



LEADING THINKERS IN THE FIELD



Centering the Museum

A Conversation with Elaine Heumann Gurian

Conal McCarthy

Thanks for speaking to me today, Elaine. Can we start by talking about you and your background and how you first got into museums?

It is all serendipity, so the first thing you want your readers to understand is that life can open up by accident, and lucky me! So, I was the daughter of Jewish German immigrants who came to the US separately in their twenties 'cause they heard for different reasons that they could make a new life. One of them had gone back to Europe in 1928, and by the early 1930s became alarmed and began to get their family out ... I was born in 1937 and was seven years old when the Holocaust ended. The Holocaust and this immigrant background, a family who were desperately trying to protect themselves from the catastrophe in Europe, is the leitmotif not only of my young life but of all my work.

When we come all the way forward to talking about my new book and my terror of Trump, one has to understand that I was raised in a Jewish ghetto in Queens, New York, where the people all around thought America was godlike. Of course I understood later when I worked in the US Holocaust Memorial Museum that America was anything but godlike! But for them, the struggle to save themselves and their families could not have happened in any other location.

My father came without a high school education or any training, but made money as a real estate agent and later property developer in Long Island—he was a contemporary of Fred Trump, Donald's father, who he knew and hated, as he was an antisemite (this was a time when you could legally discriminate in housing, etcetera). My father was no angel and did not allow Blacks to buy his housing either. So, I got to watch people struggling, but also the compromise of the idealism, which they thought was unrealistic. Property development is a nasty business, and ultimately, I, too, become a sort of property developer. If you look at my career, I build big museums.

I had a sister, but there were no boys in the family, so I was raised as my father's son. At my current age this is interesting, to look back on it in terms of women's success, of what aspirations fathers had for their daughters. I became a tomboy, which is a role that is no longer in existence. I was a straight woman who grew up with boys in what I thought was an alternate role for girls, very defiant and protected by my father.



Next, we moved to Great Neck, Long Island, which was the place nouveau riche Jews moved post-war, breaking into a “high falutin” neighborhood that was formerly segregated against them. I was raised in a world where I was very conscious that I was a Jew. In today’s world, where there is a very complicated view of Jews and antisemitism in the United States, many people looking at racism see Jews as white, in that they are also privileged and highly educated and therefore cannot possibly be marginalised ... but that’s not always true, and the rise of antisemitism is surprisingly very prevalent in the US now.

I come through that trajectory. I live in a four-and-a-half room apartment on Queen’s Boulevard and then move to an estate where we have a maid in uniform and she serves dinner ... I find that incredibly bizarre ... it was an overnight transformation in which I was supposed to be some kind of debutante, which I failed at. My mother had a gymnasium education (equivalent to junior college) and had all these aspirations, but there were all these tensions within me: Was I an insider or an outsider? Does the world see me as an outsider?

I was taken to museums as a kid only by my aunt. I go to a museum for the first time by myself at 14 when I take the train to MOMA in NYC. There I believe I am being followed by the guard, so I have a sense of terror. But I go to MOMA for two reasons. One is that I am a young artist (I like drawing), and though my family did not know what to make of this, it seems debutanteish to them. They send me to classes at MOMA, where they understand I can do something useful. But I have no preparation for this class, where they teach some kind of theory, I know nobody, and eventually there is a catastrophe in my family when my aunt dies and my mother can’t pick up my art work and it’s thrown out. So that’s not a great moment.

But I do spend my childhood looking at adult books of art history, bad art history, bad reproductions, black and white soft cover books with terrible, fuzzy pictures. Despite a poor education, I know much more than my cohort about art—I know about Botticelli! On a world tour my father takes us on, I get to see the artworks that I knew only from bad reproductions, and I nearly keel over—the paintings are big, gorgeous, with real color. Clearly, I had no real preparation for this at home. So that’s my preamble to a museum career. But I did have a kind of family education, as my father would expect us to come to the dinner table and talk about the day’s news, whether it was the Korean war or whatever the current events were at the time.

It turns out that I am dyslexic and the teachers don’t figure it out, ’cause I seem so smart and do so badly. Later I get my friends to edit my papers, but until then I have a hard time in school. I love school, and I love ideas, and I am used to showing up at dinner with an opinion on everything, but I can’t write or spell.

Now, I am keenly aware that we don’t pay enough attention to the first generation who navigate a cultural world in which you have no guidance from your home. I am now in my eighty-fifth year reading all the children’s books I never read as a child, as then I was reading all the World War Two nonfiction (which is what my father read). When people talked about *Heidi* and *Tom Sawyer* and *Little Women*, I have no idea what they’re talking about! We are not paying enough attention to this situation where people are navigating across very different cultures ... that also becomes the leitmotif of what inclusion means. For me, inclusion is about the unrepresented, but often the unrepresented who are unacknowledged. I have a very handicapped child at some point, and I try to navigate the school system with this child, but also my children who are well have a handicapped child at home, which is a very unrepresented situation. So, there are very many subgroups within the excluded; intersectionality is a complicated word but it captures that situation. If we’re going to talk social inclusion, we have to be much more catholic in our definition than we are currently, which I feel very strongly about.

I go to Brandeis University because they think that my father, as a rich man, will give them money. I wanted to do fine arts, but my father wouldn’t permit it. At that time he thought girls had three careers: secretary, nurse, or teacher. I majored in history of art and became an elementary school teacher. Later I did an M.Ed. in elementary education and art education from the State College at Boston.

Let's turn now to your museum career. Your website (www.egurian.com) has a long list of the roles that you have held: from 1969 to 1972 you were the Director of Education at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Boston; from 1972 to 1987, the Director of the Exhibit Center, the public facility of the Boston Children's Museum; from 1987 to 1990, the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Museums at the Smithsonian; during 1990 and 1991, Deputy Director for Public Program Planning for the National Museum of the American Indian; from 1991 to 1994, the Deputy Director of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which opened to the public in April 1993; and finally, Acting Director of the Cranbrook Institute of Science from 1997 to 1999. What were the highlights in all of this?

Well, again, it was all serendipity, as I was handed from one job to the other. I really began as a leftwing agitator in 1968. The following year, the mayor of Boston set up mobile units so that the riots after the assassination of Martin Luther King would not be repeated. I work on a craftsmobile as an art educator, then get made director of education at the ICA. From there I go to Michael Spock, the well-known exhibit designer (son of Dr. Spock) at the Boston Children's Museum, then one of the most adventurous museums in the country along with the San Francisco Exploratorium and the Barnesdale Junior Art Center. Spock was also very well born and leftwing, and even though people thought we were just "playing" in these places, which were not very important, we get an enormous amount of freedom. My advice to people is always start in places where nobody is looking, and where they give you much more latitude both to experiment but also in terms of what your job description is. If, as your parents tell you, you go to very prestigious places, they won't let you do anything.

By the time I left Boston in 1970 and became the Number Two at the museum division of the Smithsonian, controlling 15 museums, I went from a budget of a hundred and twenty thousand dollars to a budget of a hundred and twenty million dollars. But the foundation of my work had been much better established in my life before. When I came to the Smithsonian, I knew much more than my colleagues about the basics of financial management, and I was much more confident because of my small museum experience. I was picked by the boss, and as deputy ran the joint. Of all the jobs in museums, I am the worker bee, going from philosophy to system—how can you make the system authentic to your philosophy so there is no disconnect? Almost all of the systems we use are uninterrogated, and yet we espouse philosophy, but this philosophy and the way we go about it don't match. Because I came from the left wing rights and gay rights side, I was used to experiencing the disconnect. That is what I do, provide a broader definition of inclusion, and then if you are going to be inclusive, ask: What does that mean in terms of how you go about the work?

Being deputy director is really useful, 'cause the director does not want to do that stuff. I worked for four famous directors in four different jobs and together we made the job work. The definition of the director is that they do everything they want to do and the assistant director does all the rest—that's the part I like.

Thereafter, you became a consultant and advisor to museums around the world that are, as your website puts it, "beginning, building or reinventing themselves," as well as being "writer and lecturer to many museum studies programs worldwide."

Yes, I go into consulting at the end of the opening of the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington. But I become a good consultant, because I'm used to helping institutions make the decisions nobody else wants to. Directors turn out to be terrible consultants because they are used to making decisions, full stop, and therefore they're not listening very hard, because they think they know what needs to be done. But I'm used to trying to figure out *who* wants something here, and how can we make it happen within the context of a kind of ironclad sense of what is our purpose?

And if you look at all my writings, one of the other things that stands out is, and it's probably because I didn't get to go to museums as a child, is that I don't care very much about the definition of museums—in fact, I care not at all about the definition. Rather, I start from a couple of basic principles about what museums should be about, and then I try to figure out the system within the context in which I am working to get there.

That's an interesting segue to the first of your books (Gurian 1995), the edited collection you did on institutional trauma with the American Association of Museums, which I guess came out of all this experience working and consulting in cultural institutions. Would you like to talk a little bit about the arguments in that book?

It is interesting, given the current context of Ukraine, where I also work now, and where there's a war going on, of course. This morning I was listening to a psychiatrist who is a war specialist talking to 25 Ukrainian museum directors about the stages of war trauma ... meanwhile, I'm busy thinking about what we do with those stages. In practice, in an institutional setting, what is institutional trauma? I was at the time married to a classically-trained psychiatrist and I was fascinated to hear whether psychiatry on the individual level could be extended to an institutional view. I got a grant to study in the London School of Economics Library, but at the time there was no literature about this, though today there's a lot of writing about the psychological health of the entire staff of an organization in the face of trauma.

So, we wrote the book. I had written a chapter called "Moving the Museum," when the Children's Museum moved in 1979, and it was in the days where you had Xerox paper, and it never had gotten published, but it was an underground bestseller. So much so that I would show up at some place, and they would say, "You are the one who wrote "Moving the Museum?" And I'd say, "Yes. Is that the only thing we have that deals with what happens to the staff when you do something like that?" And so, I was interested to know, when I wrote about institutional trauma, whether that could apply to other trauma or just moving the museum. And so, it's an anthology of people who write about different kinds of institutional traumas. That was what was radical about the thesis of the book, which was that directors didn't think then that that was part of their work. But today they *would*—so it was prescient.

The book is now out of print, but I keep thinking it should be redone, because it's still not well understood. To give you an example from today's session with museums in Ukraine, the psychiatrist was saying to somebody who was explaining how they were feeling, "That's the survival stage." And I was thinking right, the survival stage. What does that mean for museums? What does it mean for the leadership of museums at that stage? And if you're going to do exhibitions, what does that mean? Well, the important thing was that, in the survival stage, what you're really interested in, and what you can manage, is only the day-to-day stuff, because everything is coming at you so fast. But you have to be really flexible about it, and ask yourself: "Really, what do I need to do?" If we're in the survival stage, we should be doing this, not that, and we should feel okay about parking all this long-range planning, because we don't have time, instead of feeling terrible that we're not doing our job.

It's interesting hearing you talk about your work in Ukraine. Your website lists the many other projects you've done around the world building museums: North America, Argentina, Europe, and of course Te Papa in Wellington, which opened in 1998. Are there highlights for you from that long period of consulting with museums?

People only hire me because they know my work, and they are on board with my approach, so I only work with museums that are interested in change, that are interested in social justice, that are not interested in replicating museology as it was founded in some other century. Generally I turn down anything that feels like what they want is the status quo, and what they want is the typical audience. I get picked, and handed about ... I've always been handed about rather than doing anything else.

And so, to Te Papa (McCarthy 2018), where you and I first met in the mid 1990s. That was because of Sean Sweeney and Ken Gorbey, who had not only read my material, but had come and visited me in the Smithsonian and had gone home and figured out, "That is what we're doing. That's where our philosophy is. She can help us with that." Te Papa was one of the highlights of my life. Well, there are a number of highlights, but Te Papa was one, because it was about a kind of community building project that I had only seen at the Boston Children's Museum, and an ethos about making it clear to the audience that "biculturalism" meant two cultures with equal value, Māori and Pakeha, within Aotearoa New Zealand. It's at Te Papa that I learned that the Māori way of doing work is entirely different, and for the first time

I learned how culturally bound the rules about museum work are. I'm grateful for that, mostly to Cliff Whiting, who was the Māori co-director or Kaihautū, who was very, very clear that the way in which the Māori part of Te Papa would come to fruition would be through the Māori way of working—and he would not be confined by a Europeanized way of working. But he also would not be antithetical to the rest of it, so he would work in parallel with us, but it required a kind of trust on both sides. That was incredibly interesting to me, and beneficial for the rest of my practice.

*Elaine, I heard you talk about that process with Ken Gorbey in recent years as part of the Michael Volkerling lecture at Te Papa (Gurian and Gorbey 2020.). It's interesting to note that on its twentieth anniversary in 2018, Simon Knell from the University of Leicester said that Te Papa was probably the most influential museum of the last 40 years (McCarthy 2018). So, you've had an incredible career the last 30 years, going around the world and being involved in these museum projects. And I guess a lot of your work is reflected in your second book, the collection of your own writings, *Civilizing the Museum* (Gurian 2006). As the title suggests, this was about change and social justice in the wider context of museums, right?*

Actually, that title was given to me by my husband, who is a very ironic man. It's clearly a joke, I mean, having spent a life in which, as a Jew, I'm considered only partially civilized. Also, it's about a new definition of what it might mean to be inclusive in the acceptance of the way in which different cultures work with each other. What's important about that book, and then the next book as well, is a chapter in it called, "The Importance of And" (which was almost the title). That chapter and *Centering the Museum* (Gurian 2022) is almost exclusively about the importance of *and*, being a connector between ideas, the notion of ambivalence and having two ideas at the same without integrating them. That is what "civilizing" means for me, and what democracy means for me is the understanding that almost all, but not all, oppositional ideas have kernels of truth, and that compromise, and even just leaving something alone, is almost always... No. Let me rephrase this: If you believe in rationality, but you are a faith-based person, you go to church. The way in which you can do that is by leaving them both lie in yourself, without putting them together, because clearly, they are in opposition. Faith is the opposite of scientific thought. It's not reducible. And yet the human being wishes for a much more complex interior life. But we have a lot of public dialectic which wishes for a simplistic life.

For example, I was a member of the team that put together *Excellence and Equity* (1992), which was the report on public education for the AAM. I was the leader, if you will, of the equity side, and a woman I liked a whole lot, Pat Williams, who was the head of education of the Denver Art Museum, was the champion for excellence. Both of us were acknowledged for doing very good work, and we were friends, and passionate about what we believed. What Pat Williams believed was that we were in danger of losing the excellence, and I believed that "excellence" had no bearing on the matter, that it was a contrived and class-based idea—and so we argued. The chair, Bonnie Pitman, and a woman named Ellen Hirzy, who was the editor, tried desperately to mediate and write a paper which moved these contrary positions together. But if you read the report from a grammatical point of view, it almost never makes sense. It does not fit together. There are arguments that are irreconcilable ... and yet, as a report it was very important and influential.

That is the key idea for both "civilizing" the museum and then "centering" the museum, which is: How can we find in a museum what I now am calling "complexity" or nuance, bring together incommensurate positions? How can we teach our visitors, but also ourselves, that the dialectic can be a series of issues that we agree to, but which we don't reconcile with each other necessarily? Can we integrate them within ourselves? But even if we can't, can we recognize that the person who holds that idea is also human and entitled to their view? What is intersectionality, and how many different unseen minorities do we have, the elderly being the one I now occupy most of the time, yet I'm not handicapped. So, what does that mean?

I think museums in the last quarter century have worked very hard to be inclusive, using educational terms in a way that has also bought into the soundbite mentality, which has actually made things simplistic. It's added to our sense that holding two ideas at the same time is wrongheaded, then one of them must be right, and one wrong. How then can museums look at social justice through a lens in which inclusion means much more subtle things than we currently are talking about?

Elaine, that's a really nice link to the new book, which came out in 2021: Centering the Museum: Writings for the Post-Covid Age (Heumann Gurian 2022). The blurb says that the book calls on the profession "to help visitors experience their shared humanity and find social uses for public buildings, in order to make museums more central and useful to everyone in difficult times." In what sense is this a collection of your work that is shaped by the crisis of COVID-19, and the promise, or the risks, I suppose, for museums during and after the pandemic?

Actually, the title is mostly shaped (and now we've come full circle) by Donald Trump, my being an American and Donald Trump running for President, with the resulting polarization and rancor in our politics since he was in office ... hence the need for a center, a middle ground. *Centering the Museum*, like the earlier collection, brings together my writings of a particular time, but it has an afterward about the time in which it gets published. Remember that the Holocaust ends when I'm seven, and I recall this when Donald Trump comes on the stage—because you remember that my father knew Fred Trump—so we recognize that Donald is no joke, and alarm bells ring. Interestingly this seems to be mostly the case for Jews. I was terrified when Trump enters politics, though my husband, who is not a Jew, and my friends, who are mostly not, thought my alarm was way out of proportion, but my Jewish friends shared my alarm. So, I tried to figure that out, and I think it's because we remember what happened in the run up to the Holocaust in the Weimar Republic. In the Holocaust Museum exhibitions this is shown clearly, the way in which, step by step, freedoms are taken away in the civil discourse. Inclusion cannot mean a free-for-all. There are guard rails of normative behavior that have to be observed. What is normative? And where does it end? And all of a sudden personal interrogation of one's value system had to be looked at. And part of Donald Trump's strategy, and also the one Hitler used, was to destroy all normative behavior which is not codified by law, and to make acceptable violent behavior and bullying behavior and unacceptable behavior because you can. And the reason Jews knew about this is that they had seen it before. So, they were the canaries in the coal mine, saying, "Wait a minute. He may look like a clown. This may look weird. But we've seen this before, and this is the systematic way in which you lose your democracy."

Hence, *Centering the Museum* takes a slightly different form in that it's much more autobiographical than any of my other writings, and less academic, though it has footnotes, etcetera. I try to look at how the museum has a role to play in society. We are in danger of losing our democracy. What are the edges of allowable behavior inside and outside of the museum? How do you engage with other people you may not agree with? How do you invite in people you like as well as people you don't like? And what is your obligation to do that? It's a book that may not wear well in the long run, because, to my great satisfaction, Joe Biden has figured out how to teach America again that decency can be achieved within the rules of compromise.

I'm glad you mentioned teaching, Elaine, because you've also done a lot of that in recent years, in addition to conference presentations, lectures, and seminars in different countries. I'm struck by the kinds of things you've talked about with students the last couple of years (in our Museum and Heritage Studies program at Te Herenga Waka Victoria University of Wellington) that relate to the new book, the idea of the center and working against the kind of polarization of public debate we have seen. Young people these days are very conscious of misinformation and problems with social media in the so-called post-truth age, and the politics of hate, and so on. I remember last year you spoke to the class about the need to engage with the political center and right, and not just to preach to the converted on the left, and not to be caught up in this kind of elite liberal bubble. You challenge them to engage with people that you don't necessarily agree with, to reach across the aisle.

I've done a workshop with Jim Volkert called, "It's Complicated." We've done four of them, three of them we did in the UK in the university system with graduate students, and what we discovered was almost a different issue than the one you're pointing out, which is, in their delight and enthusiasm for honorable justice-seeking, they are almost giving up on the parts of the education system, and therefore their basis of understanding is not as broad as I would wish. So, my hope in the addressing of the forgotten stories was

that they would be able to build on the stories that were there, engage in dialogue, and meet each other in some form. In the world of art, for example, you look at all the brilliant and missing people, artists of color, etcetera. But that didn't mean you didn't know about Botticelli. Indeed, we do an exercise where we diagram an object in its fullness, and consider what you can say about an object. You can say things about an object that you're incredibly bored with, that you are not interested in: its materiality, its dimensions, how it works. And we discovered that the students were not interested in anything but social justice, and actually couldn't see the object at all, couldn't see it in its most basic and easily understood terms, and therefore didn't have a root, a base, to enter a conversation with people whose background and understanding was so different from their own. One hopes that we will figure out a way to look at a very large volume of everything or a long span of history, in museums, for example, one of them being to include the "missing," the marginalized—but at the same time not exclude everyone else.

Worryingly, on another occasion I went around the room at a different university with very highly educated and highly privileged young graduate art history students and asked them what work they wanted to do. They almost to a person said they wanted to be museum activists. And I said, "There is no such job as museum activists. I am a museum activist." I said to them, "It's a vocation, a point of view, it's not a position." Plus, I come with all-around skills that translate to activism. I mean, I read financial reports and study management theory. Activism is not a job. You're not going to get hired as an activist. And so, I'm a little fearful of this situation.

Now, you're in the right place to be talking about this, since I teach in your own university, but I think we need to be a little careful here. We need to ensure that our students are grounded in the "missing history," yes of course, but also the acknowledged history, so that they have the tools to look at *both* sides of the situation and figure out what to do with the "mainstream" history in order to reinterpret it in a way that has more justice.

That is an elusive goal, striking that balance between things and words, or between material culture and discourse, looking at physical objects and considering the wider social context they are situated in. At various times the pendulum has swung backwards and forwards, on the one hand focusing too much on aestheticizing the formal qualities of the object and ignoring the social context, and on the other being obsessed with large scale social forces, which mean we overlook the object altogether. At the moment we seem to almost be missing the wood for the trees, as it were...

Exactly, that's what *Centering the Museum* is about, to move things back to the center, not as in "middle of the road" or centrist politics, but trying to find some common ground.

In class with you, sometimes we've talked about major contemporary social issues on the margins, not the center. University students and young and emerging professionals are often very involved with the climate crises, racism, decolonization, and so forth. Yet in the current environment we do see a highly polarized black-and-white analysis of those kinds of issues, which, it seems to me, have created a lot of heat and not much light. What are your views on this?

That we need to show that it's complicated. You know, I sometimes hear young people, who are employed, say their job is not the *right* job. They want a new job, and they ask me what should they do? One of the things I found myself saying all the time is, "There is no perfect job. Jobs overlap. You have to try out jobs. You have to write a list, weigh up the good and bad side." We need to teach that parsing, dissecting, breaking down, and resolving issues, so that people learn to be comfortable with mess, with ambiguity and compromise. The choices you're going to make are between very fine-grained differences, in which good and bad are almost equal on both sides, and that the idealism you hope for really doesn't exist, that the people who want different things to you, who are anti-abortion or whatever, still have important things to say.

That's what we need, I think, to be teaching. And to look at the systems of teaching and the way in which we're teaching, in which we teach people to look at complexity on all sides, weighing the priorities, taking a chance, learning by experience, with lots of approximations. So, I don't like the word decolonization, for example, and even though obviously I don't like systemic racism, I think that decolonization tends to be accusatory, and we've lost the contextual sense in which people thought or could find their way to their ethical center. But understanding that the world is complicated, and that the issues we are all struggling with are complicated, is, I think, a teaching lesson, and I think museums need to do it better.

There's this quandary, to take another example, about absolutely terrible people who are also great artists. Are we throwing out the art? Does showing the art mean we're exonerating the person? What are our options here? In what context did they think they were honorable? What can we do with this? I don't know the answer to this, but I do know the question.

This is very topical, with much debate about the rewriting of Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, tearing down colonial statues, and censure of historical art works—clearly the implications for museums are serious.

I don't know what to do with this. If you take away all these Civil War statues—and I do think they should be taken out of the public square, so I'm not neutral about that—then I am in a quandary about what you then do with them, and whether there's a teachable moment about how that came to be, and what we can do about that. And in what way can we understand? Not exonerate nor forgive, but deal with it as a lesson that's useful. I wish I felt more certain about the route that I'm espousing. However, I do feel somehow that destroying them all, and therefore no longer having the evidence that it once existed, is not in our best interest either ... and so I don't quite know what to do.

Asking good questions is definitely doing something. Finally, Elaine, what kind of advice would you have for graduates and early career professionals who are going into the museum sector and dealing with these complicated topics?

Well, there's a page in this book which is called "Advice," which is a long list, and they should look it up. It begins with being authentic, and knowing who you are, and not apologizing. It begins also with the advice I gave before, which is, don't go for the job that you already know. If you know how to do the job, don't take it. Only take jobs you are a little afraid of, so you'll learn something. Don't look at it like a trajectory that's mapped out, because serendipity has the most important part to play. Look at the things that really interest you, and it will all somehow come together, and make some sense later on. Don't be so fussed with what you're supposed to do. You should also be prepared to leave your job, even though you don't know what you'll do next.

I'm currently a very big fan of small. This is much better than large. Affecting people you know the names of makes a huge difference in their life, as it did in mine. But as you interrogate yourself, you will know the professor, or the teacher, or the mother, or the friend who made an impact. And that's what *you* can do so that you have much more power in a kind of contagious sense, working laterally, [rather] than looking upward and wondering about what they *should* be doing. Rather, behave exactly the way *you* think you should be behaving. Social justice really does begin in the workplace, and begins with how you treat your colleagues. Sometimes I ask people if they know all the names of the people you pass on the way to work. They are people, no matter where they are in the hierarchy. You don't have to apologize for who you are, but you do need to be civil, because people deserve civility and respect.

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