

Obama's two biggest mistakes that lost the country, the power of citizen engagement, the history of ILSR on KFAI radio & more...-->

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Defending The Public Good

Shining a light on the public and the private

"There must be a positive passion for the public good, the public interest... and this public passion must be superior to all private passions." - John Adams, 1776



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Obama's Two Mistakes That Lost the Country

Rather than challenge concentrated economic power President Obama bribed the powerful, opening the doors to an aggressive, rightwing populist movement.

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The People United

In 2015 New Yorkers demonstrated the power of the grassroots when they achieved significant victories in the face of vigorous opposition from giant corporations and the state government and state laws that eliminate citizen's ability to put an issue on the ballot.

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In Case You Missed It:

David Morris Interview on KFAI

In 2014, on ILSR's 40th anniversary co-founder David Morris sat down with Siobhan Kierans and Tom O'Connell, co-hosts of **TruthToTell**, a weekly public affairs program on KFAI radio in Minneapolis to talk about our history, our approach and our decentralist perspective.



PUBLIC GOOD NEWS BITES

- **Numbers provide comfort to school privatizers.** That is why they want standardized and frequent tests and comparative rankings to form the basis for teacher dismissals and school closings. Veteran educator Marion Brady fiercely challenges the privatizers assumptions noting, among other deficiencies, their poor scholarship. Advocates often quote quality guru Edward Deming, "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it." Brady points out that Deming's actual quote was, "it is wrong to suppose that if you can't measure it, you can't manage it -- a costly myth." [@WashingtonPost](#)
- **In 1996 Congress changed the way welfare works.** States received block grants to distribute largely as they saw fit. One result is that recipients are forced to take a job, any job, or face a cut off of benefits even though only a small minority manages to find a long-term job paying above poverty wages. A new study by CLASP focuses on how this "work first" policy hurts children. [@CLASP_DC](#)
- **Nobel Laureate economist Joseph E. Stiglitz proposes to rewrite the economic rules.** He offers 36 new policies that can reduce inequality, break up concentrated economic power, care for the needy, empower workers and expand economic security and opportunity. [@JosephEStiglitz](#)
- **Unlike most cities that give panhandlers the back of their hand Albuquerque extends a helping hand.** A city van stops at popular panhandling locations to offer panhandlers a day job paying above the state minimum wage. After work the van drops them off at a nonprofit that connects people with housing, employment and mental health services. [@JBWogan](#)
- **Since 2003, 33 US cities have taken back control of their water systems** from the private sector and 10 more soon follow their lead. This report describes why and how they did so. [@StopCorpAbuse](#)
- **ILSR's Stacy Mitchell explains why community banks are disappearing.** It's not because they're uncompetitive nor is it because of increased paperwork resulting from the Dodd-

Frank law. Beginning in the early 1990s Congress changed the rules that had nurtured rooted and local banking. [@StacyFMitchell](#)

- **One trader at Barclays summed up the current state of corporate ethics.** "If you ain't cheating you ain't trying." If caught, corporations pay a fine. A new data base of corporate misconduct created by Good Jobs offers us an empirical insight into the astonishing extent of corporate criminality. [@GoodJobsFirst](#)
- **A study by three British psychologists found that altruism trumps handsomeness when it comes to men's attractiveness to women.** Perhaps altruism is an evolutionary factor. Certainly altruism is far more useful for survival than good looks. Before you ask: There have been no studies of the impact of altruism on the attractiveness of women to men. [@TomJacobs_PSMag](#)
- **The new buzzword is "philanthrocapitalism."** Billionaires make charities and public institutions run more like corporations, both in structure (seeding for-profit "social enterprises") and operation (teacher evaluation). In this interview Linsey McGoey's author of *No Such Thing As A Free Gift* challenges this new kind of "giving." [@LinseyMcGoey](#)
- **From 2004-2012, public investments in privately owned infrastructure soared from \$23 billion to \$134 billion.** A new study by the European Network on Debt and Development finds that private-public partnerships are risky, have limited accountability and often cost double or triple that of public infrastructure. [@Eurodad](#)



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