

ANNALIZA JACKSON
& ASSOCIATES

Advancing People Advancing Leaders

Reflective Leaders

November Edition 2008

Welcome to the next instalment of 'Reflective Leaders'

- **Annaliza Jackson**



On 5th November an historic event took place in the USA – Barak Hussein Obama was elected the 44th President of the United States of America. Many factors attributed to the mass support of President Obama across the globe by analysts include focus on smart marketing, pitching the right economic factors and so forth. The call for change is one that has been ringing in many hearts and minds for well over a decade – the ravages of war; uncertainties of environmental forces; the threats to global security; the lack of safety for our

children; and the greed that has led to the current economic crisis, have all been contributors. People are tired of living in fear; they are tired of being powerless. The mass grassroots movement that Obama and his people mobilised in the US during this last presidential campaign was successful because it touched the hearts of the ordinary person. It cut across colour, race, creed and social class and has given people all over the world hope once more – “Yes, we can” became a powerful motivator – a motivator for hope that would bring change and balance back into our global society. It is no accident that President Obama is perceived as keeping the vision and message of Martin Luther King alive and well. Obama has become everyone’s President because of what he symbolises – social justice. We don’t want to make him a hero or expect more than we would any other human being, but I believe we want to live in hope that he will do the very best he can with the resources available to him. His decisions impact on my children and grandchildren as much as they do on the American progeny. Biko Syong’oh and Michael Akindeju, provide us their views of what having President Obama in the White House means to them and other Africans across the globe. Zoltan Kovacs, Opinion Editor with The West Australian has kindly allowed us to reprint his views on Obama’s win.

The 6th September witnessed the fall of the Labor government in WA and the surprise return of Colin Barnett, not as Leader of Opposition, but Leader of Government. Within a matter of 4 weeks Labor took a back seat. Australians will put up with just about anything in their leaders but not arrogance – a fault of the Carpenter regime. Harry Phillips, Peter Kenyon and Damian Leach provide insightful analyses of our last WA election. Finally, I note the injustices of Japanese whaling still marring our Antarctic waters. I wonder - does Garrett burn the midnight oil worrying about this inhumane practice? Or was it election marketing hype? I remain seriously concerned about the increase of abuse and violations against our children – the focus of our early 2009 edition. Finally, I wish you and your loved ones a peaceful and joyous festive season - Merry Christmas, Buon Natale, Happy Hanukkah, Namaste.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. Dr Martin Luther King

Best Wishes

Annaliza Jackson

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Obama in the defining moment of World History

By Michael k. Akindeju

(BSc, MSc, M AOCs, MPMI, MAIChE, AMIChemE)

Research Associate, Chemical Engineering Department, Particle Image Velocimetry (PIV) Laboratory Manager, Engineering School Radiation Safety Supervisor, Curtin University of Technology

Defiling pundits and sceptics, about 67million (53% of total vote) Americans voted for Barack Hussein Obama to elect the first African-American and 44th President of the most politically powerful nation in our world on November 4, 2008. That epic moment of victory defined National politics as one of the few events to join the likes of athletics, academics and world football championships where merit draws and definitively determines the finish line.

When he announced his candidature in Springfield, Illinois on Saturday February 10, 2007; most people sneered and jeered at Obama. But thanks to the crucible testing of the long Democratic Party nomination campaign and the economic woes of the United States, Obama's presidential credentials were revealed and preferred in a battle that involved better-known house-hold political gurus like John McCain, Hillary Rodham Clinton, John Edwards, Mike Huckabee, Rudy Guiliano and Scott Rasmussen amongst others.

Little wonder that he is celebrated and well spoken about all over the world even by Italy's left wing Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi; he is culturally savvy, having been raised like most other black kids of his time and being a product of an inter-racial marriage- a phenomenon that was frowned upon in their time. He represented everything discriminated against- skin colour, religious rumours, political career age and his acquaintances amongst others.

Elucidating for the fundamental props for his achievements, his core principles of equity and fairness, breasted with dogged and philosophical attributes of discipline, determination and dedication; and saturated with understanding, knowledge and a character of excellence with which he consistently attends to everything he does are to be found. His election shows how much of influence his personal knowledge of self, his gifts, learning and personality have created and imprinted on the hearts of not just his supporters, but his opponents too. He is indeed the part fulfilment of the 45year old dream of Martin Luther King (Jr.) ...that one day America and Americans "will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed" where "it is self-evident, that all men are created equal... be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice... and live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin but by the content of their character".

His election night, though a promisingly momentous point on the journey to see King's dream truly fulfilled is not a final rest as men and women of colour everywhere around the world now look to the symbolism of Obama to find courage and new meanings in their national polity, it must be unequivocally said that the underlying and distinguishing factors for Obama's share of history are merit and foresight. As the world becomes a plainer playing field and a stage where colour is no longer a detrimental factor, there must be an increased thirst for knowledge, its application and excellence in our everyday lives. However even within the gloom of today: Hope is not lost. Hope is certain, according to the late chief Obafemi Awolowo (Nigerian politician, leader and Premier of Western Nigeria 1959-1960): "The gloom of the world is but a shadow and there is radiance in the dark. If we could all see the only need to cultivate the courage to look, and the insight to apprehend the light which shines and make the truth a valuable pursuit". It must be borne on our minds that the "epic struggles of our heroes gone will forever remain imperishable episodes in the annals of man's long arduous and dialectic strides to social uprightness" and should be sacredly emulated. A new chapter has begun, lets all write our pages in letters of gold to be read in the congress of noble men and women yet to come.

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A World the Generations of Hate Called Impossible

By Zoltan Kovacs, Opinion Editor,

Saturday November 8, 2008, The West Australian Newspaper (Reprint with permission)

A year after Barack Obama was born in 1961, the American author John Steinback had a book published about a journey of discovery he made around his homeland. In *Travels with Charley*, Steinback presents a snapshot of the nation at the beginning of the 1960's with the novelist's insights into the mood of the people.

It is a generally optimistic book until he arrives in New Orleans and witnesses the infamous daily displays of vicious racism orchestrated at a desegregated school by a group of women ironically dubbed the Cheerleaders. His dismay and outrage are palpable as he describes the arrival at the school of "the littlest Negro girl you ever saw" to a chorus of abuse.

"The big marshals stood her on the curb and a jangle of jeering shrieks went up from behind the barricades. The little girl did not look at the howling crowd but from the side the whites of her eyes showed like those of a frightened fawn. The men turned her around like a doll, and then the strange procession moved up to the broad walk towards the school, and the child was even more of a might because the men were so big.

"Then the girl made a curious hop, and I know what it was. I think in her whole life she had not gone 10 steps without skipping, but now in the middle of her first skip the weight bore her down and her little round feet took measured, reluctant steps between the tall guards. Slowly they climbed the steps and entered the school."

That then was a part of the America into which president-elect Obama was born; a nation that harboured in its south a brutal form of racism that sickened Steinback and many others around the world.

It was the nation of the Ku Klux Klan, of murder and beatings of African Americans in which local southern law sometimes took little real interest, of the assassination of the civil rights champions, President John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King.

It was inconceivable then that an African American would ever be the president of the US. It seemed impossible that the crushing weight of prejudice and hate would ever be lifted of any such aspiration while African Americans in parts of the nation battled to get a seat in a restaurant or at the front of a bus. Indeed, the view was common among many people who formed their political opinions in the 1960s and 1970s that there were three events they probably would never see: the end of the apartheid regime in South Africa, the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the election to the US presidency of an African American. Senator Obama has completed one of history's most unlikely trifectas – as seen from just a generation or two ago.

His has been an amazing accomplishment not only because of his race but also because of his relatively humble origins. He has, in a sense, fulfilled the civil rights promise of the Kennedy era and validated its legacy.

Of course, it can be observed cynically that his biggest advantage was that he was not George Bush. Nevertheless, he also won on the strength of his rhetoric of change in a nation that cried out for political renewal and on the evident content of his character, to echo Dr King. He has raised expectations that he will restore the diminished standing and the moral authority of the presidency.

His arrival in the White House will have powerful symbolism in international relations and change perception of the US, particularly in African and other Third World nations. The election of an African American president may be seen as an act of national redemption from a horribly racist past. But it is also an act of trust which has nothing to do with race and which he can repay only by making the promise of his rhetoric of good, fair and effective leadership a reality.

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What Obama's Victory Win Really Means for Kenya

By Biko Syong'oh

Kenyan-born Mr. Syong-oh has a Communications Degree and is currently in the final stages of completing a Law Degree at Newcastle University. Among many other activities, he is a member of the SBS Community Advisory Committee and currently producing on a Swahili radio program for Northern Settlement Services, NSW.

United States president elect Obama's recent victory in the US elections two weeks ago has drawn unprecedented interest not only from the USA and the Western world, but also from Africa and Kenya in particular. First, Obama is unequivocally American by birth and upbringing. But his writing, speeches and mannerisms have left little doubt that the president elect is proud of his Kenyan roots. It is evident that Obama is acutely conscious of and comfortable with his Kenyan heritage. The search for his identity began in his teenage, he writes in *Dreams from My Father*, when it suddenly occurred to him that everybody around him was either white or with a "proper" American name. Kenyans have also made it known to the world that they are very proud of a man they have come to fondly refer to as "our son". But what does his victory really mean for Kenya and her people? For one, there is a euphoric feeling that for once, we have 'our own brother' governing the most powerful nation on earth, and that alone gives many Kenyans in countries such as Australia and other parts of the world new hope, and refreshes their spirits in believing that a "glass ceiling" has been shattered and so much more can now be achieved irrespective of racial or cultural background. His victory certainly carries with it a very fresh meaning of the now almost cliché slogan "yes we can".

This is not to say that Kenyans or Africans for that matter are disillusioned. We know and understand that Obama is first and foremost an American. It is the feeling of proximity and ability to relate to this new world leader that breathes new life into the shaping of U.S.-Africa policy. This is not only due to his African descent, but also supported by the fact that Barrack Obama's distinguishing note is that of someone keen to make a positive difference not only in his home country the USA, but also in other parts of the world. What seems to separate him from his predecessor, outgoing President Bush is his opposition to the rather militaristic policies of the former regime, and his shift away from the global monopoly and capitalistic policies which many blame for the current financial crisis that has now gripped the world.

Whereas it may be naïve to expect a tangible and immediate impact of Obama's election as US president, the real victory for Kenyans and Africans both in Australia and the rest of the world lies in the all important shift in attitudes towards Africans and other non Western/European cultures. It allows for a new era where people can be judged on merit and not skin colour or cultural background. Barrack Obama's election as U.S President certainly represents a great victory for democracy in itself.

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Early Western Australian Election Raises Questions About Compulsory Voting

By Dr Harry Phillips FACE

Hon. Professor Edith Cowan University, Adjunct Professor Curtin University

For strategic reasons, Labor Party Premier Alan Carpenter chose to call a snap poll for 6 September 2008. This action broke a century of tradition in Western Australia where governments had completed their full term. The introduction of 'one vote one value legislation' in the Legislative Assembly had been expected to provide Labor with a cushion to ensure victory but when government was narrowly lost it focused attention on the consequences of the early election. One unintended consequence was a 5 per cent drop in electoral

turnout to an estimated 86.5 per cent which prompted debate about the institution of compulsory voting and enrolment and more broadly the preparedness of electors to cast a considered vote.

Western Australia adopted compulsory voting after the 1936 election although it had been employed in the 1933 secession poll which was held concurrently with the general election of that year. Federally compulsory voting legislation had been rushed through the Parliament in 1924. The obligation to enrol legislation had been passed in 1910 for federal elections and 1919 for Legislative Assembly elections. In the following decades compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting became settled policy for State and federal elections in Australia. Moreover, opinion polls have regularly indicated that some 70 per cent of the public support the compulsory component of the electoral laws. Of course due to the secret ballot provisions voters are only required to submit their ballot to the count either by attendance, early vote, an absentee vote or postal vote.

Some of the main reasons for the support for compulsory voting (and enrolment) are based on the belief that it helps produce a parliament that better 'mirrors the will of the people' and its corollary that governments must consider the total electorate in policy formulation and management. Candidates, it is claimed, can concentrate their campaign resources to issues rather than encouraging voters to the polls. It is contended that if citizens are required to vote they will necessarily give some consideration to how they cast their preferences at the poll.

Opponents of compulsory voting question the educative benefits of the law and say it forces the 'ignorant' and those with little interest in politics to vote. Most critics, though, are vocal about how it is deemed undemocratic to force people to vote. Citizens, as in most democracies comparable democracies, should be given the option of not voting. From a campaign perspective compulsory voting increases the number of safe, single-member electorates which means that political parties then concentrate on more the more marginal electorates. Thereafter resources must be allocated to determine whether those who failed to vote can provide 'valid and sufficient reasons' to avoid a penalty, which is normally \$20 dollars. This sum, it is thought, is no longer a sufficient deterrent for failing to vote. Ultimately, of course, a failure to pay the fine can lead to a one or two days in prison. This is an outcome which election officials, as well as parliaments, are invariably keen to avoid.

For many elections the turnout for Western Australian State electors has hovered above 90 per cent of enrolled electors. For Federal elections the turnout has been some three or four percentage points higher although the calculation is dependent upon how extensive is the compliance with the obligation of eligible citizens to enroll. The earlier than expected poll in Western Australia plus a minimum 30 day campaign probably reduced enrolment and contributed to a lower electoral turnout. The weight of opinion is that the Labor Party tends to benefit from compulsory enrolment and compulsory voting. This explanation is broadly based on the theory that Labor has historically gained a greater percentage of the vote from lower socio-economic groups who are thought to be less likely to vote. There is some research support for this hypothesis but it is not an established 'law' of politics.

Post election analysis included speculation that a lower turnout was a factor in Labor's narrow electoral loss. However, the catalyst for questioning the institution of compulsory vote came from Mike Nahan who had won the seat of Riverton for the Liberal Party by a mere 60 votes from former Labor Party Minister Tony McRae. Nahan said he would use his inaugural speech in the Legislative Assembly to challenge the compulsory vote, and presumably compulsory enrolment. He was reported to have said 'there is a large number of people who were just going through the motions' forcing politicians to 'dumb down' the political process.

Significantly, Norman Moore as the new Electoral Affairs Minister in a front page West Australian reference on 18 October 2008 said he was open to introducing voluntary voting and would assess any proposal on merit. He did add that the right to vote was both a 'privilege and a responsibility'. It was a signal there may be a parliamentary and community debate on the long established practice of compulsory voting with the well documented arguments for and against the proposal again being aired.

Breaking the federal and state pattern of compulsory voting and enrolment would be a major and controversial electoral law change. The ramifications would be difficult to predict although lower turnout figures would be expected. What is most important, though, under either a compulsory or voluntary voting system will be the need to maintain the commitment to electoral education as part of a broader civics and citizenship program for each tier of government. The steps taken in this direction over the past two decades have been substantial at institutions in Western Australia including the Electoral Commission, the Parliament, the Francis Burt Legal Education Centre and the Constitutional Centre. These developments have been in partnership with the Education Department and the Curriculum Council and other agencies. Undoubted progress has necessarily been in concert with the agreed statements at the national level. Ironically, a further step that needs to be taken is a mandatory civics course at upper primary or lower secondary school level. In summary, though, it is of paramount importance that the civic education component of either compulsory or voluntary voting be addressed.

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The WA Nationals Contract

By Peter Kenyon

Professor of Economic Policy, Graduate School of Business, Curtin University of Technology & *The Cooking Professor*

The first lesson that I teach beginning economics students is the concept of opportunity cost. Opportunity cost is one of the fundamental ideas on which good economics and good economic policy is built. It is a very simple but powerful idea. Basically it says that everything thing we do has a cost. If I go the football on Saturday afternoon, I necessarily give up spending time doing something else, spending time with my wife (who loathes football), for example. If we use resources to build a shed, we forego a new car. If we go out to a restaurant to eat out, another part of the budget has to be trimmed.

What a thriller the recent WA election was. Both major parties just fell short of a majority, resulting in the National Party deciding government. There was this almost surreal and nakedly political week of horse-trading between the Nationals and the major parties as each tried to outbid one another to buy the Nationals support. Here was politics at its most basic and lurid, the naked bargaining over the grab for power.

Without doubt, Mr Grylls played a masterful game. His three years of preparation paid off as he built just enough seats, despite the one-vote one value legislation, to become the king-maker. He has driven a hard bargain, a minimum of \$675 million per year is to be allocated to the Regions - that is, not to Perth - as quid pro quo for support.

It is, of course, perfectly valid for Mr Grylls to do the best he can for his constituency. After all is this not what democracy is about, achieving power to benefit the voters who voted for his agenda? However, nowhere near a majority of the voters supported Mr Grylls. In fact, less than 5 per cent of the electorate voted National. What is in the best interests of the other more than 95 per cent of WA's electors?

If the new Barnett Government is to maximise the economic welfare of Western Australians, there are a few economic principles that he should follow, in my opinion (which, I hope, is informed by my study of Economics). The first principle we have already discussed, the principle of opportunity cost. Every dollar spent in one region or activity is one dollar not spent elsewhere. However, economics provides several other principles that the new Government might use to guide its fiscal policy in order to maximise living standards.

Importantly, resources must be directed to where their relative productivity is greatest. Our living standards will rise quicker if we get the best we can out of the resources that we have. This is obvious. What is not obvious is that the best use of resources is that delimited by specific regional allocations. This is not to say that a more productive use of resources might not result from a greater level of spending on, say, infrastructure in the Pilbara or in the Wheatbelt, rather than in the metropolitan area. However, hypothecating spending without paying attention to its productivity potential is not a good way of benefiting all Western Australians through maximising the size of the economic pie.

Not all of the Government's expenditure is directed, however, at increasing the level of State Product. Indeed, most of the Government's spending goes directly to meeting citizens needs directly – Health, education, community welfare, public transport, culture and the arts and so on. Here the principle that will maximise the economic welfare of WA citizens is to direct such expenditure where it is valued highest. Now this is more difficult than it seems, as many of these types of goods and services are not sold in well-defined markets. They are often public goods that the market cannot easily value. So, judgements need to be made about social value. Nevertheless, again hypothecating spending without carefully assessing social value is not a good way to increase the economic welfare of all Western Australians.

Mr Barnett is a trained economist. Until very recently, he taught in the Curtin Graduate School of Business, so he is well aware of these principles. I hope that this knowledge is reflected in the way that he balances politics and economics in his job as Premier of our State.

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Falling Towards Citizenship

By Damian Leach

Manager, Dept of Trade and Economic Development, South Australia
Political Scientist and Civics Activist

The role of citizens and the nature of political engagement has been a point of discussion since the time of Greek Philosophers Plato and Aristotle. This has recently become more of an issue with what characterises being 'Australian'. In the lead-up to this Remembrance Day, the notion of being a 'good citizen' and contributing to community is never more relevant, particularly in relation to political engagement, for example, the decision to go to war. It is important to reflect on the historical conversation about citizenship, and the linkage to political engagement.

Aristotle argued that humans are inherently political beings, and to lead a truly 'ethical' life one must participate in politics. Machiavelli on the other hand believed that citizens should be excluded from decision making. Hobbes concurred with this view in "Leviathan", which is generally interpreted as a defence of absolutism. Hobbes argued that citizens enter into a social contract for protection, commenting, "the sovereign is nothing more than the personal embodiment of orderly government."

Likewise, Locke, Mill, Rousseau and Marx continue to discuss the merits or otherwise and the level of citizen involvement in governing and decision-making. Flanagan et al define their understanding of the social contract:

By the social contract we refer to the set of mutual rights and obligations binding citizens with their polity (Flanagan C; Jonsso B; et al 1999 pg. 135)

The 'social contract' element of social development and cultural progress has been debated since Hobbes introduced the term (not necessarily the meaning). As a society, both governments and citizens are still defining and applying their understanding of the 'social contract' to their own lives, and in the decisions that they make.

Some scholars follow Condorcet's jury theorem contending that general political knowledge is not necessary for the democratic system to function due to aggregation (that those on either side would cancel each other out). Conversely, Bartels argues that it is unlikely that voting errors would be randomly distributed among the population. In addition he argues that there is a normative problem in that it is tantamount to a disenfranchisement of 'unknowledgeable' people.

It is argued that there is a difference between citizenship and political engagement. Citizenship is defined as:

the right to be domiciled in and take part in the political mechanisms of the state, usually through voting. There will also be the status of legal equality with all others and the entitlement to be treated thus before the court... In most liberal democracies citizenship also ensures the protection of other human rights and civil liberties (Robertson 2004 pg. 65)

Political engagement is defined as:

...the extent to which citizens avail themselves of those ordinary democratic rights of political activity to which they are constitutionally entitled...Political participation is clearly partly dependant on the overall strength of the civil society, of which it is also, in a circular manner, a measure. (Robertson 2004 pg. 388)

Citizenship has a broader meaning than political engagement. Citizenship refers to human rights, civil liberties and other elements of civic life, rather than political engagement, which elementally includes the narrower standard of voting; or more broadly, interest and activity. It is with this definition that as a society through engaging politically, and furthermore, engaging with the community around us, that the notion 'Citizenship' can be aptly termed, a term that those fallen upheld with their bravery, honour and determination, a legacy which is now shared between those of us left behind.

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Reflecting Leaders- Book and Article Reviews

The Autobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr, Edited by Claybourne Carson, Abacus Book, Little, Brown and Company, London, 2000. ISBN 0349112983

Review by Annaliza Jackson

Adjunct Associate Professor, John Curtin Institute of Public Policy, Curtin University

Particularly in light of the current socio-political, cultural and economic times in which we live as a global community, this is a must for everyone to read. King was a highly educated man with a sense of understanding and humility for the human condition that surpasses very few. His role model was Mahatma Ghandi specifically following the principles of peace and non violence in mobilising those who suffered at the hands of blind oppressors. He was a champion for white oppressed as he was for black oppressed. Through this book you will come to understand Dr Martin Luther King as a deep thinker, leader of his time and how and why his dream is still alive today. King was an avid reader across a broad cross section of genres from philosophy to sociology, politics and theology. King's autobiography is one which you will want to quote, one you will want to read and re-read. I am still learning from him and the many from whom he himself drew knowledge and learning. It's available at leading and local book stores. Make this a Christmas present.

Upcoming Events

Annaliza Jackson & Associates Presents

Friday 28th November **Learning and Leadership - Dr Penny Flett**, CEO Brightwater Care Group and President of the Chamber of Commerce & Industry WA and Ms Julie de Jong, Director, Innovative Industries, DoIR (11am-12pm)

Friday 28th November **Women's Networking Lunch – Ms Kay Hallahan AO** (12pm – 2pm)

Wed. 3rd December **Executive Women's Networking Lunch – Ms Cheryl Edwardes LLM** (12pm-2pm)

Venue for all Events:

Curtin University, Graduate School of Business, 78 Murray Street, Perth WA

[More details](#)

Further information and details about these programs will be available late January. Please contact Annaliza direct either M. 0412 543 349 or E. Annaliza@mantis.com.au if you wish to receive information regarding these programs.

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