

MUHAMMAD YUNUS, GRAMEEN BANK, and THE POWER OF THE POOR

JESSICA JACKLEY, KIVA, and THE POWER OF THE INTERNET

This online work prepares us for a North Central College session of MLD 683 (Leadership for Social Change) focusing on two readings:

- 1) The Prologue and Chapters 1-4 of Muhammad Yunus' *Creating a World Without Poverty*.
- 2) The excerpt by Dempsey J. Travis from Richard Guzman's *Black Writing from Chicago*.

After watching the videos below and doing the readings, please be prepared to respond in detail to the questions listed at the end of this online project.



Muhammad Yunus and Grameen Bank, the organization he created, won the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize "for their efforts to create economic and social development from below."

Though the microfinance movement he pioneered has not been without its flaws and detractors, and he himself has been embroiled in controversy—some of it clearly politically motivated—Yunus remains one of the great social change agents of all time. The assignments below will help you learn

more about Yunus and his many innovative projects, as well as some of the controversy surrounding them and the microfinance movement. You'll also learn about one of the people he inspired: Jessica Jackley, founder of KIVA.org.

I. Yunus, Microfinance, and "Social Business" videos:

A. This episode from the PBS series *The New Heroes* will give you an overview of Yunus' life and work. Access it [Here](#).

B. This Dan Rather (CBS) report focuses on efforts to start a Grameen Bank USA and questions that have arisen about the micro-credit process itself. Access it [Here](#).

C. In this [short documentary](#) on microfinance you'll hear about Yunus again—he's an inescapable figure!—but also about the field in general. The successful application of its principles, and the abuse of these principles as well.

D. [Here](#) you will find a list of over 200 videos on Yunus' concept of Social Business, an outgrowth of his microfinance work, but boldly different as well. One of these videos is from his appearance with Hans Reitz at a [One Young World](#) conference. (Several videos focus on One Young World, an organization of tremendous potential.) Watch enough of this 41-minute + video to get a sense of Yunus' "Social

Business” idea. Watch especially for what Robert Quinn (in his book *Change the World*) might have identified as a “Bold Stroke” question—that is, an innovative question that reframes a problem in a surprising, up-ending way.

The collection’s size attests to the interest—some of it skeptical—Yunus and the “Social Business” concept has generated. But is Social Business even viable? Who would want to give money to a business that promises no profit, just a return *of*—not *on*—investment.

II. Jessica Jackley and KIVA.org

Jessica Jackley’s appearance at USC has been released in many forms, including a series of small LeapTV segments. Below are three of these segments. In the first piece a USC prof introduces Jackley, then plays an Oprah segment containing a nice overview of how KIVA works. In videos two and three, Jackley tells a little of her story—and Yunus plays big here too—then encourages people to start small as they work for social change.



- A. Jessica Jackley [intro](#)
- B. A little of her [story](#)
- C. Social change [starts small](#)

III. Questions

- A. What “Bold Stroke” question did you find either Yunus or Jackley asking, either in the videos you watched or the portion of the Yunus book you read?
- B. The bold stroke question idea comes from the Quinn book mentioned above, a book MLD 683 has used partly as an extension of Robert Greenleaf’s “The Servant as Leader.” What one other connection did you find between the Yunus book/videos and the readings from either Quinn, Greenleaf, or even another of the course’s books: Philip Kotler’s *Social Marketing*?
- C. Your thoughts on Social Business. Viable? Half (or wholly) crazy? OR what’s your main question about it?
- D. Yunus says capitalism is only half developed. What does he mean? Do you agree?
- E. What connection do you see between Yunus and Dempsey J. Travis, or Travis and any of our other authors?
- F. What were a couple of the main ideas you took away from the Jackley videos?