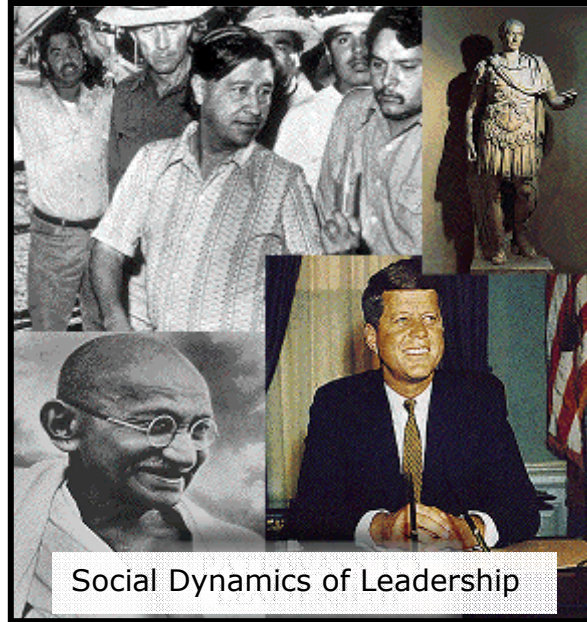


# Social Dynamics of Leadership: Elites and Society Sociology 375/Leadership 375



*D. Michael Lindsay*

*mlindsay@rice.edu; 552 Sewall Hall*

*Office hours by appointment (email preferred or campus ext. 5511)*

*Billy McMillan, Teaching Fellow (wcmillan@rice.edu or ext. 5055)*

*Department of Sociology, Rice University*

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## Description of the course

This course explores the rise, reign, and fall of elite groups in human societies (the powerful, the influential, and the celebrated) with major, though not exclusive, emphasis on the contemporary United States. The focus is comparative, using sociological analysis but also drawing from contributions in history, anthropology, and political and social theory. Specific contemporary elites—business and political leaders, military commanders and media celebrities—will be studied with a view to answering questions about their social profiles, their responsibilities, their rewards, and their efficacy. Particular themes to be addressed include power, wealth, fame, and status and the paths to achievement in different sectors of society. The course will also attend to leadership failures, moral dilemmas, and issues of accountability. Throughout the course, we will consider the social dynamics influencing individual leaders—social networks, institutional settings, and organizational affiliations. This course will be of interest to students interested in sociology, but also to other students intrigued by issues surrounding societal leadership and elite circles.

## Course requirements

“On Leadership” essay and weekly comments. In this course, Rice students will have the unique opportunity to participate as featured panelists on *The Washington Post’s* “On Leadership” website. Each Monday during the semester, Editor Lillian Cunningham will email a leadership-related question to the entire class. Students will need to post a comment to one of the featured panelist essays before 2 pm on Friday of each week. To post a comment, students must become registered users of WashingtonPost.com and choose a user name that clearly identifies him or her by first and last name. As the student’s comment is posted online (with a date and time stamp), the student will copy and paste the current screen (using the Print Screen feature on the computer keyboard) and then crop the picture in a word processing document that shows only the comment and the date and time stamp. Each week, students will build on this cumulative document and then turn in a copy on the day of the midterm (Friday, February 25) and on the final class day (Friday, April 22).

In addition to this weekly commentary, students will form into groups of five (which will also be used for the group research project and is discussed below). One week during the semester (beginning the week of January 17 and ending the week of April 11), each group will be responsible for crafting a group essay of 500-700 words that directly responds to the weekly question posed by Ms. Cunningham. This group contribution will be posted on the “On Leadership” site under the featured panelist name “Rice University Undergraduate Leaders.” Students must form their own groups by the end of week 1 and the assigned weeks for group essays will be made by Monday, January 17. Group responses have to be submitted to Ms. Cunningham (with only one member of the group sending her the final, polished essay) by 12 noon on Wednesday of the given week. This means that groups will only have about 24 hours to learn of the week’s question, formulate a response, and finalize a collective essay. At the end of the group essay, each student’s name should be listed (in alphabetical order by last name). This will constitute 10% of the final grade.

In-class Writing Assignments. Throughout the semester, unannounced, short (1-2 paragraphs) writing assignments will be given in response to the lecture or assigned readings for that day. Students who are absent will not be allowed to make up these assignments, and some will be distributed and returned within the same class period. Others will be handed out at the end of class and turned in at the next class meeting. These short response documents can be handwritten or typed, but they must be handed in personally (no email submissions). This will constitute 10% of the final grade.

Group Research Project and Presentation. Each student will work with a group of 4 other classmates (total group size of 5 students) to conduct research on the topic of elites and leadership. Students will choose a particular topic for further investigation, but sample topics include the following:

- ❖ Wealth and Elite Philanthropy
- ❖ Leadership and Presidential Transitions
- ❖ The U.S. Military as Site of Elite Mobility
- ❖ Social Profile of the *Forbes* 400
- ❖ Managing Privilege

- ❖ Institutional Authority and Social Movement Leadership
- ❖ Interpersonal Trust and Public Leadership
- ❖ Achieving Diversity within America's Leadership Cohort
- ❖ Gender and Celebrity Status

Groups will conduct original research on a particular research question on a topic approved by Dr. Lindsay. The social-scientific methods that groups can use include the following: (1) content analyses of news articles, legal documents, published works, or Congressional proceedings; (2) interviews or surveys with a certain population (both of which will require approval from Rice's institutional review panel, so see Dr. Lindsay if your group is interested in pursuing this); (3) ethnographic observation; (4) formal or informal network analysis; or (5) life history analyses of a certain population. More information on the methods for analysis will be provided once the groups are determined.

During week 1, students should form their own group. One member of the group should submit the names of all group members by email to [wmcmillan@rice.edu](mailto:wmcmillan@rice.edu) by 12 noon on Friday, January 14. Each group will identify three possible research questions for further investigation by the start of week 4. Group presentations, which will last 10-12 minutes, will take place on one of four "cycle days" that take place on March 28, April 4, April 6, or April 11. During each of these class periods, three groups will present their research to the rest of the class, which will be divided into three smaller sections. In essence, this means that the group will present their findings three times to three different groups of fellow class members in the course of a single class period. Exemplary presentations will be not only informative but also engaging. These presentations will constitute 10% of the final grade.

The groups will also present their results at the Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium, which will be held on Friday, April 15, 2008 from 2:00pm-4:00pm. Each group will prepare a poster detailing their research (substantial poster on foam board material) and then defend their work before a panel of faculty judges who will be assessing the various entrants from Rice's School of Social Sciences. The top five entrants from the School of Social Sciences (against which all of our groups will be competing) awarded by the faculty judges (first through fifth place) receive both an award certificate and a prize of monetary value, courtesy of the Dean's office. Defense of the project is an integral part of the judges' appraisal, so all group members should plan on being present for the entire time. For both the in-class presentations and the research symposium, students will be evaluated on both the substance and presentation of their research. Performance at the research symposium (posters and oral defenses) will constitute 10% of the final grade.

Also, each student will submit a confidential, one page memo (single-spaced) assessing the contributions of all the other group members. These evaluations will be used to determine the value each student added to the group project, which will constitute 10% of the final grade. They will be due at the beginning of the last day of class, Friday, April 22.

Midterm Exam. There will be an in-class midterm exam that will be administered on Friday, February 25. This will be based on the readings, lectures, and class discussions from weeks 1-7 and will constitute 20% of the final grade.

Attendance and Informed Participation. Mark Twain said “half of life is just showing up,” and while I am not as generous as he, I believe attendance and active participation in class discussions should be rewarded. Only university-approved absences are allowed, and students are required to submit all assignments *in advance*, excepting emergencies, if they are going to be absent. Student attendance and participation in class discussions (and correctly responding to the instructor’s questions when called upon) will constitute 10% of the final grade.

Final Exam. A final exam will be administered on the date set by the registrar. The final exam, which will be comprehensive in scope and closed-notes, will constitute 20% of the final grade.

*Completion of every assignment is required in order to pass the course, and there is no allowance for late work.* Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me during the first two weeks of class. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact Disability Support Services in the Ley Student Center. Finally, consulting or seeking to consult previous years’ exams constitutes a violation of the Honor Code in this class and will not be tolerated.

To summarize, here are the course requirements and the percent of the final grade they constitute:

“On Leadership” weekly postings and group essay	10%
Short, in-class writing assignments	10%
In-class midterm (based on weeks 1-7 material)	20%
Group Research Project (Presentation and Poster Defense)	30%
Final exam (cumulative)	20%
Class attendance and participation	10%
TOTAL	100%

There are also some extra credit opportunities, which hold the potential to significantly improve one’s final grade. Attending one of these events and writing a one-page memo (1-3 paragraphs) that relates the course material to the topic discussed can earn one point toward one’s final course grade. The extra credit lecturers include Rosalind Picard of MIT (January 25) and Secretary Paul O’Neil (March 16). Others will be announced throughout the semester.

The grading scale for this course is as follows

A+	100	A	94-99	A-	90-93
B+	87-89	B	84-86	B-	80-83
C+	77-79	C	74-76	C-	70-73
D+	67-69	D	64-66	D-	60-63
F	59 and below				

## Course materials and logistics

Each student should obtain the following items for the course:

- ◆ Course readings (online via course website which is password protected for students enrolled in the course); these can be located online at [www.rice.edu/mlindsay/teaching](http://www.rice.edu/mlindsay/teaching)
- ◆ One copy of Thomas R. Dye, *Who’s Running America? The Bush Restoration* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2002), 7<sup>th</sup> edition (available at the bookstore)
- ◆ One copy of Malcolm Gladwell, *Outliers: The Story of Success* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 2008) (available at the bookstore)



## Course outline

### Dates to Remember

- ◆ No Class: Monday, January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday)
- ◆ In-Class Midterm: Friday, February 25
- ◆ Spring Break: February 26-March 6
- ◆ Spring Recess: March 24-25
- ◆ Group meetings in lieu of class, Friday, April 1
- ◆ Cycle Days for Group Presentations: March 28, April 4, April 6, April 11
- ◆ Group meetings in lieu of class, Wednesday, April 13
- ◆ Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium: Friday, April 15
- ◆ Memo Assessing Other Group Participants/Last Day of Class: Friday, April 22
- ◆ Final Exam: Date chosen by the registrar

### Week 1: Introduction and Overview, January 10-14

- ◆ Course overview
- ◆ Leadership, power, and elites
- ◆ Revisiting The Power Elite in contemporary research

#### *for Wednesday, January 12*

Plato, Selections from [The Republic](#), Book III, 412b-Book IV, 421c and Book V, 471c-474b.

#### *for Friday, January 14*

C. Wright Mills, [1956] 2000. [The Power Elite](#). New York: Oxford University Press. "The Higher Circles," pages 3-29



Daniel Bell, 1960. "Is [There A Ruling Class in America? The Power Elite Reconsidered](#)" in *The End of Ideology*. New York: Free Press, Chapter 3, pages 47-74

#### *for Wednesday, January 19*

Thomas R. Dye, 2002. *Who's Running America? The Bush Restoration*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Chapters 1 and 7, pages 1-12 and 135-169

### Week 2: American Elites, January 17-21

- ◆ No Class: Monday, January 17 (Martin Luther King, Jr., holiday)
- ◆ Institutional authority and contemporary power structures
- ◆ Mrs. Astor's Ballroom—the Forbes 400
- ◆ Power structure research
- ◆ Democracy and elite rule
- ◆ Weekly "On Leadership" comments and group essays begin



#### *for Friday, January 21*

G. William Domhoff, 2005. [Who Rules America: Power, Politics, and Social Change](#). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: McGraw-Hill. "Class and Power in America," pages 1-16.



for Monday, January 24

James MacGregor Burns, 2007. "[A Tale of Two Bushes: Standing Alone Versus Standing Together](#)" in *The Values of Presidential Leadership* edited by Terry L. Price and J. Thomas Wren. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Chapter 5, pages 119-133.

Robert N. Bellah et al., 1991. "[Democracy Means Paying Attention](#)" in *The Good Society*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. Selections from the conclusion, pages 273-276 and 283-286.

### Week 3: Leadership in Decisive Moments, January 24-28

- ◆ Culture and cognition—approaches to leadership
- ◆ Transactional vs. Transformational Leadership
- ◆ Presidential transition and leadership
- ◆ Extra credit opportunity: Rosalind Picard on January 25 at 7:30 pm



for Wednesday, January 26

Howard Gardner, 1995. [Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership](#), New York: Basic Books. Chapters 1 and 2, pages 3-40.

for Friday, January 28

James MacGregor Burns, 1978. *Leadership*. New York: Harper & Row, Chapters 2 and 16 "[The Structure of Moral Leadership](#)" and "[Toward a General Theory](#)," pages 29-46 and 422-443.

for Monday, January 31

Thomas R. Dye, 2002. *Who's Running America? The Bush Restoration* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Chapters 4 and 8, pages 55-96 and 171-202

### Week 4: Presidents, Statesmen, Public Servants, January 31-February 4

- ◆ Wielding political power—the social dynamics of political ascent and access
- ◆ Symbols and sentiments
- ◆ Conceptions of power: Machiavelli, Weber, Marx, Lukes
- ◆ Group research question ideas are due at start of week 4



for Wednesday, February 2

Howard Gardner, 1995. [Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership](#). New York: Basic Books, Chapter 13, "A Generation of World Leaders," pages 244-263.



James MacGregor Burns, 1978. [Leadership](#). New York: Harper & Row, Selections from Chapter 5, "The Crucibles of Political Leadership," pages 105-111 and 129-137

for Friday, February 4

Steven Lukes, 2005. [Power: A Radical View](#). 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. Selections from "Three-Dimensional Power," Chapter 3, pages 108-112 and 134-144.

Niccolo Machiavelli, [1515] 1988. [\*The Prince\*](#). Edited by Quentin Skinner and Russell Price. New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapters XV-XVII, pages 54-61.

*for Monday, February 7*

Gaetano Mosca, 1939. [\*The Ruling Class\*](#). Trans. By Hannah D. Kahn. New York: McGraw-Hill. Chapter 2, pages 50-69.

G. William Domhoff, 2005. [\*Who Rules America: Power, Politics, and Social Change\*](#). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: McGraw-Hill. “The Big Picture,” pages 199-206.

#### Week 5: Theories of Elites: Monolithic Model, February 7-11

- ◆ Political and class theories of power
- ◆ Ruling class (Marx, Marger, Domhoff) and ruling elite (Pareto, Mosca)
- ◆ Gramsci and ideology

*for Wednesday, February 9*

Michael Useem, 1983. [\*The Inner Circle: Large Corporations and the Rise of Business Political Activity in the U.S. and the U.K.\*](#) New York: Oxford University Press, pages 9-16 and 59-75.

*for Friday, February 11*

Abraham Zaleznik, 1966. “[Equality and the Problem of Rivalry](#),” in *Human Dilemmas of Leadership*, New York: Harper & Row. Chapter 5, pages 72-99.

*for Monday, February 14*

Max Weber, [1946] 1953. “[Class, Status, Party](#)” in *Class, Status, and Power*. Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds. Glencoe, IL: Free Press, pages 21-28.



#### Week 6: Theories of Elites: Pluralist Model, February 14-18

- ◆ Centralized vs. Dispersed elites
- ◆ Community studies of power—distributed in multiple centers (Dahl)
- ◆ Keller’s segmented elites

*for Wednesday, February 16*

Suzanne Keller, 1963. [\*Beyond the Ruling Class: Strategic Elites in Modern Society\*](#). New York: Random House. Introduction, pages 3-28

*for Friday, February 18*

Robert Lerner, Althea K. Nagai, and Stanley Rothman, 1996. [\*American Elites\*](#). New Haven: Yale University Press, Chapters 1 and 2 and Conclusion, pages 1-31 and 136-140

*for Monday, February 21*

E. Digby Baltzell, 1953. “[‘Who’s Who in America’ and ‘The Social Register’: Elite and Upper Class Indexes in Metropolitan America](#)” in *Class, Status, and Power*. Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Martin Lipset, eds. Glencoe, IL: Free Press, pages 172-185.

Thomas R. Dye, 2002. *Who's Running America? The Bush Restoration* Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Chapter 5, page 97-113.

S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda S. Lichter, 1986. [\*The Media Elite: America's New Powerbrokers\*](#). New York: Hastings House. "The Rise of the National Media," pages 1-19.

### Week 7: Status and Fame: Public Icons and Stars, February 21-25

- ◆ Celebrity
- ◆ Weber and authority
- ◆ Networks and media power
- ◆ First half of weekly "On Leadership" comments due at start of class, Friday, February 25
- ◆ In-class Midterm Exam, Friday, February 25



*for Wednesday, February 23*

Malcolm Gladwell, 2000. [\*The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference\*](#). Boston: Little, Brown and Company. Selection from Chapter 2, "The Law of the Few," pages 31-69.

### Spring Break: February 26-March 6

### Week 8: Class, Wealth and Power, March 7-11

- ◆ Modes of distinction in elite circles
- ◆ Class and power (aristocracy vs. meritocracy)
- ◆ Inherited wealth vs. "new money"

*for Wednesday, March 9*

Pierre Bourdieu, 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. ["The Aristocracy of Culture"](#). Trans. by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pages 11-18.



Anthony J. Mayo, Nitin Nohria, and Laura G. Singleton, 2006. [\*Paths to Power: How Insiders and Outsiders Shaped American Business Leadership\*](#). Boston: Harvard Business School Press. Selections from Chapters 6 and 8, pages 171-185 and 233-241.



*for Friday, March 11*

Max Weber, [1946] 1978. ["Charisma and its Transformation"](#) in *Economy and Society* edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, Chapter 14, pages 1111-1125 and 1148-1157.

Peter M. Blau, 1963. ["Critical Remarks on Weber's Theory of Authority"](#), *American Political Science Review*, Volume 57, Number 2, pages 305-314.



Rakesh Khurana, 2002. [\*Searching for a Corporate Savior: The Irrational Quest for Charismatic CEO's\*](#). Princeton: Princeton University Press, Preface and pages 51-73.

Malcolm Gladwell, 2002. "[The Talent Myth](#)." *The New Yorker*, July 22, pages 28-33.

*for Monday, March 14*

Thomas R. Dye, 2002. *Who's Running America? The Bush Restoration*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Chapters 2 and 3, pages 13-54.

### Week 9: Corporate Power Structure and Their Chieftains, March 14-18

- ◆ Weberian bureaucracy and executive leadership—constraining and enabling
- ◆ Executive selection—selection mechanisms in elite circles
- ◆ Entrepreneurs, CEOs, corporate executives
- ◆ Inner circle of leadership—interlocking directorates
- ◆ Guest presentation by Secretary Paul O'Neill, Wednesday, March 16

*for Wednesday, March 16*



David Brooks, 2001. [Bobos In Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There](#) New York: Simon & Schuster. "Rise of the Educated Class," pages 13-53.

Malcolm Gladwell, 2008. *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, Chapters 1 and 5, pages 15-34 and 116-160.

Jerome Karabel, 2005. [The Chosen: The Hidden History of Admission and Exclusion at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton](#). Chapter 18, "The Battle over Merit," pages 536-557.

*for Friday, March 18*

Peter W. Cookson and Caroline Hodges Persell, 1985. [Preparing for Power: America's Elite Boarding Schools](#). New York: Basic Books. Selection from Chapter 3, pages 49-69.

*for Monday, March 21*

Ronald A. Heifetz and Donald L. Laurie, 1997. "[The Work of Leadership](#)" in *Harvard Business Review*, Volume 75, Number 1, pages 124-134.

John P. Kotter, 2001. "[What Leaders Really Do](#)" in *Harvard Business Review*, Selections from pages 85-96.

### Week 10: Education and Institutional Settings for Societal Leadership, March 21-25

- ◆ Elite Education and Klitgaard's "selection at the right tail"
- ◆ Matthew effect
- ◆ Qualifications for success, preparing for power
- ◆ The work of leadership

*for Wednesday, March 23*

Ted I. K. Youn and Karen D. Arnold, 2004. "[Pathways to Prominence: Explaining Contours of Career Hierarchy of American Rhodes Scholars](#)" in *The Lucky Few and the Worthy Many: Scholarship Competitors and the World's Future Leaders* edited by Alice Stone Ilchman, Warren F. Ilchman, and Mary Hale Tolar. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. Pages 127-148.

for Monday, March 28

Judy B. Rosener, 1990. "[Ways Women Lead](#)" in *Harvard Business Review* Volume 68, Number 6, pages 119-125.

"Debate: Ways Women Lead" in *Harvard Business Review*, 1991. Volume 69, Number 1, pages 150-160.

### Spring Recess: March 24-25

#### Week 11: Dividing Lines: Gender and Diversity, March 28-April 1

- ◆ Diversity in the Power Elite
- ◆ Leadership styles and gender norms
- ◆ Group meetings in lieu of class, Friday, April 1

For Wednesday March 30

Richard L. Zweigenhaft and G. William Domhoff, 2006. [Diversity in the Power Elite: How It Happened, Why It Matters](#). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. Selections from Chapter 3, "Women in the Power Elite," pages 59-72.

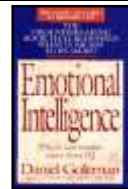
Diana Kendall, 2002. [The Power of Good Deeds: Privileged Women and the Social Reproduction of the Upper Class](#). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield. Selections from Chapter 3, "Good Deeds and Fundraising," pages 59-79.

for Monday, April 4

Malcolm Gladwell, 2008. *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, Chapters 2 and 8, pages 35-68 and 224-249.

#### Week 12: Leading People, April 4-8

- ◆ Emotional Intelligence
- ◆ Working with others
- ◆ Leaders vs. Creators; Connectors vs. Mavens



for Wednesday, April 6

Daniel Goleman, 1995. [Emotional Intelligence](#), New York: Bantam Books, Chapter 6, "The Master Aptitude," pages 78-95.

for Friday, April 8

C. Wright Mills, [1956] 2000. [The Power Elite](#). New York: Oxford University Press. "The Higher Immorality," pages 343-361.

For Monday, April 11

Geoffrey Regan, 1991. [The Book of Military Blunders](#). Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO. "The Bay of Pigs," pages 177-181.

Jerrold M. Post and Robert S. Robins, 1993. [When Illness Strikes the Leader](#). New Haven: Yale University Press, Selections from Chapters 1 and 2, pages 1-7 and 31-61.

**Week 13: Elite Dangers and Leadership Failures, April 11-15**

- ◆ The arrogance of power
- ◆ When the leader falls: ethically, politically, physically
- ◆ Role play: The Truth about Lies
- ◆ Group meetings in lieu of class, Wednesday, April 13
- ◆ Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium, April 15

*for Friday, April 15*

Rice Undergraduate Research Symposium

*for Monday, April 18*

Argyris, Chris, 1991. "[Teaching Smart People How to Learn](#)." *Harvard Business Review*, pages 99-109

Cialdini, Robert B., 2001. "[Harnessing the Science of Persuasion](#)." *Harvard Business Review*, pages 72-79.

**Week 14: Interpretations of Leadership and Power, April 18-22**

- ◆ Ethics and power
- ◆ Leadership as persuasion and education
- ◆ Management vs. Leadership
- ◆ Short Memo on Group Members' Contributions due at start of class, Friday, April 22
- ◆ Second half of weekly "On Leadership" comments due at start of class, Friday, April 22

*for Wednesday, April 20*

Thomas R. Dye, 2002. *Who's Running America? The Bush Restoration*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Chapter 9, pages 203-213.

*for Friday, April 22*

Pareto, Vilfredo, 1968. [The Rise and Fall of Elites](#). New York: Bedminster Press. "The Decline of the Old Elite," pages 59-71

**Last Day of Class: Friday, April 22**

**Final Exam (Date Set by Registrar)**