empowerment (principles) and disempowerment (anti-democratic) strategies contribute to positive social change. Anti-democratic strategies, nativism, social distinction, misinformation, fear, dehumanization, and subjugation trigger social change. Each principle—knowledge, fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security—is paired with its corresponding institutionalized anti-democratic strategy, and each category has subcategories with diverse species of its kind. When leveraged effectively, institutionalized anti-democratic strategies destroy hope, dehumanize, oppress, delay democracy, and jeopardize human emancipation through various strategies. Moreover, they nurture a dichotomous society and reinforce power structures. Hence, anti-democratic strategies catalyze democratic social change by their ability to provoke a response, whether employed through political language with the goal of social engineering or more aggressive strategies. They are called institutionalized since the

Founders used strategies in both categories against Great Britain. There is evidence of their use in society (see arguments in the section Abductive Discovery: Either-or Approach to Democracy) and in the NSS throughout every presidential administration since President Reagan.

In contrast to the anti-democratic tenets, the principles, believed to have been deliberately woven into the U.S. Constitution and other founding documents, serve as motivators, processes, goals, and strategies for achieving transformation, and self-determination (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020), self-actualization (Maslow, 1954/1987), and improved self-confidence and self-esteem (Maslow, 1954/1987; Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020). It is suggested that the principles were used as a strategy for social change at the national level to lead America's first national social justice movement. In the section under Abductive Discovery #3: Socio-Ethical Principles, there is support for the motivational aspect of the principles. The process will be explained from the macro level followed by a micro level in Chapter 5, where the same social change strategy will be applied to interpersonal relationships and as a business strategy. The principles emancipate and lead to security and sustainable transformation that usher individuals, organizations, and institutions toward an empowerment praxis. Next is a discussion of the Founders' social change strategy and process that led to the national independence movement. The use of the disempowerment strategy by the Founders will head this section.

The Founders' Disempowerment Strategies

Whereas the disempowerment strategies used by Great Britain were immediately visible, those used by the Founders were subtle. The Declaration of Independence was drafted as a tool to disempower Great Britain, gain France as an ally (Staff, 1976), and appeal to the oppressed worldwide (see Marx & Engels, 1848/2001; Paine, 1849). It was the goal of the Founders to gain broad support for independence by appealing to various factions “by giving ... every citizen the same opinions ... passions, [and] interests” (The Federalist No. 10, 1778/1998, p 33) by asserting that “Men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). This assertion made the king equal to his subjects. Dehumanization was used to instill fear of the king and Native Americans to unite “every citizen [with] the same opinions” (The Federalist No. 10, 1778/1998, p 33). To dehumanize the king, he was described as a tyrant for “transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny, plundering our seas, ravaging our coasts, burning our towns, and destroying the lives of our people,” and endeavoring “to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian savages” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

The Founders justified Independence from Great Britain through misinformation by alleging the king “abdicated government ... by declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They made it “their right, their duty, to throw off” destructive government “to provide new guards for their future security” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Using the same strategy, they justified

and incited insurrection by proclaiming that “governments are instituted among men” and derive “their just powers from the consent of the governed” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). At any other time, overthrowing the government was an act of sedition and hence, unlawful (see “By the king, A Proclamation, For Suppressing Rebellion and Sedition” (1775); see Articles of Confederation, 1777; see U.S. Const.).

Nativism took the form of independence and nationalism, reinforcing them with hope and empowerment (“Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed”; Declaration of Independence, 1776). The language of rebellion is peppered with “them,” “their,” and “our” when referencing colonists. On other occasions, an appeal to men proclaims that “all men,” not humans, “are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Moreover, the Founders alluded to our people when “swarms of officers” were sent “to harass our people and eat out their substance,” and our laws, our constitution, our trade, our consent, our charter, our seas, and our fellow citizens” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Us was used when the king “kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures, extending an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us, excited domestic insurrections amongst us,” and “declaring us out of his protection and waging war against us,” (Declaration of Independence, 1776) are but some examples of nativism’s “them against us” ideology.

Social distinctions were alluded to in the Declaration of Independence (1776). Distinctions were evidenced by the king making “judges dependent on the amount and payment of their salaries,” through the symbolic capital of “A Prince, whose Character is

... unfit to be the ruler of a free people” and who “has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance ... till his assent should be obtained” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). In contrast, the social status of the Founders was that of subjects who “petitioned for redress in the most humble terms” and with “the patient sufferance of these colonies” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

The king and Great Britain were subjugated when the Founders held “them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace friends,” and declared “that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be free and independent states,” with the “full power to levy war,” diplomacy, “conclude peace, contract alliances” and “do all other acts and things” that “independent states may of right do” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders united the colonists to act against Great Britain to achieve various species of security: physical, psychological, economic, domestic, and national (see Articles of Confederation, 1777; see Declaration of Independence, 1776, see The Federalist, 1778/1998; U.S. Const.). No doubt, any disempowerment or empowerment framework seeking to mobilize a king and citizens of diverse interests into action requires several species of knowledge.

Democratic Social Change

The process of democratic social change is linear. Individuals are empowered at every stage of the social change process. Empowerment begins with knowledge and awareness of a problem. Awareness leads to the second empowerment process, the evaluation of fairness, which elicits an attitudinal, behavioral, and affective response (see Christiansen, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). The person then moves on to the

stage of human dignity as part of the social change process. In acknowledging their humanity and having the right to be treated with respect, the individual acknowledges that they are equally human as the individual who has leveraged unfair treatment against them. Hope is the next stage. As a result of this stage, one can plan and imagine courage-infused solutions that can be implemented with the support of others (see Snyder, 2000). The penultimate stage of social change is unity. The process of hope allows the individual to envision the support of others who may be able to assist in achieving security as well as sustainable social change. In the process of democratic social change, security is the final stage and the ultimate goal. Security can be summarized as ‘Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness’ (Declaration of Independence, 1776), or more broadly, including national security and the 11 dimensions used to measure the level of democracy through measures of well-being: civic engagement, environmental quality, health, housing, income and wealth, knowledge and skills, safety, social connections, subjective well-being, work–life balance, and work and job quality (OECD, 2020). In the following section, I will discuss the democratic social change process, starting with knowledge and ending with security.

Knowledge. The social change process is suggested to have started with knowledge and strategies that facilitated deep reflection on the events and how those events shaped the reality of the Founders and their relationship to the Crown, how colonists perceived the events, and how the relationship between the Founders and the perception of colonists reflects on the self. Great Britain’s oppressive policies did not exhaust the Founders overnight. “Prudence, indeed,” dictates “that governments long

established should not be changed for light and transient causes” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Instead, “in every stage of these oppressions,” they “petitioned for redress in the most humble terms;” their “repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They “warned” the Crown “from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over” the colonies (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They “have reminded them of the circumstances of their emigration and settlement” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Nevertheless, with the consent of its monarchy, Great Britain used its power and leveraged a “train of abuses and usurpations” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). These gestures affected perceptions of justice and the evaluation of a “Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). See Appendix G: Trains of abuses and usurpations.

Fairness. The Founders’ reactions to the unfairness they experience correspond with the literature on reactions to justice perceptions. Reactions to justice perceptions are “behavioral, attitudinal, and affective” (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001, p. 279). The flood of emotions as a reaction to Great Britain’s oppressive strategies was evident in Patrick Henry’s words at the Virginia Convention in 1775, referred to as the “Give me liberty or give me death” speech (Schmittroth et al., 2000) and Samuel Adams’s speech at the State House in Philadelphia 1776 where he lacked the “calmness and impartiality which the infinite importance of this occasion” demanded. From a reflexive gaze on the Founders’ attempt to remedy the unfairness experienced at the hands of Great Britain, the

gaze turned to the preservation of human dignity. Conscientization of oppression from repeated injuries led the colonists to petition for redress while reminding the Crown of the reason for their emigration (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The colonists' frustration at following established norms and policies was the cause of a state of mind in which they recognized their invisibility to a king who attempted to establish "absolute tyranny over the colonies" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). As a result, during an era where manhood was equated with dignity, the Founders were snubbed with indignation and marginalized when slighted in three realms: political, legal, and psychosocial.

Politically, the colonies were deprived of the consent of the governed (i.e., increased taxes, relinquished the right to representation, "dissolved Representative Houses," impeding national and economic growth by "obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners" and "refusing to pass others to encourage their immigration hither," and cutting off trade.; Declaration of Independence, 1776), deprived of inalienable rights (i.e., Great Britain failed to provide due process rights, security, justice and trial by jury, and quartered armed troops in the homes of civilians), and psychosocially, (i.e., troops eating their food, burned towns, repeated injury, bullying, and not mattering (i.e., unanswered petitions, deaf ear by Great Britain to "the voice of justice and consanguinity" despite petitioning for "redress in the most humble terms" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Following perceptions of justice, the individual begins to recognize their worth as a human being. The Founders sought respect from the king as equals.

Human Dignity. The realization that the Crown was using “a long train of abuses and usurpations in pursuing invariably the same object ... to reduce them under absolute despotism,” which men often interpret as emasculation, further fueled their motivation to challenge the doxa. Under such a threat, the colonists determined that “it was their right ... their duty to throw off such government and to provide new guards for their future security” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). This interpretation is suggested by the king’s dissolution of “Representative Houses repeatedly for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The gaze becomes critical during a comparative analysis between the king and the Founders. What made the king better than the Founders based on the measures used by the standard of the king? Everything. The king’s standing overshadowed the colonies, from Great Britain’s geopolitical position to its social, economic, and cultural capital. The only currency the Founders had was hope in a comprehensive political strategy and that “all men are created equal” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). In other words, all persons have been imbued with human dignity, a softer tone than all men are created equal. Vinthagen (2015) asserted that recognizing and respecting human dignity empowers, whereas Hojman (2018) and Ziedonis et al. (2016) found that human dignity may motivate a sense of pride in self, improve self-respect, and lead to self-determination and well-being. Empowerment may promote optimism and ideas that lead to emancipation.

Hope. Understanding war and political strategy, the Founders understood that the king took desperate measures by “imposing taxes on us without our consent” to tactics to

constrain “our fellow citizens taken captive on the high seas to bear arms against their country” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Using the terms “us” versus “them” in other places in the Declaration created psychological equality between colonists and the Founders and empowered colonists to act. In addition, international politics brought the colonies to the forefront. That drove them to “declare the causes” that impelled “them to the separation” from Great Britain (Declaration of Independence, 1776). By gaining France as an ally, colonists felt empowered by being able to disempower Great Britain. They imagined their chances of gaining sovereignty were more likely than possible (see Blöser et al., 2020; Snyder, 2000). It is suggested that the Founders gained independence and achieved security by disempowering Great Britain through their national unity strategy.

Having been divested of authority by being complicit in their oppression by seeking the king’s “assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers,” allowing the king to suspend the colonists “legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for [the colonists] in all cases whatsoever,” Great Britain gave her “assent to pretended legislation” and failed to “pass laws of immediate and pressing importance ... necessary for the public good” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Through hope, the Founders created a pathway to usurp the king’s power by imbuing colonists with hope through the words of the Declaration of Independence (see Snyder, 2000). Independence from Great Britain, a goal-related outcome, was enough to gain the colonists' attention and imbue them with hope (see Snyder, 2000). Using the strategy of disempowerment,

the Founders stripped the king of authority and empowered colonists with the Founders' defiance.

Unity. The Founders used the Declaration of Independence as a political tool to secure France's alliance (see Treaty of Alliance with France, 1776). France wanted assurance that colonists were stepping towards independence from Great Britain (Staff, 1976). Throughout the Declaration, there are examples where the Founders were no longer complicit in their oppression (Bourdieu, 1991). However, their submission evolved into multiple strategies to gain support for independence from the various factions, from those with a "landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests" and those "who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society" (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 34). It is suggested that their first strategy for unity was obtaining each other's commitment by mutually pledging their lives, fortunes, and sacred honor. The commitment was sealed with the Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, a strategic coalition of colonies against the government of Great Britain.

Security. To safeguard the union, Article IV of the Articles of Confederation contained language to prevent future attempts of treason by securing that "any person guilty of or charged with treason" shall "be delivered up and removed to the state having jurisdiction over his offense" (Articles of Confederation, 1777). Later legislation on "treason against "the United States" was included in the U.S. Constitution, Article II, § 3. The Founders' security strategy included independence from Great Britain to "have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances ... and all other acts and things

which independent states may of right do” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). In addition, their strategy included a “republican form of government” (U.S. Const., Article IV, § 2), a “structure of government” that furnishes the “proper checks and balances between the different departments” (The Federalist No. 51, 1787/1998, p. 331) to “effect their safety and happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Moreover, they sought economic and physical security whereby they can “establish commerce” (Declaration of Independence, 1776), and secure themselves “against invasion ... and domestic violence” (U.S. Const., Article IV, §4).

According to the first principles of democracy social change process grounded theory, Great Britain’s unfair strategies triggered the social change process by motivating the Founders to “establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty” as a result (U.S. Const.). Their attempts to communicate with the king were either met with indifference or “repeated injuries” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They realized it was unlikely that Great Britain would abandon its intention to “reduce them to absolute despotism” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). To preserve their human dignity, the Founders adopted a broad perspective that looked beyond themselves into the distant future. Their vision of securing the nation and its people empowered them to lead the country to safety by bringing allies together and gaining support from colonists. Security for the Founders was a revolutionary form of government articulated in the Declaration of Independence and embodied in the Constitution. Establishing a new form of government would ensure domestic and national security, economic development, and well-being. The following is

a discussion of Charmaz's criteria by which to judge the quality of constructivist grounded theories.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

This qualitative constructivist grounded theory study aimed to construct a grounded theory that provides an understanding of the process of American democratic social change as it emerged from the nation's founding documents. The resulting theory can empower people at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Because the study focused on the events that led up to the U.S. Revolutionary War, social justice themes were present. Therefore, the constructivist grounded theory was the most suitable approach to use. As a result, the trustworthiness criteria for constructivist grounded theory were used to evaluate the quality of the constructed grounded theory, and the quality standards were met. The four criteria are credibility, originality, resonance, and usefulness (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021).

Credibility

Credibility was established through the internal and external validity of the data using an all-inclusive approach. The theoretical codes appeared across 18 documents subjected to successive comparisons and other data analysis strategies supporting internal triangulation (see Charmaz, 2006). The empirical grounding of findings across documents is illustrated by thick in vivo codes (see Glaser, 2002). The findings were substantiated post hoc by peer-reviewed articles. Motivational theories supported the empowerment and processual disposition of the first principles. NSS reports substantiated the use of empowerment and disempowerment concepts in American societal and

institutional cultures. At every stage, memos and reflexivity were engaged in consideration of my views and background (see Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Practitioners working with victims of intimate partner violence, school bullying, and employee harassment provided feedback to evaluate the reliability of the democratic social change process. Practitioners' areas of expertise were law, education, criminal justice, psychology, and politics. Moreover, the plausibility of the theories was established by extending the democratic social change framework to other fields.

The social effects and consequences of incremental social justice policies support the credibility of the either-or approach to democracy. Throughout American history, examples support incremental social justice policies, particularly those affecting African Americans, LGBTQ people, and women. Citing examples from Butts (1984, 1988), De Tocqueville (1839/2002), and the UN General Assembly's Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) supported the credibility of the first principles as being higher abstractions than democratic values. The credibility of the principles of democracy as a conceptual framework and as a socio-ethical framework is reinforced by moral philosophy and various ethical codes. For instance, the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct, the Declaration of Professional Responsibility: Medicine's Social Contract with Humanity, and the Model Code of Judicial Conduct include three principles: fairness, knowledge as competence, and respect for human dignity. The polytheoretical framework served as external validity to support the use of power that emerged during interpersonal relationships (see Foucault, 1980), in

specialized fields as cultural and symbolic power (see Bourdieu, 1991), and as hierarchical power based on class and property (see Marx & Engels, 1848/2001).

Charmaz emphasized “generating contextually relevant plausible accounts” (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 188) to facilitate the application of theory to practice. Thus, in demonstrating plausibility, two requirements were met: internal congruence across founding documents (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 1990) and external congruence with public policies, landmark cases, historical data, motivational theories, and other sources. The application of the democratic social change process to intimate partner violence, school bullying, and workplace violence (see Chapter 5) extended the grounded theory beyond its empirical scope to a higher theoretical value (see Corbin & Strauss, 1990; Glaser, 2002). This enhanced the formalization of the theory (see Glaser, 2002). In other words, applying the democratic social change process to different areas demonstrated its generalizability and stability (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Corbin and Strauss, 1990; Emmel, 2013; Glaser, 2002). It also established credibility.

Originality

There is no evidence of rival explanations for the first principles of democracy in theories of social change movements, theories of democracy, or theories of democratic social change. In addition, the first principles of democracy, the first principles of democracy conceptual framework, the socio-ethical principles of democracy, and the either-or approach to democracy are all novel contributions to the field of public policy and the area of democracy. Lastly, a demoralizing process framework was identified as a

barrier to democracy and the process that triggered revolutionary social change (see Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Resonance

Resonance was achieved by extending the Founders' lived experience of oppression under Great Britain's rule to intimate partner violence, workplace bullying, and school bullying. In addition, preliminary research suggests other areas—child maltreatment, mental health, racial trauma, post-release of juvenile and adult offenders, and medical neglect—where the first principles of democracy social change process framework could be used to empower victims of trauma. The framework could also be used as a business and democracy monitoring strategy. The either-or approach to democracy exposes the detrimental consequences that incremental implementation of social justice policies have on affected groups. The framework is useful in detecting extralegal practices that delay democratic social change. Examples of affected groups were cited: African Americans, White Americans with substance use disorders, and LGBTQ. Other transition points for which the framework could be used include refugee status and custody changes, foster care, post-conviction, and recovery.

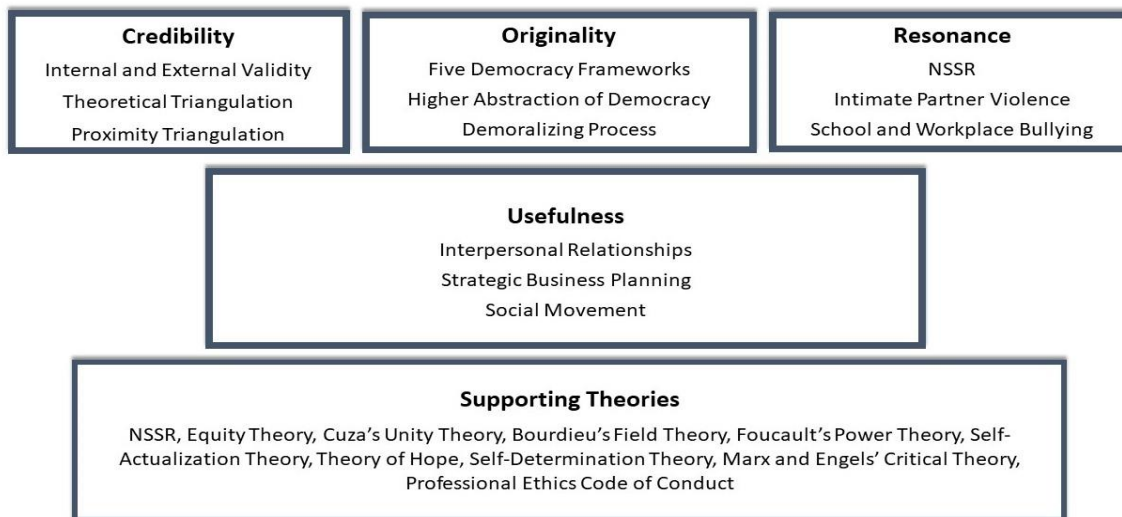
Usefulness

By implementing the democratic social change process on a micro, meso, and macro level (see Figure 13), the democratic social change grounded theory can be demonstrated to be useful in promoting social change. It could help improve the perception of self-worth, self-esteem, self-determination (see Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020), and self-actualization (Maslow, 1954/1987). With support from scholars and momentum,

the first principles of democracy can create awareness and widen the scope of democracy to include education as a constitutional right. A summary of the chapter follows.

Figure 13.

Evidence of Quality



Summary

Two grounded categories emerged with the assistance of two sensitizing concepts: disempowerment and empowerment. Several grounded theories were constructed using the theoretical codes as required by the grounded theory methodology (see Bryant & Charmaz, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967): the first principles of democracy, the first principles of democracy social change conceptual framework, the socio-ethical principles of democracy, the either-or approach to democracy, and the democratic social change process. The following chapter discusses the polytheoretical framework, the disempowerment process, and the recommendations for practice, research, methodology, and practical application of the democratic social change process.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Social disparities in the United States are inconsistent with the promise of democracy. There is a need for a critical conceptualization of the first principles that undergird American democracy and the genesis of democratic social change in America. The first principles of democracy social change process was constructed from the first principles of democracy that emerged from the founding documents to answer the research question. To assess power from multiple dimensions and as a means of theoretical triangulation, I applied a polytheoretical framework. Marx and Engels's (1848/2001) framework was used as the macro lens to evaluate conflict-centered social change and class struggle. Bourdieu's (1984, 1991) framework uses a meso perspective to explore power relationships among group members in specialized fields, in this case, the area of politics. Foucault's (1977, 1980) lens was used to analyze power strategies in interpersonal relationships at the micro level. A summary of the constructed theories and a brief discussion of the findings related to the polytheoretical framework follows.

Summary of Findings

According to the findings, disempowerment strategies trigger a reaction and may lead to democratic social change. By contrast, the principles form a framework that counter disempowerment strategies. The first principles of democracy are based on the motivational strategies used by the Founders to effect social change. They may be used to pursue positive social change where social change is desirable: At the micro, meso, and macro levels. The multilevel and transdisciplinarity of the democratic social change process broadens the scope of transformation.

The first principles of democracy form part of a socio-ethical framework of democracy that is unencumbered by cultural values. They are the custodians of democratic values and the foundation of the “inalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They evolved from the American brand of democracy based on the values integral to the founding documents and formulated for a republican form of government. In addition, the first principles of democracy fulfill the essential part of the promise of democracy: “Government for the people” (Lincoln, 1863). The either-or approach to democracy can inform scholars and policymakers whether a public policy strategy is empowering or disempowering, which species of power is being leveraged to constrain democratic progress, and how to counter the negative use of power. The need for parsimony led to the construction of a conceptual framework to leverage the polarities pairs (see Benet, 2006, 2013). The first principles of democracy were also used to construct a motivational democratic social change process. The disempowerment process facilitated the construction of this grounded theory. Later in the chapter, the process will be introduced as the underbelly of democracy and a demoralizing process.

A further finding of the study was that a broader understanding of democracy as a form of government for the people is needed. As part of this study, I introduced the first principles of democracy and distinguished them from democratic values. Nativism includes other instances in which individuals are excluded from group membership for failing to meet certain criteria. This idea is supported by Butts’s (1980) discussion of “jingoistic patriotism” and “pluralistic chauvinism” (p. 141). During data analysis, two

categories (empowerment and disempowerment) emerged, each containing six subcategories that facilitated the construction of the grounded theories through meaning and sense-making. Disempowerment strategies act as oppressive power strategies, which trigger conscientization, and facilitate changes in attitudes, affects, and behaviors (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). In the political arena with pending war, the Founders used empowerment and disempowerment strategies to unite and lead colonists to security and independence via revolutionary social change. The Founders used several incremental approaches to reduce power. These approaches were to prevent tyranny and mob rule.

The interesting findings of the current study are the grounded theories constructed using one or both categories. The disempowerment category exists regardless of whether it appears in the grounded theory framework. In the grounded theory of the first principles of democracy, democratic principles are fixed, universal, and the custodians of the inalienable right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The grounded theory suggests that the first principles of democracy are ethical concepts, and the democracy of America’s republican form of government supports self-determination and the process of American democratic social change. The first principles of democracy led to constructing a conceptual framework sharing its title.

The first principles of democracy conceptual framework incorporates fairness, human dignity, and knowledge to create and evaluate social and organizational policies that secure human dignity, fairness, and knowledge. The core principles could be used to develop and evaluate social policies and manage the polarities of democracy as standards

to be met. The conceptual framework created the awareness of the ethical foundations of the principles and contributed to the construction of the socio-ethical principles of democracy grounded theory.

The findings suggest that the socio-ethical principles of democracy are national principles that support the promise of democracy. As embraced by the Founders and woven into the founding documents, the socio-ethical principles of democracy are principles government leaders must embrace and uphold as trustees of the people to empower polity, achieve human emancipation, and secure the well-being of the people. The socio-ethical framework led to the construction of the either-or approach to democracy framework because it led to further comparisons between the theoretical codes and the experience of American colonists under Great Britain's rule.

The goal of the either-or approach is empowerment by weakening the effect of oppression. This is achieved by determining which species of disempowerment is used to stifle democratic social change and which species of empowerment to leverage as a counterstrategy (see Appendices I and J). The framework is useful in evaluating the latent consequences of social policies and detecting extralegal practices that delay democratic social change. These principles' motivational and normative dispositions led to the development of a grounded theory of democratic social change. The transformational values were initially explored at the individual and group levels as principles shared among group members. The transformational values were then applied at the macro level to determine whether there was any value to these principles at the social movement level (see Appendix L). The democratic social change process relies on empowerment as a

strategic approach to the problem of oppression. The strategies must be leveraged strategically. Strategy requires the application of species of knowledge, knowing how and when to use them, how and with whom to build a coalition, and how to secure well-being. Post–data analysis indicated that a polytheoretical framework would be the most appropriate framework to explain the levels of power that emerged during data analysis.

The use of political field and language facilitated the use of three power lenses: Bourdieu's (1991), Marx and Engels's (1848/2001), and Foucault's (1977, 1980, 2019). There is strong agreement between the findings of this study and those of Bourdieu, Butts, Foucault, and Marx and Engels. However, there are some inconsistencies between the study's findings and those of Butts, Benet, and Marx and Engels. Inconsistencies are conceptual and substantive. Marx and Engels's lens was chosen to discuss social change based on the conflict perspective, analyze the relationship between the Founders and Great Britain, and the institutionalization of class in *The Federalist* (1787/1998).

The finding is broadly consistent with Foucault's theory of power in that the interplay of power was evident between the colonists and Great Britain in the Declaration of Independence and the creation of the Articles of Confederation. In challenging disciplinary power, the conditioned effect government has on the behavior of the governed, the Founders supported Foucault's (1980) contention that power is not centralized with authority or in any one entity, and that resistance destabilizes power. In addition, the results of this study are consistent with Bourdieu's field theory, which allows the analysis of power and strategies of power from the perspective of cultural interaction. Bourdieu's field theory prompted the exchange between the colonists and

Great Britain, specifically the factors influencing habitus: nomos, doxa, and illusio. All three concepts may be viewed as practices and experiences in a field readily understandable by a single, dominant paradigm. In the field, doxa is the prevailing assumption of a natural order of things and the belief that rewards in that field have specified value. The influence of the three factors that form part of the actors' habitus and an individual's disposition is revealed in the limited interaction recorded in the Declaration of Independence. Moreover, the findings are compatible with Marx and Engels (1848/2001) findings regarding revolutionary social change but not with the transition to the type of communist economy they had suggested. Marx's social change framework explained the tension between the colonists and Great Britain and how the working-class colonists revolted against the status quo after the Founders "mutually [pledged] to each other [their] lives, [their] fortunes, [and their] sacred honor" to construct a new form of government (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Interpretation of Findings

In this section, I will distinguish between democratic values and the first principles of democracy. Also included will be definitions of democracy, the promise of democracy, empowerment and disempowerment strategies, the demoralization process grounded theory, and existing theories of democratic social change.

First Principles Versus Values

The most significant findings of this study are the first principles of democracy and the disempowerment strategies because they facilitated theory construction. The universality of the first principles of democracy made it imperative to separate them from

values. Traditional values include equality, liberty, justice, diversity, and human rights. In contrast, principles are a thing's basic elements or essence, in this instance, democracy (see Aristotle, 350 BCE/1924). The first principles of democracy are knowledge (a proxy for truth), fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security. These principles support the democratic ideal of “government for the people” (Lincoln, 1863).

Government for the People

Another notable finding was the emergence of government for the people. The emergence resulted from the lack of respect for the human dignity of the colonists, as expressed by unfairness with their “long train of abuses and usurpations” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The lack of respect included pitting colonists against each other “to become the Executioners of their Friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The king intended to “reduce them under absolute despotism” by exposing them “to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and convulsions within” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). To mislead colonists, the king withheld information and called “together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The lack of an ethical form of government led the Founders to start a democratic social change movement to create a new form of government that would govern in the interest of its people. The oppression experienced by colonists also focused my attention on the role of government and the government upholding its promise of

democracy. Of the tripartite promise, government for the people is the highest principle of the three because it is the final cause of government of and government by the people.

Democracy and the Promise of Democracy

There has been contention regarding whether or not the Founders intended to establish a democratic system of government. However, since the nation's founding, the Founders intended to establish a government where the people had a public voice. The Founders fused the systems of government of ancient democracies where the people elected government representatives. The birth of the idea of democracy was rooted in the Declaration of Independence, where Jefferson and the leaders of the Continental Congress promoted the idea that governments derive their “just powers from the consent of the governed.” In *The Federalist Papers* (1787/1998), Madison defined a republic as a “government in which the scheme of representation takes place” (No. 10, p. 56) and is the cure for the mischief of factions in pure democracies. Following this idea, Madison explains that although a republic is a democracy, it “varies from pure democracy” on “two great points,” a “small number of citizens elected by the rest,” and the coverage of a “greater number of citizens” and a “greater sphere of [the] country” (No. 10, p. 38). These main differences produced a public voice that “will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves” (No. 10, p. 38). Madison contrasted a republic with a direct democracy, where “men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people” (No. 10, p. 38). However, the greatest difference between a republic and a direct democracy is the

wisdom of the chosen body versus the collective wisdom of the masses. In *The Federalist* No. 10 (1787/1998), Madison approved of representatives “whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial consideration,” discerning the “true interests of their country.” This interpretation of democracy, as found in *The Federalist* No. 10 (1787/1998), is consistent with Amar’s (2022) assessment that a republic represents a type of democracy.

The fact that the definition of democracy emerged from the founding documents indicates that the first principles of democracy, much like democracy’s values, are contained in America’s founding documents. The promise of democracy appeared in the Declaration of Independence (1776):

Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed, that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its Foundation on such Principles, and organizing its Powers in such Form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness. It is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security.

In the United States Constitution, the first principles of democracy were reflected in the Bill of Rights, suffrage rights, and the “powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people” (U.S. Constitution, Amend. X). Democracy empowers the oppressed worldwide because “the cause of America is, in a great measure, the cause of all

mankind” (Paine, 1894, p. 5). The Founders brought “to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat” of “all nationality” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 22). The meaning of democracy was reinforced with the American Civil War and by Lincoln’s (1863) promise that “government of the people, by the people, *for the people* shall not perish from the earth” [emphasis added]. The promise of democracy contained in the Declaration of Independence and echoed by Lincoln (1863) serves as a reminder of American independence from the “long train of abuses and usurpations” (Declaration of Independence, 1776), as well as a king who was not for, by, or of his subjects. As a result, democracy and the promise of democracy empower the people and the government as their representatives.

Democracies are characterized by a people-oriented approach to governance that promotes fairness, unity, human dignity, security, and knowledge as pathways to hope. Democracy is then a symbiotic relationship between power and empowerment. When government acts on behalf of the people, hope and trust are renewed. Democracy differentiates the contemporary from the traditional. It is a symbol of national progress, a ritual reminder of government accountability, a renewal of the bond and social contract between government and the governed, and synonymous with social justice transformations. At the intersections of democracy, social change, and the promise of democracy, the function of democracy emerges, revealing how incrementalism supports democracy, the promise of democracy, social change, and political hope. Considering captives as humans and as property, the creation of factions (a divide-and-rule strategy), the disenfranchisement of “paupers, vagabonds, and fugitives from justice” (Articles of

Confederation, 1777, art 4, p. 1), and the disenfranchisement of various groups foreshadowed the cycle of democratic hope. The Founders wove the democratic values into the Constitution as a reminder that government has a duty to the people because “all experience hath shown, that mankind [is] more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

In The Federalist No. 54 (1787/1998), there was no contention that “the number of people in each State ought” to be “the standard for regulating the proportion of those who are to represent the people of each State” (p. 353). The representation of people “*is understood to refer to the personal rights of the people, with which it has a natural and universal connection*” (p. 353) [emphasis added]. Madison recognized that the appointment of taxes was “the least objectionable among the practicable rules.” At the same time, he considered “Southern States with the barbarous policy of considering as property a part of their human brethren” as the most objectionable (p. 355). While Madison defended the human dignity of all, he adopted a Socratic approach which is consistent with someone in his position representing the interests of the nation rather than his own. His loyalty was to the state and the law as a constitutionalist. He concluded:

The true state of the case is, that [captives] partake of both these qualities ... by the laws under which they live ... because it is *only under the pretext that the laws have transformed the negroes into subjects of property* that a place is disputed them in the computation of numbers; and it is admitted, that if the laws were to restore the rights which have been taken away, the negroes could no longer be

refused an equal share of representation with the other inhabitants. [emphasis added].

—The Federalist No. 54, 1787/1998, pp. 354, 355

That is to say, “the slave may *appear* to be degraded from the human rank [emphasis added]” (p. 354). However, African American captives were no less human for:

Being compelled to labor, not for himself, but for a master; in being vendible by one master to another master; and in being subject at all times to be restrained in his liberty and chastised in his body, by the capricious will of another. (p. 354)

Consistent with the argument that African American captives were human beings, Madison (1787/1998), while discussing the power of Congress to prohibit the slave trade in the federal Constitutional Convention, stated that it was “wrong to admit in the Constitution the idea that there could be property in men” (p. 1). The response to Jefferson’s effort to recognize African Americans as human beings in the first draft of the Declaration of Independence confirms the role of politics in dehumanizing African Americans. The first principles of democracy could probably trigger social change by encouraging people to re-evaluate history, social structure, and the weakening effect nativism and social distinction have on political power. To keep the promise of democracy, we must adhere to the first principles of democracy.

Empowerment and Disempowerment Concepts

The empowerment and disempowerment elements are both motivational; they propel individuals into action and could sow the seed of hope. Human dignity undergirds the empowerment principles, as empowerment strategies aim to preserve human dignity.

Conversely, subjugation undergirds the disempowerment strategies, particularly dehumanization. Whereas the disempowerment strategies are oppressive and benefit some people by supporting the worldview of entitlement, the empowerment strategies, in contrast, are motivational and do the most good for the most people. The democratic social change process starts with knowledge, the ability to discern right from wrong, and how to respond to various situations using the various species of knowledge. The process proceeds to fairness, which calls for in-depth, critical consciousness of the world and the individual's position in it. When contemplating injustice, attitudes, and emotions that lead to the awareness of humanity and the entitlement to be treated with dignity become evident. The individual becomes empowered by the hope that fairness can be secured. Empowerment motivates uniting with others who can support acquiring one or more species of security.

In contrast, the disempowerment process starts with nativism—the belief, attitude, and behaviors promoted by members who believe they are part of an exclusive in-group. The second stage is social distinction, separating people into groups based on numerous factors making it easier to leverage the strategy of politics of envy. Following the social distinctions stage, misinformation reinforces categorizing groups of people and other disempowerment processes such as fear, dehumanization, and subjugation. Misinformation also creates a divide along political party lines and nurtures ethnocentrism and nationalism. Fear follows the stage of misinformation and is a divide-and-rule strategy that divides the fearful and those to be feared. It is used to provoke citizen action or inaction. The next stage is the second-to-last step, dehumanization. Fear,

misinformation, subjugation, nativism, and social distinctions are ways to dehumanize by violating the individual's dignity and considering human worth as something other than innate. Subjugation, or control, is the goal of disempowerment by creating a master–subject relationship. Like dehumanization, any strategy can be used to subjugate.

Empowerment and Motivation

In addition to findings on democracy, the promise of democracy, the first principles of democracy, and the role of democratic social change in the Revolutionary War, the findings suggest that the first principles and anti-democratic tenets—as unfair strategies—are motivational and that extrinsic motivation—the ability to motivate others based on the motivation of those who seek to motivate—is possible through internalization and integration (see Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020), and other strategies used in social change movements. The ability to motivate others extrinsically facilitates a flexible framework accessible at various levels. At the micro level, the Founders were intrinsically driven. At the meso level, one or more Founders could have inspired members of the Continental Congress. Furthermore, at the macro level, the Founders motivated colonists extrinsically using various strategies in the Declaration of Independence.

A Strategy for Social Change

The empowerment concepts played an important role in developing democratic social change grounded theory. With a motivational disposition, empowerment strategies motivate individuals and communities because empowerment is as much a communal trait as an agentic strategy “integral to the formation of modern capitalism” (Bakan, 1966,

p 14). Accordingly, empowerment concepts (a) lead to emancipation, (b) promote hope, (c) can push individuals, organizations, and policies toward an empowerment praxis, and (d) promote sustainable positive social change. “Self-protection, self-assertion, [and] self-expansion are characteristics of empowerment” (Bakan, 1996, p. 14). It became apparent why the status quo is more likely to self-empower and be guided by the principles. As agentic agents, they are more likely to motivate themselves and devise a plan to pursue their dreams than others who wait for the government to recognize, empower, and lead them to life, liberty, and happiness. Using the Founders as an example of agentic agents, they did not wait for Great Britain to give them their freedom and recognize them. They initiated and devised a strategy to make the king see and react to them being seen. The first principles were part of a strategy to defeat Great Britain that was converted to a process for social change because the first principles are motivational. Motivation is the essence that drives social movements and personal transformation. As motivational strategies, leveraging the framework appropriately responds to unfair power exertion. The democratic social change process could be used as a peaceful counterstrategy that preserves respect for the human dignity of self and others.

Extant Democratic Social Change Theories

The findings of this study confirm, disconfirm, and extend knowledge to Butts’s and Benet’s frameworks. Although Butts used the same samples in his civic value theory of social change to explore democratic values, the methodology used by Butts and Benet differed from grounded theory’s rigorous data analysis method, the delay of the literature review, and its inductive method of generating theory. The findings of this study are

consistent with those of Butts's (1980, 1988) assertion that the founding documents contain the history of American democracy. Additionally, the findings are compatible with Benet's findings that democracy promotes respect for human dignity and fairness and that democracy "should be an either-or solution to the problem of oppression in both the workplace and in society," supporting the Founders' perspective that "democracy as an either-or solution to oppression ... that "requires both/and thinking" (W. J. Benet, personal communication, May 17, 2021). This is because although anti-democratic tenets stifle democracy, they are also used to control the effects of factions (The Federalist, 1787/1998).

Moreover, the findings are consistent with democracy providing a "system of governance that overcomes ... our deepest fear" and achievements ... [and] our highest aspiration" (W. J. Benet, personal communication, May 17, 2021). Additionally, the emergence of knowledge is consistent with Butts's element of truth. The difference is that there is a more distinct boundary between truth and misinformation. Although truth undergirds knowledge, pragmatism, intuition, strategy, wisdom, and prudence, it is not easy to pinpoint which element or combination of elements within those species of knowing makes the outcomes replicable with any consistency. This is because the truth is verifiable with no margin of error independent of being associated with a particular species of knowledge. Knowledge being measurable is associated with truth and predictability. Therefore, knowledge acts as a conceptual proxy for the truth. Two notable consistencies include Butts's (1980) use of chauvinism and Benet's (2006) use of regeneration. Regeneration in Benet's (2006) work supports the importance of hope in

democracy. The regeneration or revitalization of democracy starts with hope. Hope "strengthens the ability of workers to engage in the decision-making process" that was "identified as a human right" (p. 305). Butts (1980) refers to "pluralistic chauvinism" (p. 141), "jingoistic chauvinism" and "an ethnocentric patriotism"(1980, p. 159). These concepts support the expanded definition of nativism.

However, this study's findings are inconsistent with those of Butts's (1980, 1988), and by extension, with Benet's polarities of democracy elements. Though both theorists focused on democratic values and argued for a corrupt form of democratic values, this study presented a framework of anti-democratic tenets and democratic principles. The anti-democratic tenets permitted a global focus on the barriers to democracy and the practical utility of these barriers to the government in controlling the speed of social change.

A power analysis between the democratic principles versus the democratic values in Butts's (1980, 1988) social change theory indicates that Butts's civic values and Benet's polarities pairs rely on external empowerment while the first principles of democracy social change process, in contrast, relies on internal empowerment and the support from others in the community, not solely government. Other differences that emerged during the review of literature created opportunities to extend theoretical knowledge in the area of democracy and democratic social change and make contributions to Benet's and Butts's democratic social change theories. Theoretical contributions include a framework of ethical first principles of democracy that undergird the democratic values discussed in their theory, an alternative, parsimonious conceptual

framework, and a social change process framework that could be incorporated into Benet's (2013) polarities of democracy theory to achieve social transformation, and a framework with disempowerment strategies with which to assess existing barriers to democracy. The theoretical contributions to Butts's and Benet's theories extend to the field. A list of contributions to the field follows these findings.

Contribution to the Field

The primary contribution to the field is refining the definition of democracy and challenging the current conception of democracy by incorporating the first principles of democracy and introducing the anti-democratic tenets framework. These direct contributions contributed to the development of six grounded theories related to democracy, one of which developed beyond its substantive scope to become a formal theory. The specific contributions to the field include a democratic social change process that could be applied at three levels; a framework of principles that reflect the spirit of the constitution; an alternate lens with which to evaluate democratic change; a conceptual framework based on three principles (human dignity, fairness, and knowledge); and a framework to evaluate security risk and democratization abroad. In addition, the either-or approach to democracy grounded theory could serve as a policy framework to assess the effects of the incremental approach to democracy by looking at specific strategies of power and their counterstrategies. Also, the democratic social change process could serve as a personal program of empowerment through which to reinvigorate the self. A parsimonious conceptual framework exists to plan, assess, and evaluate policies. There is a framework of socio-ethical principles of democracy for the "creation of a democratic

ethos” (Critchley et al., 2003, p. 6) that does not “replace personal or cultural ethics” (Foldvary, 1980, p. 53) to guide behavior and gain public trust. Additionally, there is a motivational theory for social change. Furthermore, these theories recognize anti-democratic strategies as barriers and triggers to democracy. In addition, it might interest scholars to explore the substantive areas of government for the people, democratic socio-ethics, the first principles of democracy, and anti-democratic tenets.

A discussion of the constructed grounded theories will follow. Democratic principles and anti-democratic tenets were used to construct six plausible theories: the first principles of democracy, the first principles of democracy conceptual framework, the socio-ethical principles of democracy, the either-or approach to democracy, and the first principles of democracy social change process. However, integrating four grounded theories led to the democratic social change theory: first principles of democracy, socio-ethical principles of democracy, the demoralizing process, and an either-or approach to democracy. A key distinction here is that the first principles of democracy conceptual framework preceded the formal theory but did not contribute to it directly. The grounded theory, the first principles of democracy, is described below.

First Principles of Democracy

Research Question: Can human emancipation be achieved by combining the first principles with Benet's democratic values?

Emancipation may be achieved by incorporating the principles into the framework and adhering to them. Besides leading to emancipation, they might also promote competence and progress toward achieving the maximum benefit of the democratic

values under discussion. In addition, they might prevent organizations' flagrant disregard for human rights. Respect for human dignity will strengthen the workings of democracy and human rights, without which human rights are meaningless. Unity and fairness are other principles that would strengthen the democratic values of human rights and communal obligations. The first principles of knowledge, human dignity, unity, and fairness would help those who stand to gain and those standing to lose come together to resolve their goals. By including these principles, at least standards could be set. For example, in a best-case scenario, community members would be on the same page as organizational leaders in knowing the cost and benefits of a proposed project. In addition, they would know which interventions could reduce the risk of harm to community members. Challenges to the proposed projects may lead to innovation or clear the path for proposals that do not threaten the security of community members.

Alternatively, a lack of understanding of the importance of unity in preserving dignity forfeits a sense of community obligations and fosters the idea that separate is equal. The absence of agreement in the community devalues diversity, fairness, human rights, community empowerment, and security. In addition, members of communities without a sense of unity grow despondent. Authority without security is tyranny. Freedom without security is chaos. Diversity without unity is separate but equal. Due process without knowledge could lead to loss of life, liberty, or property. Participation without knowledge converts democracy into a ritual. Representation without respect for human dignity violates the consent of the governed. The following examples illustrate the

ethical first principles of democracy and what happens when those first principles are absent.

First Principles of Democracy Conceptual Framework

Research Question: How can the first principles of democracy reduce dynamic tension to achieve human emancipation?

Johnson's (1996) polarity management framework was developed to address dilemmas (Benet, 2006, p. 57), not achieve human emancipation. Hence, the most controversial aspect of Benet's (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy theory is that it uses Johnson's conceptual framework for managing democratic values as "dilemmas" to be managed. It is also unclear how Johnson's conceptual framework holds up when dealing with numerous interdependent polarity pairs. This means that emancipation and social change may be hindered by the shifting of problems to one or more unknown areas considering that "under these circumstances," Johnson (1996, as cited in Benet, 2006) points out, "we will never experience the upside of both [democratic values] simultaneously" (p. 60). Other major weaknesses emerged from the use of Johnson's (1996) conceptual framework: (a) where to locate a problem that has shifted to another polarity pair; (b) how to predict which polarity pair will experience a new problem as a result of managing multarities, true to managing dilemmas (Benet, 2006); (c) determining whether all the polarity pairs have reached their maximum benefits, and (d) determining which democratic value an organization can sacrifice to preserve the other(s).

To address these questions that result from using Johnson's (1996) polarity management model to leverage multiple paired democratic values as dilemmas to be

managed versus problems to be solved (see Benet, 2006) and reduce dynamic tension, it would be useful to incorporate the principles into the polarities of democracy (see Benet, 2006, 2013). This would reduce dynamic tension by making the principles the framework within which solutions must be framed. This is because corrupt aspects of values nullify democratic values' ethical component. As a government for the people, democracy is defined by its first principles and supported by a set of democratic values. As an alternative, dynamic tension can be reduced using a framework not driven by tension. It is easier to achieve human emancipation when the framework does not shift existing problems or create new ones. The conceptual framework for addressing this gap is based on human dignity, fairness, and knowledge. It may be possible to achieve human emancipation by introducing fairness, respecting human dignity, and ensuring that all decisions are based on the best available information. The three concepts were selected in part because all social change movements in America emphasize the importance of respecting human dignity through fairness. Benet's democratic social change theory does not guide practitioners on which principles to follow when managing social problems (see Benet, 2006, 2013). A conceptual framework based on democracy's first principle provides a reasonable framework for addressing social change. As a result of this conceptual framework, policies can be analyzed and evaluated to determine whether human dignity and fairness are being respected. By eliminating the need to monitor individually paired polarities (see Benet, 2006, 2013), the conceptual framework would reduce the need to monitor tension between the paired polarities. The reason for this is that interdependence no longer poses a problem. This can be remedied through fairness

and respect for human dignity. Human dignity and fairness are two of the most important components of democracy, and they guide all other democratic processes. It is possible to use the first principles of democracy as an independent conceptual framework. However, without Johnson's framework, Benet's (2006, 2013) polarities of democracy theory is replaced by Butts's (1980, 1988) democratic civism.

Socio-Ethical Principles of Democracy

Research Question: Are there two values in the founding documents that separate the values of the masses from those of the elites?

Generally speaking, yes. Socio-ethical principles of democracy is a normative framework based on the highest ethical standard necessary for the government to handle the affairs of the governed under the liberal tradition. For example, classical liberal ideas include species of the first principles of democracy, equal status (human dignity), due process (fairness), reason (knowledge), life, liberty, property, and pursuit of happiness (security; see Locke, 1869). The principles lead individuals towards self-determinism and self-actualization. Those who have adopted the principles have embraced the Founders' spirit and made themselves equal to modern power.

Demoralizing Process: The Underbelly of Democracy

Research Question 1: Are the disempowerment concepts part of a process or a strategy that stifles democratic change, and what, if anything, reinforces the disempowerment behaviors of those who use them?

The demoralizing process explains the interaction of disempowerment concepts and how they lead to subjugation. The process starts with nativism—the belief, attitude,

and behaviors promoted by members who believe they are part of an exclusive in-group— and ends with subjugation. Some politicians reinforce the demoralizing process by promoting and supporting protectionist policies as an economic strategy. The Mexican Exodus and the first Red Scare are examples of protectionist policies in the United States during the Great Depression. Other incidents also reinforce the demoralizing process: immigration control (i.e., the Chinese Exclusion Act), national security (the first Red Scare; Japanese internment camps), and fear (i.e., McCarthy's Red Scare). African Americans (Kendi, 2016), Catholics, Jews, Muslims, Latinos, Italians, and Irish (Connolly, 2010) were also subjects of demoralization. In addition, demoralization is reinforced during intimate partner violence, school bullying, workplace hostilities, and cult violence. Demoralization can have long-lasting effects on aggrieved groups and future generations.

Either-or Approach to Democracy

Research Question 1: Are disempowerment concepts part of a process or strategy that stifles democratic change, and what, if anything, reinforces disempowerment behaviors?

Research Question 2: Do theoretical codes contribute to or detract from a rich democracy or oppression?

The disempowerment concepts are part of a political and social disempowerment program whereby individuals are controlled through misinformation, fear, dehumanization, and social division (nativism and social distinction). Behaviors that promote disempowerment are reinforced by actors in the three branches of government.

One such example is the inclusion of the Electoral College and the incremental approach to democracy through the evolution of social change. In the United States Constitution, the recognition of citizenship rights (see *Dred Scott v. John F.A. Sandford* and the XIV Amendment), suffrage rights (see the XV, XIX, XXIV, and XXVI Amendments), equal access to education (see *Brown v. Board of Education*), voting rights (see Voting Rights Act of 1965), and notice of the due process rights against self-incrimination, right to an attorney, and trial by jury (see *Miranda v. Arizona*) were attained through an evolving process that at times spanned across two centuries. Incrementalism is a means to reinforce disempowerment at a macro level and a mechanism to control factions and maintain the current political structure because “relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its EFFECTS” (*The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 35*). A brief history of the incremental approach’s negative effects on democracy was shared in the section under Abductive Discovery #4, *The Either-or Approach to Democracy*, in Chapter 4. In all instances, the separation of power weakens the individual branches of government. It weakens democracy through strategies of divide-and-rule. Although all disempowerment tenets are divide-and-rule strategies, two obvious examples are nativism and social distinction. *The Federalist*, the blueprint of the nation’s explicit and implicit political values, collectively reinforces the political structure and has served to institutionalize power strategies. Although the strategies serve legitimate governmental purposes, i.e., protectionism and demoralizing unfriendly foreign leaders, as representatives of the people, American leaders must consider that disempowerment strategies have a direct and long-term effect on resentment among Americans who have been injured and those

seeking reconciliation. Therefore, the trustees of the people should leverage disempowerment strategies with prudence. As a framework containing both categories, the either-or approach to democracy could be used to analyze gaps in policy, services, and security. As well as analyzing the transition between removal and placement, the intersection of persecution and refugee status and the interval between release and reintegration could also be used to analyze other transition points.

First Principles of Democratic Social Change

Research Question: How do the first principles of the American founding documents provide an understanding of the process of American democratic social change?

Understanding the process of democratic social change entails acknowledging the processual strategy used by the Founders to achieve positive and sustainable social change. The linear, processual framework of strategies includes knowledge, fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security. Disempowerment principles and empowerment principles are strategies and counterstrategies. For example, all disempowerment strategies can be countered with one or more species of knowledge. Individuals who have internalized their innate worth based on their humanity are almost impervious to being affected by opinions, beliefs, or the words of others. Although this study focuses on the principles, it does not mean the Founders did not employ oppressive strategies against the king.

On the contrary, it is expected that he would be disempowered in politics where the king usurped power. Disempowerment is also a process. The disempowerment

strategies include misinformation, social distinction, dehumanization, subjugation, nativism, and fear. However, the principles as the strategy framework led the Founders to victory and lasting social change. It is worthwhile noting that the framework can be used in non-conflict situations as a business strategy, grant writing framework, and security strategy. This is because it is used in the NSS. Examples of how the strategies are applied to intimate partner violence, school bullying, and workplace violence provide concrete examples of how the principles interact to bring about micro and meso-level transformation.

Polytheoretical Framework

Three theoretical lenses were selected ad hoc to explain the findings: Marx and Engels's critical theory of social change, Foucault's theory of power, and Bourdieu's field theory. Marx's theory was the framework for the environment that gave rise to revolutionary social change and the colonists' class struggle. Foucault's and Bourdieu's power frameworks illustrate where the study fits and "extends relevant literature" and the analysis of power on the micro and meso level, respectively (Charmaz, 2006, p. 167). The polytheoretical framework enabled an in-depth analysis of power from various perspectives: class, power relations, sovereign power, strategies of power, symbolic power, and cultural power.

Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu's (1984) exchange system of capital includes economic, social, and cultural capital. Exchange value is field-specific, with certain species of capital being more valuable in specific fields versus others. Because the founding documents bind this

study, the only two documents to assess the status of the king and the various species of capital are the Articles of Confederation and the Declaration of Independence. He suggested that habitus is the schema for how individuals intuitively play their role in any given field from dispositions that are a product of socialization (Bourdieu, 1991). He approached power in the context of society and culture, with specialized fields making power more evident and symbolic. Cultural differences such as social class, political influence, and exercise of power were manifested in the Declaration of Independence, with the king representing the status quo and the colonists the subjects. Therefore, Bourdieu's social field theory will serve as one of the frameworks through which this study can be explored. The disposition of the colonists will be contrasted with that of the king by using politics as the social field.

The king's social and cultural capital can be assumed to differ from the colonists' by Great Britain's king and ruler being over the colonists and by the two founding documents alluding to his economic capital. The Articles of Confederation criminalized accepting "any present, emolument, office, or title of any kind, whatever from any king, Prince, or foreign state ... without the consent of the United States in Congress" (Article of Confederation, art. IV). The Declaration of Independence illustrates the king's wealth through numerous examples. "Judges [depended] on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries," and "he financed transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries" and was responsible for imposing taxes (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Nomos, doxa, and *illusio* are three important concepts in Bourdieu's field theory, as the three legitimize the power of the status quo. Nomos is unspoken, field-specific norms understood by players in the field that legitimize systems of hierarchy by creating a vision of the world as one that is legitimate (Grenfell, 2008): The colonists acting as subjects legitimized the king's authority when "in every stage of these oppressions we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The colonists rebelled against the king for "imposing taxes on us without our consent and for quartering large bodies of armed troops among us" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Related to nomos is doxa, the unexamined assumptions, beliefs, and opinions in a field accepted as the natural order of things (Bourdieu, 1991). After leaving Great Britain, the colonies reminded the king of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here but were still loyal to the king and, under his jurisdiction, complicit in their oppression. The king took every opportunity to remind the colonists of his authority by answering the Founders' "repeated petitions ... with repeated injury" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Likewise, it was doxa that African Americans were to be "subject at all times to be restrained in his liberty and chastised in his body, by the capricious will of another, and compelled to labor, not for himself, but for a master ... vendible by one master to another master;" (The Federalist No. 54, 1787/1998, p. 354). When the doxa was challenged by Native Americans, they were condemned as "merciless Indian savages whose known rule of warfare was an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes, and conditions" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The third dynamic is *illusio*, the general belief in a field held by agents that the reward(s) in

that field hold value (Bourdieu, 1984). The ultimate reward in the field was sovereignty. Great Britain wanted to dominate the colonies, while the colonists wanted self-determination. It is suggested that the value of the reward influences disposition. Disposition is the embodiment of a “durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking” (Bourdieu, 1991, p. 13), a product of socialization that reveals their cultural origins (Bourdieu, 1991). The disposition of the colonists and the king can be assumed through the reactions of the king and the Founders, as recorded in the Declaration of Independence.

The king’s disposition was consistently tyrannic:

He has made judges dependent on his will alone for the tenure of their offices and the amount and payment of their salaries. He has swarms of officers to harass our people ... eat out their sustenance, [and] called together legislative bodies at places unusual [and] uncomfortable ... for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures. He has given his assent to their acts of pretended legislation [and introduced] the same absolute rule into these colonies.

—Declaration of Independence, 1776

Unlike the king’s disposition, the Founders’ disposition was uncertain in the Declaration of Independence, resulting from various contributors to the document’s creation and their political situation. There were instances in which the Founders’ disposition showed due deference when they “petitioned for redress in the most humble terms” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The colonists “have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity [and] conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to

disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

In other instances, the Founders made themselves equal with the king by holding “these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal” and are therefore no less worthy of respect and freedom than the king (Declaration of Independence, 1776). As equals, they “warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislatures to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). Furthermore, as a sovereign people, “it [was] their right, it [was] their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). With a disposition superior to the king’s, they proclaimed that “these united colonies are, and of right, ought to be free and independent states” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders “absolved [themselves] from all allegiance to the British Crown” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They held the king as they held “the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends” (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Marx and Engels

The cause of America is, in a great measure, the cause of all mankind.

—Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, 1774–1779

The Marxist lens gave life to his theory of class struggle, where colonists were the working class that labored on behalf of the status quo, Great Britain. The findings support Marx’s idea that social change results from conflict between two opposing groups, the thesis (the king) and the antithesis (Founders). By constructing the colonies as the proletariat and Great Britain as the bourgeoisie, there is further evidence to suggest that

the events that led to revolutionary social change supported multiple claims made by Marx and Engels—the following claims parallel Bourdieu’s concepts of *nomos*, *doxa*, and *illusio*.

The Founders “pointed out and” brought “to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat,” and “independently of all nationality” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 22) by asserting “that all men are created equal and are endowed with certain unalienable rights” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). They united and sealed the bond between them and the proletariat by proclaiming:

The right of the people to alter or to abolish (destructive government), and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness.

—Declaration of Independence, 1776

In addition, the member of the Second Continental Congress knew that it was they who “must rise to be the leading class of the nation” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 28) by challenging the value of existing hierarchical paradigm, the natural order of things, and subordination to the king, *nomos*, *doxa*, and *illusio*, respectively. The social existence of the colonists under the rule of Great Britain raised their consciousness (see Marx, 1859/1970, p. 220).

Furthermore, they conceded that “governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The Founders “appealed to [the leaders of Great Britain’s] native justice and magnanimity

[and] conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, [but] they too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity” (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The preceding quotes delineate class differences, with colonists recognizing the status of the king as legitimate, albeit tyrannical. They understood that significant social change could only be achieved through a “united action ... one of the first conditions for the emancipation” of the colonies (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 28). The appeals in the Declaration of Independence support the united action of various factions: “the landed interest, mercantile interest, moneyed interest, and lesser interests” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 34; see Marx and Engels, 1848/2001). The Revolutionary War was fought “under the banner of the proletariat” so that “the proletarian fighters [could] do the work of the bourgeoisie” (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001, p. 24).

Property ownership and class differences supported by the landed and monied interests support Marx and Engels’s (1848/2001) thesis that class and property ownership disregard the innate worth of humans as people versus objects that serve as a means of acquiring wealth. In the Federalist No. 10 (1787/1998), the Founders observed that:

From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors ensues a division of society into different interests and parties. (p. 34)

Therefore, it is assumed and accepted as truth, or doxa, that different “interests exist in different classes of citizens, [that] in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, rendering them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 35). Yet, “if a majority is united by a common interest, like fairness or independence, the rights of the minority will be insecure” (The Federalist, 1787/1998, No. 51, p. 335). Making it appear logical, if not necessary to create hierarchies as a means of “curing the mischiefs of faction” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 33) and protecting the rights and interests of the minority, who happen to be the monied class that supported slavery, politicized science (see Kendi, 2016), and associated the image of the simians with African Americans and immigrants (see Connolly, 2010, p. 71). Unlike the Founders, who believed factions would limit the effect of pure democracy, Marx (1848/2001) believed that class divisions existed to protect bourgeois interests. According to The Federalist (1787/1998) No. 10:

The most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under like discrimination. (p. 34)

The Founders recognized class differences and had strategized to avoid the “improper and wicked project” of democracy that encourages “a rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property” with a “republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p.

36). It is from “the possession of different degrees and kinds of property” and “from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors [that] ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 34). Although Marx agrees with the Founders regarding “the most common and durable source of factions” (The Federalist No. 10, 1787/1998, p. 34), they differ in how they express these differences and how to remedy them. Marx and Engels (1848/2001) interpret the existence of factions as the unfairness of property ownership and the value of a person’s labor being determined by the bourgeois class. In The Federalist (1787/1998), injustice is interpreted as the majority (masses) against a minority (elite). Therefore Marx (1848/2001) calls for the people, through government, to own the means of production, an apparent attempt to protect the human dignity of workers and condemn capitalism instead of global competition under any economic system.

Michel Foucault

Power is tolerable only on condition that it mask a substantial part of itself.

Its success is proportional to its ability to hide its own mechanism.

—Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, 1978, p. 86

The findings are consistent with Foucault’s findings. The empowerment and disempowerment categories represent “views of power relations” (Foucault, 2019, p. 17) used in “strategic games between liberties” (p. 300), with the king attempting to control the conduct of the colonists “who in turn” tried to “avoid allowing their conduct to be controlled” (p. 300), and instead controlled the king’s by having declared the colonies “free and independent states, with full power to levy war and conclude peace”

(Declaration of Independence, 1776). Normalizing power, like Bourdieu's doxa, is exemplified by the king's power over the colonists in his absence. He forbade "his governors to pass laws ... till his assent should be obtained, and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them" (Declaration of Independence, 1776). The king's power to govern through governmentality is evidenced in the Founder's submissive behavior and loyalty to the king in showing "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind in declaring the causes which impel them to the separation" and through their repeated petitions "for redress in the most humble terms" (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

On the other hand, in leveraging power as agentic actors, the Founders freed themselves "in relationship to others" (p. 300) when it became "necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands [and take on a] separate and equal station" (Declaration of Independence, 1776) [that constituted] "the very matter of ethics" (Foucault, 2019, p. 300), which to Foucault is liberty. The interplay of power between the king's sovereign power and that of the Founders supports Foucault's findings that "the liberty of men is never assured by institutions and laws that are intended to guarantee them" because "the guarantee of freedom is freedom" (Foucault, 1991, p. 47). Foucault discussed strategies to emancipate the oppressed in general terms, such as resistance, through the power of discourse (Foucault, 1980) and aesthetic construction of the self (Foucault, 1988). The colonists resisted using the three by rebelling against the king through the power of discourse, as illustrated by the Declaration of Independence and reconstructed themselves through their legacy of the first principles of democracy. Moreover, Foucault (2019) saw power as both a negative and a productive force, as evidenced by the disempowerment

and empowerment strategies leveraged by the Founders, for “where there is power, there is resistance” (p. 167). Absent resistance, there is no power relation but obedience. For a time, the colonists did not resist the king but instead participated in their oppression (see Foucault, 2019). However, they became empowered by the hope of independence. The Declaration of Independence became a destabilizing strategy that changed the power relations between the colonists and Great Britain to this day. Great Britain intensified its oppressive strategies at the realization that the king’s sovereign power over the colonists had diminished.

Foucault’s (1980) knowledge power lens, the ability of people of power to use and create knowledge to suit their interests, was used to explore the founding documents. It is essential for power to understand individual and group behavior. Without this understanding, strategies of knowledge power would be rendered ineffective. Knowledge power was evident in laws against treason and the exclusion of certain classes of people from traveling freely across the colonies (Articles of Confederation, 1777).

The vehicle that leads to normalized power that persists throughout generations is evident in all but the Articles of Confederation (see Bourdieu, 1981). However, the Declaration of Independence and *The Federalist* (1787/1998) are more likely to be unexplored and accepted than the United States Constitution. This is because political and public discussions of landmark cases create the appearance of ever-evolving cultural norms. The essays were published in the newspaper for the educated minority to deliberate the complex matter of designing a new form of government that had not previously existed. The publication of the essays was an exercise in deliberative

democracy. However, the complexity of the conversation and the medium through which deliberation took place limited most people's participation. Those who understood government and opposed the federalists, the anti-federalists, if indeed there was a healthy opposition as in politics there must be at least a healthy skepticism, lacked the organizational strength of the federalists. Poor organization impeded their ability to garner the support of the masses despite having pointed out that the structure of government favored the wealthy and the need to include the Bill of Rights in the Constitution (Staff, 1976). The construction and reconstruction of knowledge power are most evident in the United States Constitution as a conservative yet fluid document whereby judicial interpretation accommodates societal and policy needs, evident in decisions that affect reproductive rights and same-sex intimate relationships. "We need not be apprehensive that there will be too much stability" in the United States Constitution (The Federalist No. 72, 1787/1998, p. 482) "because it is favorable to greater stability in the system of legislation" (The Federalist No. 73, 1787/1998, p. 487). Not only that, but abstract principles also provide stability and breadth of interpretation. For example, although the United States Constitution included the Bill of Rights, the rights were nullified for most of the population, particularly Native Americans, African Americans, and women. The Founders knew the culture of not recognizing women and African Americans as humans. However, they were prudent enough to include it, acknowledging that two things are certain in politics and life in general: change and the corrosive effect of power (The Federalist, 1787/1998). With the Founders' experience political experience and the lack of powerful opposition, they included another necessary

evil in the Constitution, the Electoral College, a fail-safe barrier to direct democracy and voter ignorance.

Limitations of Study

The grounded theories should be considered plausible explanations fitted to the substantive content. They provide insight into the democratic social change process, the consequences of incremental social change, barriers to democracy, and the first principles of democracy. The grounded theories were constructed based on my interpretation of the founding documents; therefore, more research is needed to amplify, validate, or refute the findings. The historical nature of the documents limited uncontroverted interpretation and access to the historical figures responsible for drafting the founding documents. The Boston Tea Party and the Pine Tree Riot were used as triangulation to support the interpretation of the democratic social change process, although they were not substantively discussed. At the same time, the breadth of content would have been achieved by including accounts of acts of resistance, preserved personal communication, and other primary documents; however, they may have also introduced other theoretical codes unrelated to democracy in America's republican form of government. The political nature of the relationship between the colonies and Great Britain introduced political language that enhanced the range of meaning, thus making interpretive analysis challenging, albeit possible. Other limitations include the lack of an existing theory of the first principles of democracy and problems with generalizability (see Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Hussein et al., 2014). Of the six grounded theories, five are substantive theories: One is a formal grounded theory.

Recommendations

I will make relevant recommendations for future research: the utility of the first principles of democracy social change process grounded theory as a transformational framework, the principles in upholding the ideal of government for the people, and the practical utility of the conceptual framework. These future research recommendations are methodological and based on my grounded theory methodology experience.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are three pressing recommendations for future studies. The first is whether the social change process accomplishes social change for those who use it, particularly agentic individuals. The second recommendation is an inquiry into the extent of the first principles of democracy, knowledge, fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security. Security upholds the theoretical ideal of democracy as a government for the people. The third recommendation is to assess the utility of the first principles of democracy conceptual framework in planning and evaluating social and organizational policies and leading organizations to social change.

The first principles of democracy social change process appear useful in theory, but their practical utility needs to be determined. If the framework proves to be a practical social change model, it could facilitate social change at the micro, meso, and macro levels. As a result, individuals can use these principles and resolve conflicts with nonviolence. It is critical to examine whether democratic principles support the democratic ideal of government for the people. This is because it could start a discussion of what it means for the government to be for the people. Scholars could use the

framework to evaluate public and organizational policies to ensure that the government meets its duty to the people by reducing violence and promoting entrepreneurship. The government is to represent the common interest, not only the interests of a few. Lastly, an evaluation of the utility of the conceptual framework for planning, analyzing, and evaluating organizational and social policies must occur. As a parsimonious framework, it may be more suitable than Johnson's (1996) for managing multitarities, and it includes fairness to achieve "our highest aspirations" and abandon "our deepest fears" (W. J. Benet, personal communication, March 17, 2021).

Methodological Recommendations

As recommended by most grounded theorists, the research question emerged from successive comparison, the literature review was delayed until the theories were constructed, and I used two sensitizing concepts, empowerment, and disempowerment, along with other various other data analysis techniques (see Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Secondary to following Glaser and Strauss's strict recommendations to delay the literature review and engaging in constant compare and contrast data analysis process, I recommend that researchers dare to engage in interdisciplinary research and rely on prior knowledge to construct the grounded theory despite emerging doubts about what one thinks one knows or remembers. Daring to cross domains and relying on previous knowledge will allow the exploration of the phenomenon with fresh eyes and using different perspectives than the lenses used by leading theorists and philosophers in that field. Once a perspective has been accepted as doxa, the researcher is more likely to replicate and validate other research results. In this way, a theory is not generated.

Moreover, delaying the literature review eliminated irrelevant distractions that could have interfered with the construction of the grounded theory. As a result of emerging research questions, I have confirmed and disproved my ideas, guided theoretical sampling, and developed several grounded theories.

Keeping the sample small improved data analysis, reduced the time it took to analyze the data, and facilitated the emergence of theoretical codes. It also reduced extraneous noise that would have affected the data analysis and theory construction. Having diverse cases, although all founding documents, improved the consistency of the emerged theoretical codes, interpretation, and construction. As noted by the coding of the substantive content, there were species of principles and anti-democratic tenets across the selected cases. Along with reifying democracy, social change, and theoretical codes, I became immersed in data analysis. As a result, I became the Founders, the king, the captives, and all others who participated in the scenarios in the founding documents. This process is conducive to allowing the suspension of judgment to permit analysis through the eyes of everyone involved. Moreover, the process serves as a reminder that the world is more complex than we think.

Analyzing the substantive content using multiple strategies to understand and interpret the content and theoretical codes primed theoretical sensitivity. A multi-lens approach was used to examine parts, processes, and systems to understand the phenomenon holistically. I recommend allowing the mind to synthesize information without forcing the construction of a grounded theory during focused meditation. This is to say, after immersing in the theoretical codes and finding connections between the

codes, creating distance between from analysis will allow the grounded theory to emerge much as theoretical codes emerge. This facilitates the process of theoretical codes becoming. Finally, conscious engagement in abductive reasoning and searching for the highest abstract concept facilitated the construction of several plausible explanations for the theoretical codes. Abductive reasoning and abstraction facilitated crossing the substantive theory boundary to formal grounded theory. In the following section, I will discuss implications for practice and present examples of how the first principles of democracy social change were used to transcend substantive areas.

Implications for Practice

Implications for practice will be presented to demonstrate the application of the first principles of democracy social change process as an organizational business model to meet the needs of a niche market and the use of the framework at a relational level during interpersonal conflicts such as intimate partner violence, school violence, and workplace hostility. The benefitting audience includes entrepreneurs, government, the community, employees, teachers, students, and other individuals that may be experiencing violence.

Business Strategy

A business plan allows the investor to design a strategy considering a business's and its competitors' strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, for ACME to thrive, the organization will need a strategic plan before starting the business. Knowledge would be specialized in the business product or service, customer service skills, relevant policies, marketing, budgeting, financial reports, etc. Fairness under this situation may include an

assessment of fairness for the entrepreneurs or the customers so there can be equal opportunity to compete in the market (“life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;” Declaration of Independence, 1776) or an unaddressed need or underserved population.

Human dignity may entail the human dignity of the entrepreneur and the consumers of the underserved market niche. An income for the entrepreneur shows respect for his human dignity, as does serving the needs of others. Hope is manifested in the ability, resources, and drive to meet market needs and demand.

Unity in organizations has historically been collaboration, cooperation, and coordination. However, connecting with clients or customers whose needs the entrepreneur intends to serve is just as important. Addressing customer concerns can often nurture customer loyalty and fosters security. Security in this scenario refers to sustainability, personal security/well-being, and a plan that safeguards personal and business security. Regarding business security, a thriving business usually invests in advertisements, research, and development, expansion, increasing profits, a good brand name, going public, and loyal customers.

Regarding business security, a thriving business usually invests in advertisements, research and development, expansion, increasing profits, building a strong brand name, loyal customers, and transitioning from private to public ownership. Although the principles can be used as a business strategy without being triggered by a disempowerment strategy, the following three scenarios illustrate the utility of the framework. In such scenarios, the principles become counterstrategies to oppressive power strategies. In contrast to using the principles as a social change strategy in business

planning, the framework could be used in relationship conflicts, intimate partner violence, and workplace and school bullying. Next is applying the first principles of democracy social change process to intimate partner violence.

Intimate Partner Violence

Globally, intimate partner violence has been classified as a significant public health and human rights concern (McCarthy et al., 2018). As many as 70% of women in foreign nations report being victimized, with as many as 80% of men reporting having been perpetrators (McCarthy et al., 2018). Intimate partner violence is responsible for perpetrating a larger system of gender violence (McCarthy et al., 2018). This type of violence consists of various forms perpetrated against an intimate partner and can involve control and a variety of power strategies to subjugate the spouse by destroying their self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-determination (Geiger, 2002; McCarthy et al., 2018). Intimate partner violence is behaviors that cause physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual abuse by an intimate partner (Gerino et al., 2018). Males are often likelier to be the perpetrators of intimate partner violence (McCarthy et al., 2018; Sweet, 2019); therefore, males will be referenced as the perpetrator in this study. However, women can also be perpetrators of intimate partner violence. The disempowerment strategies are fear, dehumanization, nativism, social distinction, misinformation, and subjugation. The demoralizing process triggers the need to use the democratic social change process so I will discuss it first.

In intimate partner violence, fear is also achieved through various strategies (Sweet, 2019; Mshweshwe, 2020). The abusing partners often threaten their partners with

divorce, physical and sexual violence, withdrawal of financial support, and shaming by exposing personal information and stigmatizing (Capaldi et al., 2012; Mshweshwe, 2020; Pizzirani et al., 2019; Rozeboom & Sangiovanni, 2018; Sweet, 2019). Geiger (2002) explained that repressive and coercive power are forms of power that materialize the fear of losing control and power rather than the ownership of it (p. 12). Fear can take various species and lead to hyper-vigilance (Ross, 2017), learned helplessness (Geiger, 2002; Sweet 2019; Salter & Hall, 2022), escape paralysis, and complex post-traumatic stress (Salter & Hall, 2022).

Dehumanization can take many forms in situations of intimate partner violence, including structural exclusion (Sweet, 2019), stigmatization, infantilization, objectification, instrumentalization (Rozeboom & Sangiovanni, 2018, p. 115), and exploitation. Abusers ridicule; degrade; rape, humiliate; insult (Geiger, 2002; Pizzirani et al., 2019; Salter & Hall, 2022); feign disinterest (Pizzirani et al., 2019); verbally, psychologically, emotionally, and financially abuse (Ross, 2017); control; and create dependence (McCarthy et al., 2018; Mshweshwe, 2020; Pizzirani et al., 2019). Nativism plays a role in intimate partner violence. Gerino (2018) found that “cultural beliefs, social values of reference (specifically machistic-patriarchal values), as well as racism and sexism” impact the manifestation of intimate partner violence (p. 11). Beliefs and value systems associated with celebrating extreme masculinity increase the risk of intimate partner violence (Hoffman et al., 2020; McCarthy et al., 2018; Mshweshwe, 2020), as does attempts at controlling the spouse’s religious values and practices. Diverse types of social distinctions have been explored in studies of intimate partner violence. Women

from all education levels and social and economic statuses are victimized. However, poor, uneducated women who depend on their spouses are at a higher risk of victimization (Capaldi et al., 2012). More specifically, social distinctions can take the form of tacitly noting class or economic differences and lack of cultural refinement, whereby the wife is ridiculed into assimilating the perpetrator's values due to embarrassment (Pizzirani et al., 2019). Groups particularly vulnerable to intimate partner violence are minorities, people with "cognitive and physical impairments," and substance use disorder (Gerino, 2018, p. 11).

Misinformation in intimate partner violence can come in the form of gaslighting (Sweet, 2019), a strategy that often causes dire psychological effects and could lead to poor self-esteem and victims questioning their sanity (Geiger, 2002; Ogbe et al., 2020), referring to women as irrational, emotional, and childish (Rozeboom & Sangiovanni, 2018; Sweet, 2019). Intimate partner abusers allege that they love their partner too much or that no one will love them as much as they do. This is a strategy to create dependence on the husband. This strategy is often successful when the abused believes she is not worthy of love or respect. The abuser blames their wife for their loss of control and abusive acts; he claims he can control himself if she complies with his requests ... or convinces her that he has changed after his temper subsides and witnesses the scars he left on her, for example.

Distress in marriages often leads to violence. Victimiziers use various strategies of subjugation: dehumanization (Pizzirani et al., 2019), misinformation, social distinction, nativism, and fear (Mshweshwe, 2020); because of patriarchy (Geiger, 2002; McCarthy

et al., 2018; Mshweshwe, 2020). These five strategies can serve multiple subjugation goals. However, personal and social transformation can occur through an empowerment process, as feelings of unfairness can motivate individuals to act and prompt change (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). However, despite attempts at subjugating women, women retain the power of autonomy and self-determination (Geiger, 2002). The strategies women use to resist their partners include ignoring their husband's requests, faking headaches, their menstrual cycle, reciprocating verbal assaults, desertion, weaponizing the police, and taking the matter to court, to name a few power strategies (Geiger, 2002). The strategies men and women use are species of knowledge gained through experience or as children who have witnessed intimate partner violence between their parents (McCarthy et al., 2018). In addition to resistance by victims using the strategies mentioned above, victims can use the first principles of democracy social change process framework as a counter-strategy: knowledge, fairness, human dignity, unity, security, and hope. Unity and security interact strongly in this situation, leading to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" (Declaration of Independence, 1776).

Knowledge can take many forms depending on numerous factors, including culture, wisdom, prudence, and inner strength. For example, knowing when to change the conversation subtly, ignoring the invitation to fight, knowing when to remain silent and when to speak up, when to call 911 and leave the line open to allow the operator to listen in, and when to call 911 and hang up shortly after to allow the address to register for law enforcement to visit the home, or when to use nonverbal communication to communicate with law enforcement. This type of knowledge often relies on wisdom, prudence, and

strategy. Knowledge about the effects of trauma may help survivors of intimate partner violence understand that their dignity is intact. The trauma, however, is responsible for the feeling of loss of dignity. On the other hand, trauma-informed interaction with law enforcement may reduce feelings of humiliation and shame (Salter & Hall, 2022).

Most research on fairness and distress is focused on married couples (Ross, 2017). Although this may benefit the substantive area, a lack of research on fairness in areas outside marriage and the workplace may limit our understanding of fairness in other realms. Problems regarding fairness in marriages arise from firm beliefs in the role of the partners and the inability or unwillingness to meet strict expectations (Ross, 2017).

A sense of fairness increases well-being among couples; however, couples are least depressed when the balance of power is in their favor (Ross, 2017). Victims of intimate partner violence search for solutions to end oppressive control, believing they, not the perpetrators, are responsible for the abuse. They may rationalize the abuse as their spouse being tired, stressed, or working hard for the family and, as a result, assume the abuse would stop if the victimized partner could make things fairer by cleaning more, cooking better, or disciplining the children how the spouse wants, speaking when spoken to, and isolating themselves from friends and family. Fairness is being treated with dignity (Salter & Hall, 2022) and seeking the assistance of law enforcement and the court through a temporary protection order. Fairness is also the product of acknowledging and respecting the wife's human dignity (Salter & Hall, 2022).

The concept of dignity has been used in traumatology at the individual level (Salter & Hall, 2022). Salter and Hall (2022) support promoting dignity at the policy,

relational, community, institutional, and macro levels to reduce shame and humiliation's effects. Survivors of intimate partner violence and rape have emphasized a desire to have their human dignity restored and recognized (Ogbe et al., 2020; Salter & Hall, 2022). Human dignity may be manifested by acknowledging the importance of self-preservation, self-determination, acting as a protective parent, and living in a safe and peaceful environment (Salter & Hall, 2022).

The victim of intimate partner violence can seek support by uniting with extended family, close friends, supportive neighbors, and the community (women's shelter, clergy members, law enforcement, the assistance of the court for a temporary restraining order, child protective services, and public assistance; Salter & Hall, 2022). Gerino et al. (2018) found that low levels of support increase the risk of intimate partner violence, whereas high levels serve as a protective factor against victimization. Low familial and social support may lead to loneliness and isolation (Ogbe et al., 2020). However, in intimate partner violence, support is especially imperative for protecting victims of intimate partner violence. Security takes many forms: safety planning (intimate partner violence safety plan and school safety plan), legal protection (temporary order of protection and the victim complying with those terms), and financial security (child support, employment, and government assistance; see Capaldi et al., 2012; Salter & Hall, 2022). Security is the goal of victims of intimate partner violence because security leads to empowerment.

There are few scenarios through which hope can be understood than through the example of intimate partner violence, whether the victim decides to return to the abuser

hoping things will change or decides to leave the abuser permanently because it has become clear that things can only get worse. Hope allows the victim to visualize a significant improvement in the couple's relationship or how much worse things can get for her. Couple empowerment comes when couples feel there is a balance of power and compromise to resolve their problems independently (Ross, 2017). Women's empowerment mitigates intimate partner violence (Geiger, 2002; Salter & Hall, 2022). Empowerment comes with high levels of family support (Gerino et al., 2018), intersectional trauma-informed practices that address the effects of trauma (Ogbe et al., 2020; Salter & Hall, 2022), a social network orientation for access to social support, community education (Ogbe et al., 2020; Salter & Hall, 2022), reducing shame, and promotion of dignity (Salter & Hall, 2022). In the following section, the first principles of democracy social change process will be applied to school-place bullying. This is in the hope that school officials can put a plan in place for youths at risk of harm to themselves or others.

School Bullying

The school is another place where the slight differences stand out to adults and children who have not learned to normalize diversity. This may create conflict environments where being different makes the student a target. The difference may be something as unimportant as the color of their shoes. Younger learners may require external direction to complete the transformation process due to their developmental level, social and coping skills, and the level of support available. Bullying is unwanted aggressive behavior from peers or school personnel that continues for some time. A wide

disparity exists in the effects of learner-on-learner bullying versus instructor-on-learner bullying. Normalization and teacher–student maltreatment contribute to bullying (Marraccini et al., 2018). In the field of education, subjugation and dehumanization strategies take many forms (humiliation, shaming, ignoring, feigning disinterest, and ridicule tactics; Pizzirani et al., 2019), nativism (peer exclusion, isolation, clique formation, intelligence, sports), social distinctions (class, race, ethnicity, religion, ability/disability), fear (verbal and physical abuse, punishment), and misinformation (rumors). Instructors who abuse their power by ridiculing, punishing, or manipulating students are considered bullies (Marraccini et al., 2018). Bullying or mobbing among young learners is evidenced by verbal and physical aggression and relational bullying (Wachs et al., 2020). Bullying creates a sense of unfairness, leading to anger, hostility, depression, and low self-worth (Ross, 2017).

Younger students are more likely to seek teacher support or tell someone than older students (Averbuch et al., 2020). Students with appropriate or adequate social or coping skills are less likely to engage in aggressive or violent behaviors (Inesia-Forde, 2005; Ringdal et al., 2020). Moreover, students with a quality support system (teacher, guidance counselor, therapist, principal, parents, and others (Marraccini et al., 2017; Wachs et al., 2020); are less likely to feel the impact of bullying felt by students without a quality support system (da Silva et al., 2017; Ringdal et al., 2020). Like adults victims of workplace bullying, adolescent victims of bullying suffer from anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation (Domas & Midgett, 2019; Marraccini et al., 2018; Ringdal et al.,

2020), self-mutilation, low self-esteem, loneliness, suicide (da Silva et al., 2017), and conduct problems (Domas & Midgett, 2019; Marraccini et al., 2018).

Bullying in academic settings is not limited to primary and secondary school settings. Undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate students also experience bullying from peers and instructors (Averbuch et al., 2020; Marraccini et al., 2018). Instructor bullying takes the form of abuse of power, destabilization (ordering work below competency level, withholding information that impacts performance, shifting goalposts), overwork, threats to professional status (through excessive monitoring), isolation (professional and social exclusion), intimidating disciplinary procedures, false allegations, and other bullying strategies (Averbuch et al., 2020). The impact of bullying on postgraduate students, like younger learners, include psychological distress (anxiety, suicidal behavior; Marraccini et al., 2020), depression and post-traumatic stress disorder, fear of ramification or increased bullying, hopelessness, loss of career opportunities, decreased confidence, and leave of absence or program (Averbuch et al., 2020).

The student becomes aware of unfairness and oppressive conditions at school promoted by bullying and the unconscious participation in oppressive behaviors by instructors (Marraccini et al., 2020). For example, parents and teachers may participate in oppressive behaviors by making statements like, “That is why you do not have friends,” and “Just ignore them” (without equipping the student with ways to ignore others mentally and not only verbally), or by pointing out when the student is not prepared for class, talking in class, forgot their homework, lost their place, and other comments that may cause the learner to feel shame, guilt, or resentment. Although some students may be

resilient to redirection and may forget or mock the teacher behind their backs, some learners may translate the redirection as criticism or being singled out (Marraccini et al., 2020). Danielson and Jones (2018) found that emotional support followed by information (problem-solving solutions) leads to a better appraisal of advice quality.

For learners, knowledge comes from leveraging social and communication skills, impression management, and building a support network to provide emotional support and information on handling bullies (Danielson & Jones, 2018). Armed with appropriate communication or adaptation skills can reduce bullying incidents (Inesia-Forde, 2005). In contrast, professors may also bully adult learners with good social skills. In this case, being aware of available resources to hold the instructor or school staff responsible may help end bullying.

Many students who are the object of bullying may have sought to create a fair environment by talking to peers, but their attempts were ineffective due to poor social and/or coping skills. They may have confided the bullying to teachers, principals, or guidance counselors, who only further reinforce feelings of being unheard, ignored (Billingham & Rogers, 2020; Gini et al., 2014; Marraccini et al., 2020), excluded, and disempowered. Teachers who responded to bullied students with emotional support made learners feel heard (Danielson & Jones, 2018). On the other hand, postgraduate learners are less likely to seek fairness out of fear of ramifications, increased bullying, and feelings of hopelessness (Averbuch et al., 2020). However, graduate and postgraduate students can seek institutional or external assistance to end the bullying (solicit the assistance of professional boards, institutional oversight, or make a police report).

There is a small number of students who may feel an intense sense of injury or have a hyperinflated need for others to show them respect, as they may have a low tolerance for rejection in general or have been exposed to violent masculinity culture (Farr, 2019), which impels them to protect their human dignity more so than other students. However, young learners develop at a different pace, and some may not have the moral development to understand the concept of human dignity. Others, however, may have a more advanced sense of moral development to recognize how bullying impacts their human dignity. In developing a sense of human dignity, mattering may be of a big concern to the latter group, although mattering or a sense of belonging is a major concern for young people in general (Billingham & Rogers, 2020; Gini et al., 2014; Marraccini et al., 2020; Marshall & Tilton-Weaver, 2019). The absence of mattering and moral disengagement can lead to emotional and conduct problems such as bullying (Billingham & Rogers, 2020; Gini et al., 2014; Marraccini et al., 2020; Marshall & Tilton-Weaver, 2019). However, fostering a sense of school esteem and belonging in students has been shown to mitigate bullying incidents (Danielson & Jones, 2019; Dumas & Midgett, 2019).

Hope for the student may be accomplished by successfully attaining social skills, a life space crisis interview (Rodgers & Hassan, 2021), emotional first aid, and working with the victims and victimizers if learners are willing (Inesia-Forde, 2005). Although social skills attainment reduces bullying incidents (da Silva et al., 2017), students feel more empowered if they feel they are being heard by their teachers (da Silva et al., 2017; Kollerová et al., 2021; Marraccini et al., 2018; Ringdal et al., 2020). The nurturing or the

transferring and integration of hope for older students may be accomplished by creating an anti-bullying committee at their university, online, or in the community (Averbuch et al., 2020).

A socio-ecological approach that involves a collaborative effort by school personnel may provide meaningful social support (da Silva et al., 2017; Kollerová et al., 2021; Marraccini et al., 2018; Ringdal et al., 2020). Using Bronfenbrenner's framework, parents, teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, and community service providers may reduce the incidence and impact of bullying (Dietrich & Cohen, 2021; Kollerová et al., 2021; Marraccini et al., 2018; Wachs et al., 2020) and provide a means by which to teach and reinforce social (communication and problem resolution skills) and coping skills (ways to ignore the criticism using cognitive-behavioral therapy skills, and perspective-taking; Inesia-Forde, 2005; Ringdal et al., 2020). In school officials uniting with the bullied student, emotional support was ranked as the most effective means of supporting younger bullied victims (Danielson & Jones, 2018).

Social support has shown a positive effect on female victims of bullying but the opposite effect on male victims of bullying, indicating prudence in selecting support strategies to assist male students (Danielson & Jones, 2018). Adult learners can formally report to student affairs administrators, professional organizations, the Dean, and institutional oversight organizations. Support from teachers is the first strategy to lead students to feel a sense of security. Moreover, security for students includes a safe, educational environment, educational support, improved academic standing, coping skills, and social skills competencies. Applying the social change theory sheds light on

how the theory may be extended across substantive areas, a task left for other scholars.

The first principles of democracy social change process will be applied to work environments next. Workspaces can often be naturally stressful due to the nature of goods and services. Improving the stress level in the workplace could benefit employees and their families, employers, and consumers.

Workplace Hostility

Workplace hostility is associated with intent to leave (Bambi et al., 2018; Caesens et al., 2018; Namin et al., 2021; Valtorta, 2022; Wilson et al., 2011) and can take various forms: management on the employee, the employee on management, mobbing (hostile group behavior towards peers or leadership; Park et al., 2020; Salin, 2003; Yamada et al., 2018). Workplace hostility describes conflict-producing behaviors such as bullying, harassment (Yamada et al., 2018), mobbing, workplace violence, and incivility (Bambi et al., 2018; Namin et al., 2021; Salin, 2003), with incivility being the least aggressive workplace conflict, but still one that can spiral into more aggressive behaviors and lead to the same consequences as other hostile workplace behaviors and can affect the populations they serve (Hodgins et al., 2014; Wilson et al., 2011). Incivility in the nursing sector can lead to “higher adverse patient outcomes” (Bambi et al., 2018, p. 454) and an estimated cost of \$82,000 to \$92,000 to replace a registered nurse and \$145,000 for a specialty nurse because of turnover (Wilson et al., 2011). In the academic sector, workplace incivility is higher than in other sectors, with a positive correlation between perceptions of incivility and turnover intent because “knowledge hiding behavior and

competition” facilitate this relationship (Namin et al., 2021, p. 13). However, unskilled laborers experience the most bullying overall (Feijó et al., 2019).

Management style, role conflict, stressful work environment, employee classification, and relationship with their supervisor are predictors of workplace violence (Feijó et al., 2019; Valtorta, 2022). Examples of employer–employee workplace bullying include discussing the employee with others (Feijó et al., 2019; Teo et al., 2020; Yamada et al., 2018), long hours that prevent a work–life balance, abuse of power, ignoring the employee, and leveraging silence as a form of defiance (Caesens et al., 2018; Scott, 1990). As a reaction to hostility and a form of dissent, powerless employees respond with “foot-dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage” (Scott, 1985, p. 14), gossip, and rumors (Scott, 1990).

Workplace hostility has short and long-term effects on organizations, employees, and lateral victims (Bambi et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2011). Consequences include depression, post-traumatic stress, burnout, anxiety, and suicide, in addition to increased sadness, fear, and anger (Namin et al., 2021), poor productivity, low job satisfaction, lost wages, absenteeism, and turnover intent (Bambi et al., 2018; Namin et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2011). Psychological effects often influence the victim’s performance, productivity, and attendance (Feijó et al., 2019; Hodgins et al., 2014; Salin, 2003; Teo et al., 2020). In addition, workplace hostility may lead to post-traumatic stress, somatic symptoms, suicide (Feijó et al., 2019; Wilson et al., 2011), adverse patient outcomes (Bambi et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2011), and homicide (Doucette et al., 2019).

Disempowerment strategies used by bullying offenders include nativism, social distinctions, misinformation, fear, dehumanization, and subjugation.

Nativism is a narrowly defined culture that creates an “us-versus-them” attitude that may transcend but may also include race, status, religion, sex, and nationality, depending on the context of nativism. For example, gender-specific nativism looks specifically to socially constructed differences in the traditional construction of man and woman. Hence, nativism can be experienced in a culture where new hires encounter a culture of exclusion based on gender, credentials, years of service, or job title (Bambi et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2011). Other divisive strategies used with nativism include segregation during meal breaks based on race, ethnicity, gender, and religion or excluding employees from routine work-hour activities and after-hours gatherings. Where nativism relies heavily on culturally specific attitudes and beliefs not normalized by society, social distinctions rely on normalized attitudes, values, and beliefs regarding class hierarchy that often divide one group from another between blurred lines. In the workplace, social distinctions are often based on the employee’s dress code, hairstyle code, communication preference, accent, organizational status, and other factors.

Misinformation contributes to workplace hostility through role conflict, withholding information, ambiguous policies, and unclear responsibilities (Feijó et al., 2019; Hodgins et al., 2014). The employer may lie (Caesens et al., 2018) and misinform employees regarding state and federal employee rights, departmental policies, employee competence, and work performance (Teo et al., 2020). Human resources ideology often supports workplace bullying (Feijó et al., 2019). Therefore, the employee may feel

betrayed (Caesens et al., 2018), alone, outnumbered, excluded, oppressed, and fearful (Bambi et al., 2018; Feijó et al., 2019; Park et al., 2020). Misinformation by human resources reinforces fear and other feelings associated with workplace hostility. Employers instill fear with threats of unfavorable reference, write-up, unpaid leave, humiliation, and termination (Caesens et al., 2018; Yamada et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2011). Fear often leads to feelings of dehumanization (Akella, 2020).

Dehumanization is a psychological process (Valtorta et al., 2022) associated with petty tyranny in the workplace and culture that fosters the feeling of being treated as objects or used by employers (Caesens et al., 2018). Petty tyranny is caused by abusive supervisors who “engage in the sustained display of hostile verbal and nonverbal behaviors ... such as yelling at subordinates, giving the silent treatment, expressing anger, or ridiculing subordinates publicly” (Caesens et al., 2018, p. 710). Employee-employee and employer-employee bullying share similar subtle strategies: disrespect, humiliation, thoughtlessness, arrogance, neglect, or not being recognized as having a socially valuable existence (Caesens et al., 2018, p. 710), feigning disinterest (not mattering; Pizzirani et al., 2019), and exclusion (social and situational). Dehumanization is associated with employee dissatisfaction, employer-employee relationship, turnover intent, and burnout (Caesens et al., 2018). The association between dehumanization and workplace subjugation is that dehumanization may lead to subjugation.

Workplace subjugation is any disempowerment strategy that causes the employee to disregard a work-life balance, labor laws, policy, or job description as a condition of their employment, promotion, or salary increase. For example, fear is often used as a

strategy of subjugation to increase productivity (Akella, 2022). Workplace subjugation does not include employees who enjoy and feel empowered when immersed in their work. Workplace subjugation includes attempts to Anglicize the appearance of minority women, learned helplessness, ostracizing and terminating employees for expressing what the organization considers an extreme ideology, requiring workers to sign a non-compete clause, and regulating their employees' off-hour lives without prior request or consent.

Knowledge in the workplace relies on effective communication skills, coping skills, impression management skills, prudence, competence in their field or assigned duties, resourcefulness, and access to a support network that assists the employee in achieving their professional goals, like honor societies. It is often the case that competent or overqualified employees intimidate lesser qualified employees and thus trigger workplace bullying. However, employees who understand human nature can recognize when the bullying results from the bully's low self-esteem and/or need to feel empowered (Anderson, 2017).

The International Labor Organization recognizes human dignity as a fundamental human right (Tiwari & Sharma, 2019). Therefore, every employee has a right to take time off and decide how they will occupy it (Tiwari & Sharma, 2019). However, employees are often complicit in allowing others to infringe on their human dignity, hoping things will soon change when upper management notices them. They believe they can transfer to another department, look for a different job or resign if the situation does not improve. To be exact, knowledge of the oppressive environment alone does not assist the employee with changing their situation. However, resourceful employees are more likely to find

strategies that may ameliorate the work situation, possess coping skills, or be more likely to leave the toxic work environment completely (Gillen et al., 2017).

Despite the awareness of the long-term effect of workplace hostility, there is an urgent need for quality workplace interventions that prevent bullying behaviors (Gillen et al., 2017). Regarding what is considered fair, employers often rely on employees to seek organizational justice and just solutions to end the oppressive work environment. Solutions traditionally used may include a one-on-one discussion with the person or people engaging in hostility, reporting the hostile employee by following the chain of command, self-evaluating to make improvements with time management skills, and prioritizing (Hodgins et al., 2014), asking for help, or involving human resources by filing a formal grievance, which often has negative consequences. In contrast, empowering leadership has been a mitigating factor in workplace bullying (Feijó et al., 2019). Nevertheless, research suggests that employee empowerment is often rhetoric, given the prevalence of hierarchies in the workplace (Akpotor & Johnson, 2019).

Employees can self-empower by becoming aware of applicable statutes and maintaining detailed documentation of bullying incidents that include the date, time, place, witnesses, and the person to whom the bullying was reported; documenting new positions that may be available; maintaining a current resumé; saving more in their retirement account; and sharing their work experience with outside sources like friends, family, and partner. Social and emotional support from friends and family can help employees deal with workplace hostility (Ross, 2017).

Employees can unite with others by finding support from the Employee Assistance Program, Department of Labor, Equal Employment Opportunities Commission, and other state and federal oversight agencies, seeking legal help, therapy, or whistleblowing via various mediums. However, employers are best positioned to assist employees by empowering employees and providing distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

On the other hand, employee victims of workplace hostility can obtain a sense of security by changing their work environment to promote their psychological well-being (Gillen et al., 2017). Aside from finding a new position, employees can find temporary security by applying for unemployment benefits, selling stocks, or using part of their retirement savings. They can also seek external solutions by reporting the hostile environment to the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission through civil litigation or filing a police report if the bullying constitutes criminal behavior. However, employees are more likely to feel empowered if they believe the strategy they use in dealing with workplace bullying will be effective and their employer will end the bullying without repercussions to the bullied victim. The sections on the policy implications follow and continue with the implications for social change next.

Implications for Policy

In addition to policy implications, a framework of principles may complement former Justice Scalia's originalism theory by embedding "certain rights in such a manner that future generations cannot really take them away" (Eisgruber, 2007, p. 36); and, as a result, be the constant in an "evolving standard of decency" (p. 36) and support the idea

of the spirit of the law. In the academic setting, strategies could increase awareness of the complexities of governance, the American social change process, and the consequences of an incremental approach to social change. An educational policy requiring support systems within the school setting for ostracized and bullied students with a strong need to preserve their human dignity but who lack the appropriate skills could reduce incidents of school violence. Also, a thorough introduction to the principles could equip students with a strategy to counter and weaken the effects of oppressive strategies they will likely encounter throughout their lives. Instructors must instill a healthy respect for human dignity throughout students' educational experiences.

Likewise, a state policy mandating the posting of employees' right to an independent mediator to address workplace hostility could improve the work environment by improving productivity, quality, and attendance. This could reduce acts of violence, employee retaliation, lawsuits, and the cost of hiring and training new employees. Also, a policy requiring grantees to partner with community organizations and provide wraparound services for perpetrators and victims of intimate partner violence and their children could lower parent and child victimizations and fatal encounters. Nonetheless, a culture of respect for the dignity of self and others must be fostered more than anything else. As with all the policy changes addressing injustice, there are implications for positive social change. These implications follow.

Implications for Positive Social Change

There are more contributions to positive social change aside from the democratic social change framework's practical utility of preventing violence and trauma of students,

employees, and victims of intimate partner violence: the first principles of democracy framework, a normative framework, a policy analysis framework, a demoralization process framework, and a parsimonious conceptual framework. As public officials fulfill their role as a government for the people, the normative framework serves to unite and empower citizens. The first principles of democracy framework could expand our understanding of democracy, improve the living conditions of Americans, and revitalize democracy as envisioned by the Founders by intercepting the fatal sequence of democracy proposed in 1787 by Scottish historian Alexander Tytler (Greenwell, 2018). An interruption in the fatal sequence of democracy could delay or prevent the dependency stage, where the government has absolute control over citizens, and as a result, the bondage stage could lead to fierce opposition and social unrest (Greenwell, 2018). In addition, The conceptual framework constructed with the polarities of democracy in mind (see Benet, 2006, 2013) could be used in planning, formulating, and evaluating organizational policies, and to attain human emancipation and positive social change.

Moreover, understanding the political utility of disempowerment strategies and how to use counterstrategies effectively could empower targeted individuals. This is because it may be possible to detect extralegal practices that delay democratic social change. The first principles of democracy social change process is a grounded theory based on strategy and motivational concepts. It was constructed to explain the process of revolutionary social change, but it could also serve as a disrupter and a transformative process that may lead to social justice, security, and improved self-confidence and self-

esteem. Relationally, social change means secure family, school, and work environments. In school and organizational settings, a sense of security increases student and staff productivity, improves attendance, and reduces staff turnover. Positive social change resulting from the construction of grounded theories involves a better understanding of political science, the evolution of social policies, and the complexity of governance. The conclusion of the study follows.

Conclusion

Hearken not to the unnatural voice which tells you that the people of America, knit together as they are by so many cords of affection, can no longer live together as members of the same family; can no longer continue the mutual guardians of their mutual happiness; can no longer be fellow citizens of one great, respectable, and flourishing empire.

—The Federalist No. 14, 1787/1998, p. 77

This dissertation journey was started attempting to answer the research question: In what ways does the polarities of democracy theory contribute to or detract from realizing the promise of democracy as encapsulated in our foundational documents? Desirous of making a novel contribution, I decided to engage in a critical inquiry using the constructivist grounded theory tradition. A few months later, 12 theoretical codes, six in each category, emerged from the substantive content. As a result of data analyses and theoretical codes, new research questions emerged. The development of five grounded theories preceded the construction of a democratic social change theory, the grounded theory that answers the main research question. A year into my dissertation journey, my

research direction changed. The challenge was to develop a process theory of democratic social change based on the first principles of democracy that emerged from the American founding documents. It was an honor and privilege to embark on that journey.

The most striking finding is the Founders' courage to challenge the then-existing dogma that the king of Great Britain was superior to his subjects, using the first principles of democracy—knowledge, fairness, human dignity, hope, unity, and security—and the anti-democratic strategies employed by the king. Founders and colonists were treated as locals and exploitable laborers unworthy of the king's respect and attention. Consequently, they felt like slaves (Adams, 1776/2022; Henry, 1775). Great Britain's oppressive strategies were part of a program to disempower and impose a false consciousness (Marx & Engels, 1848/2001). However, a generation imbued with respect for human dignity and national sovereignty emerged and defied the ideology of the then-status quo, leading America to independence and establishing a new nation.

As America's first social justice advocates, the Founders' claim to equality with the king was as audacious to the king as the claim to humanity by African Americans, immigrants, LGBTQ, women, seniors, disabled, and offenders. As superior strategists, the Founders knew that all men are created equal. Mounting a social justice movement that led to the Revolutionary War in the interest of fairness, respect for human dignity, unity, security, and renewed hope in government made their awareness evident. However, sacrifices were made by those summoned to duty without their express consent for the development of a sovereign nation.

Today, the United States is the leading superpower. She is more prosperous than any other nation in the world. Thus, it is time to challenge the doxa that skin color, sex, religion, ideology, and wealth determine worth. In an evolving post-racial America, democracy no longer requires human sacrifices and rituals. Instead, it requires government, the people, and their neighbors, to work together for the common good and the nation's good. An advanced generation of critical thinkers can revolutionize society into Jefferson's and Madison's original vision of an America where all people are created equal.

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Appendix A: Sample Memo: Constant Comparison Method

Process	Theoretical Sampling Memos
Theoretical Sample	The Federalist Papers
Comparison Initial Sample	
Comparative Analysis	There were discussions of group empowerment: nationalism, patriotism, and factions. There were also discussions of disempowerment: humans as property, suffrage, factions/diversity, and special interest in protecting property owners' interests over and beyond the political and social interests of non-property owners (social distinctions).
Peculiar Observation	Negativity and a sense of disorganization led to selection of the next theoretical sample.
Memo	The U.S. was still a developing nation. Understand the underlying essence of factions, nationalism, and patriotism by deconstructing terms. *Ask and memo ideas that emerge from process question.
Post Analysis	The center of power is unity, bond, alliance, and cooperation.
Theoretical Sampling	The Bill of Rights
Comparison	The Federalist
Comparative Analysis	Compare and contrast documents and concepts. Themes of personhood, humanization, security, ideas, and unity emerged. Security appears in all the documents examined as safety, economic security, and national security in The Federalist Papers. Security also emerged as personal, religious, and ideological security in the Bill of Rights.
Peculiar Observation	There is no explicit mention of human dignity or negative ideas based on race and factions in the Bill of Rights.
Memo	Compared, contrasted, and deconstructed emerged concepts. Examine concepts from the perspective of marginalized people, governments, and privileged groups. Analyze the relationships

between concepts. Meditate on emerging categories. Apply a comprehensive approach. *

Post Analysis	<p>The personhood theme changed to humanity upon mediation on concepts. Education (vacillated between awareness, ideas, and knowledge during analysis since instruction takes different forms and does not account for natural talents and skills), equity, and religion (as education/ideas) emerged during data analysis. Normalized values and the political ideology, “tough on crime” perspective on crime influenced by fear promoted by the media and politicians, and privatization of prisons are factors that may influence Justices’ decisions on capital punishment and hence explain why there is a shortage of the literature on human dignity in jurisprudence and politics.</p> <p>I became aware that I was unsure of how democracy appeared on paper other than what had been shared through others’ research. From the beginning of the study, I determined to reduce the influence of rehashed definitions of democracy based on what others presumed American democracy to be. Therefore, I bracketed to mitigate the effects of what I previously understood about democracy. I explored the previously documents using a “fresh” lens. I was 'led' to choose the U.S. Constitution as the next theoretical sample.</p>
Theoretical Sample	United States Constitution
Comparison	Bill of Rights, The Federalist
Comparative Analysis	<p>Hope and empowerment emerged, and these themes were followed. More Federalist Papers were analyzed using selective coding for concepts that emerged in the U.S. Constitution (knowledge, unity, empowerment, human dignity, security). Discussions of security and factions implied fear. Equity was not noted in The Federalist Papers.</p>
Peculiar Observation	<p>Some decisions in the document were deemed politically motivated and contrary to the emerged personal values of “Publius,” the authors of The Federalist Papers (Madison, Hamilton, and Jay). The empowerment themes were later compared with the disempowerment themes in The Federalist Papers. There seems to be a hyper-awareness of security.</p>

Memo	Compared, contrasted, and deconstructed terms and documents. Use a telescope lens to examine the document and emerging concepts. I followed my intuition that politics might be involved. There is a dissonance between implicit and explicit meanings. *
Post Analysis	The decision was made to use the term empowerment and include hope as the empowerment factor. The term empowerment has a less obscure meaning than hope. Dehumanization and subjugation were implicit in the text.
Theoretical Sample	The Declaration of Independence
Comparison	U.S. Constitution, The Bill of Rights, The Federalist
Comparative Analysis	Themes of empowerment and disempowerment were compared. In all cases, empowerment was noted. Themes of disempowerment were noted in The Federalist Papers, the Declaration of Independence (train of abuses and usurpations), and the U.S. Constitution (restrictions to full democracy; special requirements for presidency and vice presidency-nativism), but not in the Bill of Rights. I paid close attention to the terms used and the day's culture. I noted that the trains of abuses and usurpations were corrected with due process rights found in the Bill of Rights.
Peculiar Observation	The terms equality and manly firmness. Compared and contrasted equality and manly firmness and engaged in deconstruction to explore power and alternative meanings.
Memo	Conduct a power analysis between the Founders and the king. Meditate on the meaning of equality based on text within the Declaration.*
Post Analysis	The situational analysis led to a desire to investigate the relationship between the king and the Founders using dramaturgical analysis coupled with grounded theory's continuous comparison approach. The findings suggested the interplay of power, politics, and political language. This exploration allowed me to discover a process of personal and social transformation (?) with equality taking on the meaning of human dignity. The principles may have served as individual and collective moral values of the power elite (Founders). In

some ways, the method of using them was to combat the king's oppressive power, one which might have been Bourdieusian and Foucauldian in nature.

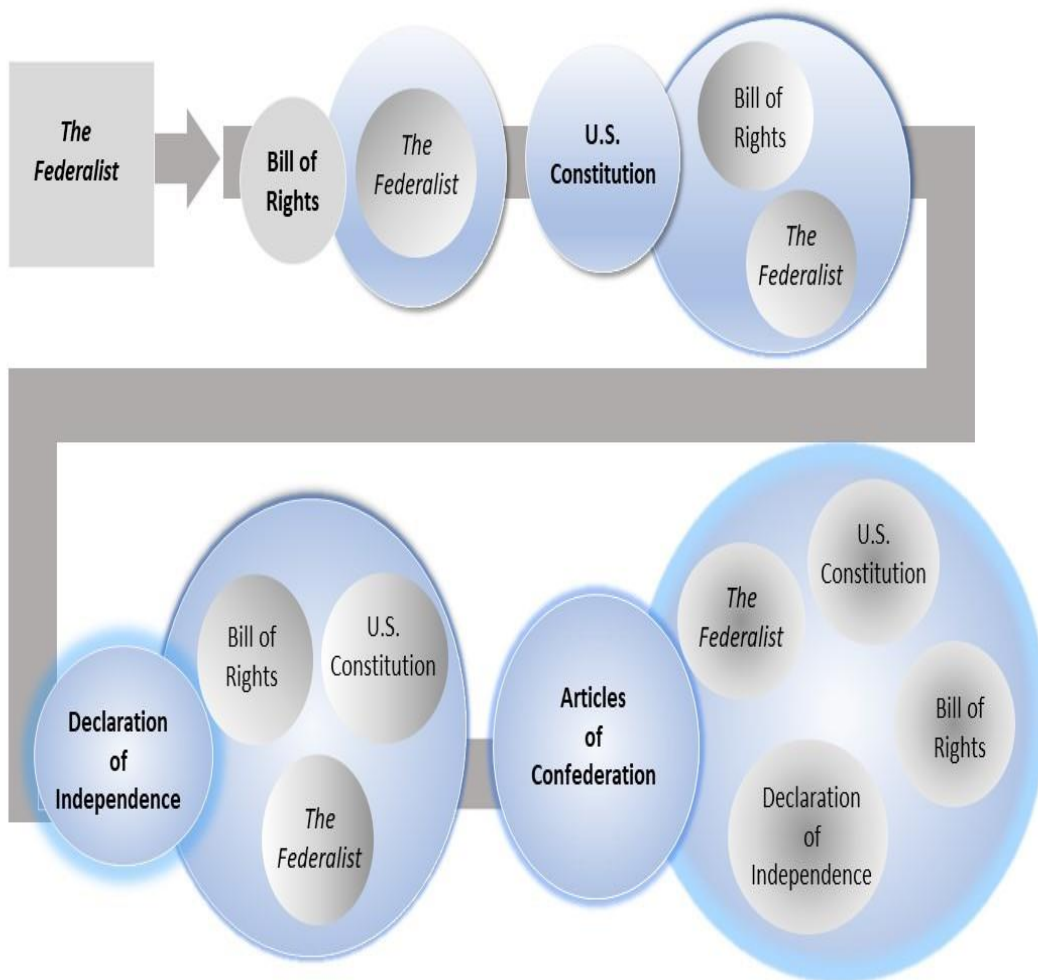
In contrasting the Founders with the Crown, obvious factors emerged. The Founders and colonies lacked economic, cultural, social status, and geopolitical power. The lack of capital and global power suggests that equality and inalienable rights mean more than the superficiality associated with equality and dignity. Therefore, human dignity was the only other meaning of equality that made the colonies equal to Great Britain and permitted the association of inalienable rights. Only when individuals are recognized as human beings can they be guaranteed human rights. As a process, recognition can be seen in the incremental approach to suffrage rights (poor, propertyless White males were given suffrage rights, Black males, White women, and Black women). These groups were recognized as human beings and incrementally deserving of human rights protection. Equality can be seen as acknowledging the worth or dignity of individuals not regarded as imbued with human dignity.

Theoretical Sample	Articles of Confederation
Comparison	The Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, The Bill of Rights, The Federalist
Comparative Analysis	Compared, contrasted, and analyzed document purpose, emerging themes, implicit and implicit meanings, and the relationship between concepts and categories. What was evident between the documents were the concepts of unity (as consolidation of power in all analyzed documents, as a national community in The Federalists Papers, the USCON, Bill of Rights, and Declaration), fear/security, social distinctions (as racial, national, and class (property owners' interest) distinction in The Federalist Papers, as the electoral college in the United States Constitution, and as state power versus citizen rights in the Bill of Rights, and as a class and racial differences in the Articles of Confederation).
Peculiar Observation	The Articles of confederation was the document with the most disdain for paupers, vagabonds and fugitives from justice.

Memo The theme of disempowerment evolved to antidemocratic strategies and continued to notice that all previously analyzed documents except in the Bill of Rights.

Post
Analysis The reference to “savage Indians” in the Declaration makes this commonality noteworthy. However, I suspect the reference in the Declaration was as political as the reference to African Americans as property in The Federalist Papers.

Appendix B: Theoretical Coding Process



Appendix C: Coding the Federalist Papers

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
1	2	The existence of the UNION, the safety and welfare.	U, Se
1	6	This is the safest course for your liberty, your dignity, and your happiness.	HD
1	3	It has been frequently remarked that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country . . . to decide . . . whether societies of men are really capable or not of establishing good government from reflection and choice, or . . . on accident and force.	K
1	3	This idea will add the inducements of philanthropy to those of patriotism.	K, U
1	5	An over-scrupulous jealousy of danger to the rights of the people.	F
1	5	The vigor of government is essential to the security of liberty.	Se
1	5	That a dangerous ambition more often lurks behind the specious mask of zeal for the rights of the people than under the forbidden appearance of zeal for the firmness and efficiency of government.	Se
1	5	Yes, my countrymen.	U
1	6	I am convinced that this is the safest course for your liberty, your dignity, and your happiness.	HD, Se
1	6	To preserve that union.	U
1	7	To offer arguments to prove the utility of the UNION.	U
2	7	It will therefore be of use to begin by examining the advantages of that Union, the certain evils, and the probable dangers, to which every State will be exposed from its dissolution.	U, F, Se
2	9	This country and this people seem to have been made for each other, and it appears as if it was the design of providence, that an inheritance so proper and convenient for a band of brethren. United to each other by the strongest ties, should never be split into a number of unsocial, jealous, and alien sovereignties.	U

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
2	10	Distinguished by their patriotism . . . In the mild season of peace, virtue and wisdom.	U, Se, HD, K
2	11	Knowledge on that head.	K
2	10	It is not yet forgotten that well-grounded apprehensions of imminent danger induced the people of America to form the memorable Congress of 1774.	K, F, Se
2	11	Event proved their wisdom.	K
2	11	Of the people reasoned and decided judiciously.	K
2	11	They considered that the Congress was composed of many wise and experienced men.	K
2	11	Communicated to each other a variety of useful information.	K
2	11	they must have acquired very accurate knowledge on that head.	K
2	11	The true interests of their country.	U
2	11	After the most mature deliberation, they really thought prudent and advisable.	K
2	15	The judgment and integrity of the Congress.	K
2	11	Some of the most distinguished members of that Congress, who have been since tried and justly approved for patriotism and abilities, and who have grown old in acquiring political information, were also members of this convention, and carried into it their accumulated knowledge and experience.	N, K
3	12	IT IS not a new observation that the people of any country (if, like the Americans, intelligent and well-informed) seldom adopt and steadily persevere for many years in an erroneous opinion respecting their interests. That consideration naturally tends to create great respect for the high opinion which the people of America have so long and uniformly entertained of the importance of their continuing firmly united under one federal government, vested with sufficient powers for all general and national purposes.	K, SD, N
3	13	For their SAFETY seems to be the first. The SAFETY of the people.	Se

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
3	13	It as it respects security for the preservation of peace and tranquility, as well as against dangers from FOREIGN ARMS AND INFLUENCE, as from dangers of the LIKE KIND arising from domestic causes.	Se, F
3	13	Under an efficient national government, affords them the best security that can be devised against HOSTILITIES from abroad.	Se
3	14	That a cordial Union, under an efficient national government, affords them the best security that can be devised against HOSTILITIES from abroad. The number of wars which have happened or will happen in the world will always be found to be in proportion to the number and weight of the causes, whether REAL or PRETENDED, which PROVOKE or INVITE them.	Se
3	14	The Union tends most to preserve the people in a state of peace with other nations.	U, Se
3	14	Yet more general and extensive reputation for talents and other qualifications will be necessary.	K
3	14	The judicial decisions of the national government will be more wise, systematical, and judicious than those of individual States, and consequently more satisfactory with respect to other nations, as well as more SAFE with respect to us.	K, Se
3	16	Not a single Indian war has yet been occasioned by aggressions of the present federal government, feeble as it is; but there are several instances of Indian hostilities having been provoked by the improper conduct of individual States, who, either unable or unwilling to restrain or punish offenses, have given occasion to the slaughter of many innocent inhabitants.	Se
3	16	A national government, whose wisdom and prudence will not be diminished by the passions.	K
4	19	If consistent with prudence.	K
4	20	As the safety of the whole is the interest of the whole.	Se

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
4	20	One government can collect and avail itself of the talents and experience of the ablest men, in whatever part of the Union they may be found. It can move on uniform principles of policy. It can harmonize, assimilate, and protect.	K, Se, U
6	32	The wars of these two . . . the desire of supplanting and the fear of being supplanted.	F, S
10	33	By a faction . . . who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.	U
10	33	There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects.	Se, U
10	33	There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.	K, U
10	34	Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.	K, SD
10	34	The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests.	SD, K
10	34	A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders . . . interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good.	SD, U, K, S
10	34	From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties.	K, SD

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
10	34	A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views.	K of SD
10	34	Conflicts. But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination.	K of SD
10	34	Involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.	U
10	34	And what are the different classes of legislators but advocates and parties to the causes which they determine?	K of SD
10	35	The CAUSES of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its EFFECTS.	Se
10	35	When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens.	K
10	35	From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction.	Se,
10	36	Theoretic politicians, who have patronized this species of government, have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.	K
10	36	A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking.	F/E
10	36	The delegation of the government, in the latter [Republic], to a small number of citizens elected by the rest.	K

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
14	116	Hearken not to the unnatural voice which tells you that the people of America, knit together as they are by so many cords of affection, can no longer live together as members of the same family; can no longer continue the mutual guardians of their mutual happiness; can no longer be fellow citizens of one great, respectable, and flourishing empire.	U
22	182	From the gradual conflicts of State regulations, that the citizens of each would at length come to be considered and treated by the others in no better light than that of foreigners and aliens.	N
38	332/333	Congress . . . Is a bill of rights essential to liberty? The Confederation has no bill of rights.	HD
38	333	I shall be told, that however dangerous this mixture of powers may be in theory, it is rendered harmless by the dependence of Congress on the State.	K
38	333	Out of this lifeless mass has already grown an excrescent power, which tends to realize all the dangers that can be apprehended from a defective construction of the supreme government of the Union.	Se, K, U, SD
42	385	Including a power to prohibit, after the year 1808, the importation of slaves.	HD
42	389	That the power of prohibiting the importation of slaves had not been postponed until the year 1808, or rather that it had been suffered to have immediate operation.	HD
42	390	It ought to be considered as a great point gained in favor of humanity, that a period of twenty years may terminate forever, within these States, a traffic which has so long and so loudly upbraided the barbarism of modern policy.	HD
42	390	Happy would it be for the unfortunate Africans, if an equal prospect lay before them of being redeemed from the oppressions of their European brethren!	HD
42	390	Attempts have been made to pervert this clause into an objection against the Constitution, by representing it on one side as a criminal toleration of an illicit practice, and on another as calculated to prevent voluntary and beneficial emigrations from Europe to America.	K

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
42	391	The powers included in the THIRD class are those which provide for the harmony and proper intercourse among the States.	SD
42	398	An alien, therefore, legally incapacitated for certain rights in the latter, may, by previous residence only in the former, elude his incapacity.	N
42	395	What description of Indians are to be deemed members of a State?	N
43	414	That should a popular insurrection happen in one of the States, the others are able to quell it.	F
43	418	God, which declares that the safety and happiness of society are the objects at which all political institutions aim.	U, Se
51	188	The Structure of the Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments.	F/E
51	189	In order to lay a due foundation for that separate and distinct exercise of the different powers of government, which to a certain extent is admitted on all hands to be essential to the preservation of liberty, it is evident that each department should have a will of its own.	F/E
51	190	It may be a reflection on human nature, that such devices should be necessary to control the abuses of government. But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary.	F/E
51	191	In a single republic, all the power surrendered by the people is submitted to The administration of a single government; and the usurpations are guarded against by a division of the government into distinct and separate departments.	F/E, K
51	191	All the power surrendered by the people is submitted to the administration of a single government.	K, Se
51	192	It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure.	N, Se, K, U, SD, F/E

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
51	192	Whilst all authority in it will be derived from and dependent on the society, the society itself will be broken into so many parts, interests, and classes of citizens, that the rights of individuals, or of the minority, will be in little danger from interested combinations of the majority. In a free government the security for civil rights must be the same as that for religious rights. It consists in the one case in the multiplicity of interests, and in the other in the multiplicity of sects.	Se, K, U, SD, N
54	545	From an admission of numbers for the measure of representation, or of slaves combined with free citizens as a ratio of taxation, that slaves ought to be included in the numerical rule of representation. Slaves are considered as property, not as persons.	D
54	545	They ought therefore to be comprehended in estimates of taxation which are founded on property, and to be excluded from representation which is regulated by a census of persons.	D
54	545	Might one of our Southern brethren observe, that representation relates more immediately to persons, and taxation more immediately to property.	D
54	545/546	The true state of the case is, that they partake of both these qualities: being considered by our laws, in some respects, as persons, and in other respects as property.	D
54	546	In being compelled to labor, not for himself, but for a master; in being vendible by one master to another master.	D
54	546	In being subject at all times to be restrained in his liberty and chastised in his body, by the capricious will of another.	D
54	546	The slave may appear to be degraded from the human rank.	SD, D
54	546	[The slave is] classed with those irrational animals which fall under the legal denomination of property.	D
54	546	The slave is no less evidently regarded by the law as a member of the society, not as a part of the irrational creation; as a moral person, not as a mere article of property.	HD
54	546	The federal Constitution, therefore, decides with great propriety on the case of our slaves, when it views them in the mixed character of persons and of property.	D

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
54	546	This is in fact their true character. It is the character bestowed on them by the laws under which they live; and it will not be denied, that these are the proper criterion; because only under the pretext that the laws have transformed the negroes into subject of property.	D
54	547	Because it is only under the pretext that the laws have transformed the negroes into subjects of property.	D
54	547	That if the laws were to restore the rights which have been taken away, the negroes could no longer be refused an equal share of representation with the other inhabitants.	HD
54	547	Would the convention have been impartial or consistent, if they had rejected the slaves from the list of inhabitants, when the shares of representation were to be calculated, and inserted them on the lists when the tariff of contributions was to be adjusted?	K
54	548	Those who reproach the Southern States with the barbarous policy of considering as property a part of their human brethren.	HD
54	549	That the slaves, as inhabitants, should have been admitted into the census according to their full number [...] are not admitted to all the rights of citizens.	S, N
54	550	[slaves] are not admitted to all the rights of citizens.	SD, N, S, D
54	550	As debased by servitude below the equal level of free inhabitants.	D, SD
54	550	SLAVE as divested of two fifths of the MAN.	M, D, SD
83	838/839	Let us suppose that by the laws of this State a married woman was incapable of conveying her estate, and that the legislature, considering this as an evil, should enact that she might dispose of her property by deed executed in the presence of a magistrate. In such a case there can be no doubt, but the specification would amount to an exclusion of any other mode of conveyance, because the woman having no previous power to alienate her property.	SD

No.	Page	Example Quote	Code(s)
83	839	Of the same act it should be declared that no woman should dispose of any estate of a determinate value without the consent of three of her nearest relations, signified by their signing the deed.	SD, N, S

Note. No. is the number of the essay.

Coding abbreviations: Dehumanization (D); Fear (F); Misinformation (M); Nativism (N); Social

Distinctions (SD); Subjugation (S); Knowledge (K); Fairness (F/E); Human Dignity Empowerment (H);

Unity (U); Security (Se).

Appendix D: Coding: Bill of Rights

Amendment	Principle and Example Quote
	Human Dignity
	The Bill of Rights as a whole represent respect for human dignity and fairness.
I	Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech.
III	No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner.
IV	The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.
V	nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.
VIII	nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.
	Fairness
III	No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house.
IV	No warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation.
V	No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury . . . nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.
VI	The right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury . . . to be informed of the nature. And cause of the accusation . . . confronted with the witnesses against him . . . have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor . . . have the assistance of counsel for his defense.
VII	Right of trial . . . no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States.
VIII	Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed.

Amendment	Principle and Example Quote
Hope	
X	The powers not delegated to the United States by the constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.
I	[Right] to petition the government for a redress of grievances.
IX	Certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.
Security	
II	Well-regulated militia . . . security of a free states, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.
V	in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger (there may be exception to grand jury indictment).
Unity	
I	Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.
VI	By an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed.
Knowledge	
I	No law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.
VII	[Right to trial] by jury shall be preserved.

Appendix E: Coding the U.S. Constitution

Section	Example Quote	Theoretical Code(s)
13th	Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.	Human Dignity, Fairness
14th	All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside . . . nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.	Nativism
14th §3	No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States . . . who having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United State . . . shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof.	Security, Nativism
15th	The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.	Human Dignity, Fairness, Nativism
19th	The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.	Human Dignity, Fairness
24th	The right of citizens of the United States to vote . . . shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay poll tax or other tax.	Fairness
26th	The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.	Human Dignity, Fairness
art. 1, §2, cl. 3	Those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons.	Nativism
art. 1, §2, cl. 2	no person shall be a Representative who... is not a citizen of the United States	Unity
art. 1, §3, cl. 3	no person shall be a Senator who . . . is not a citizen of the United States	Unity

Section	Example Quote	Theoretical Code(s)
art. 1, §9, cl. 1	The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight	Nativism, Dehumanization.
art. 3, §1	No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States . . . shall be eligible to the Office of President . . . neither shall any Person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty-five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.	Nativism
art. 4, §2, cl. 3	No Person held to Service or Labor in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labor, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labor may be due.	Dehumanization
art. 4, §2	The United States shall guarantee to every state in this union a republican form of government, and shall protect each against invasion . . . and against domestic violence.	Security

Appendix F: Coding the Declaration of Independence

Empowerment Principles

Examples of Empowerment	Code(s)
The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America.	U
A decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.	K, F
We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.	K, F, H
They are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.	H, Se, E
That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.	Se, H, E, F, U
It is the right of the People to alter or to abolish [destructive government], and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their Safety and Happiness.	E, F, H, Se
Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves.	K, F
It is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.	E, F, Se
Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies.	K
Obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their Migrations hither, and raising the Conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.	U
We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms.	K, F, E

Examples of Empowerment	Code(s)
We have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations.	H, K, F, E
As we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.	H, Se, E, F
The good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare . . . That these United Colonies are	U, E, F
Of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; as Free and Independent States.	H, Se, E, F
Have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.	H, Se, E
And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.	Se, H, E, U

Note. Equity/Fairness (F); Empowerment (E); Knowledge (K); Human Dignity (H); Unity (U); Security (Se).

Appendix G: Coding Trains of Abuses and Usurpations

Examples of Unfairness	Code(s)
But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism.	D, S
Attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us.	D, S
Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury.	D, SD
They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity.	D
That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends.	D, S
He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.	S, SD
He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.	SD, D
He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.	F, S, D
He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.	S
He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.	F, S, D
He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the meantime exposed to all the Dangers of Invasion from without, and convulsions within.	F, D
He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.	F

Examples of Unfairness	Code(s)
He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.	SD, D
He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.	N, SD, D
He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.	N, F, D
He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.	F, D
He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.	F, N
He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation.	D, M, SD, F
For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us.	S, D, F
For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States.	M, N, D, S
For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent.	D, S
For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury.	D, S
For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences.	D, M
For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighboring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies.	M, D, N
For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments.	D, S
For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.	D
He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.	S, F
He is at this time transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny . . . totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.	F, SD, S

Examples of Unfairness	Code(s)
He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.	F, N, K
He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.	F, D, S, SD
He has excited domestic Insurrections amongst us, and has endeavored to bring on the Inhabitants of our Frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known Rule of Warfare, is an undistinguished Destruction, of all Ages, Sexes and Conditions.	F, S, N
He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers.	F, SD
Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.	D, SD
We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity.	D

Appendix H: Coding Articles of Confederation

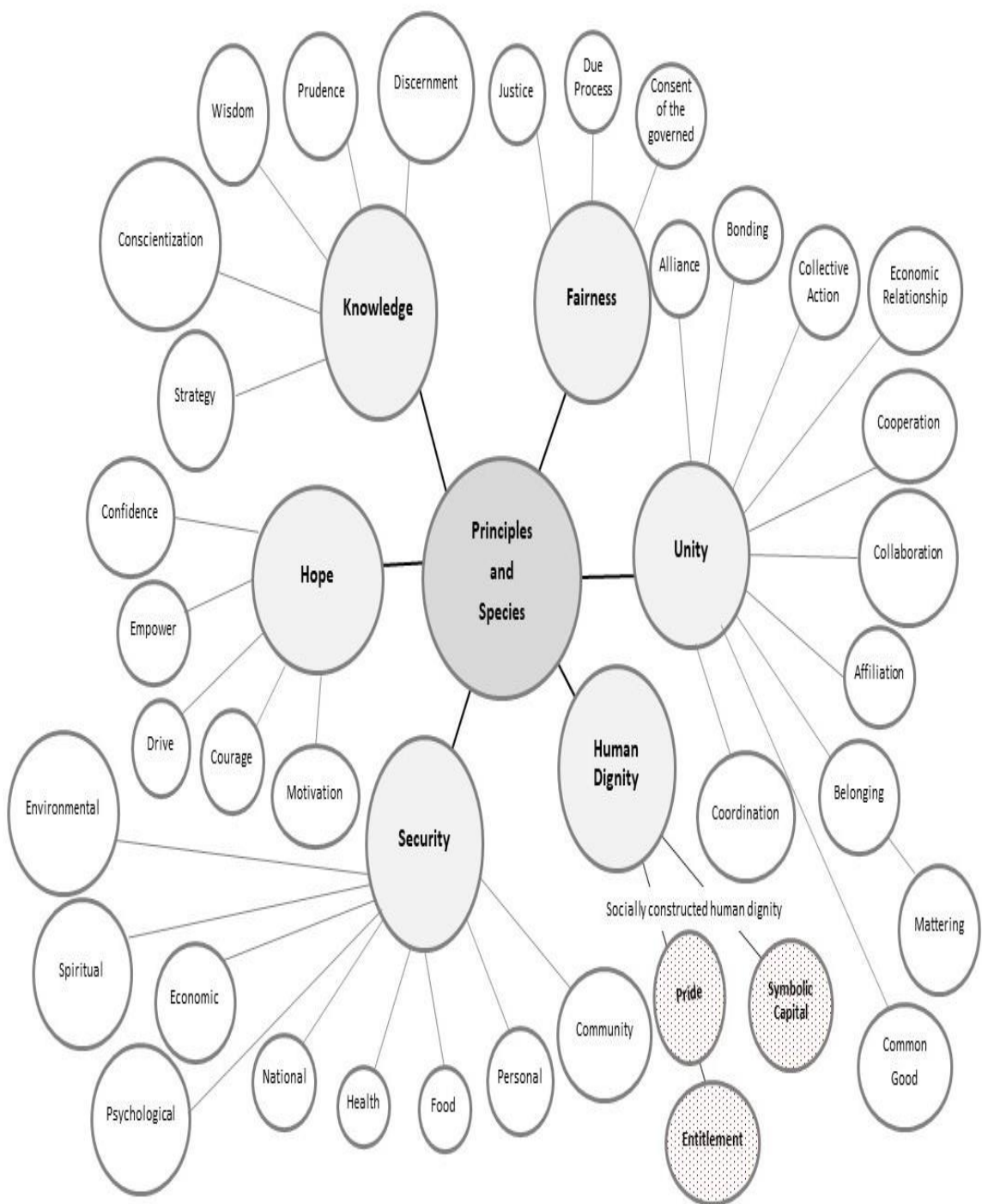
Article, Page	Quote Example	Theoretical Code(s)
art. 1, p. 1	Articles of Confederation and perpetual Union between the States	U, Se, N
art. 2, p. 1	Each State retains its sovereignty, freedom and independence, and every power, jurisdiction and right.	U
art. 4, p. 1	The better to secure and perpetuate mutual friendship and intercourse among the people of the different States in this Union, the free inhabitants of each of these States	Se, U, N
art. 4, p. 1	The free inhabitants of each of these states, paupers, vagabonds and fugitives from justice excepted shall be entitled to all privileges and immunities of free citizens in the several states.	D, HD, N, SD,
art. 4, p. 1	Shall enjoy therein all the privileges of trade and commerce.	Se
art. 4, p. 1	If any person guilty of, or charged with treason, felony, or other high misdemeanor in any State, shall flee from justice. They shall be delivered up and removed to the State having jurisdiction of his offense.	Se, F/E
art. 4, p. 1	Full faith and credit shall be given in each of these States to the records, acts and judicial proceedings of the courts and magistrates of every other State.	U, F/E, Se
art. 5, p. 2	Freedom of speech and debate in Congress shall not be impeached or questioned in any court, or place out of Congress, except for treason, felony, or breach of the peace.	K, HD, Se
art. 6, p. 2	No State, without the consent of the United States in Congress assembled, shall send any embassy to, or receive any embassy from, or enter into any conference, agreement, alliance or treaty with any King, Prince or State; nor . . . accept any present, emolument, office or title of any kind whatever from any King, Prince or foreign State	Se
art. 6, p. 2	No two or more States shall enter into any treaty, confederation or alliance whatever between them, without the consent of the United States in Congress assembled.	Se, N
art. 6, p. 2	No vessels of war shall be kept up in time of peace by any State	HD, Se

Note. Coding abbreviations: Dehumanization (D); Fear (F); Misinformation (M); Nativism (N);

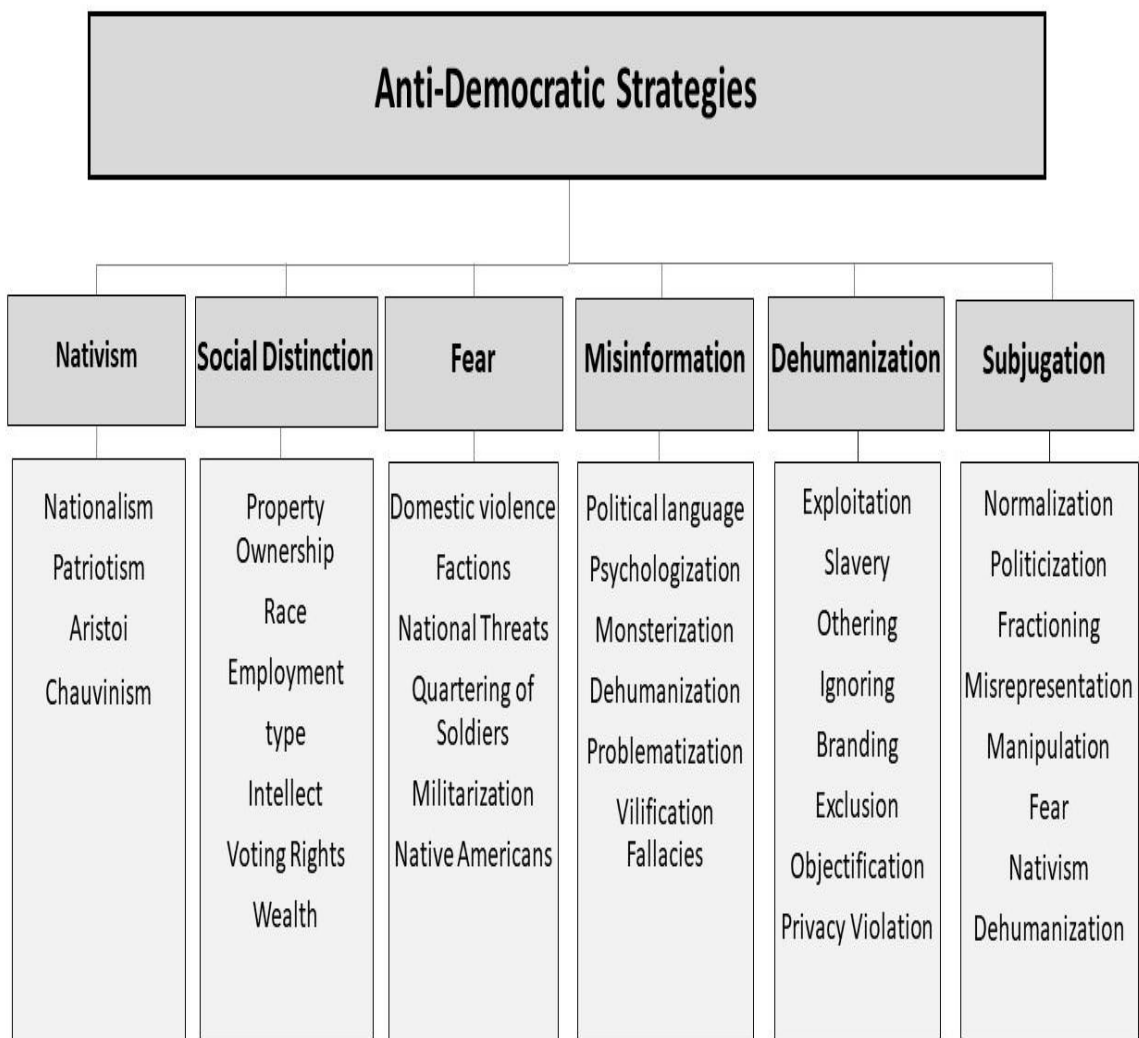
Social Distinctions (SD); Subjugation (S); Knowledge (K); Fairness (F/E); Human Dignity

Empowerment (H); Unity (U); Security (Se)

Appendix I: Principles and Their Species



Appendix J: Species of Disempowerment



Appendix K: Triangulation National Security Report for the United States of America

Strategy	Administration and Example of Codes
Reagan Administration, 1987	
Principles	<i>Empowerment</i> (encourage hope for change, engagement, democratic change, free elections), <i>Fairness</i> (justice, social justice, economic development, food, water, addressing the problem of poverty), <i>Knowledge</i> (intelligence, diplomacy, military technology, military strategy, innovation), <i>Human dignity</i> (human dignity, preserving human rights, freedom, democracy), <i>Security</i> (economic security and national security), and <i>Unity</i> (allies, collaboration, partners)
Anti-Democratic Tenets	<i>Dehumanization</i> (human rights violations, oppression), <i>Misinformation</i> (propaganda), <i>Nativism</i> , <i>Fear</i> (security threats), <i>Social distinctions</i> (disparities of wealth, ethnic frictions, unsettled borders, and religion), and <i>Subjugation</i> (domination)
Clinton Administration, 1999	
Principles	<i>Empowerment</i> (hope, democratic participation, democratic empowerment, free elections, promoting democracy, economic empowerment), <i>Fairness</i> (justice, fair employment and economic opportunity, economic development), <i>Human dignity</i> (dignity, preserving human rights, freedom, democracy), <i>Knowledge</i> (intelligence, diplomacy, economic and commercial secrets, language proficiencies, cross-cultural communication, modernization, innovation), <i>Security</i> (global stability, economic wellbeing, disaster relief, environmental security, economic prosperity, national security, peace process, freedom, humanitarian aid), and <i>Unity</i> (allies, partnership, cooperation)
Anti-Democratic Tenets	<i>Dehumanization</i> (human rights violations), <i>Fear</i> (security threats, state-sponsored terrorism), <i>Misinformation</i> , <i>Nativism</i> , <i>Social distinctions</i> (ethnic, religious, and cultural strife) and <i>Subjugation</i> (oppressed groups)
Bush W Administration, 2002	
Principles	<i>Empowerment</i> (encourage change, strengthen democracy, democratic political system, respect for women, using voice and

Strategy	Administration and Example of Codes
Anti-Democratic Tenets	<p>vote, kindle hope and aspirations), Fairness (independent judiciary, the rule of law, justice, equal justice), Human dignity (human dignity, human rights, liberty, democracy), Knowledge (emphasize education, intelligence collection and analysis, diplomacy, modern technology, innovation), Security (secure public health, freedom of movement, economic development, free from poverty and violence, humanitarian assistance, national security, political, economic, and military resources, respect for private property, religious and ethnic tolerance, free trade, global security), Unity (coordination, allies, open society, bilateral engagement, partnership, solidarity, cooperation)</p> <p><i>Dehumanization</i> (oppression, unfair practices), <i>Fear</i> (dominant potential aggressors, threats), <i>Nativism</i> (corruption), <i>Subjugation</i> (authoritarian systems, repressive governments)</p>
Obama Administration, 2015	
Principles	<p><i>Empowerment</i> (hope, democratic transitions, empower, empower women's equality and empowerment, representative system of government), <i>Fairness</i> (social, economic development, justice, due process, ending extreme poverty, accountability), <i>Human dignity</i> (human rights, human dignity, freedom, defending democracy, dignity), <i>Knowledge</i> (intelligence, diplomacy), <i>Security</i> (safety, economic and national security), and <i>Unity</i> (coalitions, alliances, partnerships)</p>
Anti-Democratic Tenets	<p><i>Dehumanization</i> (oppression, human rights abuses, denied inalienable rights, violence), <i>Fear</i>, <i>Misinformation</i> (propaganda), <i>Nativism</i> (authoritarianism, political elites, mass atrocities)</p>
Trump Administration, 2017	
Principles	<p><i>Empowerment</i> (empower, restore hope, promote women and youth empowerment programs, inspire, uplift, renew), <i>Fairness</i> (fairness, reciprocity, justice under law, respect for individual liberty, equal rights for all Americans, fair trade), <i>Human dignity</i> (human dignity, human rights, freedom, democracy, dignity of every life), <i>Knowledge</i> (intelligence, diplomacy, political, economic, and military competition, innovation, technology, harness the power of data), <i>Security</i> (safety, peace, tolerance, security, protecting national sovereignty, military victories, economic security, national security, promoting prosperity), and <i>Unity</i> (alliances, collaboration, partners, unified people)</p>
Anti-Democratic Tenets	<p><i>Dehumanization</i> (oppression, brutalization of people), <i>Misinformation</i> (propaganda, disinformation, ideological threats, false information), <i>Nativism</i> (fascism, bigotry imperialism, dictatorship, hostile ideologies, enforced uniformity), <i>Subjugation</i> (power, dominance)</p>

Appendix L: Triangulation Concepts in Social Movements Democracy in Social Movements

Comparison research analyzing democracy in social movements was carried out by Donatella Della Porta (2009). The European Commission funded the study. Six European nations, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom, participated. The dataset comprises over 210 organizations whose members participated in interviews (Della Porta, 2009). The study lasted from the first of September 2004 to the last day of August 2008. A review of this work indicates that theoretical codes are already part of social movements in one way or another. However, the terms used to express these principles may differ.

Knowledge—Terms associated with knowledge include expertise, judgment, decision-making, professionalism, and specialization.

Fairness/Equity—Social justice has been linked to the terms “justice” and “fair” (Della Porta, 2009, p. 22) and the goals of what the movement is about (p. 22). Pages 23 and 24 contain a substantial list of social justice goals and terms associated with equity. However, the listed social justice goals lead to equity and security in various forms. Social justice, or equity, is the “broken frame that connects all the others” and prioritizes human beings over profit, militarization, and financial and cultural power (Della Porta, 2009, p. 23). Social justice, global justice, justice, workers’ rights, equal wages, globalization of human rights, and unionism (which can also be associated with unity) are associated with equity. At least in the organization, equity is a motivating factor (Watters, 2021).

Human Dignity—Human dignity is implied. It is associated with the provision of human rights, economic development, and the benefits of social justice listed on pages 22 and 23 (Della Porta, 2009).

Unity—United, consensual decision-making, shared vision, collective contributions, collective decision-making, grassroots, direct democracy, communitarian identity, unitary-plural, majoritarian decision-making, cooperation, unionism, majority vote, consensual majoritarian principle.

Hope—Hope is absent. However, empowerment is found in participation principles, political engagement, mobilization, and deliberative democracy. Social justice goals may lead to empowerment. Secure people feel more empowered than those who are inhibited by fear.

Security—Eradication of poverty, peace, eradication of hunger, access to resources, economic justice, sustainable social development (economic, financial, and environmental), and the outcomes of social justice goals mentioned on pages 22 and 23 (Della Porta, 2009).