



Ruminations on the State Of Things:

How to Make the World A Better Place 50 Years
from Now

A collection of brief essays from members of the Dartmouth Class of 1968 and friends on the occasion of their 50th reunion.

The opinions expressed are solely those of the individuals.

Allan Ackerman

Better for who or what? That said, here goes:

For the world: Re-enlist the U.S.A. in the Global Climate Accords. For the U.S.A.: Repeal Citizens United, establish term limits for Members of Congress, institute compulsory national service to reduce the nation's carbon footprint and improve its infrastructure, fund public education from day care through 12th grade on a per capita basis, make 2 years of college free for all, move to a single-payer healthcare system, establish a minimum annual income for all U.S. citizens, buy back and then ban all firearms excepting shotguns, revolvers, and bolt-action single-shot rifles, establish a national firearm registry, mandatory and renewed firearm safety training to be required in order to buy ammunition. Increase the efficiency of the job retraining marketplace, improving the "demand" through publicizing the where and what of job sectors, and the "supply" through assessment and training matching where the demand is and will be. For Dartmouth: I'm out of touch, so I may be asking for an improvement that is already in place — teach every undergraduate how to make and continue to make work and life choices, both inclusive and exclusive of the tracked professions. The burden and the opportunity of choice has dramatically expanded and its rate of change is far greater than before. Establish a dynamic on-line library of role models in work and life for undergraduate use as well as online and human assessments to inform self-knowledge. This is not intended to replace what is already conferred by the Dartmouth experience, but to complement it.

Rachel Alpert

Most unfortunately, the true question is what must we do to stave off 50 years of social and political disaster? We must re-bend the American arc toward social justice and secure the promise and premise of the Constitution's preamble. I have no illusions of possessing solutions, other than to arouse the passion of the populace, seize political power, reverse the judiciary, endow all people with civil rights, and reclaim individual and collective primacy over moneyed and corporate interests. 'Tis a tall task indeed, but we, each of us, must act, resist if need be, persist, and persevere.

Howard Anderson

The next 50 years can be better than the last 50 if progress in governing human societies keeps pace with advances in science and technology. Measures to achieve

this are available—some of them in reviving the best of our own political culture—but progress will be slow until certain now-dominant political visions are abandoned. Since the 17th century, advances in science and technology have far outstripped our ability to govern increasingly complex and diverse societies. Legal and political systems are still rooted in the doctrines and prejudices of earlier times. Maintaining political stability and prosperity while allowing optimal freedom for individuals to develop their potential means aligning governance to the realities of the 21st century and to what modern science is teaching us about both the limitations and potentialities of human nature.

Improving governance need not require adopting radical new doctrines. America's best political traditions, for example, contain principles that are few, timeless, and—reflecting the founders' balanced view of human nature—flexible enough to be consistent with what we are learning about how humans can adapt to change and minimize the destructiveness of their own behavior. Unlike major competing ideologies of the left and right, the best American tradition—not to be confused with what is now on display—does not require belief either in religious revelation or rigid secular ideology, nor is it designed to rationalize rule by privileged elites. Its core principles are focused more on checking the violent, destructive, and oppressive impulses in human nature than on molding idealized citizens with prescribed characteristics.

Given the re-emergence of authoritarian political doctrines and the systematic, technology-aided promotion of cynicism, false narratives, and tribalism, it will count as an improvement if during the next 50 years we manage to hold in check the worst evils of which humans are capable.

John Anderson

I'm so thankful for great friendships and shared experiences of growing up while learning at Dartmouth. I hope that the next years will see the rekindling of some friendships that I have regrettably let slip away, and hope that all who read this are blessed with good health that continues for as many of the next 50 years as is humanly possible. I mention 50 years to be at least marginally responsive to the essay question. I'm to recommend measures to make the world better? Geez, why didn't you ask me earlier? I could have saved the world so much aggravation in these past decades. Of course, there are no such measures. Betterment comes from within each of us and our collective voices and actions. We need to use them, and not just be voices crying in the wilderness, so to speak.

Roger Arvid Anderson

1. Life as we know it is ephemeral. The adage "dust to dust" is accurate. The sooner a person gets a grip on these hard truths the sooner you can comprehend how valuable life is and to make the most of your time here.
2. Humans are tribal and migratory. What constitutes a tribe varies and evolves, but the fact we are migratory remains a constant. Both issues result in inevitable conflicts among people, and within yourself as you are capable of belonging to a number of different tribes based for example on race, gender and sexual orientation. The value of tolerance and shared social values is something we must learn from an early age.
3. Over-population to me is the overwhelming social problem we face in a planet that faces climate change, scarce resources and robotic replacement in the work place. Since we share this planet with many living creatures and plant life it is important to reduce our numbers so other creatures can flourish. How we go about reducing the population is a great challenge, and will challenge those who value democracy and individual liberty. We will also need to deal with the issues of genetic engineering. Since I suffer the consequences of birth defects I am open to how genetic engineering could resolve eliminating some bad genes in our physical constitution. The moral issues that arise from these engineering choices will again challenge the future of individual liberty.
4. The nature of family, marriage, gender and racial identity continue to evolve and an openness and transparency in dealing with these issues is important in meeting them.
5. Educational opportunity for all remains an ideal that I continue to subscribe to and through my estate I hope to help. Thank you, Dartmouth. You changed my life.

Russ Andrews

A series of recommendations:

1. True separation of church and state. Any ideological belief – religious, racial, economic, gender, etc – plays no role in the governing of the populace.
2. Equality of opportunity: all citizens shall have access (1) to basic but complete healthcare without significant charge (a nominal charge – no more than the minimum hourly wage – may be charged for office or emergency room visits). Such universal healthcare would – like the public school system – be devoid of for-profit activities. The oxymoron of "health insurance" (similar to "education insurance", "clean water insurance", "police insurance" would disappear); (2) to

education without charge through postgraduate level as long as a reasonable academic standard is maintained.

3. Vetting of persons running for public office: at the level of state representatives and above, all candidates must pass a basic test of suitability for office. This might include: full disclosure of all criminal records, tax returns, and lawsuits (both plaintiff and defendant).
4. Direct voting for candidates and major legislation (similar to propositions in California). This reduces the chances of legislators backing legislation that is clearly not favored by the majority of the population. All propositions need to be subject to legal review prior to voting – to avoid the wasted resources of lawsuits after a proposition is voted upon.
5. Our antiquated voting system is severely hampering democracy. All candidates at the federal level would receive campaign funding from the government and would be barred from funding by individuals or corporations. The number of candidates could be limited, e.g., to those candidates who are in the top five with regard to number of signatures obtained by petition of the general population.

Noel Augustyn

A reversal of many decisions made by the Supreme Court concerning the First and Fourteenth Amendments over the past 60 years, which have adversely affected the civilized character of American Society, might possibly reverse the decline in our civilization, but it is probably too late. The two threats to civilization remain the Bomb, and the collapse of shared standards and values, at least among American elites, that had previously been based on the Judeo-Christian ethic, more specifically the Decalogue and the Golden Rule. The Supreme Court obviously can play no role on the Bomb issue, but it has had a ruinous effect on the second. The law is a teacher that sets expectations, and expectations influence behavior, so the role of the ultimate interpreter of the law should not be underestimated. A society that no longer has a common understanding in matters concerning wanton materialism, idolatrous egoism, profane and vulgar language, leisure, rest and work, integrity of the family, the sanctity of human life, sexual behavior, property rights, honesty and greed, and, in general, how we treat each other as human beings, cannot long endure – at least as a civilized society. Many of the Court's decisions have diluted a once common understanding in these areas, and these decisions were made and continue to be made by a majority of nine people, not "the people" – hardly the way a democratic republic should function. As Joseph Conrad taught us in "The Heart of Darkness," civilization depends upon restraint, and the Court has had a major influence on restraint's removal.

Bob Bednarz

A strong liberal-arts-based education for all.

Gerry Bell

The primary challenge of the next 50 years will be repairing the fractured, almost tribal culture that we have become. Too many of us seethe with fury and hatred for anyone the least bit dissimilar — in skin color, religion, national origin, or political outlook. Our differences have become chasms; our loyalties bound only to those exactly like us; our ability — and desire — to reason together almost extinguished.

I suggest three remedies:

- Recommit to public education, with strong emphasis at the secondary level on civics and logical thinking. An uninformed, unreasoning electorate reflexively voting its gut-level emotions is a danger to itself and to the republic.
- Mandate that each young person participate in at least one sport. Athletics is the last absolute meritocracy. Our people need to understand what meritocracy means — and to learn that proficiency and advancement come only with persistence and hard work.
- Most important, require universal service at age 18 for eighteen months. The type of service — military, health care assistance, building low-income housing, or simply picking up roadside trash — is almost irrelevant. The idea is to force different people together — the Boston Brahmin, the kid from Hell's Kitchen, the Mississippi sharecropper's son, the homey from Detroit, the Texas cowboy, the surfer from California, and on and on. These were the ingredients of the Greatest Generation. We owe our next generation — both genders — the opportunity to become another. Its members must learn that Americans have more in common than they have differences; that they must sublimate their egos to something bigger than themselves; and that diversity builds strength and loyalty, not weakness and resentment.

I'm sure all this will strike some as social engineering of the highest order. So be it. No apologies. This is necessary.

David Bergengren

The way we govern ourselves, first established by the Founding Fathers (influenced, I'm sure, by some Founding Mothers), needs to be modified. I suppose the only way that's going to happen is going to require electing the right people into the right positions in government. If we ever achieve that critical mass, including a Supreme Court not mired in ultraconservative thinking, then that government needs to tackle those modifications. For instance, the Second Amendment should not mean that every citizen has the right to own automatic weapons. Those weapons should be banned for civilians. The courts need to strike down gerrymandering, no matter which political party has instigated it, and legislators need to come up with a set of guidelines to set up fair and logical voting districts everywhere. There should be some form of universal health care available to American citizens, and it should not involve insurance companies or employers. The idea of making some form of Medicare available to everybody is probably a good idea. Police departments nationwide, once automatic weapons have been effectively banned for civilians, need to trim their own arsenals of military-type weapons and upgrade sensitivity training and the recruitment of minorities. Groups that have traditionally received the short end of the stick (to put it mildly) in America, need to have their grievances addressed better, perhaps with a new department of government that specializes in mediating such things. That obviously includes the descendants of former slaves, but it also most definitely includes Native Americans, who deserve to have at least some of their land and sovereignty claims addressed. Immigration needs to be more open, with those who are here and working from other nations given some interim rights and, when appropriate, a path to citizenship. And perhaps, given our nation's current predicament, there should be an IQ requirement for prospective presidents.

Bob Block

For profit health care is destroying the nation. Small proprietors are being ruined covering the health care insurance for their staff with 8-10 percent increases yearly. Medications are inflating above 10% pa. The large companies have trouble giving deserved raises when their medical insurance costs inflate so greatly. Today, the leading cause of bankruptcy is a major illness in the family. At the same time, we spend more per capita on health care than any other developed country.

Why do we pay so much and get so little?

We are the only country which has a for profit system. With every merger of health care companies, prices increase and our choices diminish. Likewise, every Pharma company merger likewise drives large increases in drug prices. This happens despite the fact that

most Pharma discoveries are made at research universities which then buy the patent. There is no truth to the mantra of the industry that costs are so high because of the high cost of pharma research. Their largest cost is TV Ads and major contributions to our congress to make sure that they can continue to bleed the country dry. There is only one solution: we need to return health care to caring for patients who need care regardless of their income, education, when they need it and where the need it. Single payer eliminates all of the middle men, second guessers and allows physicians to do their work, not worrying if they will be paid. There are several ways this could happen. Personally, I am supporting Medicare for all, which is affordable and could be instituted rapidly. It would also allow negotiation with Pharma for the same 40% or more discount that the VA receives. I am working toward that goal, and hope to see it in my lifetime.

Sarr Blumson

We need to enlarge our sense of community. Most of the world's problems come from a sense of "us" vs "them." What seems like greed, for example, is actually a symptom: "We" are entitled to more because we are smarter/work harder/are chosen by God. This is complicated, because most of our existing institutions can cut either way. Religion, for example, can form a definition of "us" and "them." Or it can teach us that everyone is created in God's image and that everything we have is a gift, not something we deserve.

Any of you who remember me will remember that my politics were pretty far left. They still are, but "maturity" has made me more sensitive to the problem of how you get from here to there. So I'm not suggesting that I have any idea how to get from here to there.

Ted Bovill

From my perspective, the two greatest problems confronting us are the explosion of worldwide populations with its correlated climate change and the current challenges to liberal democracy. With regard to the first, I was gobsmacked by our current president pulling us out of the Paris Agreement. I recently read *Sapiens: A brief history of humankind*, by Yuval Noah Harari which gives a sweeping view of our rapid spread across the planet and some of its consequences. He makes a compelling argument clarifying the problem but comes up short on solutions.

The solution at least involves our country coming together with the rest of the planet to work for solutions. Hard to do in our current political impasse. Having recently read Ron Chernow's "Grant" and Gordon Wood's "Friends divided: John Adams and Thomas

Jefferson”, it is evident that we have been in incredibly trying times before and muddled through. Or as Churchill said: “The Americans always get it right but not before they try every possible alternative.” I am not sure we have time to try “all the alternatives” but in the shorter term, hope our two currently dysfunctional political parties can find their way out of their combined short sighted confusion.

Pat Bremkamp

We need to restore mental health treatment. Our experiment at shutting down mental health facilities (mostly to save money) has not helped society and has not helped those with mental problems as much as it should have. It is wonderful how the stigma of mental problems has been reduced, but now treatment needs to be better funded and those with problems better identified and helped.

Energy production and distribution should be localized. Different areas of the country have different best ways to create electricity, but wide distribution just opens it up to complaints from small regions. The days when a huge coal plant serves half the country needs to be past. Smaller generation and distribution would also result in greater distribution of manufacturing and the people in that area paying closer to the real cost of their goods.

Education need to return to education tailored to kids able and willing to handle it – college prep at one end and vocational training at the other. One uniform education in an effort to be fair is unfair to most kids. I have one grandchild who wants to be a scientist and one who wants to rebuild diesel engines. Neither one is getting the education he needs.

Population centers need to move away from large centralized high rises to small living centers where housing, workplaces, entertainment and culture are available locally.

Harry Bryden

I recall in the radical '60's saying: "Never trust anyone over 30", "Anyone over 40 should be shot". The idea was that life was for the young and the young should be responsible for the direction of the world. Now we have increasing power and influence embedded in older people, they have the houses, the money, the healthcare insurance that young people need. I suggest that as a society we work toward making older people, say those over 60, justify why resources should be spent on prolonging and enriching their lives while we shift emphasis to young productive people helping them to achieve good

education, to go into work at a young age with real responsibility and to make sure they do not live in fear of catastrophic healthcare costs for their young families.

Dan Butterworth

Peace and love.

Steve Calvert

It would be good to see my college take a leadership role on 2 fronts:

1. End organized football (because of the concussion issue).
2. Make a concerted effort to curtail the cost of a Dartmouth education.

Wells Chandler

Compassion, communication and understanding amongst the people of planet earth to better the common concerns of all. Organizations and governments do not necessarily exist for the common good, but rather are more concerned with profit and perpetuating themselves. Hopefully, our children will have more compassion, better communication and understanding concerning the common needs of all regardless of nationality, race or religion.

Tony Choueke

Good attitude is the most important of all. Everyone has challenges and no one is spared from them. Being open and being understanding of others contributes to our affection for them. It is better to love someone than to admire someone. Love of family is the foundation upon which the next generation will build. Helping others is a privilege and a gift. Keeping engaged and being involved in meaningful and interesting work is energizing and rewarding. The pursuit of happiness is an illusion. Being satisfied with who we are and what we know is the expression of gratitude for all the advantages which we have deservedly or not received. Our actions should reflect our beliefs. Believing without acting is hypocrisy. It's not so difficult to admit when we are wrong and to accept failures. If we don't fail from time to time then we are not indeed facing challenges. We learn through our own mistakes and we can continue to grow in spirit until the last of our days. A healthy environment is an essential legacy which we should

leave for our future generations. I feel both honored and fortunate to have been accepted into the Dartmouth community and to have been nurtured by the college. The college took a chance on me. I may not have been the best or most suitable candidate for admission but the college still welcomed me. I think that the college did all that it could to help me and my classmates. I think it's important to give back to those who have invested in us and not to take what we have received for granted. We should be generous of spirit and tolerant of others and not so concerned only with our narrow self-interest. We were lucky.

Warren Cooke

Limiting myself to the US for this purpose: the best way to improve on the next 50 years would be to rededicate ourselves to teaching people how to reason and analyze – how to think. The stark divisions that separate people on many issues in our society today are clear evidence of unwillingness or inability to think through the nuances present in most problems — if not of complete unwillingness to accept that there ARE any nuances or complexities. People flee into the arms of simple-minded doctrines or positions that offer complete solutions only because they are so simple. Either you are for Michigan or you are for Ohio State, and the other side is the enemy, right? Works for football. Mostly does not work for the real world we live in — the attitude that my “side” is good and that all thoughts that challenge or threaten it are evil is simplistic, medieval thinking but it rules in the US today. The only solution lies in education — teaching people to be suspicious of orthodoxies, to analyze facts wherever they may lead and however complex, and to arrive at their own opinions through open-minded reasoning.

Kenneth Cooper

Eat well, get plenty of sleep, exercise 150 minutes per week, hydrate, meditate daily, give to charity, drink lots of craft beer and read at least 60 minutes per day. Wait a minute—that's what I'm already doing. 😊 PS Vinyl is back.

Harry Bryden

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people need. I suggest that as a society we work toward making older people, say those over 60, justify why resources should be spent on prolonging and enriching their lives while we shift emphasis to young productive people helping them to achieve good education, to go into work at a young age with real responsibility and to make sure they do not live in fear of catastrophic healthcare costs for their young families.

Tony Dambrava

To save lives I recommend a civilian ban on the possession, ownership, and/or use of M-16/AR-15-type weapons in all U.S. jurisdictions. This is a uniquely military weapon that was specifically designed to kill, rather than merely wound or maim, enemy in guerrilla warfare.

The U.S. Army Infantry School during Vietnam instructed that in a conventional war, it takes 4 support personnel to sustain each ground troop; in a guerrilla war, it takes 9. Why? Because guerrillas tend to leave their wounded behind, placing additional burdens on U.S. forces. To conserve our resources, the M-16/AR-15 were designed to kill more enemy.

These roughly .25 caliber weapons have a very high muzzle velocity that causes bullets to tumble or gyroscopically wobble in flight and to break apart the casing of each round upon impact, creating several whirling pieces of shrapnel. Thus a bullet entering the torso of a person is liable to cause massive internal organ damage (instead of passing through on its trajectory), making death more likely.

To illustrate lethality, Army instructors placed a heavy, metal ammo container filled with water on the ground, and fired a single M-16 round into the sealed container at 10 meters from a prone position. The container would jump a foot or more into the air and seem to explode, gushing water in all directions. Examination revealed a single entry point and several larger exit holes in the back and sides of the metal canister. These weapons have wreaked havoc in the civilian sphere for decades. Congress failed the public by acquiescing to their civilian sale in the '70's and again by allowing the temporary Clinton-era ban (covering all assault weapons) to lapse. Constitutionally, neither militias nor individuals seeking to protect their homes and families need to use these weapons. Spread the word. Preserve life.

Ken Dardick

Follow the words of Hillel, "That which is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow. That is the whole Torah; the rest is the explanation; go and learn."

Monroe Denton

Two years ago, planning for my seventieth birthday in Puebla, Mexico, I realized I had outlived both parents and my sister. I was truly in my own space. My sister had been there at my sixtieth in Venice; sixty-five was in Istanbul.

It turned out that friends from Turkey came to Mexico (fewer conflicts with Moslems during Christmas), and they were the first to meet someone I was starting to know. Ending loneliness as one enters the eighth decade is a wonderful experience. Those destination birthdays were celebrations of my life. They were the focus that I had expected at one time to come from winning prizes. I realized the love of those friends was the prize.

There is so much more to see, to read, and I hope to stage and enjoy, sharing with a partner and with a wonderful circle of friends. Teaching college courses for forty years, I realized the secret was "joy"—to profess, demonstrate, and bear witness to the pleasures of life and to the power of discovery. It's good to be able to own the moment. The good thing about losing memory is that with it go fantasies and disappointments. What is left of the senses is damned thrilling.

Dave Dibelius

Recommendation 1: Change the Electoral College system. In November 2016 I would have said "I don't know if we should change it, but it's time to think about it and I would have to hear objective analysis from informed experts about alternatives and implications." A year and a half later I am strongly inclined to change it, although I still want to have the debate. I am dissatisfied with my entire state being marginalized in the electoral process because it is reliably one political color. It is wrong that my vote should carry less weight than the vote of a person from a less populous state. It is wrong for national leadership, policy and direction to be determined by a relatively small number of people from a non-mainstream demographic concentrated in a few states whose decisions are based on narrow or even singular objectives. I'm not ready to say what the new system should be but the present system has changed from what the founding fathers envisioned and fails in today's America.

Recommendation 2: Get serious about addressing the existential issues facing mankind. Climate change, population growth, risk of pandemic, nations that can't get along. Identify priorities and allocate resources.

Recommendation 3: Find a new planet for us to live on. It's not just an adventure. Eventually our current planet will become too depleted, polluted, and over populated and we will have to leave. That is reality. It will take hundreds of years to find where to go, learn how to get there and dedicate the resources to make it happen. Make the current search for exoplanets a commitment to colonize. Until there is a viable off-earth population, see Recommendation 2.

Stan Dirks

Universal free education to age 21 to those who qualify, universal free health care with responsibility, reduction of U.S. military spending by half, ceasing of U.S. military intervention in internal conflicts of other countries (no matter which side we think is "more democratic" or our "ally"), interpretation of the second amendment so that it only allows gun possession by a "well-regulated militia" (at a minimum, raising the gun purchasing age to 21 and banning automatic weapons – whether rifles or hand guns).

Rich du Moulin

The present domestic and international situation is not optimum for cooperation on key challenges including climate change, ethnic struggles, forced migration, threats to democracies, and nuclear weapons. But if we care about the world we leave our children and grandchildren, while we are around we need to exert effort and yes- spend money- to support Initiatives and organizations dedicated to putting us on the right course. Every time I find myself muttering and feeling somewhat useless , I click on line to support Common Cause, Sierra Club, a political party, the UN – whatever. I am active in various charities and non- profits, but think more and more as to what I can actually do to effect positive change. Might be fun to hear what others are doing while in Hanover!

Peter Dunn

I believe we need to find ways to bring diverse segments of the US in particular closer together and deemphasize Country or Religion of origin.

I am also astonished by the inability of Congress to get anything meaningful done.

1. Provide a short time period to citizenship for the DACA group.
2. Outlaw without exception firearms that are meant for war.
3. Encourage unification of people vs celebration of differences.
4. Respect the majority as well as the minorities.
5. Figure out a way to keep the fringe 5% on either end of the political spectrum from controlling the Country.

Richard Eberhart

During our post-Dartmouth years, western civilization has deteriorated dramatically. Its character is crasser, uglier, hollower, and angrier than before. I attribute this decline to its secular denial of the existence of truth. The dictum of our half-century is "There is no such thing as truth...and even if there were, it wouldn't be YOUR truth."

Really, this condition is undeniable. Often, though, the fact is met with a shrug of disregard, while good times are grabbed and enjoyed by those able to distract themselves.

Of course, there IS truth that is greater than oneself, but western civilization is trying to move forward by denying that fact, an effort that has failed to succeed in every pagan realm.

Most persons (and I assume most classmates) probably live their personal ethical lives on the basis of truth that IS greater than themselves (most don't steal, murder, etc.), however others may fail morally by making for themselves an idol of humankind's supposed ability to change the facts of nature and of God.

This query asks for measures that should be adopted, perhaps reaching out for governmental steps which should be taken. I can think of some I would favor, but—really—in order to make the next 50 years better, we should work to rid western civilization of the heresy that there is no such thing as ultimate truth.

But that is a work of the soul, not of the government, nor of any other of our arrogant agencies of civil and social engineering.

To make the next 50 years better, I suggest we reawaken our souls to moral truth that IS greater than ourselves, to the truth which bore western civilization forward during the

past 2,000 years—and could do so again. And, having re-awoken to it that we behave in accordance with it.

Andy Epstein

However they are accomplished, family and societal focus on and investments in the early stages of life make the biggest difference later. To that end, uniform excellence in prenatal care, successful accomplishment of the first 1,000 days of life, early childhood education, especially reading, curiosity and a love of learning, social skills of respect, by which I mean honoring the differences, and others like these can make the biggest difference. Beyond, although relevant to, early childhood, addressing social and financial inequality, investing in adaptive skills for those dislocated by innovation and technology, and ensuring a social safety net will contribute to a compassionate, productive, and vibrant society. While I have certainly learned that there are no simple solutions to complex problems, these cultural characteristics will enable us to restore America as a beacon for the world, the idea and the ideal:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

What more could one ask? It's what my grandparents emigrated to America for. After this, it's up to each of us to fulfill our dreams and our potential.

Peter Fahey

We should establish true democracy in our country.

I know that the founding fathers adopted many measures short of true democracy. Many of those have been changed for the better (no 3/5 persons, direct election of Senators, women and black suffrage...).

We now must eliminate the Electoral College system as we know it. No further proof is needed than the observation that the two presidents elected with a popular vote minority in recent years are palpably the most disastrous in recent times. I realize that the mechanism of constitutional amendment seems impractical. Effecting the needed change via the National Popular Vote (NPV) Interstate Compact plan has some chance of success. Under the NPV, states would agree to assign all their electors to the winner of the national popular vote if states constituting a majority of electoral votes likewise

adopt the plan. Already, 11 states constituting 165 of the necessary 270 electoral votes have adopted the plan. Legislation is pending in an additional 18 states with an additional 152 electoral votes. Whenever (if not already) the travesty of the current administration is widely conceded, it is not hard to imagine that this movement could catch fire and succeed.

While we are at it, a number of additional measures would be worthwhile. Most notably, there should be nationwide standards assuring voter eligibility and eliminating gerrymandering. It would probably also be wise (in order to avoid distortions from fringe parties) to provide for run-off elections for presidential elections where no candidate achieves a majority vote.

The founding fathers bent over backwards to assure that the minority was not oppressed. The majority is now being oppressed by the minority and we should not stand for it.

Phil Freedman

- Adopt single payer universal health care with benefits that fit within a budget
- Fix legal system by eliminating contingency fees and having expenses paid by losing litigant.
- Restructure education system to emphasize the value of learning and reduce burden of graduate education. Accept that everyone is not going to graduate school.
- Have people accept their mortality from an early age. Teach folks the folly of entitlement and accept that when something goes wrong it is not always someone else's fault.
- Accept that the human species is subject to the same order as other species and we are not endowed with unalienable rights.
- Teach the concept from the beginning that success is not determined by how much you have but how much you appreciate what you do have.
- Recognize that life is more about the journey than the destination.

Jim Frey

To make the next 50 years better, several things have to happen:

1. Continue the increased leadership roles that women are playing in our public sector, business environment, and societal organizations. In all levels of government, women have proven to be more effective at compromising and

collaborating with others with different views and values. Many have proven adept at leading and growing organizations, all done with a conscience when strategies are established for customers and employees.

2. Address national and personal levels of debt. We cannot continue to jeopardize the quality of life of our grandchildren by continued fiscal profligacy in the personal and public sectors. We are literally out of control.
3. Reinstate the Glass-Steagall Act.
4. Re-learn the arts of listening to and respecting the opinions of others. We are currently suffering from the rhetoric and actions of those on the extreme spectra of our society – political, religious, economic, et al.
5. Continue developing world-class technology that enhances the quality of life for business and personal applications.
6. Selectively apply some of the mutualist political philosophy of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (thank you, Prof. Albert Wilson) in concert with the positive, profit-motivated aspects of capitalism. Lancaster has been recognized as the most immigrant-friendly city in the US. I have served here as a SCORE mentor for several social enterprise entrepreneurs. These young innovators and small business leaders have demonstrated the power of a for-profit orientation to enhance the status of members at the lower economic strata of our society while creating a sense of community. If replicated here and in other areas of the US, this model may address income disparity and start the rebuilding of the American middle class, several citizens at a time.

Lee Friedman

No. I'm much more interested in the health of the planet more than 50 years from now. The threat of worsening climate change is one that must be addressed by all of the world's governments soon, or we risk catastrophic changes to the global ecosystem. No, I don't know for sure exactly what will happen if we do nothing and let present trends continue. But strong action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is an unbeatable insurance offer.

Dave Gang

Since I am an MD, I feel that I ought to address healthcare. Our system is completely broken and incentives for physicians are misaligned. We should not have a for-profit system. We should not be paid/rewarded only for taking care of sick people, we should be paid for keeping people healthy. There should be one insurance company, the US

Government, i.e. a single payer health system. It is crazy to have hundreds of insurance companies employing thousands of people to process claims.

The incentive is for physicians to do more, to bill as many RVUs and CPT codes as possible, because they get paid by the procedure or action. That's why we have one of the most expensive health care systems on earth. Hospitals are incentivized to compete with each other, to hire the best and the brightest, to have the most modern corridors, cafeterias, and procedure rooms.

In many states, like Florida, it's a free for all. Heroic measures to keep people alive are wasted on elderly people to keep them alive a few more days to weeks, so the system can make more money. Our infant mortality rates and longevity are far behind many countries in the Western world. For profit hospitals suck the lifeblood out of the system rewarding shareholders instead of community needs. Venture capital companies recruit physicians to invest in outpatient ORs and MRI centers that put hospitals out of business. There would be so much more money available for healthcare without this unnecessary bureaucratic structure and profit incentive. Fraud and abuse is rampant.

Physicians need to enter this field not to get rich (because they are reasonably paid) but as a calling to make the world a better place.

Until we change the incentives, our health care system will continue to decline.

Charles Gay

Realistically deal with climate change, lessen income inequality in the US, get rid of tyrants and autocrats around the world, make automatic guns illegal to sell or buy, or even own, and pay \$1000 for each such weapon turned in to the concerned authorities, no questions asked. Get rid of Trump ASAP.

Amy Gettinger

Put intelligent, educated, peaceful women in charge of every government in the world. Make huge task forces of women from all over the world who can work together to help define useful solutions to such issues as global warming, overpopulation, homelessness, and the universal need for good health care – solutions which can be tweaked to work for all nations. Pay educators what they are worth – as much as a lawyer or a doctor. Encourage world-wide education of all children. Find US lawmakers who can get things done – not overreacting or underreacting to problems, but finding an

elegant balance. Find lawmakers who will change gun laws in the US to reflect current-day technology and keep our kids (and the rest of us) safe. The whole world needs to take a chill pill and not fight so much – it needs to pick its battles. We all need to start seeing race as a characteristic as important as foot size or nose length – just a detail. We all need to start listening much more deeply to others rather than flapping our mouths out of habit and without thought. And kindness and respect need a resurgence on such a packed earth.

Fred Glickman

Less emphasis on tribalism, and more attention to humanity's common interests.
 More attention to long-term consequences, especially regarding the environment.
 Recognition that democracy is eroding in many areas, including the U.S.
 Respect for science.

Joe Grasso

In 1963, our Dartmouth application posed an essay question along the lines of “Imagine you are a dying philosopher, and tell us what insight you would like to leave as your legacy.” I wonder how many of us remember our response, and I wonder how different our response would be today after 54 years of life experience. With some degree of personal embarrassment, I remember the response of this 16 year old “deep thinker”: “If you see a blind man, kick him. Why should you be kinder than God?” So, it’s with some degree of gratitude that I welcome a second chance at responding.

To begin, I fear the question operates from a faulty premise. Our generation, the American Baby Boomers, is the most fortunate in the history of mankind. No generation has experienced, or likely will, such material and technological abundance. Just consider how the material and technological advancements of the 20th and early 21st centuries have changed, and continue to change, our lives — color televisions, microwave ovens, computers, cellphones, and evolving smart/artificial intelligence. Few among us are likely to forget the unbridled enthusiasm and idealism of our youth — the Peace Corps, the Age of Aquarius, and “Ask not what your country can do for you” — idealism that not even Vietnam and Watergate could destroy. Nothing was beyond our reach except our own self-imposed limitations. Like me, I suspect that many of you don’t see as bright a future for our children and grandchildren. So to make the next 50 years better, I suggest we look to what we have lost in the process — the gift of our parents, the Greatest Generation — emphasis on things bigger than ourselves such as family, community, personal responsibility rather than individual rights, and “doing unto others.” The more things change, the more they remain the same.

Chip Green

Walking by a dead tree

I

Walking by I asked if the dead tree cares
and hearing no response, continue probing.
Not about no longer living, but whether
my praising the beauty of the wood, cut
into cylindrical sections, made life,
past life and dying, easier or better.
And it was beautiful, the golden brown
highlighted with darker concentric growth rings.
After my time, if I were to somehow sense
free praising of either my bones or ashes,
the form or strength of one, the other's lightness,
I suppose I'd be more than neutral, content
to bring brief pleasure to a stranger, sharing
a delicate connection, not despairing.

II

Revisiting, months later, the cut wood
that's now gray, cracked, and overgrown with fungus,
I posed a new question to the dead tree
or what was left of it. Did this stage come
willingly? Stains and strange protrusions mar
what was beautiful, fissures slice scores of growth
rings, advertising temporality
through this sectioned piece of the carbon cycle.
I too am grayer, et cetera, and though
my rings from aging are masked, I'm confident
there are changes there too. And I would answer
my question, 'yes,' I came to this willingly
as I make a way through my borrowed part
of the same carbon cycle — end and start.

Cliff Groen

Work on climate change and take care of our environment. Pope Francis has written his encyclical "Laudato Si': On Care For Our Common Home". It concerns climate change, ecology, poverty, nature, and animals. He asks: "What is the purpose of our life in this world? Why are we here?"

We should adopt measures to solve our climate changes in a very serious way. We need to change our lifestyle, production and consumption in order to fight the warming. We have to stop the emission of carbon dioxide. We should support the Paris climate change accord. We should make use of solar and wind power.

A rise in the sea levels can create havoc. A quarter of the world's population lives on the coasts. The majority of our megacities are located in the coastal areas.

We should adopt measures to help the migrants coming from Africa, the Middle East, and Central America.

We should adopt measures that focus on poverty.

We should adopt measures to support animal rights. They have souls, too.

We should adopt measures to cure dementia. Also, to make medicine more humane. Make nursery homes much better.

We should adopt measures for artificial intelligence (AI). Singularity is so near. Singularity is the pace of our human-created technology. That pace is accelerating so fast. It has exponential growth. Technological change is exponential. They will bring many changes in the next fifty years.

We should adopt measures to protect our privacy. Facebook, Twitter, Google, Amazon and Apple have too much power now.

We should adopt measures that let us explore the universe.

We should adopt measures to learn about different cultures and religions. We should learn about our "blind spots" (e.g., opera, poetry, science, music). We should be more open-minded. We should try many new things.

Ric Gruder

An unanswerable question since it doesn't say who is adopting the measure. But in the end the one thing I have learned is that no one-government, parents, loved ones, or whatever— can legislate behavior. At best a system of rewards and punishments can be adapted to encourage/discourage behaviors. Those works but not quickly and perhaps not as effectively as we would like. So the answer to the question is NOTHING. Nothing can be legislated or adopted to force a change in behavior. At the risk of branded "one of those" (well maybe I am and maybe I have been all the time) in the end we need to remember what we were told when we were young from whomever it was that was teaching us our morals, "do unto others..." We need to remember that we each have a right to our views, to disagree, to debate and even to take extreme off the wall positions. But we need to be civil to each other, to respect each other as human beings. Without civility and respect we are nothing. I sense that is where we are. Social media allows us to hide behind screen names or impersonal discourse without direct consequences to ourselves. Is that the source of all evil-hardly- but it certainly has added to the downfall of civility. We must do better.

Mike Gump

I love this country and what it stands for in the world. We're not perfect, but we don't suffer from hubris either. I fear that younger generations, for the most part, have little understanding of the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the incredible perceptiveness and wisdom of the founding fathers. Our schools have strayed too far from what education is all about, and our standing relative to other countries in various tests is clear evidence of that. Our schools need to return to the business of education with an emphasis on civics, English, math, and history. A truly educated electorate is necessary if the country is to survive and prosper. We know how other once-promising civilizations became political carcasses, and it would be unbelievably sad if we went that way too, eyes wide open. The next 50 years hold the key.

Ted Gundy

I have watched our country evolve since I graduated in 1968. Before that, I think I was naïve as to how it functioned politically. I have seen the pendulum swing back-and-forth several times. And while I clung to that pendulum, technology was marching forward exponentially. The amount of information available on the Internet, some accurate, much inaccurate, has become overwhelming. Our ability to communicate through social networking has become instantaneous, and so powerful at times, the network seems to

have a mind of its own. The pace as well as the volume of messaging crushes the needed moment, the space, to discern the truth. Now there's no slowing it down! The days of Walter Cronkite, John Chancellor, and even the gentle Bill Moyers and Roger Rosenblatt are over. These strong sensitive thinkers could at one time slow the pace down, inviting generous space to think. Patient conversations are difficult to have any more. We have Chris Matthews, Wolfe Blitzer, Joe Scarborough, Sean Hannity and Bill O'Reilly, and thankfully the ever-gracious incisive Rachel Maddow—all hammering us with urgent messages, admixed with swirling diarrheal tweets from a president who somehow got through college without reading, still bragging that he does not read or listen to the advisors who do read (the ones who haven't been fired yet!) , only listening to the twisted content of his superior brain , clinging to facts of dubious origin. On this thin ice our beloved America skates. Trust in the government, and trust in the press has been seriously eroded. It is difficult to know who to listen to. There are few options: trust Rachel, travel to Nebraska to search for Mother Abigail (The Stand), go forward and try not to look for the good old days...or listen for the still small voice of God.

Roger Gutner

We must move toward a level playing field where all people have an equal chance at success if they're willing to work hard, accept competition & allow for room on both sides, understanding that one's best may not always bring home the trophy the first time; but, that failure should be a prompt to try different strokes rather than an impetus to play the victim in the hope that others will come to one's aid & take away the need to be responsible. The world will be better if there could be a return to the importance of family in formulating strength of character, fairness & ultimately happiness. Along with this I believe that true wisdom comes with experience & aging, & that while youth can bring fresh approaches to old problems, that youth cannot always have all the right answers, as the last 30-40 years have shown; and that youth should not feel entitled to have the moral high ground for right & wrong. I further believe that Socialism & Communism look the best to those who are looking for an easy way forward; but have poor outcomes which aren't clear until it is too late to swing back. If I saw that our Dartmouth showed any inclination to change this approach to educating our youth, then maybe I would change my decision to never donate even \$1.00 to it, again. That's my take on things, including life. Thanks for the question.

John Hamer

The earth should be invaded by hostile aliens, which would inspire humanity to come together to save the world. In a heartbeat, all national, racial, ethnic, tribal, economic

and other divisions would disappear. People would unite in a common cause, maximizing resources to fend off the invaders. Men, women and children would organize to fight, protect one another, survive and carry on. The rivalries, prejudices, pettiness, greed, exploitation and cruelty of the past 50 years would disappear. Cooperation and collaboration would be essential and rewarded on a global scale.

The ancient attributes that brought the first human tribes together — warding off enemies, feeding communities, protecting children, and caring for the ill and elderly — would once again be paramount. Leaders would arise capable of organizing and including everyone on the planet in this existential effort. Altruistic instincts would predominate.

There is proof of this postulate: After World War II, Charles Fritz, who worked for the National Opinion Research Center, based at the University of Chicago, led an extensive survey of survivors of catastrophic events, whether natural or manmade. "Fritz's theory was that modern society has gravely disrupted the social bonds that have always characterized the human experience, and that disasters thrust people back into a more ancient, organic way of relating....As people come together to face an existential threat, class differences are temporarily erased, income disparities become irrelevant, race is overlooked, and individuals are assessed simply by what they are willing to do for the group....What catastrophes seem to do — sometimes in the span of a few minutes — is turn back the clock on ten thousand years of social evolution." (Source: "Tribe," by Sebastian Junger)

So, an alien invasion from outer space is clearly our only hope for the next 50 years!

Ed Heald

To presume that I can offer "measures that should be adopted" is unrealistic, as, from my experience, people will only do what is important to them personally, what adds value to their own lives (however they choose to define that), and imposing external measures would eventually prove temporary and unproductive as there would likely be no long-term commitment. Rather, I lean toward helping people understand that we are in an inter-dependent relationship with everything else and everyone else. Within this context, a return to core values would then provide the base from which we can make the next 50 years better. These core values encompass respect for all things and peoples, integrity in one's self, candor without malice in relating to others, interpersonal relationships based on verbal and personal human interaction and not by technological means, an open mind when presented with or facing difficult or different thoughts, beliefs, environments or challenges, and the willingness to continually grow personally.

The ability to see, hear and understand the context within which all people live their lives is a critical element in assuring an opportunity for a "better" next 50 years.

Jim Henle

1. The problem of wealth and income inequality. This is the cause of the current political instability, the partisan divides, and the paralysis of government. Some research I have done suggests this can only be addressed by a return to the high tax rates of the 1950's.
2. The legacy of slavery and the treatment of Native Americans has never been adequately addressed. The only reparation that is politically possible and at the same time meaningful is the creation of a truly egalitarian public school system. I mean a system that treats every student as a potential star, that nourishes their intellectual lives, that gives them identity and community.
3. The problem of the loss in this country of a sense of citizenship, of shared purpose, shared history, shared principles, shared experiences. We no longer have the draft, we often don't vote together, celebrate together Public schools would help.
4. They would also help with the coming economic dislocations caused by the use of robotic technology. We could easily double the number of teachers.

Greg Herschell

For mankind to have a better next 50 years we, as a group, must all learn to think critically, continually question our assumptions, challenge the status quo, and manage change. We must not allow governments, institutions, or individuals to dictate policy but, as a people, must participate in our society. We also need more of the human race to be better educated. Therefore I would recommend making education affordable for everyone and make it a lifetime endeavor. Secondly, we will need programs to support people emotionally and financially as they lose their occupations to technology. Rage against machines is understandable but unproductive. It often opens the door to evil leaders who will exploit discontent for their own benefit.

As an aside, and just referring to the U.S., I do believe all of us should give two years of our pre or post college years to our country in service. One could join the military, the Peace Corp, Vista or some other service. We would all have broader horizons and an investment in our future unrelated to economic gain. Too many of us get to live in a silo today and fear those in another silo. We need to require our youth to move out of their

comfort zones, expose them to different cultures, ideas, and experiences. The world is shrinking and the more we know about each other the better we will be.

Dolph Highmark

Open minds and do more critical thinking.
 Stop teaching to a test.
 Walk in the other person's shoes.
 Think and do what is right.
 Get up early in the morning and listen.
 Hike in the forest.
 Pass on your knowledge and experience.
 Volunteer.
 Stop the foolish consistencies, the hobgoblin of little minds.

Gerry Hills

As Bill Clinton said, you get what you vote for. Look what just happened.

Ronald Hinckley

"Better" is a relative and elusive term that is difficult to determine in a time frame such as 50 years with any confidence. I prefer the term "different" to indicate change with the understanding that some will think it is better, others worse. The March/April 2017 Dartmouth Alumni Magazine published an essay by Judith Hertog, "Why We Need the Humanities: Right Now More than Ever" that identifies where significant efforts must be adopted to make a difference 50 years out. The article pinpoints problems of the current age that make the humanities "indispensable." And then it ends as if once discussed problem solved. Meanwhile, legislators in Utah call for ending humanities courses in high school because they do not prepare youth for jobs in the modern era, and a Wisconsin state college ends majors in humanities due to diminishing enrollments.

Marx was correct in that economics determine our being, with the irony that it is our capital business interests ultimately behind the move to focus only on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education. A solution, if there is one, is for those who profess the values of the humanities to become an active force in

society – critical thinking is not enough, critical action must occur. One area for such action is the development of on-line interactive sites where the human resonance found in the various humanities can be shared. Ironically, such sites cannot rely on traditional humanities approaches but must adapt to people's current interests and attention spans that are unnatural to the humanities. For example, an appeal to engage with a humanities interactive site could last no more than 9 seconds, the on-line attention span of the current generation. The social sciences must become an ally of this humanities effort, because their irrelevance is next for the economic determinists.

Gary Hobin

This really depends on the scope of "better:" for me? For the nation? For whom? As a political and social moderate (regardless of the fact that my East Coast friends may not think me that) my recommendations for measures to make the next 50 years better include more attention to improving public schools — which means NO to school vouchers, among other things. Expanding health care is a biggie; as a veteran, I make use of the local VA Medical Center, which, in contrast to reports in the popular "bash-em-all" press gives both excellent and timely health care (whether this is true throughout the system is debatable). In the short term, taking action to broaden our national policies regarding immigration and refugees has great potential for making the next 50 years better: economically, scientifically, and socially. And, let's not forget the environment! Longer term measures to make the next 50 years better should include efforts to improve public transportation, to reduce carbon emissions, to make more efficient use of the resources we have. Yes, I'm an environmentalist of sorts. Love my SUV for its carrying capacity (multiple grandkids), but sure do wish it got better gas mileage! Since there is little to be gained by retreating from international relations or global marketing, our measures to improve the next 50 years ought to include embracing global partners, economically, politically, and diplomatically. President G.W. Bush was wrong in declaring our right to strike at potential adversaries to prevent them taking action; doing it may be justifiable, but DECLARING it just alienates friends without deterring potential adversaries — well, in my opinion anyway. Given the longevity curve of my grandparents and parents, I might just be around to see how this comes out.

Peter Hofman

I hark back to one of the items Dartmouth included in its application: "You are a world-renown philosopher and about to die. In 25 words or less write a message to all humanity." I don't recall my specific response, but it went something like this: as

appreciation for the value of all human life increases, poverty, inequality, discrimination, slavery, human trafficking, war, disease, malnutrition, and other afflictions will decrease. Clearly, that appreciation must lead to action. While we've made some progress over the last 50 years, we have SO far to go. Therefore, I think this message still applies.

I think my message didn't include any reference to respecting our planet and the importance of stewardship. Clearly, this must be a priority that goes hand-in-hand with my initial message. It must also be all encompassing – all natural resources, all life.

The statements are simple, yet the implementation will be challenging. People will constantly have to be reminded – it might make sense to present these messages as short, easy to remember mission statements. If people constantly remember that we are one human race on one planet and it's all we've got, we should make progress, and the human race – and our planet – should be in better shape than they are today.

Bob Holmberg

I would like to see my grandkids, indeed all kids, be able to envision a brighter future for their next 50 years than we have right now.

I believe we are at the start of a new political revolution which could recharge our tiring democratic process. Youth are dismissing our lame excuses and inaction on gun control in this country and demanding sensible policy which respects the primacy of public safety. Young promising women are being courted in political training programs for future primaries. The current paralyzing log jam of radical bi-partisanship will be broken by enlightened youth and women who respect relationships, facts, multiple viewpoints and the common good. The strangling financial power of corporations and the wealthiest to control elections will be defeated.

Public policy will be developed to broaden opportunity and decrease economic disparity through the most effective return on investment: subsidized quality early child care and education including wraparound parent support and education. Paid parental leave will be extended as in Scandinavia. Post-secondary educational opportunity will be available to all including those in the trades skills and recent immigrants. Re-training programs into new green technologies and public services will be available to adults laid off from failing old world technologies as the paper, coal and petroleum industries. How can we possibly pay for this brighter new world? Through enlightened education, research and development the US will help lead the world in new green technologies. Tax reform must be progressive with the wealthiest paying more as is their opportunity

and responsibility. Tariffs must be strong but selective and developed privately to induce reciprocal changes from the most offending countries.

Finally, our more enlightened future leaders will see the critical need to join the global community in recognizing and striving collectively to reverse world climate change.

Henry Homeyer

The Next 50 Years

America could become a kinder, gentler place, a better place if only we could change six things:

1. Reform the campaign financing rules. Let the federal government finance all federal elections instead of letting corporations and special interests influence our legislators. Limit campaigning to 6 months.
2. Do away with gerrymandered districts. Let the popular vote decide presidential elections.
3. Institute universal health care. Take care of our sick, do away with the need for private health insurance.
4. Cut back our military budget so that we have adequate resources to defend ourselves, but not the means – or the temptation – to annihilate other countries.
5. Require every citizen to vote. Perhaps voting can be done on-line. Elect officials who are honest, hard-working and well intentioned.
6. Ban assault weapons and bump stocks. Buy them back.

Of course, none of those things are going to happen. But each of us can make changes. I believe that life can be made better, one person at a time, by helping others in our immediate communities. We can serve others, we can share our resources with those less fortunate. This is what I decided to do, and have been doing.

Jack Hopke

Increase federal oversight of state education and increase federal funding for public education.

Prohibit government financial aid to private charter schools.

Increase government regulation of banking institutions.

Restrict the size of private media organizations.

Increase government funding for the arts and culture.

Increase federal regulation of carbon emissions.

Eliminate the Electoral College.

Prohibit former government employees and elected officials from joining private interest groups/lobbying firms for at least 5 years after leaving government.

Limit elected officials to two terms.

Clean up the oceans.

Encourage healthy diets and the limiting of meat consumption.

Increase federal oversight of the intrusion of religion into government and publicly-funded educational institutions.

Provide tax incentives to families to limit the number of offspring.

Gary Horlick

If the earth's temperature continues to rise nothing else will matter much.

Frank Bowen Hugg

The amazing speed and overwhelming e-changes of our life are reducing the personal face to face quality of life. Words on a screen cannot and do not substitute for spoken words in the presence of another. People are coming more detached. I do not know how to change these seeming inexorable times, but something must be done. Measure to limit phone, pads, etc. Next guns must be removed from our society. Even at risk of loss of life of police and military.

Mike Jacobs

The obvious measures might be attention to, and action regarding, climate change, income inequality and inequality of educational opportunities, the coarsening of political dialogue, and the reestablishment of the US as an advocate and force for moral good in the world. The listing of these rather obvious goals seems almost fatuous, or would have seemed so a year ago, but the election of Trump has placed a cloud over good sense, decency and the improvement of the polity.

Bill Jaeger

Stop liberals from controlling governments.

Benjamin Johnson

More informed debate. More science and technology.

Robin Jones

Return the virtues of truth, fact, and scientific evidence to everyday life (as has been powerfully expressed by many,) but basics that we have failed to require of our society. Having worked in the US Navy for 27 years, and continuing to play a limited role in today's work force, I know that personal loyalty and loyalty to institution both have their limits. Start with a required high school class in civics for all, such as my Dad taught for many years. Promote and rededicate in ourselves those basic values that we seem to ignore at our peril. (Didn't need 300 words to say what I wanted.)

Dick Jones

One thing that I believe is badly needed is an aggressive re-introduction of civics and a sense of universal responsibility to participate in our government processes. The country has been in a declining path more or less since our graduation date regarding the urgency to protect and defend society against forces of political oppression, unbridled capitalist and selfish corporate interests. Social institutions to educate, facilitate and enable middle and lower classes to achieve a reasonable productive life have been eroded or weakened in service of enrichment of the upper class. The work force has lost its social contract with corporate America, more than ever confined to jobs with reduced or non-existent monetary remuneration and benefits sufficient to raise a family and make a career. The institutions which were built at great cost through the bulk of the 20th century and defended at great cost in World War II and subsequent conflict, and by dedicated public servants and competent elected representatives are being deconstructed or removed, in part because a passive, or ill-informed, or disconnected population cannot or will not oppose and correct the process. I very much fear the country will descend into a second world state from which it may never recover unless some very fundamental things change.

Cedrick Kam

Our generation came of age in the 1960s, the decade of Civil Rights, feminism, and the War on Poverty. It was the Age of Aquarius. We Baby Boomers would build a better,

more just and equal world. My career choice was to enlist in the War on Poverty. Not only has our dream not been fully realized, it is under open attack today.

They didn't teach in school that thanks to the "peculiar institution" of slavery, racism is endemic in American society, and traditional elites have always conspired to keep the lower classes in their places. The Civil War settled very little. Americans have always been divided into rough halves, politically. Current events are bringing our historic racism, classism, and misogyny into sharp focus.

History shows that a new generation can recognize and correct the mistakes of the past. Children are born with an innate sense of fairness. Young people are seeing rights always taken for granted being snatched away. Like many others, they recognize that things are just not right. Newton's third law of motion—for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction—applies to human society as well: Slavery led to Civil War led to Jim Crow led to Civil Rights; industrial pollution led to environmentalism led to climate change denial; the first black president is followed by a white supremacy apologist. Societal reaction has been swift and strong: Women march. Confederate statues fall. People vote.

As we experienced in the 1960s, education and social activism are antidotes to societal disorder. It is past time to heal Civil War wounds, recognize we are a nation of immigrants, and heed our motto, "Out of Many, One." In the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

Marty Keller

Not that the other questions were easy, but this is more than tough, given how hard it is for our government and others to make the positive changes that I think would benefit the health, welfare, safety and quality of life of the USA citizenry and lessen the risks of international terrorism and genocide. So, while fully cognizant of the difficulties (seeming impossibilities) of actualizing some of the changes I would believe are necessary, I propose the following, starting with several domestic issues and then hitting some international crises:

While the second amendment has withstood a variety of challenges, we need to enact severe and meaningful restrictions on the right to bear arms similar to that of England, New Zealand and other countries that make it extremely difficult to purchase and own the type of weaponry that has been used in many of the massacres that have taken place in USA in the past several years.

Affordable, quality health care needs to be made available for those who are currently not covered. This will be a challenge of enormous magnitude to do, but should be thought of as a right and not as a privilege.

The vicious cycle of inner city and rural poverty and disintegration of the nuclear family remains a daunting horror with multifactorial contributing causes that legislation is not likely to wipe out; however, there needs to be a human safety net for children born into these conditions that make it less likely that they will be victims of hunger, abuse, preventable illness and early death from unnecessary causes.

International treaties and alliances must be entered into that enable a dent to be made in rampant international terrorism of the past 15 years which is clearly escalating. Finally, meaningful nuclear safety/disarmament treaties are absolutely essential.

Dick LaFrance

We can't legislate morality.

Need to applaud differences, and not seek constant conformity.

Provide an appropriate social safety net.

Medical care is a fundamental right, but not a guarantee for longevity.

There is a right to choice, and a right to choose to die.

Tom Laughlin

As a society we need to vigorously support law enforcement, not vilify its noble agents or ignore the rules as lawfully set. We need to support constructive discourse, and not allow dissidents who don't like the narrative to impede civil debate. We need to be wary of a PC culture that unfairly maligns individuals who act or speak honestly about real issues or concerns. We must not allow a token few malcontents to preempt what the majority would like to do or see happen. We must work to strengthen the resolve of a younger generation to uphold the dignity of human life, to honor the privilege of liberty, and to strive to be the best they can be. And we need to elect leaders who espouse these principles and will commit to working faithfully to reinforce them.

Oscar Lebowhl

I think that the changes which would improve our lives in the U.S. would be strict gun control laws and an affordable health care system which would provide quality health

care to all Americans. Another problem is the high cost of college and graduate school education. When we attended Dartmouth tuition was \$1800 per year. Now the cost of tuition and other fees exceeds \$60,000 per year. In my profession, Medicine our medical students frequently have debts greater than \$200,000 when they graduate. This affects their choice of specialties and very few choose primary care which pays poorly compared to other medical specialties. My four sons completed their education without debt but I worry about the cost of education for my grandchildren.

Woody Lee

We came of age in the 1960's. Our mothers smoked cigarettes throughout pregnancy. We had no helmets, no cell phones, and no Facebook or Twitter. We fell from trees, broke bones and got into fights, but always healed in time to run again. Our neighborhoods were mostly safe and forgiving. We absorbed failures as necessary trials. We knew that failure and success were twin partners in our journey. Our generation produced some of the best risk-takers, scientists, artists, activists, and leaders the world has known.

I found my passion as a physician in the world of heart transplantation. Routinely I witnessed the miraculous outcomes of modern science. But my patients too often bore the scars of a society that has made little progress in advancing social justice and equity. And so I wondered, why can we engineer medical but not social miracles?

A broken society does not mend miraculously. We live in a nation where social, racial and economic disparities are severe and increasing. To be committed to social change is to engage in vigilance and action on behalf of those left behind. And we do so as long as this society remains at odds with the pretty language and ideals inscribed by our founders.

Once again we hear the voices of the young. They have a vision of the future. For some the horizons are unlimited and opportunities hang low on fruit trees ready to be plucked. For others, only sacrifice and struggle will enable them to stand up and reach for the sky. But rise they will. Some will lead, many will follow. Trust the today's youth. Respect their wisdom, energy, and passion. Occasionally they will seek our counsel, which we can grant, ever mindful that it is they, not we, who will change the world.

Joseph Leeper

Some of key measures would include: 1) higher taxes for the wealthy; 2) less dependence on coal; 3) universal health care; 4) cheaper higher education especially for state universities; 5) get rid of partisan politics; 6) US to be true world leader politically, economically and socially; 7) stricter term limits relative to state and federal offices; 8) somehow have a winning program for Dartmouth's men's basketball culminating in Ivy Championship; 9) keep attracting high quality student-citizens to Dartmouth.

Roger Lenke

Hopefully, people will start to think more logically and make decisions based on facts rather than "fake" news. Better attention to the environment. Less screen time and more personal interactions.

Ted Levin

We must reverse Climate Change and the unequal distribution of wealth in the world. That includes feeding all the hungry of the world, insuring health care for all, providing adequate housing for all. We need to shift from an economy that benefits only the United States to a global economy that allows economic growth for all nations. Global economy is not a zero sum game. The more people who are literate and can use electronic media the more who can raise their standard of living and have their voice heard. The Internet was the next great step in democracy since the wars of independence in the late 1700's. We need to continue exploring the universe and the quantum world; some day we may need to leave this planet if we do not fix it first.

Terry Lichty

1. Mandate term limits in Congress, and a limit to the time allowed for campaigning for election/reelection.
2. Require periodic reports cards on those in public office, with an emphasis on getting good stuff done quickly. Bad report card, they could be removed; good report card, they don't need to spend much time campaigning. Excepting the recent tax cut bill, so little has been accomplished this decade in the US legislature that incumbents should be ashamed to take a paycheck.

Dave Loring

We need to figure out ways to protect the planet including not only the environment but working on peace between all groups and nations and helping those less fortunate to have education, safety, good health, work, food and meaningful lives. The USA can take the lead on this but must be willing to learn about and learn from other countries, defuse international strife and not become isolationist. We need good leadership and the kind of leaders who care deeply about the long range future of the country and its citizens. We need leaders who are educated and willing to take the time to study and learn the facts surrounding all pertinent issues. We need a better balance of race and gender in our government.

We need meaningful options for inner city youth.....starting with good education and work options.....I strongly recommend mandatory (two year minimum) national (paid) service for all high school graduatesa choice of military service, peace corps or domestic programs. In addition there must be programs to follow those, who for whatever reasons, do not graduate from high school. We need to get all these kids off the streets and into productive activity and fund it. We are losing too many of our young people to drugs and violence. We live in a country where violence seems to on a continual increase. Steps need to be taken to reduce the amount of violence. Take a look at what some other countries have done, learn some lessons on what to do and take action.

Rusty Martin

Three issues need to be addressed, although I am unsure what measures can successfully address these issues.

First is the political leadership in our country. There needs to be more accountability and willingness to compromise among all government leaders. Perhaps term limits would help here. Today's politicians do a poor job of representing the wishes of the country, instead participating in partisan politics and grandstanding, resulting in the inability to accomplish important tasks. Politicians should be more willing to work together.

The second important issue for me is healthcare. Again, I am not knowledgeable enough to understand what the correct solution is, but doing nothing accomplishes nothing and our system remains broken. I believe quality universal healthcare should be available and affordable to everyone.

Finally, the immigration issue remains a huge puzzle and one that does not have a simple solution. Our country provides tremendous opportunities for millions of immigrants and should continue to do so. However, there must be some kind of screening process to protect our internal security.

I also believe a system needs to be established so that productive workers who have been in this country for years, whether legally or illegally can be granted freedom to stay and work as long as they have broken no laws.

Toby Mathias

Our skyrocketing national debt and future potential insolvency of the Social Security Fund threaten the economic futures of our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. Can retired seniors like most of us do anything at this point to make a difference? The leadership of AARP steadfastly refuses to address this issue. After all, the ranks of the AARP are swelled with members who do not want to see their benefits reduced and the AARP wants future members to know it will fight to maintain these benefits. We seniors are now part of the problem. Do any of us want to become part of the solution? And what will it take? At a minimum, it will require a change in leadership within the AARP. It is a very powerful political lobby. Will new leadership come from any of us or be supported by us? There is no standing on the sidelines. If we are not part of the solution, then we are part of the problem.

John Maxfield

Vote consistently for those who most effectively embrace the ambition to keep government out of our lives.

Randy McElrath

Reduce the influence of money in our political system.

Bob McGee

We must and it is imperative that we adopt both laws, policies, and regulations, as well as effective means to enforce these, and adopt social binding contracts in every country and across this world, to protect and preserve our environment, the animals who have

inherited this world with us, and our world-wide historical legacy. The greatest fear I have is that we inherit or pass on a world without the natural and geographical wonders we have grown to take for granted, and the wildlife both in the sea and on the land and in the air with whom we have shared our world, and the great creations and wonders made by man from Angkor Wat to today's technological creations, and the many diverse and miraculous cultures and societies from the great dynasties of Egypt, Minoan societies, Greek and Roman empires, the developing Christian, Muslim, and Eastern religions, and what each has left to us in writings, music, art, architecture, philosophy, creativity, foods and life's experiences.

All of this must be protected and maintained in its most original and natural state or condition as possible. We learn from the animals themselves, we learn from the past, we learn from ancient and modern cultures, and we learn from all aspects of other societies and life commitments. In 50 years, we must still have these same things preserved, as they have always been, for our descendants to enjoy, to be enthralled by, to learn from, and to have full and complete life experiences.

We have a fragile world. It will be gone and, heaven forbid, long forgotten, if we, as inhabitants of this earth and as part of a global movement, do not start making the right decisions to protect and preserve all of this for another 50 years. Can this make the next 50 years better than the last? Maybe not better, but better than the alternative of losing much if not all of what we have had that has been good in the last 50 years.

John Melski

My 50th reunion is one year after my 50th wedding anniversary. My stories about Dartmouth are intertwined with my marriage. "We are all stories in the end." (Amy Pond in the Tenth Doctor Who).

My Dartmouth stories began in High School where Mr. Miller taught English using dramatic readings of Shakespeare. He wrote in my yearbook "This was a Lear...when comes another." I was also one of the "Six characters in search of an Author" as a Dartmouth freshman. I later discovered that theater is important in both teaching and patient care. Patients remember how they felt as much as what they were told. I used the Fish! Philosophy to teach: 1) choose your attitude, 2) play, 3) make their day, and 4) be present. Being present can be simply listening or bearing witness to suffering. At Dartmouth, Professor Peter Bien had me drink from the fire-hose of English Literature. In "Zorba the Greek," Basil, the narrator, asks Zorba "Are you married?" Zorba replies "Am I not a man? And is a man not stupid? I'm a man, so I married. Wife, children, house, everything. The full catastrophe." Zorba's response inspired "Full

Catastrophe Living” by Jon Kabat-Zinn, a book that restored my spiritual health years later.

Dartmouth also epitomized Plutarch’s insight that “Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.” The time-sharing computer in College Hall ignited my passion for computing, which led to my career in Medical Informatics. I majored in psychology and assisted Professor Gulick in his study of stereoscopic vision. Cognition and computing became my twin stars of inspiration. The psych syllabus included *Escape from Freedom* by Eric Fromm, which explores our transcendent need to belong to something larger than ourselves. My transcendent need became the practice of medicine.

Don Middleton

1. Laws should be passed to protect us from gun violence. Automatic weapons should be banned. The framers of our Constitution did not envision the fire power that is available today. You cannot buy an F16. The government can certainly limit the firepower of recreational weapons.
2. The extraordinarily wealthy should pay a greater portion of their income in taxes. Slums should be cleared from the American scene. Persons currently living in slums should be trained to help improve their surroundings.
3. Mass transit projects should be fully developed: rapid rail transport or intercity subways would certainly help.
4. Strict controls on pollution are needed.
5. Of course world peace would be great but I doubt that it will be achieved in the next 50 years.
6. All Americans should perform some sort of government service: beautifying their own cities, teaching, or providing some service such as working in the healthcare sector. Many Americans take their rights for granted without working to support those rights. To value something into which one has put little is tough.

John Norman Miksic

We need to foster universal education at the highest level possible throughout life. People need to be taught to think critically, to be inquisitive, never to be satisfied. As our old president John Sloane Dickey said, “We need to teach people how to learn.” We need to develop methods to make learning interesting, using all senses, with as much exposure to different places and people as possible.

Susan Miller

History actually reflects steady improvements in human individual and collective systems as time rolls past us. Sadly, the same cannot be said for our environment, as we see photos of melting glaciers, warming oceans, deforestation, and erratic temperature swings, causing havoc with agricultural and nature's cycles. If any of us has the means to influence these degradations, through donations to supportive causes or corporate or political policy changes, make this our Number ONE Priority NOW. Bless you.

Rich Miller

The past 50 years bred the impression that goals of international peace and improving quality of life around the world were achievable. Even the insults to our environment due to past and current industrialization were being addressed to reduce the climate change, the exposures to toxic chemicals and to improve democracy around the world. Hope for all of these concerns were ever present and appreciated. Partners in Health is an excellent example of the compassion as has been the neighbor to neighbor outreach demonstrated in the present fire and water catastrophes. Yet even with these individual and collective actions, the world has once again seen that arrogance can rapidly change our perspective. Recommendation – globalization is the cure; temper the human attitude of us versus them in all of our individual, societal and governmental actions. Unfortunately, the USA has faced an upheaval in this approach to our citizenry, our national responses, and international participation. Hopefully, this current leadership will identify to each of us the characteristics for needed change/ return to stable actions and progress in these ever-fragile times. Perhaps the answer is to have leadership at all levels of government with individuals having known experience and skills focusing on the continuing development of inclusion in our attitudes.

Max Milton

Well, who is doing the adopting? It seems one of the first things that we need to do as a democracy is establish trust in our institutions. Which means that everyone impacted by those institutions feels they have access and a voice, a right to transparency in policies impacting them and fairness. It seems this willingness to engage needs to be extended beyond our national borders as well. Americans need to see the rest of the planet as neighbors rather than only as competitors in a zero sum game for resource extraction or as outlets for our advertising and markets. Americans need to realize some 2.5 billion

people in Asia aspire to be part of "first world" and are aggressively pursuing that with or without us.

If I were advocating a "measure" one would be that no one gets out of high school without being exposed to the brutal history of the 20th century and how a deep discontent with Modernism and reaction to it that began broadly in Europe around the time of the fall of Napoleon, but was articulated full on by J Rousseau a generation earlier, is today playing out violently in our times – in India, the Middle East, and elsewhere- just as it did in 19th century Europe in the age of revolutions and protest. Many of the leaders in Germany who supported Hitler were heirs of this violent reaction throughout parts of Europe to the excesses of the French Revolution. The "Liberal" and "Conservative" struggle is rooted in those Enlightenment/post Enlightenment times. Many of the literary giants and major figures from that time that were required reading for us as undergrads were formed in those decades and yet, I, at least, did not, maybe could not, appreciate the context of their lives.

Jim Morrison

Within 300 words, it would be impossible to give fair treatment to all of the recommendations I would want to make in this regard, so I will focus upon what I deem to be the central issue that affects all the others. That is the need for a Constitutional amendment to overturn and vitiate the Supreme Court ruling in Citizens United v. FEC. In that ruling, the Court committed numerous errors, as pointed out by Justice John Paul Stevens in his dissent. The most egregious of these errors, which opened Pandora's box for the others, was the majority's extrajudicial expansion of the specific issue brought by the plaintiffs, in effect legislating from the bench on matters that the plaintiffs did not raise. This violation of the majority's profession of judicial restraint allowed them to make law to fit a predetermined outcome with a reach far beyond the legal issue brought to bear on the case.

I leave to others to read the summary of Justice Stevens's dissent, available online, to appreciate the quality of his reasoning, but what most concerns the point of this essay is the insidious effect of removing from Congress the ability to judge and regulate the effects of commercial communication on the body politic. Not only are corporations not individuals, as envisaged in the First Amendment, but also their being granted the inalienable rights of individuals grants them the unfair ability to drown out the speech of others by marshaling vast economic resources to gain favoritism by those they work to elect. Far from being free associations of individuals, they are artificial entities created by the state, and thus are subject to regulation by the state impermissible to being applied to individuals.

Our commonwealth is not enriched but impoverished by the overweening influence of corporate interest.

Bill Mutterperl

Our Undergraduate years at Dartmouth, 1964-68 are generally considered the most turbulent and polarized time in U.S. history other than the Civil War. But this period ultimately lead to great strides in the area of social justice, primarily in the form of gains in civil rights. The current era in our politics gives the 60's a good run for its money in terms of turbulence and polarization; the main reason I think being the back sliding in gains in social justice and equality made over the last 50-60 years. I think much of this has occurred because of one party control of all branches of U.S. and many of the state governments, combined with growing radicalization of that party, and the other, to a lesser degree. Techniques such as recent voter suppression legislation threaten to add a degree of permanence to this situation. In the end, of course, you can't pass off all the blame on politicians; we have the government we elected. We need to get back to a two party system where one is center/right and the other is center/left. If the result is divided government, so much the better. But this better future is still within our grasp. It is up to responsible voters who actually exercise their franchise in all elections, and at least attempt to understand and not demonize members of the opposition.

Joe Nathan

No fences. We built a fence around the White House and closed Pennsylvania Avenue. We built barricades around the U.S. Capitol and inside the Capitol we closed off debate on the most important issues facing us. We built a no-protest zone around the Supreme Court, restrict public access to Supreme Court proceedings and ban television from Supreme Court proceedings that fundamentally shape and influence our lives. There is no progress without accountability. Right now, we are accountable only to our own interest groups. We would do better in a true representative democracy. What would that look like? Diversity. No borders. Term limits. Popular election of Presidents. End the Electoral College. Senators and Representatives must represent populations of people, not territory. Let's eliminate artificial divides and borders based on political parties and state lines. Let's all get into the same boat and row ahead together. This is a country of immigrants. We are stronger when we welcome all regardless of race, religion or country of origin.

Thomas Jefferson imagined America as the homogenous, agrarian utopia, populated by agricultural workers. Jefferson and Madison did not see the rise of the great urban areas and how destructive to democracy is a system where a state of 1 million people would have the same strength in the Senate as a state of 39 million persons. The rights of the minority must be protected; however, minority rule is not democracy.

In closing, I recommend that (i) all court hearings be open to the public via television ("Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants."), (ii) the President be elected by popular vote so that the will of the people can be vindicated, (iii) the United States adopt a unicameral congress where representation is apportioned strictly base on population, not artificial state borders, and (iv) our immigration policy must reflect this ideal: "Give me your tired, your poor, Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

My ideal America represents peace, justice, security and broadly-shared prosperity.

Mark Nelson

We are coming to know Earth's biosphere at a very troubling time. The Industrial Revolution in less than 300 years has intensified and spread throughout the world spawning unintended consequences everywhere.

Some actions are obviously needed. We need to slow down, halt and eventually reverse what greenhouse gases are doing to our atmosphere. Otherwise, the impact on ecosystems, acidification and warming of our oceans, increase in extreme weather events, on top of other human impacts on our biosphere, make for a truly frightening and even unpredictable near and long-term future.

Our future is not pre-determined. It's certainly not too late. We can't wait for the future, we must create it. All is not gloom and doom. Many incipient positive trends and changes can reverse the threats to our and our biosphere's future. Perhaps more important than technical advances are changes of consciousness, how we understand our relationship to nature.

Younger people around the world understand far better than their elders that new approaches are needed. They don't take as givens that our technosphere must rely on non-renewable and ecologically damaging resources, that our food must be grown with chemical fertilizers and pesticides, or that we have to put up with polluted air and water. The switch to wind and solar power is proceeding fairly rapidly in countries which have

made the decision. Progress is far slower in others where the powerful interests of giant companies and their government allies strenuously deny realities like climate change and exaggerate the economic costs and disruptions of a shift to non-polluting renewable sources of energy.

The biospheric paradigm shift is up against powerful ideologies deriving from “neo-liberalism” and free market economics. Their premise that market forces will solve any environmental problem has not worked and there is no reason to believe it will in the future.

The paradigm shift is exemplified by terms signaling a new relationship between humans and our biosphere. “Inter-generational justice” emphasizes meeting current needs without damaging the capacity of future generations to fulfill their needs. It’s encouraging that “sustainable development” is widely used despite confusion about what it means.

Though we may not precisely know what is sustainable, it’s clear many aspects of “business as usual” are not sustainable and change our world for the worse. We need new economic paradigms since conventional economics still treats shared resources and the environment as an “externality” – outside of and therefore not included in economic analyses. Unless polluters pay for clean-up and damage to the biosphere, there are no economic incentives for them to change.

“Ecological economics” emphasizes the interdependence and co-evolution of ecological systems and human economics. This expanded perspective values “natural capital,” the health of our biosphere, which contributes so many critical free services and maintains its life support capacities.

It’s important to not heed those ready to give up the fight for a better future, as though we’ve passed some irrevocable tipping point. We are in great need of new scripts, new storylines, new epics, new mythologies and teaching stories for humanity as we forge a renewed respect and moral compass for our behavior towards the natural world in the Anthropocene.

Out-dated mythic baggage, narrow bounds on science, economics which exclude human and natural values help feed the strange separation of humans from their rightful roles as participants in the biosphere. Many people think the environment is something outside of themselves, rather than understanding the truth that we are inseparable from nature, from our biosphere. These old paradigms are wrong, dispiriting and harmful. We need to awake to our reality and what a glorious one it is!

I remain optimistic about the prospects for the “human experiment.” Problems humans cause can also be solved by humans. My optimism, in large degree, comes from my Biosphere 2 experience, which taught us every action, however small, is important. If we give up hope, we cease motivating ourselves to act for positive change. The present confused time also means there’s an opening for new paradigms based on reality to take hold...

The challenges we biospherians faced and overcame in Biosphere 2 also give me hope. We didn’t destroy our wilderness biomes to plant more food. We didn’t undermine each other or cause harm to the life inside, our life support system. We continued working flawlessly with each other no matter what. We understood that there were higher values and necessities that united us.

Martin Luther King said, “We may have come in separate ships, but we’re all in the same boat now. ”We understood that in Biosphere 2—and that the boat was our lifeboat. That united us as a task group, a team. I see a growing appreciation around the world that we humans are in a shared lifeboat, regardless of our origins and circumstances. The ultimate spur to our collective human intelligence may be when we realize our shared necessity to live with one another and our global biosphere.

Our aims should go beyond sustainability to regeneration. Many features of the world we live in need to be changed, including poverty and income inequality, racism and sexism, materialism (which measures life by consumption), and both the diversity of human culture and nature everywhere under attack.

We should act so that future generations look back at our time as when the era of destruction began to be replaced by a restoration of ecological and human sanity. We are collectively facing a species IQ test. It is a test of whether humans can show the intelligence, resilience, and adaptability to be a cooperative and creative part of our planetary biosphere—or whether we are headed toward an evolutionary dead-end. From my new book: *Pushing our Limits: Insights from Biosphere 2*, University of Arizona Press, 2018.

Jamie Newton

The Dartmouth Class of 1968 will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of our graduation in a time that challenges us to express our best, most authentic character publicly as well as privately – much as we were challenged by the turbulent era of our youth.

We have been invited to recommend ways to make the next 50 years better than the past 50. A more compelling purpose, it seems to me, is to recommend ways to dispel the shadows of the future that we can expect if current trends remain unaltered.

Surely most of us can readily suggest directions for positive change, such as averting global climate change with the catastrophic consequences we already observe, preventing the worldwide nuclear arms race that is being fueled by the announced intentions of our own government, instituting universal health care, reversing patterns of intensifying economic and social inequality in the United States and around the world, protecting rather than degrading the earth's fragile biosphere, and defending democratic institutions against further corruption.

We came to adulthood in the activist 1960's, and we were gifted with the finest education available. As elders, we complement that education with decades of experience. What better legacy can we imagine than to leave the future a bit brighter, the integrity of the planet less compromised, as a result of our efforts?

At the memorial gathering of our 40th reunion, I quoted Mary Oliver (The Summer Day):
 "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Now I add this guidance from Wendell Berry (Sabbath Poem 1993-1):

"Now more than ever you can be
 generous toward each day
 that comes, young, to disappear
 forever, and yet remain
 unaging in the mind.
 Every day you have less reason
 not to give yourself away."

Jim Noyes

(Editor's note: Jim, in his own entertaining style, suggests a change at the top of the Executive Branch in Washington. Speak to him directly for particulars.)

John O'Shea

As a Society we need to reverse the very dangerous Socio-Economic Inequality in this Nation. Excessive money in Politics accelerated by those most wealthy individuals whose political, social, and/or religious agenda (on all sides of the political spectrum) is

to intentionally conquer and divide instead of attempting to influence governance for the Greater Good will only serve to further divide us and undermine the important Democratic principles and institutions we so desperately need to preserve and protect if we want future generations to enjoy the fruits of diversity, equal opportunity and prosperity our Class has benefitted from.

Overruling the Citizens United Holding (thereby limiting money influence), creating term limits for Federal Legislators, prohibiting the revolving door from Political positions to Lobbying, working to eliminate the unfair effects of political Gerrymandering, and possibly abolishing the Electoral College would go a long way to insure that our Democracy does not become a Plutocracy whose citizens are segregated, culturally, racially and economically, as between those of the very few haves, and the many have nots.

And oh, by the way, let's universally abolish assault rifles while enabling those who like to hunt to do so freely-our kids deserve the right to concentrate on getting the best education possible instead of worrying about getting shot. The Second Amendment never contemplated protections concerning modern day military weapons of such lethal firepower.

Rick Pabst

The "War On Drugs" has been as effective as Prohibition. Let's treat the addiction as a disease and house those homeless to reduce their emergency room visits. Let's all agree that Birth Control and Family Planning would reduce the abortions that no one really sets out wanting. Let's have spokes persons present the technological side of DNA manipulation in a way our society can debate the ethical issues. Let's beware of the possibility of our next generation of computers deciding that we are not worth serving. Let's develop the ability to listen and discuss divisive and difficult issues civilly to try to solve those problems that divide us.

Jon Page

UNDERSTANDING

Understanding and calm conversation must be improved between liberals and conservatives. Finding compromise and common ground is important and possible. For example, a good starting point could be agreement on shared goals and values. People need to learn to listen to each other concerning the issues faced by society.

A liberal arts college should be a good institution for forming a foundation of discussion and reason with differing points of view given respect and toleration.

Moderation should prevail over divisiveness in political leadership. We need to ask ourselves if differing points of view are being given respect and the opportunity to be voiced on campuses.

Pure hatred and extreme bias should be exposed so that they can be replaced with understanding. Basic education in economics and economic systems (with history) should be introduced in high school and extended in college. Educational institutions should feel a mandate to try to hire teachers and professors who are able to express and tolerate a range of opinions thereby getting students to open and broaden their minds.

Governmental and economic systems which feature the rule of law and free markets (with a price based system of resource allocation) should be compared with other systems for quality of life, basic freedoms and very long-term durability. The advantages of balanced approaches need to be taught and understood. Thanks for reading these thoughts.

Jim Payne

Even in the age of Twitter, outlining how to improve the next 50 years in 300 words or less is a tall order, but here are some thoughts: In a nation (and world) so diverse that all of us never can and never will agree on matters of importance, I think we need to return to the old-fashioned civic virtues of listening, good faith, self-restraint, and compromise; to accept the fact that no one owns the truth; and to understand that human institutions, like the rule of law and our democratic institutions and processes, are not necessarily eternal. They are ultimately fragile and in need of constant tending. Somewhat less important, but also useful, would be a return to public civility and moderation whenever moderation is appropriate — which, in my view, is most of the time. Judge Learned Hand once suggested that Oliver Cromwell's plea — "I beseech ye in the bowels of Christ, think that ye may be mistaken" — should be written over the portals of every church, every school, every courthouse, and every legislative body in the United States, and that every court should open with that proclamation. One concrete step we might take to improve the next 50 years would be to implement the Judge's suggestion and supplement it by requiring that the same plea be tweeted to all Twitter subscribers at least once per day, posted on every Facebook page, and proclaimed at the beginning of every cable news talking heads show. I might want to omit the "bowels of Christ" part, though.

David Peck

First and foremost, universal single payer health care will be a gigantic step to make the next 50 years better, although I certainly hope we don't have to wait 50 years for this to happen. Our current health care system is the most expensive in the world, yet with poorer outcomes than many other countries. Our costs have been growing faster than the rate of inflation, and are a growing percentage of the country's gross national product. This is unsustainable. I believe some type of Medicare For All needs to be in our future. Income inequality must be addressed; a recent report noted that top earners earn more than 200 times that of low earners. A mix of higher minimum wages and higher taxes on the uber-wealthy could reduce the inequality ratio. The defense budget should be reduced, in pure numbers and as a proportion of our national budget. We currently seem to spend inordinate amounts on expensive technology and equipment, designed to fight the last war. More money should be directed to education, from universal pre-K to college and beyond; investing in education is truly investing in the future, far beyond the next 50 years. I would welcome a requirement of 2 years of universal service for all young people, which would include the military, social services, and programs like the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) in the 1930's. This would serve our country in myriad ways, give life experiences, and our young people time to grow and mature a bit before entering the workforce or college. In short, I would like to see, hope to see, a society modeled after the best of the Western European democracies.

John Pierce

The biggest dangers facing the world are climate change, racial and religious intolerance and nuclear war. Changing the political landscape to get rid of Donald Trump, his cronies, and his core supporters as a political force will go a long way to mitigating all three of these dangers.

John Pfeiffer

People in society at every level — family, community, nation, and the world — must increase their capacity to understand, care for, and respond wisely and compassionately to human needs, especially those of the poorest and weakest among us. Civic and communal virtues and justice must be given greater value than individual acquisition of material goods at the expense of others. Governments and their leaders must dedicate themselves to ensuring the adequate provision of basic human needs, such as housing, education, income, employment, and health care and to pursuing

sound and equitable solutions to challenges that exceed the capacity of individuals and smaller organizations, such as poverty, crime, technological change, war, and climate change.

From their earliest ages, children should be taught to adopt such values, to accept personal responsibility for addressing these problems, and to work creatively and effectively with others to craft better ways of addressing them. Historically, liberal education in the arts, sciences, and humanities has played a major role in training citizens to assume such responsibilities, but appreciation of the importance of this mission has been displaced by a more popular view of education as mainly technical career training. Society needs to recognize that these visions are not incompatible and that both should be pursued consciously together for the greatest chances of creating a better future for all.

John Pilling

I gave myself a self-financed sabbatical for my 70th birthday, a degree in sustainable design from the school where I've taught since 1993. I wrote in my application: "I recognize the body of scientific research showing that characteristics of the Anthropocene may result in catastrophic global warming," and "I intend to use [my] graduate work ... to expand on my belief in the importance of effective urbanism as a means of creating a more resilient environment in the future."

Plenty of changes to the environment, both political and geophysical, in the short time since I started my sabbatical. So many expressions of unhappiness about the present and such wildly different promises for improving it.

I think the first step for positive change in our country is a political commitment to work together. It doesn't exist now. An example: compare the inability to move forward with only the Trans Hudson Tunnel (2009-present) to the success of the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act (1956).

Next, increase investment in renewables, where, according to a Forbes article from Jan. 2017, "Just under 374,000 people were employed in solar energy, according to the [Department of Energy] report, while coal, gas and oil power generation combined had a workforce of slightly more than 187,000" [Editor's note: These numbers have not been checked]. More people working at well-paying jobs and less greenhouse gas emissions.

Finally, build on the New Deal, don't dismantle it. While a substantial proportion of our citizenry were cut out of the New Deal because of racial discrimination, many of us benefited from it in countless ways.

This proposal isn't utopia. An example, the Nordic Model, exists. Check it out in Wikipedia. Some of the happiest, healthiest, most socially mobile, and wealthy people in the world live with this combination of private markets, free trade, and social welfare.

Bill Rapf

As a human race we have to learn to get along. It's not just the past 50 years that we've seen intolerance and greed lead to endless wars and conflicts, it's been happening since the dawn of civilization. How do we achieve a world where we can get along with each other is question that has no easy answer. Good education for everyone, and not just in STEM subjects, but like Dartmouth requires, a foundation in the humanities. Liberal Arts can help make us more open and accepting to differences of ideas, beliefs, and traditions.

Another big issue is Income Inequality that is widespread and growing throughout the world. In a world of have's and have not's, it is hard to preach that we should all be one. Minimizing Greed would go a long way to reduce this imbalance. How one goes about doing this another tough question. It's great to be ambitious and want to get more but at what point is the acquisition of monetary gain, territory, or possessions enough? Perhaps coming back to universal quality education is a beginning.

We can make great advances in technology and medicine, to make our lives easier, and healthier, but if we can't learn to listen, hear and empathize with each other then all this good progress will be for naught because the killing and hate will go on, wars will be more lethal, and greed will destroy the environment, and with that, our world in 50 will be over.

I'm not really that pessimistic. But the human capacity for good and evil seems rooted in our genes. I'm optimistic that goodness will prevail and we'll learn to put humanity first and not just Me first.

Alan Raymond

Despite a lot of evidence to the contrary, I remain optimistic that living conditions for most humans are improving. The problem is the vastly unequal distribution worldwide of income, living standards, and what should be basic rights like educational opportunity, justice, affordable health care, sanitation, access to healthy food and clean water, an unpolluted environment, personal security, etc. I hope technology will solve more

problems than it creates and that emerging generations will be better able to avoid past mistakes and lift all of humanity. At the same time, I'm mindful of what Barbara Tuchman has written about our ability to learn from the lessons of history. "There are lessons, of course, and when people speak of learning from them, they have in mind, I think, two ways of applying past experience. One is to enable us to avoid past mistakes and to manage better in similar circumstances next time; the other is to enable us to anticipate a future course of events. To manage better next time is within our means; to anticipate does not seem to be." While I am not religious, I believe religions will persist, and I hope that the values of charity, justice, kindness and making the world a better place for all, which are present in most world religions, will prevail over divisive and corrosive religious (or secular) fundamentalism and extremism.

Bob Reich

Most of us were born in 1946, along with George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Donald Trump. Collectively, we've made a mess of it.

To be sure, 2018 isn't much worse than 1968. As you'll remember, that was the year Martin Luther King Jr. and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated, our cities were burning, Lyndon Johnson vastly escalated the Vietnam War, and Richard Nixon was elected president. The nation never fully recovered; many of the divisions and troubles that mark the present day had their origins in that fateful year.

The most important thing now is to restore the sense of common good that America had when we were young — an understanding, forged in the Great Depression and World War II, that we're all in this together, and no one of us can succeed unless the vast majority of us succeeds. I don't mean to romanticize those years: There was rabid discrimination and mindless conformity. But at least we were inching toward those shared ideals.

Central to that task is rebuilding our democracy. We've got to get big money out of politics and ensure equal voting rights. Without a functioning democracy we can't do all the other things necessary for our survival, such as reversing climate change.

Despite it all, I'm optimistic. I've been teaching for almost 40 years, and the current generation of college students is more dedicated to improving the nation and the world than any I've witnessed. All across America I come across courageous and articulate young people, like the teenagers in Parkland, Florida who are shaming adults into being adults. I talk with my granddaughter and her friends, and am wowed by their idealism. We may have made a mess, but they're bound and determined to clean it up, and forge a better world.

Jon Reich

Caring...is the word, the quality, that I chose years ago to guide my life. I recommend it to others of my species. We must care for each other, and reduce the devastation of interpersonal and intergroup hate. We must care for the less fortunate among us; they, too, are part of the team, and should not be neglected or disdained. We must care for other species; we share their planet. What a travesty that we hunt and butcher and extinguish them. We must take better care of our environment; it is what sustains us all!

An economic and legal system that allows some to grow rich at literally the expense of others is evil and **MUST** be changed. A political system that enthrones the dishonest and avaricious and disempowers its citizens **MUST** be changed. And a social and industrial system that makes a garbage heap out of our planet and threatens the very survival of the human species **MUST** be reined in, **BY US**, while there is yet time.

The twin horrors of hatred and ungoverned climate change pose the greatest threat to human survival and happiness in the history of our kind. If we are anything like the heroes we like to imagine ourselves, we will grab the bull by the tail and look the problem squarely in the face.

Ted Renna

Term limits for all elected officials; improved, respectful civil discourse; more science based policies and incentives to slow climate change/global warming; strong disincentives for all activities and endeavors that harm the environment; greater oversight and regulation of "social media" outlets; total worldwide nuclear disarmament; reasonable gun control legislation; improved public education at all levels; and on a parochial note, perpetual pitching superiority for the Boston Red Sox.

Bill Rich

What drives me in how I live and what I believe is the answer to the question: What works? There is a reason most religions promote honesty and kindness. Along with trust and courage, those traits make for a better society. The same applies to the ways in which we are governed. Some systems work with an alert and informed citizenry. Others fail miserably – always – with the theft of rights and property, corruption, poverty, and death – and, naturally, untold wealth to the inside group. We live in a time of

laughably ridiculous political correctness and flagrantly dishonest political philosophies designed only to garner votes and not concerned in the slightest in outcomes. In fact, about half of our politicians actually favor illegal and fraudulent voting. This is outrageous. For the next fifty years to be better, this sort of thing has to change on the college campus, in the halls of government, and in society in general. Will this happen? Who knows? As Robert Frost closed in his poem "New Hampshire," he noted that "at present, I am living in Vermont."

Jerry Rinehart

Invest in Pre-K education and support for working families. Disadvantaged use begin dropping out of higher education in about third grade: if they haven't had the support and special attention they need to develop grade-level appropriate reading and mathematics skills at that time, their ability to find fulfillment and make a contribution to society is extremely limited. Funding this will require a federal/national commitment to social justice. We must reduce the income gap and direct funds and human resources to support public. Frankly, our own Robert Reich is doing everything he can to move us in this direction, and I greatly admire his work.

Kim Ritchey

In my opinion the last 50 years have been characterized by an increasing distance financially and in other respects between the "haves" and the "have nots". While there have always been the rich and the elite, in decades/centuries past they have been a relatively small group. I believe the inexorable movement separating these groups has had a number of consequences, including the inability to achieve the "American Dream", inability to own your own house, no hope of improving your life compared to your parents, and increasingly feeling disenfranchised from control of one's life. In turn, this has led to the current populist and xenophobic movements and exacerbated the distance between the political parties. While there will be no quick fix, I think it will be important in the next 50 years to develop strategies to bring the disparate groups together. Money talks and the first step would be to close the income gap. I believe that with more confidence that life will be remain good and continue to improve, people will naturally be more inclined to be inclusive and willing to compromise.

Leckie Rives

I believe that we must find a way to narrow the widening gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" in our society. We must rebuild the safety net that was developed by

Franklin Roosevelt and that is currently under attack by the Republican Party such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, etc. We must also try to eliminate the remaining vestiges of racism and sexism that continue to divide our society. In the international arena, we need to wage peace not war. The "America First" policy under President Trump is making us an enemy to our allies and an ally to countries like Russia that clearly are trying to harm us. We must strengthen the balance of power between the 3 branches of government, shorten terms in office and make the legislators have the same health and retirement benefits as the constituents they serve. We also must find a way to operate on a balanced budget not a continuing short term spending referendum. We must also get big money and the influence of lobbyists out of politics.

John Russell

I always preferred essay questions over true/false or multiple choice questions because the latter had objectively correct answers while the former allowed for the latitude of subjective interpretation...aka "bullshit artistry." Interesting that the current issue of the Dartmouth Alumni Magazine (March/April 2018) has an article on Professor of History J.C. Adams. I chose to major in history at Dartmouth because it had no "comps" (comprehensive exams) in your senior year. Having heard that Adams was a most impressive professor, and yet being oblivious to the fact that as the article states.... "Adams also was renowned for his tough grades." ... I found out the hard way that that was an understatement. Having followed the suggestion of several history jocks, I signed up for Adams' course in Russian History. Woefully unprepared...in terms of sufficient class lecture attendance and required reading....I took his mid-term exam thinking I knew enough to bullshit my way through... "through" to what came as a very shocking and rude awakening in the form of a grade and a personal note from Adams. "F".... "There is a possibility that you can pass this course but only if you do very well on the final." So much for my bullshitting approach. Seems like Adams wanted lots of historical facts (e.g. names, dates, places, battles, number of casualties, weather, etc.) to accompany the narrative that was to serve as an answer to his essay questions(s). Just like the author of the DAM article, I ended up getting a "C" for a final grade. But in 1967 I'm pretty sure it was a C- ...never was so grateful to receive a "C". So fast-forward 50+ years and once again my usual...and continuing illusion that I can bullshit my way through an essay question has been EXPOSED. "Write a 300 word essay conveying your recommendations as to what measures should be adopted to make the next 50 years better than the past 50 years." Say what!?! I don't even understand the question....so how can I even give a bullshit answer? The next 50 years of Dartmouth?...John Russell?...or the world? The first and third will probably be around in 50 years...but a 121 year old J.R. ...insurance actuaries and common sense make that reality laughable! Unsure of the nature of the question, I saw on the

questionnaire that we could call Tom Hostage if we were having problems. I assumed he was in our class...he wasn't...he also didn't have a clue as to whom or to what making the next "50 years" better applied! Good for him...how presumptuous to think that anyone would take seriously my "recommendations as to what measures should be adopted to make...".

Steve Schwager

This is a difficult time: the planet is in peril from human-induced climate change, and nationalism, authoritarianism, and bigotry are resurgent around the world. People across the political spectrum feel threatened by their hardships and by others with opposing views, and compromise is seen by many as weakness. We must find ways to expand and strengthen the belief that people, nations, and the world will be better served by cooperation than by conflict. Incentives must be created to encourage people and governments to act for the common good in order to advance their own interests. We need to make information widely available on who is influencing the making and interpretations of laws. This would help everyone identify players who are gaming the system for their own advantage, at the expense of many others. If people become more ready, willing, and able to think analytically, politics will be driven less by catchy sound bites and dog whistles. Achieving this will be an uphill battle, because many well-positioned people and organizations benefit greatly from the current system. But unless we stop and reverse the trajectory of climate change, we will doom future generations to a dystopian existence. Even the best seat in the lifeboat will be of no use if there's nowhere habitable for the lifeboat to go.

Paul Smith

Create a binding world government, elected by the peoples of the world.
 Recognize the oneness of all humanity.
 Unite all the world's peoples in one universal cause, one common faith.
 Establish a universal auxiliary language, a common script, and a single currency.
 Recognize the harmony of science and religion.
 Universal education and the elimination of prejudice.
 Equality of women and men.
 Teach consultation as an alternative to competition and strife.
 Elimination of the extremes of wealth and poverty.

Jim Snyder

Creating a "Do Not Call" registry that actually works would put the next 50 years way over the top.

On a more serious note, studies show that nearly half of all deaths in the United States are linked to behavioral and other preventable causes. Americans needlessly suffer from illness caused by tobacco use, poor diet, obesity, drug and alcohol use, lack of exercise and accidental deaths from automobile accidents and firearms. Current trends may well get worse over the next 50 years. Life in America would be better (i.e., safer, more healthy, more productive, less painful, less costly) for all concerned if we were able to address these issues in some thoughtful, well-coordinated manner. We have seen positive societal benefits from controlling the known risks of tobacco. We should amp up those efforts and broaden the focus to address the alarming (and preventable) disease and death rate arising from: opioid drugs, sugar and high fat content of mass-market processed foods, use of carcinogens in building materials and pesticides. The list goes on. I would further recommend some economic mechanism to encourage positive behavioral change aimed at reducing the societal costs associated with diabetes, high blood pressure, lack of exercise, obesity, etc. As the Baby Boom Generation ages, the costs of preventable diseases will begin to mount up in an alarming way. An increased level of emphasis, coordinated across multiple US and State Governmental Departments, on some fairly obvious public health and safety issues would make life in America better over the next 50 years.

George Spivey

Capturing the souls and energies of our youth, at a very early age, before the untruths and distorted images presented by those older, through immersion in the wealth inherent in diversity and all the people it represents. Through my experience as an elementary principal, the minds of our youth can be guided positively to understand and appreciate the value in all of their classmates, regardless of their family make-up (color and/or content or persuasion) or disruption in their daily lives, at home or in the streets or in a shelter... By capturing the "souls and energies of our youth," we must also do the same for parents and guardians...even though the latter initiative would be much more difficult. Just speaking from my experience over the last fifty years of engaging youth and adults.

Dow Stewart

America's most severe problem is its federal government. It is bloated, unresponsive to its citizenry, corrupt, and pernicious to the society it should be enriching. Both major parties are driven by their extreme fringes, as reflected by independents being the largest political party. Ironically, independents have representative candidates, dooming our nation to electing the less awful of two presidential candidates. By nominating Hillary Clinton, the Democrats elected Donald Trump. Both candidates were dreadful people, corrupt, selfish, vain, arrogant, and a source of embarrassment to America.

Tom Stonecipher

Upgrade, regulate, and adequately fund the American educational system nationwide so everyone, everyone, gets a good education through secondary school, to include a good technological base, good computing and basic math skills, learning how to write, and studying another language

Elimination of government incentives/subsidies to grow the crops which now comprise most of the American diet to avoid monocultures and foster more varied foodstuffs. Intelligent, increased socialization of health care and breaking/radically reducing the for-profit aspects of medicine and pharmacy. No commercial advertising of prescription medications; better straightforward informational access about them.

Max price for a half-gallon of ice cream: Four bucks. It would be the law. Free quart of maple syrup annually for all living Dartmouth grads, wherever located 'round the girdled earth, to benefit their muscles and their brains.

Richard Stowell

The mess that is the National Debt and Federal Deficit must be addressed otherwise it will be very difficult to make the next 50 years better. We have been the beneficiaries of spending and the increases in debt and now, as we are about to leave the table, we are expecting that someone else will pay the bill. It is not going to work.

Maybe it would be more appropriate to look back to the Class of 1918 with the same question. I am sure that they would be distressed by the lack of responsibility, civility, and a sense of community since their 50th reunion. Technology has made tremendous improvements but we have sacrifice many core values in the process. In dealing with the disaster of our profligacy, we might hope that we could return to those shared

values that have seemed to disappear over the last 50 years. Despite the pain, that would make the next 50 years better.

Sam Swisher

“Take two and hit to right?” No. (Joe Schultz, supposedly to players. Ball Four Jim Bouton

“Six, two, and even?” Not exactly. Joe Morgan. Dick Tracy cartoons as well. So much for baseball as inspiration.

Measures to be adopted to make the next 50 years better than the past 50 years, describes a to do list, aphorisms, to be followed, individually, family-, community-, country-wise, and internationally, personally, professionally and spiritually:

May the force (our greater consciousness, individually and collectively) be with me and those who need our help the most, the victims of violence physically and psychologically, their friends their families, their associates.

May I be a better parent, better husband, better community resource, better mentor.

May I, myself, my family, my community, my country and this world, be forever learning, growing, adapting, understanding that we live in a complex and ever changing world.

May we be open, fair, hardworking, honest, and honorable, and about the issues of the day, be rejecting of simplistic thoughts, magical solutions, shortcuts, dead ends, fantastic concepts, fanciful notions, digressions, diversions, escapes and escapism.

May we be noble, humble, upright, upstanding, stand up, hardworking, dedicated, devoted, and determined, thoughtful, practical and commonsensical.

May we take on-going inventory of the degree, level, and quality, of our own personal engagement and involvement, and conduct ourselves in a manner that is resolute, timely and accountable.

In our communications with others may we be understanding of what may be different layers and levels of understanding, interest and need, and take them into account in approach.

Let us set goals and objectives and deadlines, but not be deterred by impediments, but find alternate and parallel paths to follow our goals.

May we do the best we can as long as we can.

Let us not be ignorant, apathetic, inactive.

Bob Tarr

Fairly equal distribution of wealth and opportunities throughout the world.

Peter Temple

1. Require American high school graduates to engage in two years of mandatory national service. This service would include a large variety of choices so they might select an area of interest or in relation to their secondary school preparation, such as working in hospitals, national parks and forests, public construction projects, conservation projects, social service agencies, military service, public transportation, etc. Require them to live far away from home and work the equivalent of a 40 hour week. After two years' service make it very affordable (close to free as possible) for them to engage in some form of higher education, either training and apprenticeship programs, two-year colleges, or four-year.
2. Eliminate the Electoral College system and convert the U.S. elections to majority vote. Eliminate private financing of political campaigns and convert to a European style system of funding campaigns. Eliminate current system of gerrymandering by the party in power and create a more rational system.
3. Create a publicly funded effort to educate all Americans that their country, over the last century, with only about 5% of the world's population, is responsible for the majority of Climate Change, and therefore they must accept that responsibility and work to prepare to take in millions of climate refugees from those countries whose water supplies and crop harvests are ending (and other effects) due to climate change. In addition, Americans must do all they can to help people in their home countries who are suffering the most from our past actions.
4. Create a new central focus for American public schools to educate students in rational thought, science, the culture of evidence, critical analysis, critical thinking, search for truth.

Bob Tharinger

Swing thinking to appreciation of the common good. De-accentuate the short-term gain, favoring the long-term benefit to as many as possible. Define freedom down to reality: even the most powerful, those who think they can purchase their freedom, have only a fraction of a degree of parallax to see what reality is. They must be constrained from deciding for as many others as they would like, what the reality of those others should be. Nations and states are the only modern organizations that can deliberate and enforce a people's emphasis on the common good; they are only legitimate insofar as they will do so. Any person or political or legal measure that impedes them from their unique just vocation is unjust -and will not work.

Knowledge creeps ahead at a slug's pace but it's real though ever-changing. It should be respected. It should be constantly put to tests. Knowledge is not ideology . It's certainly not myth or religion. Myth and religion should be respected as sometimes useful metaphors but nothing more. Advertising is myth in the 21st century.

Women bear children and must always have the first and the final say of whether they will or won't, do or don't. Any other arrangement is unjust both for the woman and the common good of a world with 9 billion people.

The common good is many things and those things are, admittedly, impossibly complicated in their details. But not so complicated is the limiting to the least, and by every means possible, the deaths of people by violence. States and nations, therefore, to fulfill their unique responsibility, must make it their obligation to disarm themselves and their citizens.

Woody Thompson

Better for whom? I have no idea how to make things better for the whole word, but here in the U.S. we could start with our political system, which is a mess. I would do away with the Electoral College in presidential elections. Every registered voter gets a vote, and the candidate with the most votes becomes President. Period.

Second, we need to restore the basic principles of universal and affordable health care, so that the costs of health care are distributed among all age groups, in order to provide more numerous and less expensive insurance options than are now available following Republican efforts to do away with "Obama Care". Everybody is required to have auto insurance. So why shouldn't health insurance also be mandated?

Third, gun violence is one of the most appalling problems in the U.S. Voters need to support political candidates who advocate common-sense restrictions on assault rifles, along with minimum age limits and required background checks for all gun buyers.

Fourth, we need to restore respect and credibility for the time-honored news media in this country, so that the bogus "fake news" accusations heard so often these days will be put in perspective by the public.

Fifth, our educators need more respect and support, starting with the public school teachers who are expected to juggle all sorts of bureaucratic requirements, and often have to deal with the growing attitude that everybody is right except them.

Last but not least, there needs to be more public awareness and support for science research in the U.S., to counter presidential appointments of biased Federal agency heads whose main agenda is to defeat responsible climate change research, water quality improvement, mitigation of sea-level change hazards, and other long-term environmental problems affecting both our country and the rest of the world.

Rick Thorner

Unfortunately, it is unlikely that any of us '68's, regardless of current health, will be around at the end of these next 50 years.

Most of us live in our own little part of a great big world that has most likely been, and will continue to be, very good to us and our descendants. For the next 50 years to be truly better than the past, there is only one thing that can be done — everyone needs to have their "hard drives" erased so that biases centered around religion, race or ethnicity are things of the past. Then, and only then, will we rise to a higher plane where the future will be immeasurably better than the past. Without this "new start", there will only be, in the big picture, incremental improvement. How this can be accomplished, I have no idea. But if the beliefs that divide us persist, nothing really will change.

Clark Wadlow

We need to improve our political discourse. Non-partisan redistricting for Congressional districts would eliminate safe seats and cause candidates to appeal more to the center, where most Americans are, rather than to the extremes of their parties. That would result in more centrists in Congress, thereby leading to more compromise and more non-partisanship.

We need to reduce gun violence, at our schools and throughout our society. Comprehensive gun control legislation is needed, including: outlawing military-style assault weapons, bump stocks, high capacity magazines, and excessively destructive ammunition; comprehensive background checks on all sales; raising the age of purchase to 21; no-buy lists for convicted felons, security risks, spousal abusers, those with mental health issues, and other high risk persons.

We need to reduce the huge disparities in the concentration of wealth. The system of peer review by compensation committees on corporate boards needs to be reformed. Tax provisions that incentivize innovation and reward success but at the same time ensure greater fairness are needed.

Greater resources need to be devoted to reducing the causes of climate change. Strict pollution controls and incentives and mandates to use renewable sources benefit American industry. We become world leaders in such new industries when we have the strongest regulations.

More resources also need to be devoted to education and to science and R&D in new technologies, new industries, and new initiatives. We must return to space exploration. We must be the world leader in artificial intelligence, communications security, clean energy, and other “new” industries.

Comprehensive immigration reform is essential. We are a nation of immigrants. We need to foster immigration in order to continue to grow our economy. We should actively encourage the world’s best and brightest to attend our universities and remain in our country, and we must welcome immigrants seeking a better life.

David Walden

Peeing on the Electric Fence: Humility, Wisdom and the Necessity for Experiential Learning

A couple of years ago while I was attending a meeting of Dartmouth alumni, I heard a fellow from a somewhat younger class announce to the meeting that one of his class’s goals for the next five years would be to apprise younger classes of the wisdom that he and his classmates had acquired over the years, so that members of those younger classes wouldn’t have to “learn the hard way.”

I have to admit that my first unspoken thought about his statement was “how arrogant can a guy be!” My next and kinder thought was to recognize, however, that at least part

of this guy's motivation was to help younger classes avoid making the same mistakes that members of his older class may have made and having to suffer the consequences of those mistakes.

And my third thought was of the cowboy humorist and philosopher, Will Rogers: "There are three kinds of men. The ones that learn by readin'. The few who learn by observation. The rest of them have to pee on the electric fence for themselves."

So, how do men become wise? That depends, of course, more upon who needs to be doing the learning than who is trying to do the teaching, doesn't it?

And that doesn't mean that the learning always needs to be done by the younger folks or that the teaching is always best done by their elders. In fact, it's sometimes us old dogs who are a bit shocked to find ourselves peeing on the electric fence.

So, my suggestion for the next fifty years? More humility and more experiential learning. Who knows? They might produce more wisdom.

Mark Waterhouse

Doing something to make sure we live another 50 years would probably be helpful.

Reducing climate change; whether you believe it is caused by human activity or not, the climate is changing and it doesn't look good. If we can do something to ameliorate the changes, we should.

Figuring out how everyone can continue to have – or finally have – a decent standard of living as robotics and automation continue to eliminate the human jobs that pay the wages needed to buy what we need and want.

Assuring that Artificial Intelligence works as a useful tool and does not become a weapon some people – or countries – use against others.

Developing an Internet (or whatever will replace the Internet) security system that doesn't require me to remember 87 fricking passwords.

Developing sensible policies on weapons control. Weapons are going to continue to become more lethal – that is the nature of weapons development. Not everyone should have everything. The time to start limiting them is before they proliferate and get into the wrong hands.

And despite all those things and many more challenges – learning to embrace the future as much as we are inclined to hold onto the past.

Recognize that the Iroquois were right: "We do not inherit the earth from our parents – we borrow it from our children."

MaryDee Weigel

It seems to me that we have taken being politically correct too far. This is not to say that discrimination is good and ok because it is not; however, all people should feel they can express/state personal beliefs, thoughts, ideas, and ethnic pride without fear of reprimand. We have improved over the last 50 years, to be sure, but now the pendulum has swung the other way. There is and should be a happy median. I kind of feel that this is bred by ignorance, and I believe ignorance can only be changed through education and so we must keep pressing on.

Pete Weston

End political patronage and impose term limits on elected officials. Restructure the way political campaigns are financed to eliminate excessive influence by corporations, non-profits, foreign governments, labor unions, lobbyists, other special interest groups, and individuals. Also restructure the way Congress is compensated to include pay raises indexed the same way Social Security is indexed, and requiring contributions to Social Security and Medicare. Institute health care and retirement packages for elected officials that are similar to what the populace gets. Establish a requirement that all citizens over 18 perform public service (2-3 years minimum, military, Peace Corps, VISTA, etc.). Restructure public education so that teachers are on a merit-based compensation system.

Andrew Winter

My mother whose mother, my grandmother, died in the holocaust, believed that assimilation was a key ingredient to ending war, hatred and strife. Having traveled to 100 countries and all seven continents, having lived in six countries and spent significant time in four others, I believe she was right.

Roger Witten

The world is plagued by strife and hatreds based on religious belief. Some people hate, injure, kill, demean in the name of the deity they believe in. Our leaders, religious and other, should at a minimum avoid encouraging religious divisions; should not use religion to advance political and/or social objectives; and should move society to a more secular or at least less religion-saturated ideal – where belief is a more private consolation and where its power is used to help others, without hurtful proselytizing and less "my beliefs are right and yours are therefore heretical."

Marshall Wolff

I think it is inexcusable that we have the means to take a big bite out of hunger and poverty in this country, much less the world, and don't make it a priority. I'm very disappointed that our leaders don't/won't look at the big picture and take on the world issues that matter.

I think patterning ourselves after Lions Club International, the purpose of which is simply to serve others, is a calling for all those who have the ability and means to do so.

Pete Wonson

Take better care of the planet. Place the health of earth above the corporate profit motive.

Take better care of each other. By "each other" I mean all human beings, whether we know them or not. Work to develop a global community of tolerance.

On any list of things you value, place money far down the list below such things as integrity, family, good health, spirituality, brotherhood.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., said: "Somewhere, somebody must have morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. Men must see that force begets force, hate begets hate, toughness begets toughness. And it is all a descending spiral. The chain reaction of evil – hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars – must be broken. Or else we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation."

In the spirit of Dr. King's statement, and in the context of international politics, there is no nation on earth as well-positioned to change the historic global paradigm of violence

as the United States of America. Our government and our citizens must work (unilaterally if necessary) to reduce our country's emphasis on the military and weapons of destruction, as an example to the rest of the world that we can co-exist peacefully without the threat of war and violence. If America, as the most powerful nation on earth, cannot lead the way in this quest, if America cannot lead the world toward true peace, then such a goal can never be realized.

You may say Dr. King and I are hopelessly naïve. I say we are true stewards of the planet and mankind.