The Long History of the Age of Fracture:
Does Identity Politics Undermine Democratic Citizenship?

I. Remedies for Unequal and Unresponsive Democracy
   (Benjamin Page & Martin Gilens’ Democracy in America?)
   A. Curbing the Power of Money to Produce Equal Responsiveness
      1. Rethinking Constitutional Law
      2. Diluting Private Money Via Multiplied Matching
      3. Democracy Vouchers
      4. Require Full Disclosure of Major Political Spending
      5. The Problem of Unrestricted Outside Spending
   B. Controlling Lobbying and Organized Interests
      1. Require Full Disclosure of Lobbying Activity: Lobbying Procedure Act
      2. Stop Favor Giving and Revolving Doors
      3. Build Government Capacity
      4. Create People’s Lobbies
      5. Curate the Interest Group System to Diversify Representation
   C. Reforming Elections to Empower Ordinary Citizens
      1. Basic Problem: Voice of People Both Weak and Biased
      2. Eliminate Barriers to Voting
      3. Reforms to Facilitate Voting: Universal Voter Registration
   D. Unclogging the Senate by Abolishing the Hold and Limiting the Filibuster
   E. Democratizing the House of Representatives: Overcoming the Hastert Rule
   F. Depolarizing Political Parties
      1. Importance of Reforms Listed Above
      2. Create Competitive Districts
      3. Ranked Voting and Instant Runoffs
      4. Abolish Primaries
      5. Proportional Representation via Multimember at Large Districts
   G. Harmonize Political Institutions
   H. Threaten a Constitutional Convention
II. Concluding Reflections: On the Need for a Democratic Social Movement to Repair Democracy in 21st Century America and the Right Kind of Progressive Populism for 2020 and Beyond
   A. Page’s and Gilen’s Call for a Pro-democracy Social Movement
   B. Taking Advantage of the Organizing Potentials of New Technology and Overcoming their Weaknesses

III. Introduction to the Idea that We Inhabit an Age of Fracture
   A. What Is a Public? What Is a Nation? Stories of Peoplehood and Imagined Communities (Benedict Anderson, Rogers Smith, Michael Warner)
   B. Transformations in Self-Conceptions, Social Imaginaries and Political Claims-Making
   C. The Structural Bases for these Cultural-Political Transformations
      1. Economics and Geography
      2. The Essential Role of Media of Communication in the Constitution of the Public
      3. Political Parties, Other State Centered Political Institutions, Partisanship and Mobilization
      4. Demography

IV. Cultural Dimensions of the History of the Age of Fracture
   A. The Effective Myth of a Unified Public: Post-War America
      1. More Unifying Identities, Social Imaginaries and Forms of Claims Making
      2. The Economics of the Great Compression: Policy and Intellectual Framework
      3. The Common Culture of White America (Robert Putnam, Charles Murray)
      4. The Importance of the Cold War
      5. Encompassing Political Parties and Lack of Ideological Sorting (and Representation)
      6. The Suppression of Difference
   B. Case Study 1: Race and a First Line of Fracture
   C. Case Study 2: Gender and a Second Line of Fracture
D. Public Religion and Evangelical Mobilization as a Third Line of Fracture
E. Other Fault Lines
   1. Sexuality
   2. Immigration
   3. Partisanship
   4. White Identity Politics: Backlash Reinforces Fracture

V. The Political Critique of the Age of Fracture
   A. From the Left: From Equality to Difference and Redistribution to Recognition as the Goals of the Politics of Identity (e.g. Nancy Fraser)
   B. From the Right: Francis Fukuyama on the Obsessive Politics of Resentment

VI. The Ethical Critique of the Age of Fracture: Anthony Appiah on the Lies that Bind
   A. A Dialogic Theory for the Construction of Identity
   B. Ascriptive vs. Self-chosen Aspects of Identity
   C. More or Less Tightly Scripted Identities
   D. The Changes in Self-Conception that Identity Politics Brings About

VII. Exploring Some Resources for Reconstructing Just and Inclusive Bases for Solidarity in the Aftermath of the Fracturing of American Political Culture
   A. Conceptual Resources
      1. Dignity and Honor
      2. Respect and Recognition
      3. The Tendency to Overshoot in Combatting the Social Misrecognition
      4. The Politics of Non-Misrecognition
      5. Creedal National Identity and the Politics of Integration (not assimilation)
   B. How the Claims Against Misrecognition Became Culture War Issues
   Practical Imperatives for Building New Sources of Commonality