

You're receiving this email because of your relationship with Ara Norwood of Leadership Development Systems. Please [confirm](#) your continued interest in receiving email from us. To ensure that you continue to receive emails from us, add [ara@aranorwood.com](mailto:ara@aranorwood.com) to your address book today.

You may [unsubscribe](#) if you no longer wish to receive our emails.

# Uncommon Sense

Providing Clarity, Promoting Intelligence

## In This Issue

[The Death of Management?](#)  
[What Is Politics?](#)  
[Incident in LA](#)  
[Add Opine to your Vocabulary](#)

## Quick Links

[Ara's Web Site](#)  
[Facebook Page](#)

## Join Our List

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Issue: # 070

February 25, 2014

## Greetings!

Great to have you back for another round of *Uncommon Sense*, and a hearty welcome to the many new subscribers that have joined us.

Where will you be in 25 years? What will you be doing? It's an interesting question to think about.

In 25 years, I will be 80 years of age. My youngest child will be 44. My grandson will be 25. And I will very likely be busy producing some body of work on The Founders or some leadership topic as I enter my sunset years. I will also very likely be lecturing, perhaps still teaching at the college level, and still advising business leaders. And all of this because I will it to be so. Granted, my circumstances may change between now and then. It is certainly possible I may be hit with grave misfortune. But I think it's important to have one's sights set on building a productive and profitable future, regardless of what curve balls life throws our way.



That's looking forward. What about looking backward?

What were you doing 25 years ago today? Do you remember? I do.

I remember because it was 25 years ago today that my wife gave birth to our first child. My daughter was born on this very day 25 years ago. It's been quite an odyssey since that singular event a quarter-century ago. I love my

daughter and wish for nothing but good things for her - now and always.

And "good things" are what I hope you will glean from this issue of *Uncommon Sense*. There is some important instruction awaiting you in this issue, so put on your seat belts and sink your teeth into this issue!

OK, let's get started.

Warm regards,

Ara Norwood

## Self-Development The Death of Management?

Let me preface my message by saying that there are three broad roles in business and commerce: **Executive, Manager, Producer.**

You are either an executive (titles may include President, VP, Owner, Managing Partner, etc.,) who *contributes strategically* and has the power to make key decisions for the direction of the firm. Or you are a manager (common titles of which include Director, Supervisor, Manager, etc.,) who *contributes through others*, and whose key



processes include strategic planning, capital budgeting, project management, hiring and promotion, periodic business reviews, etc. Or, you are a producer of some kind (perhaps a specialist such as a sales professional, a shipping clerk, an engineer, or a bookkeeper, or perhaps in some staff position as an administrative assistant, a receptionist, a member of the custodial staff, etc.)

Management is dead. Or at least it seems to be. In my research of random job descriptions being posted these days, I see over and over again the statement that "the candidate for this job must work with a minimum of

supervision." That is code language for "We won't be managing you very closely so if you can't produce results on your own, you'll be fired shortly."

Or another troubling trend I see in the job market is actual management job postings that indicate "this is a working manager position." Again, that's code language that you are called a "manager" but you won't be managing anyone; you'll be simply a producer.

This is disconcerting. Management as a formal discipline ensures that things are done right, that resources get allocated properly, that the right objectives are set, that the right talents are developed, that the right activities are coordinated, and that the right efforts are being motivated. Without management, stakeholder demands are not met. Can you imagine a professional boxer, someone like Floyd Mayweather, Jr., excelling in his career without a manager guiding that very career?

What have you seen where you work? Are management roles in your organization morphing into producer roles? Is management dissolving? Write to me and either confirm or deny my suspicions. Here is one area where I hope I am wrong.

## The Elephant In The Room What Is Politics?

I'd like to deviate from my usual practice of throwing a spotlight on some troubling actions done by the Left in an effort to unravel American culture, and be a bit more instructive to provide clarity around a term we use a lot but perhaps don't always fully understand.

Politics.

It's a singular word, despite the "s" at the end (much like *economics* is singular, not plural.) And it's a word that often sparks much controversy and contention. This is how it's been since the founding of our republic. In the Washington Administration, two of President Washington's key cabinet members, Thomas Jefferson (who served as Secretary of

State) and Alexander Hamilton (who served as Secretary of the Treasury) had rather different conceptions of what America could and should be - and thus, political parties were the result. I don't see this as a bad thing necessarily (though Washington himself hoped to avoid the bane of what he referred to as "factions.")



Politics is Foundational

Politics, at its root, is about how citizens within a city, or state, (or nation) are governed. Politics give birth to public policy about a variety of issues, and, depending on one's outlook, there are always winners and losers when political decisions result in new legislation, or law.

It is politics that enshrines for American citizens such ideals as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The usually erudite Charles Krauthammer believes that the deepest purpose of politics "is to create the conditions for the cultivation of the finer things, beginning with philosophy and science, and ascending to the ever more delicate and refined arts."

Politics has the power to elevate or to bring untold misery. If you doubt that, just look to Korea, both North and South, to get the contrasts clear in your head. North Korea has bad politics, and its people starve as a result. South Korea has much better politics, and its people enjoy a level of freedom that would be unfathomable to their North Korean counterparts.

Stay tuned for the next issue of *Uncommon Sense* where I will describe what it means to politicize an issue.

**Shameless Plug**  
**Another Great Speech on The Six Great Men**

I had a great experience last Thursday addressing the Rotary Club of Thousand Oaks. Over 100 people attended the event and the Q&A was both lively and engaging. The focus was on the six key Founders of our republic: Franklin, Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, and Hamilton. We examined their lifespan,



where they were from, their family structure, physical characteristics, temperament and personality, educational achievements, vocations, and political philosophy.

This presentation represents Part 1 of a multi-part program on the Founders. Future programs will look at a variety of questions, including their relationship to their parents, their relationship to other key women in their lives, their intellectual traits, their views on slavery, their religious outlook, their military

experience, any inventions or innovations they brought forth, publications, their sense of humor, their greatest fears, their greatest



failings, their legacy, and many other aspects of their lives.

**From Ara's Journal**

**Incident in LA**



Life is fraught with all sort of possibilities for danger. And I dodged a potential bullet just the other night. Coming back from several events in Orange County late last Friday, I blew a tire. Stopping at the nearest gas station, a 7-11, I found myself in the heart of one of the more dangerous parts of Los Angeles. No sooner had I got out of my car, a gang-banger type walked up to me and demanded money - which I didn't have.



Stalling for time, I told him to wait while I got back into my car, ostensibly to look for money, but in actuality to stall for time to collect my thoughts. I used that 7 seconds to decide to simply but bluntly inform this young man that I simply wasn't in a position to give him the cash he was demanding. I knew my doing so had the potential to escalate quickly into a confrontation.

I abruptly threw open my car door. Unfortunately, he was, for whatever reason, standing too close to the door, and I thus slammed the door into the side of his face, knocking a cigarette tucked above his ear to the ground, and stunning him.

I now knew this was probably going to escalate into a physical exchange, and I knew that I better be up and on my feet rather than stuck sitting down in my car where I would be largely defenseless. I got up quickly.

I've been in three fights as an adult, and I've come out on top all three times. But, as anyone knows who has been involved in a physical confrontation, even "winners" get hurt, and I sustained injuries all three times - just not as badly as my opponents.

I was really hoping this night would not bring fight number 4.

I faced the gang member and apologized and asked if he was OK. He responded by demanding twice as much money in order for him to forget what just happened.

This was the moment of truth. I had to stand up to him and gain command of the situation, and quickly.

Without raising my voice, without showing so much as a trace of fear, yet without showing any anger or desperation, I simply but firmly told him that was not

going to happen.

I was sure he was going to throw a punch, and I was rehearsing in my mind what part of my training would come into play to counter any attack he threw. I certainly enjoyed an advantage in height, as I stand at six feet, and he couldn't have been taller than about 5'6". I was ready, and I was hoping I would prevail, especially when I saw his right hand close into a fist.

While my mind is a bit hazy on exactly what happened next, I remember asking him where he was from. He replied, "Mexico City." I asked, "Are you familiar with the town of Toluca?" He replied, excitedly, that he knew the place well, and asked me how I knew of such a town. I told him I was there just last April visiting a close friend. And Bingo: the entire dynamic changed. The fist was unclenched. An animated conversation ensued. We even talked about the challenges he has had finding a job. I gave him some good career advice and even wrote down for him some leads he should consider pursuing.

The last thing he did was extend his hand. I responded by shaking his hand with a rather strong grip. He told me his name, and then he left.

I am really quite lucky to have dodged a bullet, and to have seen a likely street brawl turn into a helpful exchange for that young man.

## The World of Words

### Opine

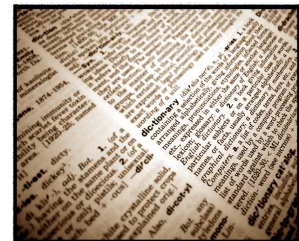
#### Building Your Power of Expression

Opine, v.

**Pronunciation:** ō'pīn

**Meaning:** I learned this word from one of my mentors, Louis Midgley, who taught Political Science at Brigham Young University for many years. The word simply means stating one's opinion about a matter. Any time you submit an opinion, make a declaration, or put forward a conviction, you are opining.

**Usage:**



- *"The man is a genius," he opined.*
- *The critic opined that the most exciting musical moment occurred when the orchestra struck up the national anthem.*
- *People often opine that Bach would have reveled in the modern organ.*

---

New subscribers, the Special Report "11 Ways to Beat the Odds" should have been sent out to you already. If you have not received it, please communicate that to me via email ([ara@aranorwood.com](mailto:ara@aranorwood.com)).

For more information on my work, follow me on Twitter ("Ara Norwood"), or on Facebook (keyword "Leadership Development Systems") or via my website: [www.aranorwood.com](http://www.aranorwood.com)

**Sincerely,**

Ara Norwood  
Leadership Development Systems