

OB377: THE PATHS TO POWER

More than twenty years ago, Rosabeth Moss Kanter wrote that power was the “organization’s last dirty secret.” To this day power remains a topic that makes many people uncomfortable. But power is a reality in much of organizational and social life, in settings ranging from investment banks to high technology companies. Insufficient sensitivity to and skill in coping with power dynamics have cost Stanford GSB graduates promotion opportunities and even their jobs.

This course is designed to help you learn concepts useful for understanding power and ways of analyzing power dynamics in organizations. Even more importantly, the course is designed to encourage you to think about and develop your own personal path to power (which can include, of course, a path away from power) as well as enhance your skill in exercising power and influence.

A USER’S MANUAL FOR THIS CLASS

The course is continually evolving. This year, in response to comments from past classes as well as discussions with colleagues involved in the high performance leadership course and the leadership development platform, we are going to make the class more “student centric” and less “instructor centric.” What that means is, consistent with the new GSB curriculum to be launched next year, you and your colleagues are going to be given more responsibility for learning and the learning environment.

Objectives:

The overall objective of this course is to help you see the world differently—to change what you notice and think about and how you apprehend the world around you—and, if we are particularly successful, to also change what you **do** as you navigate through that world. If the class is successful, you will be better able to achieve your objectives and never have to leave an organization or a position involuntarily.

To accomplish this objective, we will spend some portion of many class sessions and have constructed the out-of-class assignments to help you focus on building your own action plan and skills with respect to power and influence. **It is important that you do the assignments and the readings. It is useful if you actually think about how this material applies to you in your current life as well as in your future career. Learning the material requires engaging with it.**

Although it is unlikely that taking this class is going to fundamentally transform you, if you become even 5% more effective in every situation you confront, just like compound interest, these small increments in effectiveness can bring you to a very different place down the road.

Some Assumptions (or “Philosophy”)

Involvement and Engagement. In order to accomplish our objectives for this course, we need to be partners in the learning process. The very design of the tiered classroom subtly reminds people of settings in which they are entertained or see some performance. Then, in a desire to be liked or seen as helpful, professors and students become complicit in an exchange in which faculty “help” students through outlines, notes, class summaries, and a variety of teaching aids and students reciprocate by asking for more help and coming to evaluate the classroom experience as they would many other “service” or entertainment experiences (see, for instance, the comments in GSB Unofficial about this and many other courses).

The existing empirical evidence suggests that instructor ratings (as a measure of teaching) and student learning (as assessed on objective tests) are completely uncorrelated. That is not surprising as teaching and learning are two separate activities. Teaching is what I do, learning is what you do. One way of understanding my job is that I am in the role of your “personal trainer.” I will do my best to make available to you the tools—the readings, a classroom environment conducive to learning, and other materials—that I hope will motivate you and encourage you to learn the material. But learning is ***your*** responsibility. Moreover, it is *your* responsibility to decide what is important for you to learn and retain, and how best to do that. ***For that reason, you will find few if any handouts being distributed to summarize the class sessions or other such aids such as summaries of readings or texts.*** This is not a briefing, a lecture, or a presentation, it is a course. When you subsequently need to put the material of this course into practice, you probably won’t have the notes, handouts, the books, or me or my colleagues sitting near by. It is, therefore, my hope that you will work to *internalize* the learning, ideas, and the feelings and beliefs about power and influence that you develop during this course.

Education (or Learning). Education is about seeing new things or seeing things differently. Therefore, the materials and ideas that form the basis for much of the course material have been selected because they do challenge many aspects of conventional wisdom or the taken-for-granted assumptions that many people hold about the sources of success and influence. The ideas and concepts are, however, well-grounded in literature in the behavioral and social sciences. If some of the readings or discussions disagree with your ideas or cause you to feel uncomfortable, that is part and parcel of the learning process.

“Role Models” Not everyone we encounter in Paths to Power are individuals you are necessarily going to want to emulate. This is class about how to get things done, about how to build and wield influence, and the multiple ways to accomplish this. As Richard Nixon (quoting Bismark) once wrote, “those who love laws and sausages should not watch either being made.” In much the same spirit, not everything involved in building and exercising influence is going to be attractive. Part of the educational process is designed to expose you to a) what you may face on the part of others you encounter who have fewer “inhibitions” about using a range of strategies and tactics to get what they want and b) the various ways available to you for building power, and how, and **why** they are frequently effective.

Core Concepts

There are a relatively few, central ideas that can help you think about power and influence in organizations to both explain and predict behavior. I highlight three here, but this is not an exhaustive list.

Use Ideas and Concepts from Other Courses—Analogies Between Personal and Organizational Behavior. One important recommendation is simply to take concepts and ideas from other courses you have taken at the GSB, and here I am not referring solely to other classes in organizational behavior, and apply them to the situations and people we will be studying and to your own personal strategies. For instance, in economics you learned about self-interest and competition. So don’t be surprised if some people you encounter in the course materials (and in the world) pursue their self-interest (as Williamson might say, sometimes with “guile”) and view peers as competitors. In strategy, you considered ideas such as ease of imitation, barriers to entry, and building sustainable positions of competitive advantage. These ideas are useful in forming your own personal strategy. In finance (and in economics) you were exposed to ideas about markets, efficiencies and inefficiencies and imperfections in information markets, arbitrage opportunities, and so forth. Each of these ideas, plus others not listed here, may be useful in helping you understand power dynamics inside companies and nonprofits.

The Self-Enhancement Motive. A few years ago, as I prepared to give a lecture summarizing the course, I was unhappy with the “list-like” quality of that final session. So, a colleague and I set out to write a paper which explored to what extent many of the ideas and concepts covered in the class, including escalating commitment to chosen courses of action, similarity as an important basis of interpersonal attraction, and the influence technique of flattery, could be logically related to the fundamental idea of self-enhancement. That paper, subsequently published in *Organization Science*, is assigned at the end of the course, but there is no reason that you can not read it at the beginning of the course, also, as it provides one way of organizing a lot of the material we will be covering.

The “Just World” Phenomenon. Some decades ago, a social psychologist, Mel Lerner, argued that for a variety of reasons, people were motivated to see the world as a just, fair, and moral place where what happened to people was related to what they “deserved.” So, for instance, when “bad” things happen to “good” people, research has shown that respondents frequently try to attribute why those individuals actually deserved what they got (this often involves “blaming the victim”). Conversely, when “good” things happen to “bad” people, respondents either tried to uncover previously unobserved sources of virtue or believed that the individuals’ bad behavior would eventually catch up with them. Virtually every major religion, confronted with a world that does not always appear to operate justly, has come up with some account balancing scheme. For some systems of belief, the balancing occurs in the next life (reincarnation), for others, in the concept of heaven and hell, and so forth. In thinking about the materials in this class, be sensitive to the “just world” tendency to believe that “it all works out in the end,” a belief system that may make you somewhat resistant to actually learning, accepting, and using some important principles of interpersonal influence.

COURSE LOGISTICS

Grading:

Grades will be based on four components: 1) Class participation (30%), 2) your group project (25%), 3) your final individual project (25%), and 4) your doing your various individual self-reflective assignments (as described in the course outline) and turning them in as required and **on time** (20%). **Turning assignments in on time means turning them when they are assigned per the course outline (e.g., if something is to be turned in at the start of class, after class would not be considered “on time” by most people).** However, since the assignments are designed to enhance your learning and not just be evaluative, doing them at any point is preferable to not doing them at all.

The class participation grade is determined by a) the quality of the comments you make in class (determined by whether you repeat what others have said, a sign you haven’t listened, your ability to provide new insights and draw on relevant personal experience, your ability to move the discussion in productive directions); b) your attendance (it is hard to help the class discussion if you aren’t there); and c) your contributions to the overall classroom experience and learning environment. In order to help me keep track of your class participation as well as to learn your names and something about you, we **will use a seating chart.**

Attendance: Customarily, a number of students who want to take this class are not able to get in, including students from other departments on the campus. I believe it is inconsiderate for a student admitted to the class to miss a large number of class sessions. It is inconsiderate to those who wanted to take the

class but couldn't get in, inconsiderate to your fellow students who do not get the benefit of your participation, and inconsiderate to me. If you intend to miss a lot of class sessions for **any** reason you should not take the class. If you miss more than 3 or 4 sessions during the quarter, the odds on your passing the class (in other words, getting a grade other than a U) are low. Missing more than one session may affect your grade. If you are going to miss class, please let me know in advance and please let me know why.

Group Project: The group project is described on an addendum at the end of the course outline. It is intended to have you use and experience the ideas of the course in a more field-oriented, clinical setting. Learning by doing and learning through more intensive involvement is much more likely to result in real mastery and retention of the material than more passive forms of learning. Learning from and with your colleagues is also very beneficial. That is why I encourage you to take the group project seriously and have some fun with it to explore the ideas of the course. **Group projects are due by 5 P.M. on Friday, March 9, 2007. That is the week before the last week of the quarter. LATE PROJECTS WILL NOT BE GRADED AND WILL EARN ZERO CREDIT.**

Individual Project: In addition to the group project, there will be an individual project designed to have you put the ideas of the course into practice or, at a minimum, think about how you intend to use the material of the class as you plan your future activities and career. The assignment is described in an addendum to this document. **Individual projects are due by 5 P.M. on Friday, March 16, 2007, the last day of the course. LATE PROJECTS WILL NOT BE GRADED AND WILL EARN ZERO CREDIT.**

Self-Reflective Assignments. The various individual, self-reflective assignments are specified in the course outline. They are designed to help you reflect about the content of the course in the context of your own plans, objectives, values, and experiences, as we cover the material in the sessions. If taken seriously, these self-reflective assignments will be useful as work for your individual project. Previous experience in other iterations of this course suggests that these are among the most useful course activities. **The individual assignments are due (in written, not electronic form) at the start of the class for which they are assigned. PLEASE BRING TWO COPIES WITH YOU TO CLASS.** Even on days when no such assignment is due, many of the preparation questions are designed to cause you think about the relevance of the material to you and your life and I hope you will take the opportunity to do so.

Learning Teams:

It has become clear to me that neither just having you reflect outside of class on your own and/or asking you to share personal insights with 65 other people in public is as effective as possible in getting you to think about and get help with your own personal dilemmas and choices and to internalize the course material.

Therefore, **by the third session of the class**, you will be asked to let me know the **6-person** team you have put together to a) do the group project, b) work together when we have in-class exercises, and c) meet on a weekly basis for about an hour or even slightly less to discuss how the course material relates to your own “paths to power” and your own experiences. The team needs to be comprised of people from the section of the course you are enrolled in. I have resisted the suggestion of some colleagues to randomly assign you to teams—you can constitute your own. But they do need to include 6 people.

Administrivia:

My best efforts notwithstanding, some days have more reading than others. I will try to call this to your attention so you can look ahead and plan your time wisely, but you should also look ahead in the syllabus to plan your work.

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Office Hours: By appointment made directly with me, by either phone or e-mail. I would love to get to know you better during the quarter.

Required Materials:

Managing with Power: Politics and Influence in Organizations by Jeffrey Pfeffer, Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1992; paperback edition, 1994. This book provides the conceptual overview, research base, and many examples for the ideas we will be covering in the course. I have begun work on a new book on power based on the current structure of the course. I hope to finish it during 2007.

Syllabus available for purchase. You will find that the syllabus contains relatively few traditional cases (and the ones that are included are, for the most part, ones I have specifically developed for this course) and, instead, chapters from books (several of which have won the Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, and other recognition) and magazine and newspaper articles. I believe you will find these reading materials to be exceptionally well-written and engaging, and encourage you to buy and read the books from which the readings came as your interests dictate (the Robert Caro books on Robert Moses and Lyndon Johnson are particularly wonderful). The study of power and influence is an ongoing process, and I hope that process won't end for you at the conclusion of this quarter.

Recommended Books:

Frances K. Conley, *Walking Out on the Boys*, New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1998 (available in paperback).

This is a very readable account of Dr. Conley's experience as a female neurosurgeon at Stanford Medical School, as well as some insights into power and politics in academic medicine at Stanford and more generally. It is an exceptionally honest account of the trade-offs that confronted at least one professional woman and her attempt to cope with and change the organization of which she was a member. The book was on the Bay Area best-seller's list after it came out, and Conley has appeared on numerous national television programs. Dr. Conley was a student in this class (when she was a Sloan fellow) in the mid-1980s. Although I have assigned a case developed about Dr. Conley specifically for this class, I strongly urge you to read the book also as it is a compelling and well-written story.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE OF SESSIONS

I. THE PATHS TO POWER: FINDING YOUR WAY AND PREPARING YOURSELF

January 10. Session 1. Self-Knowledge and Staying Out Of (or Getting Into) Trouble.

Case: John W. Dean III, *Blind Ambition: The White House Years*, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1979, Ch. 1, "Reaching for the Top, Touching Bottom."

John Dean was counsel to the President during the Nixon administration. He orchestrated much of the Watergate cover-up and his testimony eventually was influential in driving Nixon from office. This material describes John Dean's "interview" for the position of White House counsel. As in all interview situations, both those doing the hiring and the person being hired had their own perceptions of the situation and their own agendas. We begin with this material because a) it is relevant in a number of respects to your own interviewing and job finding process, b) it provides a nice overview of the issues and ideas covered in the course, including the importance of self-knowledge and awareness, and c) it begins our exploration of the topic of finding our own path and preparing ourselves for our journey though life and to (or away from) influence

1. What qualities do you think Haldeman and Nixon were looking for in their employees/staff? What makes you think that? What made John Dean so attractive as a job candidate to them?

2. What warning signs did John Dean have that this might not be the “dream” job he imagined? Who delivered these warnings? Why was Dean so ready, willing, and able to ignore these warning signs?
3. How would you describe John Dean? What characteristics/attributes did he seem to possess? What was his perspective about his career? About this job? About what he wanted from the job? What were his professional goals?
4. How was Dean recruited? Why did he take the job?
5. How did Dean “negotiate” for the job or make himself “more attractive”? Do you think these strategies worked? Why or why not?
6. What important (and almost obvious question) did John Dean never ask? Why do you think he failed to ask it?
7. What qualities and/or behaviors eventually got John Dean into trouble? Which of these qualities and behaviors do you see in yourself?
8. Although few of you may ever be asked to work in the White House, and even fewer will work with people like Richard Nixon and his staff, there may be important lessons in the Dean experience for everyone. What lessons can you draw for your own career and for yourself from this chapter?

During class, we will see an interview with John Dean, from a program on the Watergate scandal.

Also, as you prepare for class, think about the following general questions, relevant to the course you are about to take:

1. What do you think of when you think of the words “power,” “politics,” and “influence?” What sorts of associations and attitudes do these terms evoke?
2. How powerful and influential do you feel? Why?
3. What do you think stands in your way of acquiring and exercising even more power and influence?
4. How much power do you desire to accrue over the course of your career (recognizing that power and money are not perfectly correlated)? What do you want to do with that power?

January 12. Session 2. Preparing Yourself: Developing Individual Attributes that Create Power

First Individual Assignment: In preparing for this class, do Part I of the assignment before you do the reading.

1. **Write a brief, one page essay about those aspects of your personality, skills and abilities, and “character” that you believe are and have been most important in helping you get ahead in life (both in the past and in the future). In other words, what personal attributes or qualities do**

you possess that you value highly and believe have and will make you more effective in obtaining your goals.

- 2. After completing this essay, read Ch. 9 from *Managing with Power*. Now write a second one-page essay indicating how you see yourself with respect to each of the attributes described in the chapter. Rate yourself on those dimensions on a 1-5 scale, where 1 means you possess little of the attribute and 5 means you possess a lot of it.**
- 3. Compare and contrast the two essays. What do they suggest to you about things you might want to do to develop more power and influence?**
- 4. Both essays will be collected at the start of class. Please bring hard copies (along with an extra copy for yourself).**

Reading: *Managing with Power*, Ch. 9, "Individual Attributes as Sources of Power"

1. What is surprising about the material in Chapter 9? What seems true? To what extent does this analysis resonate with your own philosophy of what produces success?
2. Where do these attributes come from? Can they be learned? How? Are they inherited?
3. What, if anything, do you disagree with about the material? What's missing from the list? What should not have been included?

Case: Keith Ferrazzi

Keith Ferrazzi is a graduate of Harvard Business School who has enjoyed a meteoric career trajectory. The case explores his first 10 or so years after business school.

1. Describe Keith Ferrazzi, in terms of a) the personal qualities that distinguish him, and b) the strategies and behaviors he has used to build a successful career.
2. *Why* do you think these qualities and strategies and behaviors have been helpful for Ferrazzi? Or if you think he has succeeded *in spite of* some of what he has done, provide an argument as to what about his activities have been detrimental to his success.
3. Keith is, by his own admission, a consummate networker and someone who is ambitious, who wants to make a big difference and have a big impact on the world. Why hasn't this created more problems for Ferrazzi?
4. What recommendations would you make about the career path Keith should follow, given his strengths, weaknesses, and skills?
5. Could you do what Ferrazzi does? Why or why not?
6. What lessons are there for you in the Keith Ferrazzi case? What might you think about doing more of, less of, or doing differently?

II. **BUILDING YOUR PATH TO POWER: CREATING A DOMAIN**

January 17, Session 3. Getting Noticed and Getting In

These two readings focus on ultimately quite successful people early in their careers. We want to understand what they did to provide a foundation for their subsequent success, and how they accomplished that foundation building.

Case: Walter Isaacson, *Kissinger: A Biography*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992, Ch. 4, "Harvard: The Ambitious Student, 1947-1955."

1. What was the context or environment at that time, both in the country generally and in the political science department at Harvard, at the time Kissinger was a student? What opportunities did this environment present?
2. What were Kissinger's apparent goals while he was at Harvard, first as an undergraduate student and then as a doctoral student? What was he trying to accomplish?
3. What did Kissinger **do**, what specific actions did he take, how did he spend his time, with what effects? Why were his actions apparently so effective?
4. What bases of power was Kissinger able to develop?
5. What personal strengths and weaknesses did Kissinger have? How self-aware was he of them? What did he do to capitalize on his strengths and mitigate his weaknesses?
6. What is your personal learning from Kissinger's experience at Harvard? How do you feel about your use of your time at the GSB when you think of what Kissinger did?

Case: Reginald F. Lewis, Blair S. Walker, and Hugh B. Price, *Why Should White Guys Have All the Fun? How Reginald Lewis Created a Billion-Dollar Business Empire*, New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1994. Ch. 4, "No Application Needed: Breaking Down the Doors at Harvard Law."

1. How would you describe Reggie Lewis? What personal characteristics did he have and what were his actions that helped him get noticed?
2. How do you feel about his behavior? Were his actions fair? Ethical?
3. Would you want to hire someone like him? Why or why not?
4. Could he have achieved the same results any other way?
5. Why did Lewis want to go to Harvard Law School?
6. What are the lessons for you in the material on Kissinger and Lewis? What was similar, and what was different, in their approach to gaining notice and leverage early in their careers? Could you do what they did? Would you want to? Why, or why not?

January 19. Session 4. Choosing the Right Pond to Launch Your Career

Reading: *Managing with Power*, Ch. 8, “The Importance of Being in the Right Unit”

Case: David Halberstam, *The Reckoning*, New York: William Morrow, 1986, Ch. 11, “The Whiz Kids,” and Ch. 13, “The Quiet Man”

1. What were the fundamental political groups that existed in Ford Motor Company? What made these groups particularly salient as social categories?
2. Which group had been the most powerful at Ford? Why?
3. Why did the finance function come to hold such power at Ford?
4. How did finance acquire its power? What strategies and tactics did it employ?
5. What about Robert McNamara made him particularly successful in his efforts to gain power for the finance people and the function?
6. Did McNamara, or the manufacturing or product people, see their behavior as self-serving, or as serving the best long-term interests of the company?
7. What did finance do to extend and to institutionalize (perpetuate) its power at Ford? How successful was it in those efforts?
8. What things would you look at to uncover a) the relevant political groupings and b) how much power each of those groupings had in an organization you were thinking of joining?

During class we will see some edited segments from the documentary, *The Fog of War* that show Robert McNamara.

January 22. Session 5. Power from the Control of Resources: How to Create Resource Leverage

These two sets of readings show how two ultimately very powerful people uncovered resources and obtained control over them as ways of building a foundation for their rise to power. The skill in discovering or creating resources, seemingly out of nothing, is one that you would be well served to develop, which is why these readings are so important.

Reading: *Managing with Power*, Ch. 4, “Where Does Power Come From,” and Ch. 5, “Resources, Allies, and the New Golden Rule.”

Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*, New York: Vintage Books, 1975. Ch. 10, “The Best Bill Drafter in Albany,” Ch. 11, “The Majesty of the Law,” and Ch. 12, “Robert Moses and The Creature of the Machine.” (This book won the Pulitzer Prize).

1. Before reading Ch. 12, at the end of Ch. 11, what would you have done if you were Robert Moses? Can you guess as to what he will do to turn around a situation in which he seems to have no hope of success?
2. What were Robert Moses' sources of power?
3. What did he do to develop these sources of power? How did Moses create resources where none had existed before?
4. Why did Al Smith stick by Robert Moses?
5. How could Moses have been opposed more effectively? Why weren't his opponents more effective in opposing him (recall that he was opposed by some very wealthy, powerful, and well-connected individuals)?

Case: Robert A. Caro, *The Path to Power*, New York: Knopf, 1982, Ch. 13, "On His Way," and Ch. 15, "The Boss of the Little Congress"

1. What are some sources of power that the young Lyndon Johnson possessed or developed?
2. What personal characteristics, interests, aptitudes, and skills did Johnson demonstrate?
3. How did Johnson "create" resources where none seemed to previously exist?
4. What similarities and differences do you see between Moses and Johnson?
5. What are some lessons for you to use as you build your own path to power from these readings on Moses and Johnson?

January 26. THERE WILL BE NO CLASS ON FRIDAY, JANUARY 26.

January 29. Session 6. Building a Reputation and Creating Power from a Position that Has Little Formal Power

Reading: *Managing with Power*, Ch. 7, "Formal Authority, Reputation, and Performance"

Case: Sally Bedell Smith, *In All His Glory: The Life of William S. Paley*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1990, "The Prince," Sections 10 and 13.

This reading describes Frank Stanton's background and his early career at CBS.

1. What was the reputation that Frank Stanton developed? How did he go about building that reputation?
2. What were Stanton's sources of power? How did he go about developing them?
3. What does the reading reveal about the qualities of Stanton? Which of these qualities were most important for his subsequent success? (Stanton subsequently rose to become head of CBS News and finally president of CBS).

4. Many people in this class “like” or prefer the tactics and characteristics of Stanton to some of the other people we have (and will) studied. Does this describe your reaction? Why do you think people react this way?

Case: Robert A. Caro, *Master of the Senate: The Years of Lyndon Johnson*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002, Ch. 17, “The Nothing Job,” pp. 383-419.

1. What about the context or the situation gave Johnson some advantages in building power from a position, Assistant Democratic Leader, that traditionally did not have much power or visibility?
2. What sources of power did Johnson develop? How did he accomplish this?
3. What similarities and differences do you see between Johnson and Stanton?
4. What behaviors, and what personal qualities, are required to accomplish what Stanton and Johnson did, transforming seemingly marginal positions into sources of power?

SECOND SELF-REFLECTIVE ASSIGNMENT: This part of the course is about finding, and perhaps more importantly, creating, a domain in which you can flourish, given your particular strengths, weaknesses, and preferences. Write a brief, one page essay in which you:

1. Briefly describe settings, organizations, or situations in which you have tended to do well, and ones in which you have had more difficulty;
2. Describe what you did, or did not do, to help create or get yourself established in both types of situations; and
3. Based on the material in this section of the course, including the material on Ford Motor, Frank Stanton, Henry Kissinger, Reggie Lewis, and Lyndon Johnson, briefly relate what you might do differently going forward about a) choosing a domain and b) creating influence from that position (relating this to one or more of the examples from part 1 of your short essay).

III. ATTRACTING OTHERS ON THE PATH: THE NEED FOR ALLIES AND FOLLOWERS

February 2. Session 7. Building Support and Attracting Allies

Case: James Richardson, *Willie Brown: A Biography*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996, Ch. 19, “The Play for Power,” and Ch. 20, “Drawing Lines,” the portion from pp. 275-284.

Reading: Edward Epstein, “Willie Brown’s School for Dealmakers,”

San Francisco Chronicle, January 26, 2003, p. A1, A7.

Willie Brown, most recently the two-term mayor of San Francisco, has been described as one of the most effective politicians ever and is certainly one of the most powerful Afro-Americans in history. He came from a very poor family in Texas, and in the early stages of his career suffered numerous setbacks (he lost his first race for California assembly, he lost his first contest to become Speaker of the California legislature, for example). This reading describes his successful campaign to become Speaker of the Assembly, a position he held longer than anyone else and one that provided him enormous power. Brown, a liberal Democrat from San Francisco, won this position with the help of Republicans, conservative Republicans at that. There is no better example of obtaining allies.

1. What behaviors/characteristics did Brown demonstrate at the time covered by the chapter? What has he apparently learned?
2. Why did the Republicans trust him?
3. What did he do to build support among the Democrats, both in the legislature and in other arenas?
4. What about the situation, the times, his opponents, and so forth, (things over which he had no control) made it possible for him to be successful in his quest for the speakership?
5. What did he do to build his alliances, and how did he do it?
6. Few of you are likely to run for public office, and fewer still will probably run for political leadership positions. Nonetheless, there may be some important lessons in the story of Willie Brown's rise to power that are relevant regardless of where you are. What lessons can you draw for yourself from this material?

During class, we will see a CBS *60 Minutes* video on Willie Brown.

Case: Bryan Burrough and John Helyar, *Barbarians at the Gate: The Fall of RJR Nabisco*, New York: Harper and Row, 1990, Chapter 1.

1. What does Ross Johnson do to attract allies and supporters?
2. What does Johnson do to neutralize his opponents?
3. What does it take to be successful in Ross Johnson's group?

What are the similarities, and the differences, you see in both a) behaviors and b) characteristics/traits between Ross Johnson and Willie Brown?

February 5. Session 8. Building a Network

Case: Heidi Roizen (HBS#9-800-228)

1. What steps did Roizen take, over the various jobs she held, to develop her network? To maintain it?
2. What has made Roizen so successful to this point in her career?
3. What are the strengths of Roizen's network, as we see it at the end of the case? Any weaknesses?
4. What suggestions would you give Heidi Roizen as she becomes more involved as an Internet venture capitalist?

During class, we will watch an edited version of Bill Moyer's journal in which he followed David Rockefeller at the time Rockefeller was still chairman of the Chase Bank, on a trip to Europe. As you watch the video, consider Rockefeller's view of friendship, personal relationships, and what is required "to have as many friends as one would like."

5. What similarities and difference do you see in what Rockefeller and Roizen have done in building their networks?
6. What similarities and differences do you see in their strategies and in their relationships with others?
7. What lessons do you draw for your own activities to build a network of relationships?

February 9. Session 9. Building (or Losing) Support Through Language

Reading: *Managing with Power*, Ch. 15, "Symbolic Action: Language, Ceremonies, and Settings."

Paul Ekman, *Telling Lies*, New York: Norton, 1985, Ch. 2, "Lying, Leakage, and Clues To Deceit." [This is a very useful and interesting book on the detection of lying. It is highly recommended].

"Note on Power and Social Interaction."

In this class, we will watch the public testimony of two people caught up in political scandals, Oliver North in the Iran-Contra issue, and Donald Kennedy, president of Stanford, which was caught up in a scandal of over-billing of the government for indirect costs on research contracts. Ironically, Stanford was eventually found to owe very little money, while Oliver North avoided being convicted of a felony because of technicalities concerning the use of evidence produced under guarantees of immunity. But North went on to run for the Senate and Kennedy was forced from office. The readings provide important background on the situations facing these people. What we will do in class is watch their use of language and symbols and compare and contrast their styles, approaches, and effectiveness. Also during the session, randomly selected groups will have the opportunity to "present" what they might have done differently had they been in the Stanford president's position.

Case: Joel Brinkley, "Birth of a Scandal and Mysteries of Its Parentage," *New York Times*, December 25, 1991, p. A11.

"Oliver North, Businessman? Many Bosses Say That He's Their Kind of Employee," *Wall Street Journal*, July 14, 1987, p. 35.

"An Iran-Contra Guide: What Happened and When," *New York Times*, March 17, 1988.

Anthony DePalma, "Stanford President at Brunt of Storm," *New York Times*, May 10, 1991, p. A10.

Rich Jaroslov, "Called to Account," *Stanford Magazine*, June, 1991.

During class, we will watch edited video tapes from both Oliver North and Donald Kennedy testifying before Congress.

Third Self-Reflective Assignment:

At the back of your course materials, you will find a copy of the Participant Version of the *Influence Strategies Exercise*, published by the Hay Group, along with *Profile and Interpretive Notes* that accompany the exercise. At a minimum, fill out and score the exercise sometime prior to today's class. If you want, you can make copies of the participant questionnaire and have others that know you fill it out (this is optional). Come to class prepared to discuss what the exercise reflects about your use of various strategies of influence, and what you have learned from this exercise.

IV. CLEARING THE PATH: DEALING WITH RESISTANCE, OBSTACLES, AND SETBACKS

February 12. Session 10. Consolidating Power and Eliminating Opposition

Reading, *Managing with Power*, Ch. 14, "Changing the Structure to Consolidate Power"

Case: Seymour M. Hersh, *The Price of Power: Kissinger in the Nixon White House*, Ch. 1, "The Job Seeker," Ch. 2, "A New NSC System," and Ch. 3, "Consolidating Authority,"

1. How did Kissinger build his reputation? What sort of reputation did he build?

2. What was Kissinger's **formal** authority, upon assuming his position in the National Security Council?
3. What did Kissinger do to increase his authority?
4. What did Kissinger apparently believe was effective performance in his job? In other words, what did "doing a good job" mean to him?
5. What strategies did Kissinger use to acquire additional resources useful for his exercising power?
6. What did Kissinger do to neutralize actual and potential opposition and opponents?

Case: John Helyar, "Playing Ball: How Peter Ueberroth Led the Major Leagues in the 'Collusion Era'," *Wall Street Journal*, May 20, 1991, pp. A1, A6.

1. How (and why) did Ueberroth increase the power of the baseball commissioner's office?
2. What was his leadership style? Why was that style effective?
3. What were the consequences of his consolidation of power? Positive consequences? Negative consequences?

February 16. Session 11. Persistence and Surmounting Obstacles and Resistance.

Case: Laura Esserman (A)

This case describes the efforts of a physician who also has an MBA from Stanford to change a number of aspects of medicine and the treatment of breast cancer at the University of California, San Francisco. Although the particular situation is health care, the task that Dr. Esserman confronts is similar to many situations where there is dispersed power, conflicting objectives, and entrenched interests in a setting populated by highly educated professionals.

1. What are Laura Esserman's strengths?
2. What are some of her weaknesses, of difficulties?
3. What about the situation makes changing things difficult? What about the situation makes it political?
4. What do you think Esserman has done well so far in her efforts? What do you think she has done less well?
5. What should she do now? Be specific, so someone could actually implement your suggestions. Provide a rationale for why you think the suggestion will work and how it will help her accomplish her objectives?
6. Do you believe Laura Esserman will be successful? Why or why not?
7. What lessons do you draw from this case for your own efforts to get things done in organizations?

February 21. Session 12. "Porcupine" Power: Engaging in Conflict

Reading: David Halberstam, *The Reckoning*, New York: William Morrow, Ch. 7, "The Banker," Ch. 8, "The Turning Point," and Ch. 9, "The Crushing of Masuda."

These three chapters describe the rise of Katsuji Kawamata to the position of president of Nissan, the rise of Tetsuo Masuda to become head of the union that organized Nissan's workers, and the struggle between them (and between them and their rivals). This struggle turned out to have profound and lasting effects on Japan's economy and the nature of its industrial relations system, but our interests are primarily in the power dynamics.

1. How did Kawamata become the head of Nissan? What did he do? When did he do it? How did he do it?
2. What qualities and characteristics did Kawamata display in his rise?
3. Why and how did Masuda become head of the union?
4. How would you describe Masuda? What were his strengths? His weaknesses?
5. How did Kawamata win the struggle with the union? What tactics did he use? Why were they successful?
6. What lessons from this instance are particular to Japan at that time or to the automobile industry? What lessons seem to be more general in thinking about winning in struggles against opposition?

During class, we will see a video of Lyndon Johnson dealing with George Wallace at the time of the civil rights struggles.

February 23. Session 13. Overcoming Setbacks: What Do You Do When Disaster Strikes?

Case: Jeffrey Sonnenfeld (A): The Fall From Grace

1. Why do you think Sonnenfeld got into the trouble he now faces?
2. Do you think he intentionally damaged the building?
3. Could he have foreseen the difficulties he now confronts?
4. What should he have done differently in the fall of 1997?
5. What should he do **now**? How should he do it? When should he do it?
6. What are Sonnenfeld's sources of power? How has he developed them?
7. Why do you think Emory is doing what it is? What characteristics or qualities does that reflect?
8. What do you think will happen? Will his allies stand by him? Why?

Fourth Self-Reflective Assignment. This section of the course is about overcoming obstacles and coping with setbacks. It is important to integrate this learning into your own life and experience. Write a brief, one page essay in which you:

1. Describe an organizational situation in which you faced substantial difficulty (for example, you were fired (not laid off, fired), you were demoted, you failed to get a job or a promotion you wanted and thought you deserved, you were embarrassed or lost face because of some situation, etc.).
2. What did you do that contributed to the problems you experienced? To what extent were the obstacles and difficulties the result of chance events over which you had no control?
3. Based on the course material, what would you do differently if you encountered the same situation today? In other words, what is the learning or what are the ideas that have emerged in the class that you would use to help you in similar situations?

V. POWER AND POLITICS IN A COMPARATIVE FRAME

February 26. Session 14. Are There Important Cross-Cultural Differences in Power Dynamics?

Case: Stan Sesser, "A Reporter at Large: A Nation of Contradictions." *The New Yorker*, January 13, 1992, pp. 37-68.

This article describes Singapore and also Lee Kuan Yew, the country's former prime minister who held office for decades and who now holds the title of Minister Mentor to his son, the current prime minister. As you read the article, focus particularly on the personal qualities and strategies and tactics of Lee Kuan Yew.

1. What do you see as being similar to other people we have studied in terms of the personal attributes that have contributed to Lee's power, his ability to obtain it and his ability to hold on to it?
2. What is similar in terms of the tactics and strategies he has used to hold power for so long?
3. Are there differences that you observe from other people we have studied in the course? What are they? Why do you think these differences are important for understanding the power dynamics of Lee Kuan Yew?
4. **Please come to class prepared to discuss your own experiences with power and influence in different cultural contexts, and what is similar, and what is different from what we have studied in the class in primarily U.S. settings.**

March 2. Session 15. Differences in Power and Politics by Gender: Women and Power

Case: Dr. Frances Conley (A): The Resignation

Patrick McGeehan, "What Merrill's Women Want," *New York Times*, August 22, 2004, pp. BU1, 4.

The Conley case (or the optional reading, *Walking Out on the Boys*), describes the situation faced by a physician and Stanford business school graduate (the Sloan program) operating (literally) in a man's world. The Merrill, Lynch article describes life on Wall Street for women a very few years ago.

1. What is similar, and what seems to be different, about the power issues and dynamics faced by women compared to those confronted by their male colleagues?
2. What are the implications, of the Conley case and the Merrill, Lynch article, for women and their careers? The personal attributes or qualities necessary for success? The strategies they may want to employ?
3. **Please come to class prepared to share, in an open and non-PC way, incidents you have either seen or experienced, as we discuss and debate the implications of this material for the "paths to power" for women, and for that matter, other minorities.**

VI. FALLING OFF AND KEEPING ON THE PATH: WHAT'S DIFFERENT WHEN YOU HAVE POWER AND HOW POWER IS LOST AND MAINTAINED

March 5. Session 16. How Power is Lost

Reading: *Managing with Power*, Ch. 16, "Even the Mighty Fall: How Power is Lost"

Case: Robert A. Caro, *The Power Broker: Robert Moses and the Fall of New York*, New York: Random House, 1974, Ch. 42, "Tavern in the Town," Ch. 46, "Nelson," and Ch. 49, "The Last Stand."

1. Why did Robert Moses lose power?
2. What might he have done differently?
3. Could the way in which Moses lost power have been anticipated? How and why?
4. What lessons do you take away from this story for your own behavior, both early and late in your career?

March 9. Session 17. So You Really Want Power? Living in the Limelight

In this class we will consider Rudy Crew, formerly Chancellor of New York City schools and now superintendent for Miami-Dade County. Urban schools in the U.S. have problems—the graduation rate overall for high school is about 70% and for urban school districts it is even lower. Education is a hot topic at both the national and local level. Crew is an extremely visible person holding jobs that entail great scrutiny. In addition to the profile in *The New York Times*, I selected a few recent articles from Miami that should give you a sense of what his life is like.

Case: “The Stealth Chancellor,” *New York Times Magazine*, August 31, 1997.
“Crew’s Results Likely to Earn Bonus,” *Miami Herald*, June 20, 2006.
“Blame Game Topic: Failing Schools,” *Miami Herald*, July 3, 2006.
“Black Leaders Will Look Into Alleged Slurs by Lawmaker,” *Miami Herald*, April 29, 2006.

1. What has Rudy Crew done during his career to get to where he is—to be as successful and visible as he has become?
2. What about the job makes it so political?
3. What personal qualities does Crew possess?
4. What are his goals and objectives?
5. How would you describe Crew’s leadership style and approach? What makes that approach work? What may be problematic?
6. How has Crew obtained power? How has he exercised the power he has obtained?
7. What lurking pitfalls do you foresee?
8. What are some of the advantages and costs of occupying such a visible position?
9. What lessons do you draw for your own “path to power” and career aspirations from considering Rudy Crew?

March 12. Session 18. Keeping (and Getting) a Job

Case: Connie Bruck, “The Personal Touch,” *The New Yorker*, August 13, 2001, pp. 42-59.
Bernard Weinbraub, “The Man Who Unites Moguls, Looking Ahead,” *New York Times*, October 27, 2003, pp. B1, B6.

These articles describe the career and behavior of Jack Valenti, who for decades (and now in his 80s) was head of the Motion Picture Association of America. We want to understand how Valenti has a) held on to a very political job in which he reports to seven heads of movie studios and b) has for years run an organization typically rated as one of the top two in Washington in terms of lobbying effectiveness.

1. Describe Valenti's early career. What qualities did Lyndon Johnson see in him?
2. What preparation did his early jobs provide for his subsequent work? What kinds of networks? What sorts of experiences?
3. How did he originally get the job as head of the MPAA?
4. What has he done, specifically, over the years that has enabled him to keep his job and be so effective in it?
5. What behaviors have made Valenti so successful?
6. What lessons can you draw for yourself and what you might want to do?

VI. LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING AHEAD

March 16. Session 19. What Have We Learned, and What Will You Do With What You Have Learned?

Reading: Jeffrey Pfeffer and Christina T. Fong, "Building Organization Theory from First Principles: The Self-Enhancement Motive and Understanding Power and Influence," *Organization Science*, 16 (July-August, 2005), pp. 372-388.

Managing with Power, Ch. 18, "Managing with Power."

Fifth Self-Reflective Written Assignment: Please come to class prepared to hand in (and keep one copy for yourself) a brief, no more than one page statement that addresses the following questions: Now that you have completed this course, 1) What do you think about power and politics in organizations? 2) What influence styles or strategies do you intend to use most? What do you intend to use least? 3) What influence styles are you most comfortable with? What are you most uncomfortable with? 4) In what situations have you typically been most effective? Least effective? 5) What does all of the foregoing mean in terms of the sort of career and job you want for yourself?

GROUP PROJECT ASSIGNMENT AND INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Form a group of **six people**, of your own choosing.
- 2) **No later than the third session, January 17, 2007, let me know who is in your group. No later than the sixth session, January 29, please let me know what your group has chosen as its focus for the project. This can be done by e-mail or on paper, but both dates are important.**

Your assignment is to do “field research” on how individuals obtain and exercise influence, as a way of seeing how the material from the class is, or could be, put into use. Power becomes more visible and is exercised more clearly where there is opposition, where something needs to get done and resistance must be overcome. Think carefully about that in choosing the focus for your project.

Your “subject” of the analysis should be someone who is a) early in his or her career and b) is “similar” in some respects to who you are or who you desire to become. In particular, the person MUST be someone that you can interview and, even better, perhaps get some insights from talking to her or his colleagues and others. Recent graduates of the Stanford business school, people who have taken this class, people who are about 2-10 years out of school, and who are doing well or, alternatively, have had problems because of political issues, should be the focus of your analysis. DO NOT FOCUS ON HIGHLY VISIBLE “STARS.” Anyone who has more than 5,000 Google entries should probably be “out of bounds” for the project.

In thinking about how to write the analysis and do the project, you can (but you don't have to) use the organizing themes of the course as a guide. So, for instance, you could study how some person or group overcame opposition and resistance. You could analyze how some individual prepared him- or herself for the path to power. You could illustrate how some person or group lost power, or, alternatively, what someone did to hold onto power against significant opposition and challenges. You could analyze how some group or individual established a domain, by acquiring resources, attracting allies, and so forth.

Length is *not* the defining characteristic of a good analysis. Try to concisely (using exhibits as needed) cover the material. Use analysis and insight, rather than lots of words, to convey what you have learned and discovered.

- 5) **Final written projects are due no later than 5 P.M. on Friday, March 9, 2007.**

SOME GUIDELINES/HINTS TO MAKE THE ASSIGNMENT MORE INTERESTING, USEFUL, AND SUCCESSFUL:

- a) Try to use as many sources of information as possible—archives, interviews, public sources (if available). In other words, to the extent possible, triangulate to get the most valid information possible. In particular, the subject of your paper is likely to provide information that is at least unintentionally (and possibly intentionally) biased and self-serving.**
- b) Please proofread your paper to eliminate typographical errors.**
- c) Don't just list some references at the back of the paper, or nowhere. If you have relied on sources, particularly published sources, and particularly if there is a direct quote, please provide a complete footnote as to the source.**

INDIVIDUAL PROJECT ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Due by 5 P.M. Friday, March 16.

If the material from Paths to Power is going to stay with you and be useful, it is imperative that you use it during our quarter together. Below are two options for your individual project assignment.

Option 1.

In an organization where you currently work or are volunteering—such an organization could be a nonprofit, a for-profit company, a student government organization, or any other formal organization in which you are currently involved—during the course of the quarter try to exercise influence over some specific issue, using the concepts from the course, and then write up your experience. You should keep notes throughout the quarter, with new entries every time something important happens and as a way of making sense of your experience while it is still fresh—as opposed to writing it all up at the end of the quarter. In order to do this, you will need to: a) begin with some specific objective, what are you trying to change, what are you trying to accomplish? Such an objective could involve either changing a policy or practice in the organization or advancing your position to one of more power, or both; b) outline a set of things you are going to do to try and influence the situation; c) describe what you did, what worked, and what didn't, and why; compare this to what was in the literature and what we have discussed in class (i.e., integrate what you learned through your experience with what you learned conceptually); and d) what were your personal lessons in power from this experience.

Option 2.

Using the ideas and concepts from the class, write out a plan for yourself as to how you will use the material to build your own path to, or away from, power. What are you going to do, specifically, for instance, as part of your job finding process? What are you going to do as you enter your new organization? What other things are you going to do to build influence, or, for that matter, not do? In other words, how do you plan to put the ideas and concepts to work for you in your own life? Which ideas or concepts are you deliberately choosing NOT to put into practice, and why?