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9TH EDITION

SOCIAL WORK, SOCIAL WELFARE, AND AMERICAN SOCIETY

PHILIP R. POPPLE LESLIE LEIGHNINGER ROBERT LEIGHNINGER

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NINTH EDITION

Social Work, Social Welfare, and American Society

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Preface

When we were preparing to write the first edition of this text, we conducted an extensive survey of introductory courses in social work programs on both the undergraduate and graduate levels. What we found is that there were three different types of introductory courses. The first was introduction to social work and covered professional roles, fields of practice, methods, values and ethics, and the like. The second type of course was an introduction to social welfare. This course covered social welfare problems, societal values, the social welfare institution, the role of the social work profession in this institution, and so forth. Some programs offered one or the other of these courses, some offered both, but the most common course was a third kind that was a combination of the approaches. This text originally was aimed at the combination course but, as we are both policy specialists by training, it leaned somewhat heavily toward the introduction to social welfare approach. As social work education has evolved the introductory course has come to focus more on introducing students to the social work profession with policy content touched upon but generally relegated to the advanced policy course. In keeping with this trend, in this new edition we have greatly increased the social work practice content while (hopefully) continuing to maintain significant content on the social welfare institution.

The foundation of this text has been, and continues to be, the description and analysis of social work and social welfare within the context of American political beliefs systems. For most of the history of social work the profession confidently believed that our society was becoming increasingly liberal and taught our courses from this perspective. However, beginning in the 1980s, liberal ideas of progress toward a more complete social welfare system were severely shaken. Economic difficulties and growing federal budget deficits helped pave the way for a major reconsideration of the goals and shape of social welfare programs in our society. A revived conservative agenda emerged, first articulated by Ronald Reagan. Many of his ideas and programs were continued under the presidency of George H.W. Bush, revived by his son George W. Bush, and more recently pushed into high gear by Donald Trump. Most social workers, including the writers of social work textbooks, have been slow to respond to the new social welfare era. Despite the political shift, many social work faculty members continued to teach Introduction to Social Welfare courses with the liberal perspective and faith in continued progress as unexamined assumptions. Social welfare text writers failed to openly acknowledge and examine their liberal approach. Equally important, they neglected to describe and analyze the conservative critique and its alternative proposals. With this text we have attempted to address this issue.

Prior to writing this text, we found discussions of liberal and conservative approaches to problems creeping into our classes with increasing frequency. This led to a realization: Although students had self-images of being liberal or conservative (or even radical), few had any real idea what these labels meant. Not only were many students unprepared to clearly articulate their points of view, but also most were unable to either respond effectively to or appreciate the arguments of alternative political perspectives.

Thus, we felt the need to help students grasp the meaning of different political perspectives and understand social welfare developments in light of those perspectives. As we go to great pains to discuss in this text, social and economic justice are not the opposite of conservatism.

The majority of conservatives, like all decent people, support social and economic justice. They simply differ from liberals on their definition of exactly what these things are, and what is the best way to achieve them.

One of the developments in American society since the last edition of this text, which has been mentioned over and over in the work of political scientist, sociologists, and journalists, is the increasing complexity and division of political views in the United States. As we thought about this, we decided that two perspectives were not sufficient to encompass all the ideas one might have about social welfare. Something was missing. In the period just before the rise of Ronald Reagan, there was considerable political unrest that included ideas outside conservatism and liberalism. The Civil Rights Movement, the opposition to the Vietnam War, and the Women's Liberation Movement contained ideas that were called radical by comparison to traditional political argument. These ideas never coalesced into a political party that could rival Republicans and Democrats, nor did they fit comfortably within radical parties that survived the 1930s, such as the Socialist Party of America. Nonetheless, they offered important critiques of social welfare, and they were still being cogently espoused by writers and activists at the time the first edition of the text was being written. So we included progressivism and a few branches of conservatism that may even be considered as radical as perspectives worth at least noting.

New to This Edition

For the ninth edition of *Social Work, Social Welfare, and American Society*, Dr. Robert Leighninger, editor of the *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, has been added as a named author. Bob has been writing the Housing chapter since the first edition of this text, but for this edition he has taken over the revision of Leslie's chapters and is now listed on the title page. Much of the writing of those chapters is still Leslie's, but if readers have problems with these chapters, they can now blame Bob. A lot has happened since the last edition. We have tried to pack in as much as could without turning this text into a doorstop or requiring that you take out a loan to pay for it. In addition to updates on all the basic research and statistics, the addition of the progressive perspective to our political analysis, and the addition of more practice examples, we have added material in the following chapters:

New: Chapter 1: Introduction

- Describes the career of a typical social worker
- Identifies the different levels, or types, of social workers
- Identifies the perspective that differentiates social work practice from the practice of other helping professions

Chapter 2: Competing Perspectives on Social Welfare

- Updates the traditional liberal-conservative dichotomy to include progressive streams on the political left and nationalistic conservative streams on the political right
- Introduces these competing perspectives in Chapter 2 and integrates them throughout the text as a way to look at social work and social welfare in America

New: Chapter 5: Social Work Practice: The Person-in-Environment Perspective

- Social Work Practice now broken out into two chapters covering the Person-in-Environment perspective and generalist practice (now chapter 6)
- Differentiates between the social work perspective on human problems and that of other helping professions

- Explains what C. Wright Mills meant by individual troubles and public issues, and how this relates to the social work perspective
- Differentiates between an individual treatment and a social-change approach to human problems
- Overviews the development of micro-practice, macro-practice, and the generalist approach
- Overviews the development of the concept of integrated methods and how this led to a more unified theory of social work practice

Chapter 7: Responses to Human Diversity

- New discussions of *intersectionality, micro-aggression, sexual harassment and the #metoo movement,* and *diversity in the mass media*
- An update on the status of women in politics and the corporate world
- Unsettling data on the persistence of race taking precedence over income, particularly with boys

Chapters 9–11 on Poverty and Inequality

- Discussion of recent work on the relation of the upper-middle class ("dream hoarders") to the perpetuation of inequality
- Material on the growing movement advocating for a Universal Basic Income
- Greater discussion on why increased inequality is bad for everyone, not just the poor

Chapter 12: Child Welfare

- New discussion of the campaign against child labor
- Discussion of the American Indian Child Welfare Act

Chapter 13: Crime and Criminal Justice

- A major review of *smart incarceration*, one of the Social Work Academy's Grand Challenges
- Discussions of *restorative justice* and *police social work*

Chapter 14: Health Care

- Review of the contents and effects of the Affordable Care Act
- Coverage of the ongoing attempts to undermine the ACA
- Coverage of the *opioid epidemic*, which is also covered in the Aging and Mental Health chapters

Chapter 15: Mental Health and Developmental Disability

- Introduction of the *New Disabilities Paradigm*
- Investigation of the rising rates of suicide
- Discussion of *anxiety* and *depression* on campus
- Extended presentation of the *opioid epidemic*

Chapter 16: Housing, Homelessness, and Community Development

- Evaluation of San Francisco's *Navigation Centers*
- Consideration of *gentrification*
- Exploration of new types of affordable housing, including *tiny homes, shipping containers,* and *prefabrication*
- Trailer parks as new affordable communities

Chapter 17: Aging

- Introduction of new theories of Alzheimer's disease
- Update on pensions and Social Security
- Exploration of a potential *generational war*
- Asking the question: Do we work too hard on extending life?

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Introduction

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A SOCIAL WORKER'S STORY

When planning this text we decided that it would be good to liven it up with stories of actual social workers and some cases with which they worked. Our first task was to find a person at the end of his or her career whose history we could use to illustrate what one of many possible social work careers had actually looked like. We were tempted to use the career of Barbara Mikulski, the Maryland social worker who became a six term United States Senator; or Harry Aponte, who was director of the famous Philadelphia Child Guidance Clinic and a noted psychotherapist and author; or Virginia Satir, sometimes called the "mother of family therapy," who developed the conjoint family therapy model; or my graduate school classmate (whose name I can't recall) who didn't become famous, but became very rich setting up employee assistance programs for large corporations. However, the careers of these people are hardly typical and to use them to introduce the profession of social work would be misleading. What we needed was someone whose career had been successful, but not rare. Someone whose career we could present as an illustration of something that a student selecting social work as a major could reasonably expect to emulate. So we have created the following case about a successful social worker, Brenda Barstow, to illustrate the main points in this text. Brenda embodies the qualities of social workers who we have worked with over the course of our careers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Describe the career of a typical social worker.
- Identify the different levels, or types, of social workers.
- Identify the perspective that differentiates social work practice from the practice of other helping professions.
- Explain why statistics reporting the earnings of social workers are often inaccurate.
- Identify the reason that social work and its concerns cannot be entirely explained using a social scientific approach.

Brenda was being honored on the occasion of her retirement after a 40-year social work career with, of course, a plaque. Brenda graciously agreed to our request for an interview later in the week, and we asked her only one question: "Tell us the story of your life as a social worker." The following is what she said.

I was raised by a single mother, my father having been one of the first Americans to die in the Viet Nam conflict. I would not say we were poor, certainly not in the sense that a typical food stamp recipient is poor, but with my mother's pay as a Licensed Vocational Nurse, combined with the Social Security Survivors benefit we received and some benefits from the Veterans Administration, we barely scraped by.

By the time I was in high school it was clear that I was really good at math and science. Working in health care, my mother was well aware that physicians made a lot of money, were looked up to by almost everyone, and that the profession was rapidly opening up to women. She decided that I was to become a doctor and, being a dutiful daughter and having no real alternative plan, I went to college and majored in biology and double minored in chemistry and math with the intention of going to medical school.

During the spring of my junior year I met with my pre-med advisor. He told me that the pre-med committee had met and evaluated my record. They concluded that my grade point average was fine; my score on a Medical College Admission Test practice exam was well above average; and that they were confident that I would be able to get strong letters of recommendation. However, they had one concern about my portfolio—I had very little in the way of volunteer experience. Their advice to me was to spend the coming summer doing volunteer work at some kind of health care organization and, assuming that I got a positive evaluation from my volunteer supervisor, the pre-med committee would recommend me for admission to medical school.

I phoned the volunteer coordinator at Children's Hospital and asked for an application to be a volunteer (this was way before the Internet so everything had to be done by phone, letter, and by hand; I don't think that even fax machines had been invented). I filled out the application and quickly received a call from the volunteer coordinator who told me that the Social Services Department had need of a volunteer. She instructed me to call the Chief Social Worker, Ms. Alyssa Feldman. I did this and met with Ms. Feldman later in the week. I was surprised when I met Ms. Feldman because, counter to the stereotype of the frumpy old social worker, she was young, very attractive, stylishly dressed, and had about her an air of intelligence and sophistication. She explained what I would do as a volunteer, mostly routine and perhaps boring tasks like taking phone calls, compiling statistics for reports, and running errands of various types. She said that I would have some opportunity to actually work with patients, although what I would be doing would be pretty low level, nontechnical things like helping a person find the right clinic in the vast maze of the medical center; perhaps driving a patient to an appointment at another facility; helping a patient apply for food stamps; stuff like that. I would also have the opportunity to shadow Ms. Feldman and the other social workers as they went about their duties. At the end of our interview, Ms. Feldman said something that really got my attention. She first asked me "Do you watch medical dramas on TV?" I answered that I did not have much time to watch TV, but when I did have the time I frequently watched these shows and that, actually, as a pre-med student, they were among my favorites. Ms. Feldman continued, "As you go through your experience here, if you are perceptive, and I think you probably are, you will find that the vast majority of things that TV doctors do are actually done by social workers. For example, you will never find a doctor helping a pregnant sixteen-year-old plan for her baby; the social worker does that. You will never find a doctor visiting the home of a pediatric patient whose parents are suspected of being drug addicts to assess if the family is capable of providing the level of care the child will need upon release from the hospital; the social worker does that. After a physician performs a mastectomy on a young woman, you will not find him or her doing counseling with the woman about her body image and what the procedure will mean for her relationship with her husband; once again, it is the social worker who does this. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not criticizing doctors. They do what they are trained to do—diagnose and treat illnesses and injuries. They have neither the time nor the training to take on the psychosocial needs of their patients. That is why medical social work was created. In fact, it was a physician, Dr. Richard Cabot, who hired the first social workers in a hospital specifically because he recognized that much of the physicians work was coming to naught because of problems in the patient's social environment that doctors had neither the time nor the skill to deal with."

By the end of my volunteer summer, my life plan had completely changed. After observing the work of the doctors at Children's I was sure that this was not the way I wanted to spend my life. After observing the social workers, and helping a few patients with simple yet important life tasks, I was pretty sure that I wanted to become a social worker. I was pretty sure, but not sure enough to immediately invest in two years of graduate school for a master's degree in social work (MSW). I explained this to Ms. Feldman during my exit interview in August and she once again gave me good advice. She explained what I already knew, that to actually be a professional social worker you had to have an MSW (at this time undergraduate social work degrees were very rare and those that did exist were not recognized by the profession) but, due to the extreme shortage of MSWs, there were still a number of social work jobs that would provide in-service training to a person with a bachelor's degree in another field. She said that the most professional, challenging, and, incidentally, the best paid was that of child welfare worker for the state. The following spring, shortly before graduation, I contacted the state employment office, took the merit exam for Public Welfare Worker I (the bureaucratic title for a child welfare social worker), and was offered the job. My mother was surprisingly supportive and I am eternally grateful that her real concern was that I be happy, not that I become a doctor.

So it was that I became a social worker. I began the job by traveling two hundred miles to the state office where I remained for one month of intense training. When I returned to my home office, I was assigned to a unit supervised by Jim Bailey, an MSW with ten years' experience in mental health and child welfare. Jim's supervisory approach was to shield new workers, carefully assigning cases from which critical skills could be learned and where a rookie's mistake would not get anyone killed or seriously injured. After six months, he told me he thought I was ready for the job and he let my caseload build up to forty cases, the expected load for a child welfare social worker. On one of the first cases I was assigned, and one that remains my most memorable and troubling, I found myself back at Children's Hospital working with Alyssa Feldman. The case involved a baby that had been severely scalded when her mentally challenged mother put her in the bath tub, turned on the hot water, and stepped out to begin preparing dinner. The mother had done this many times before, only on this occasion the landlord had replaced the old, worn out, water heater, so rather than coming out at a temperature of about 80 degrees as it had previously, the water came out at about 170 degrees and by the time the mother reached the screaming child she was seriously scalded. Ms. Feldman, my supervisor Jim Bailey, and I were all conflicted about what we should do. We were convinced that the mother had not meant to harm the child, but we were equally convinced that she had demonstrated that she was not able to protect the child from normal environmental risks. We scoured the city looking for resources that would enable the mother to keep her child while also keeping the child safe. I even looked into the possibility of our agency putting both the mother and child in a foster home. In the end, the case resolved itself. The child eventually fully recovered with only some scarring on her legs as evidence that she had ever been injured. She was in the hospital for literally months—how this could be I don't know but can only say that this was a time before managed care and insurance companies having to approve lengths of stay—if the doctor said the child needed to be in the hospital, that is where she stayed. After a while it became obvious that the mother no longer recognized her own child. One of the main reasons was that the mother only spoke Spanish and as the child learned to talk she spoke only English because the hospital had few bilingual staff members. The mother slowly drifted away and eventually disappeared, the best evidence seeming to indicate that she had returned to Mexico. The child was placed first in a foster home and later an adoptive home with one of the hospital nurses and her spouse. In one sense, this case turned out well—the child is now a married third grade teacher with two kids of her own and by all indications a prosperous and happy life. But in another sense, this case still haunts me in that I can't shake the feeling that I was part of a huge injustice done to this mother who was doing her best with her limited abilities.

I worked for child welfare for four years, during which time I met and married my husband Clint, a general contractor with his own business. I was very fortunate that Clint's business did well enough that I was able to resign my position and attend graduate school with no strings attached (some of my colleagues went to school supported by a child welfare stipend that required they return to work for the agency for three years after graduation). Like most of my classmates, I specialized in casework (now called social work practiced with individuals, families, and small groups) with a mental health focus. Upon graduation, I accepted a job as a clinical social worker (at that time called a psychiatric social worker) with the county mental health/mental retardation agency. In this position, I mainly provided psychotherapy and aftercare services to people who had been discharged from state mental hospitals and

schools as part of the mental health care trend known as deinstitutionalization or community care. One of my cases involved a forty-year-old man who was discharged from the state school he had lived in since he was four years old. He was placed in a halfway house where he was a constant problem because of his habit of eloping (the term they used to describe what was actually just wandering off on his own). The halfway house administrators installed increasingly complex and expensive alarm systems to alert the staff when a resident left the house but, unfortunately, one of the other residents was a woman with an IQ of sixty seven who was what is referred to as an "idiot savant" when it came to electronics, and she would take apart and disable every alarm system they installed. Anyway, the sad ending to this case is that the lady disarmed the latest alarm; my client wandered off and, while crossing a busy highway, was hit and killed by a teenager driving a car with faulty brakes. I continued to be involved with this case for two years after my client's death as a result of his brother, who had not seen him in thirty years, suddenly feeling a great loss and filing a multimillion dollar wrongful death suit against my agency and the halfway house (he lost).

Working for county mental health I became increasingly convinced that, while mentally ill and disabled people living in the community were certainly in need of skilled casework services, they were in even greater need of someone to advocate for them and to create structures to protect them from the legion of unscrupulous (sometimes downright criminal) people who were constantly devising schemes to take advantage of these vulnerable folks. Having this belief, I worked with my agencies development officer to write a proposal to a federal agency asking for support for a three-year pilot program to provide community development and advocacy services for deinstitutionalized mental hospital patients living in my community. I was delighted when this proposal was funded and even more delighted when I was offered the position of director. One of the first things I accomplished in my new job was to work with our local bar association to put together a group of volunteer lawyers to represent our clients who had been cheated. In one case, a man who ran a small loan company convinced a client who had inherited a small piece of property to take out a loan with the property as collateral. The loan was for only about 25 percent of the value of the land. The monthly payments were quite small and our client paid them faithfully. However, what our client did not understand was that the contract included a balloon payment at the end of one year. This meant that he was obligated for twelve small payments and the thirteenth payment would be for the entire balance of the loan, an amount he couldn't possibly pay. When he defaulted on the thirteenth payment the loan company took the land. Our volunteer attorneys were able not only to force the loan company to return the property, but they also were successful in getting the balance of the loan forgiven. I have always believed that it is better to prevent a problem than to deal with it after it has already occurred, so after the loan company case I began to look for ways to keep this kind of thing from happening. What I finally did was work with our local United Way family services agency to hire Certified Financial Counselors to whom social workers can refer clients for advice before they enter into financial arrangements. I'm sorry to say that after the initial three year grant ran out my community advocacy program ended. I'm happy to say, however, that the financial counseling program that I helped Family Services start has grown into a full-fledged financial literacy program with a goal of eliminating predatory lending in our community, and it is now one of the agency's largest and best-known programs.

The regional director of the state department of social services, the agency of which my former child welfare office was a part, was a member of the advisory committee for my community advocacy program. When it became clear that the program was going to end and that I was going to need a new job, he approached me and asked if I would consider working for him as the director of the child welfare program. My old agency had been going through a difficult time with several abuse and neglect cases featured in the local print and electronic media with the agency and its employees being criticized as incompetent and uncaring. Several staff members had been fired and several more had resigned. The morale of the agency was at rock bottom and the regional director told me he "needed a bold and charismatic leader who can inspire the staff and handle the media." He told me I was just that person, although I was not so sure. One of my conditions for taking the job was that the agency grant me a few hours per week off and pay the tuition so I could attend my local school of social work and earn a twelve semester hour certificate in administration. I told him that, while I might be just the right person to inspire the staff and handle the media, I knew little about the basics of administration and to be successful in the job I would need to learn budgeting, human resources management, program evaluation, and management information systems, exactly the classes that comprised the certificate in administration. He agreed to my condition and I took the job. This second stint with child welfare lasted for two years and

is probably my least favorite episode of my career. I found I was able to do administration; I just didn't like it very much. I concluded that, while I admire and appreciate my colleagues who do administration, policy, and planning, these roles were not for me. I need more contact with clients and less with bureaucrats and politicians.

At the end of my second stint with child welfare, I found that I really wanted to return to working directly with people who needed help, in other words, direct practice. Also, by this time I had two children of my own who were reaching adolescence and I felt I needed flexibility in my schedule and more time to devote to them. In the recent past there had been some policy developments that opened up just the opportunity I needed. One was around an issue known as "parity" that resulted in laws requiring insurance companies to cover the cost of mental health care at the same rate as physical health care. The other development was licensing laws that enabled social workers with sufficient training and experience to bill insurance companies and government programs for services they provided. In other words, it was now possible for a social worker to open a private practice and make a decent living. After quite a bit of searching I found a small group of two social workers, one clinical psychologist, and a licensed marriage and family therapist, who had joined together and opened a counseling office. Each was a completely independent practitioner, but they shared an office, an administrative assistant/receptionist, an answering service, and all other overhead expenses. My colleagues needed one more person to share expenses and fill up all their office space and, after extensive conversations and negotiations; they invited me to join them. I did, and spent nine gratifying years providing individual and family counseling, generally working about twenty hours per week during the school year, and ten hours per week during the summer, and taking two weeks off at Christmas, one week for spring break, and one month summer vacation. It was a great way to continue with a career I loved and also to be able to tend to my family. I realize that I am extremely fortunate to have been able to organize my life this way, and I very often found myself obsessing on the injustice that a few people such as myself could have such a life while I observed the crushing day-to-day struggles of most of my clients (and more than a few of my friends).

At the end of my nine years in private practice my two kids were both in college and I found that working part-time left me with too much time on my hands (I've never really been into hobbies and social groups), and, not incidentally, not enough income to help offset the monumental costs of two college educations. So I once again looked at my life and career and evaluated options. One option, of course, was to expand my practice to full-time, but I had to admit to myself that after nine years of intense work with people with various psychosocial problems I was a little burned out. I felt that expanding my practice would completely do me in and that I really needed to do something else. Looking back over my career to date I concluded that I had gotten the most excitement and sense of accomplishment from the three years I had spent as a community advocate for people with mental health issues/challenges. This conclusion resulted in a six-month search for my "perfect job." One of my contacts, a professor at the school of social work, put me in contact with the director of a poverty law center that had recently been established in our community who was looking to hire a director of community outreach. I interviewed for, and was offered the job. I was excited to be back working in the community.

The Poverty Law Center was liberal to the point that it was often characterized as being radical. I never thought it was. To me it was a group of fiery, committed, good-hearted people who were sick and tired of seeing the poor exploited, mistreated, and denied the opportunities essential for them to escape poverty. As a friend once observed, in America we expect people to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps, but we must realize that for them to do this, first they have to have the boots. The Poverty Law Center was dedicated to getting people the boots. Looking back on my whole social work career, I am convinced that my work as a community worker with the Poverty Law Center was where I made the greatest contributions to society. I worked with the school system to provide day care for the children of high school students so they could complete their educations, and to provide before and after school care for working parents who could not otherwise afford high quality child care. I organized not one, but three, rent strikes to force landlords to maintain their property and to prevent them from evicting tenants who they considered bothersome. I worked with the corporate offices of a large national food store chain to open a new and large store in a neighborhood that would, in current terms, be labeled a food desert. My greatest accomplishment, although one I felt very ambivalent about, was to work with our legal staff to file suit against my old child welfare agency demanding better services for foster children. The result of the suit was a court order that the agency establish higher educational requirements for caseworkers (I am well aware of the irony that these standards would have prevented me from getting my first social

work job.) and that caseload sizes be greatly reduced. I won't be around to see the results, but my colleagues are trying to find a legal justification to force the agency to increase social worker salary levels.

This has been a great career for me and I envy those young persons who are just starting on their social work journey.

WHAT THIS BOOK IS ABOUT

When in college, one of the authors took a public speaking class in which the professor said that the key to an effective talk to an audience was to "tell them what you're going to tell them; tell them; and then tell them what you told them." This has proven to be good advice and has guided our lectures, and writing, ever since. So, for the rest of this chapter we are going to tell you what we will be telling you in the rest of this book; in the next sixteen chapters, we will tell you; and, finally, in the chapter conclusions, we will tell you what we told you. The following are the main points illustrated by Brenda Barstow's career and they are expanded upon in the following chapters.

There Are Different Levels of Social Workers

All lawyers, as one example, have JD degrees, have passed the bar exam, and are licensed to practice law in at least one state or territory. This is not the case with social workers. As illustrated by the career of Brenda Barstow there are a number of levels of social work certification and different types of social workers. These vary slightly from state to state, but generally the levels are:

- Untrained social worker. Unfortunately, over half of the people occupying jobs classified by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) as social work jobs have no social work training at all. Obviously, many of these people are occupying the lowest level jobs, and these jobs are frequently not recognized by the profession as social work positions. For example, small nursing homes and community centers will sometimes have people with job titles such as "Social Service Specialist" who not only do not have a social work degree, but also most likely have no degree at all. This is not to disparage the intelligence, dedication, and usefulness of these folks, but serves only to point out that, although the BLS may classify their jobs as social work, they are not professional social workers. More problematic, however, is the fact that there are still a number of positions that, due to complexity and responsibility, should be occupied only by people with professional training that are frequently held by people without such training. Brenda Barstow began her career as a child welfare worker, a job that, as will be discussed in Chapter 12, involves making life or death decisions and decisions that can break up a family. Although the percentage of child welfare workers who have at least the BSW degree is increasing, currently about half the child welfare workforce has a degree in another area, and sometimes has no degree at all.
- BSW social worker. The entry level of professional social work practice is occupied by people with the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) degree earned from a program accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). BSW social workers are expert in utilizing generalist social work practice methods. Generalist social work practice (further discussed in Chapter 6) is defined as the ability of a practitioner to work with all levels of social work clients: individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, neighborhoods, and communities, within a value framework consistent with the social work profession, and following the ethical guidelines stated in the National Association of Social Workers

(NASW) Code of Ethics. The BSW level generalist practitioner also can be seen as a person who can make a broad assessment of individual, group, or organizational needs and then make connections to resources that will meet those needs. BSW social workers are employed by large public social service programs such as child protective services; nonprofit anti-poverty programs such as those of the Salvation Army and Goodwill; nursing homes and senior services centers; and as case managers in a wide variety of settings.

- MSW social worker. This is a social worker with a 60-semester hour (or 36 hour accelerated program for a person with a BSW and a high grade point average) master's degree from a school accredited by CSWE. The MSW is a specialist degree meaning that it involves intense training in a method, usually either direct practice with individuals, families, and small groups (formerly referred to as social casework, now sometimes called micro practice), or administration, policy, community work, or social planning (sometimes called macro practice), or advanced generalist practice which is a combination of advanced micro and macro practice.
- Licensed social worker. Every state and territory has some form of social work licensing law. The lowest level is the Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker (LBSW) that requires a BSW degree and passing a licensing examination. The next level is the Licensed Social Worker (LSW) that requires an MSW degree and passing an advanced licensing examination. The highest level of licensing is the Licensed Clinical (or independent or independent clinical) social worker (LCSW). This level of licensing requires an MSW, a large number (generally 2,000) hours of supervised clinical experience, and passage of an advanced licensing exam. Only social workers with this highest level of licensing are allowed to engage in private practice and bill government programs and private insurance companies for their services.[1] Licensing and legal regulation of social work practice will be further discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

Social work is only one of a number of helping/counseling professions, but it has its own unique contribution.

When Brenda Barstow worked as a private practice counselor/psychotherapist, she shared her practice with two other LCSWs, a clinical psychologist, and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. It would not have been unusual for the practice to have included a Licensed Professional Counselor and it did, in fact, have a close relationship with a psychiatrist who was not a member of the practice but with whom they shared a number of cases and often used as a consultant. The majority of the practice of each of these specialists was the same, namely individual and group counseling/psychotherapy utilizing short-term modalities such as cognitive behavioral therapy and solution focused therapy. However, as summarized in Table 1.1, each has its own contribution to make. The contribution of social work is mainly its expertise in, and focus on, what is referred to as the person-in-environment (PIE) perspective. This perspective is discussed in some detail in Chapter 5.

Social Workers Work with a Variety of Social Problems

As well as applying a method (generalist, advanced generalist, micro, or macro) social workers generally specialize in work with one or more social problems or populations, referred to as fields of practice. Major fields of social work practice discussed further in this book are families and children (a field that includes child welfare) in Chapter 12; crime and criminal justice in Chapter 13; health care in Chapter 14; mental health and development disabilities (including substance abuse) in Chapter 15; housing, homelessness, and community development in Chapter 16; and aging in Chapter 17.

Table 1.1 Counseling/Helping Professions

Profession	Educational Requirement	Unique Contribution to the Helping Process	Counseling/ Therapy Emphasis
Clinical Psychology	Ph.D. or PsyD	Testing/Diagnosis	High
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapy	MA in family therapy or MSW	Family Systems/Dynamics	High
Licensed Professional Counselor	MA or MEd	Educational and Career Planning	High
Psychiatrist	MD	Physical Assessment/Drug Therapy	Limited
Generalist Social Worker	BSW	Person-in-Environment Perspective	Moderate
Licensed Clinical Social Worker	MSW	Person-in-Environment Perspective	High

Social Work Has a Special Interest in the Poor

At one time, many social workers worked in large public assistance programs. In fact, the social work profession began in private charity programs that were later taken over by the government and became public welfare programs. This is discussed in Chapter 4 which includes social work's historical development. Currently, very few social workers work in the major governmental assistance programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needed Families, Supplemental Security Income, or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (food stamps). This fact, however, does not mean that social work has become a mental health profession with no special interest in poverty. The majority of social work clients in the earlier listed fields of practice are poor people. For this reason, each of the field of practice chapters in this book (child welfare, aging, etc.) includes an extensive discussion of the relation of poverty to each problem discussed. Many of the poor receive benefits from the major public programs and so, even though they may not be directly employed by these programs, social workers need to be very familiar with the policies and workings of these programs so they can help their clients receive all the benefits to which they are entitled, and to use these benefits to their best advantage. Poverty and anti-poverty programs are discussed in some detail in Chapter 11 and a detailed discussion of the dynamics of poverty is presented in Chapters 9 and 10. In these chapters, we will make one of our main arguments regarding social work fields of practice: the social work profession needs to reengage with public assistance programs because these programs, and their clientele, are desperately in need of our expertise.

Social Work Is a Value-Based Profession

Throughout this text we use empirical data and research findings to describe every topic. This reflects the fact that social work seeks to be a profession based on social science and, in fact, many have begun to use the term "the science of social work." To be a profession based on social science is a noble quest, but we must note that it is not one that is completely achievable. The reason for this is that social work is, at its core, based not so much on data as it is on values. These values are ideas about right and wrong, good and bad, should and shouldn't. Three different geologists can describe a piece of granite and will come up with exactly the same description. On the other hand, three social workers (or any citizens) can describe poverty, child abuse,

crime, or any other social issue and come up with quite different descriptions of what the problem is, who is responsible, what should be done, and so forth. Because of this, it is very important to understand the different value perspectives that people in this country bring to the discussion of social problems. Although it may be a bit of an over-simplification, we find that the general classification of people's values (or political) perspectives into the large groups of liberal, conservative, and progressive is the most useful way to approach this topic. These perspectives are discussed in some detail in Chapter 2, *Competing Perspectives on Social Welfare*.

Social Work Is a Generally Liberal Profession, but Is Also Appropriate for Caring Conservatives

The social work profession has sometimes been criticized for being too liberal and, in fact, unwelcoming to people who do not share a liberal perspective. For example, in 2007, the National Association of Scholars (NAS) a conservative group that is mostly concerned with what it sees as the problem of "political correctness" in U.S. colleges and universities, targeted social work education in a 27-page report titled "The Scandal of Social Work Education." This attack provided material for conservative *Washington Post* columnist George Will to write a nationally syndicated column titled "Code of Correctness." The report asserts that social work has an unredeemable liberal bias that reflects that of the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics and is further enshrined in the Council on Social Work Education accreditation standards. Particularly troubling to the authors of the report and to Mr. Will is the emphasis on social justice that "today generally equates with the advocacy of more egalitarian access to income through state-sponsored redistribution. The phrase is also frequently used to justify new entitlement rights for individuals and whole categories of people, i.e., legally enforceable claims of individuals or groups against the state itself." The NAS report asks "How far has the trend toward advocacy in social work education gone?" The answer it comes up with is "On the basis of numerous anecdotes and fragments of evidence it began to appear increasingly likely that even within the ideologically colored environment of the contemporary university, social work education constituted an especially advanced case of politicalization, in which dogma, tendentiousness, and coerced intellectual conformity were becoming integral to the definition of the field." Mr. Will concludes that "there might as well be signs on the doors of many schools of social work proclaiming 'conservatives need not apply.'"[2]

If the National Association of Scholars and Mr. Will are correct, and schools of social work are sites of heavy duty liberal indoctrination, one would suspect that the profession would be overwhelmingly populated by people considering themselves to be liberals, perhaps even radicals. Empirical evidence, however, indicates that this is not the case. In 2004, Mitchell Rosenwald drew a representative sample of 558 social workers from the 11,000 licensed social workers in the state of Maryland. He administered the validated Political Opinion Scale to this sample. Rosenwald concluded that the data did not demonstrate that social work is a "liberal monolith." He found that only slightly more than half of his sample (53%) identified themselves as liberal with almost as many (45%) identifying themselves as moderate to conservative. We note that, while perhaps not a "liberal monolith" these data show that social work is somewhat more liberal than the general population. National Opinion Research Center polls indicate that only 28.9 percent of the population consider themselves to be liberal, while 71.1 percent self-report as moderate to conservative.[3] So, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter 2, the National Association of Scholars and Mr. Will are wrong—the social work profession is not totally liberal. It is more liberal than the general population, but a large number of conservatives and moderates have been able to find a comfortable home within the profession's ranks. Social work's appeal to

liberals is related to its position and function in American society, topics which are addressed in Chapter 3, *Social Welfare: Basic Concepts*.

Social Work Is a Viable Career

When people tell their family and friends that they want to become a social worker, the response generally includes concern that they will never be able to make an adequate living. This, as we will reveal shortly using Brenda Barstow's career as an example, is really not true. The main reason that people have this idea is related to our previous discussion of different types/levels of social work. At least half of people holding jobs that they themselves, and the general public, classify as social work are not really performing professional social work jobs. They have jobs such as social service aid at a nursing home, community worker at an inner city church, or food distribution worker at a community food bank. Most of these positions have few qualifications, are not career positions, and pay little more than minimum wage. If you included these jobs in with the category of engineers it would appear that engineering is not a viable career either! Looking only at professional social work jobs, the data indicates that social work, while not a high paying career will at least provide an adequate living for its practitioners. Let's look at Brenda Barstow's career with numbers updated to 2017 levels. Brenda began her career as a beginning child protective services (CPS) worker. This job in Texas, a relatively low paying state, starts at $42,116 dollars per year (with full benefits), with a median salary of $45,800, and a senior CPS worker earning $49,180. A CPS worker promoted to supervisor (a natural career progression) will begin at $53,363 and top out at around $60,000. After receiving her MSW, Brenda went to work for the Department of Mental Health and Mental Retardation (MHMR) as a clinical social worker. Her starting salary was $60,815 and she was earning $71,350 when she left. When she left MHMR and became Director of a Community Development and Advocacy agency her salary was $84,000 per year, the amount she herself had written into the grant application. She explained that this salary was a little above what the market was paying for this sort of job but the additional income was justified by the fact that it was a grant funded position and would end after three years, once again putting her on the job market. When she did end up on the market and was hired as a program director back at her old child welfare agency her earnings regressed to $74,000 per year, but the job was secure and offered opportunities for advancement. Brenda says that it is very hard for her to explain her earnings during her years in private practice, first because she was working part time and her number of hours varied from year to year, and second because the reimbursement arrangements for private practice are so varied and complex. Incidentally, the vast majority of social workers in private practice are doing it part time, sometimes as an adjunct to a regular full time job, and sometimes, like Brenda, because they only want to work part time. Brenda billed for her counseling services at $140.00 per hour, but rarely received this much. For private pay patients she had a sliding scale that resulted in some paying as little as $25 an hour. For patients with insurance, Brenda had to apply and be accepted by the insurance company as a certified provider. To be accepted, she had to agree to accept the rate that the insurance company paid for a particular service and she estimates that, on average, she received $70 per hour. Brenda estimates that if she had worked full time, subtracting vacation, holidays, and sick days, and subtracting overhead expenses such as rent, utilities, administrative assistance, insurance, and paying the full 14+ percent social security tax that she would have netted about $72,000 per year. Her final job as director of community outreach for the Poverty Law Center paid $76,000 per year plus full benefits. Brenda hastens to explain that her salary was never the primary factor behind her career decisions. She says that if it had been, she would have remained with either the child welfare agency, or the mental health mental retardation agency,

working her way up into upper middle management or even upper management and her salary would have probably ended up just under $100,000 per year.

A LOOK AHEAD

In this introductory chapter we have previewed the major concepts we will be discussing in greater detail in the remainder of this text. We have told you what we are going to tell you, so to speak. We have previewed the different levels of social work (BSW, MSW, licensed, LCSW), identified various social problems/populations that social workers focus on (children, the elderly, mental health issues, physical health issues, adult and juvenile crimes, housing and homelessness, substance abuse, as well as the social/environmental dimensions of numerous other problems). We stated that very few social workers work in government financial assistance programs, but that poverty is a major interest and focus of social work nonetheless. We previewed several aspects of the social work profession that we will be discussing later in greater detail, namely that social work is a value-based profession, that most social workers are political liberals, but that the profession includes many with a conservative perspective. And finally, we discussed that while it is probably true that you won't become rich as a social worker, you can certainly expect to earn a decent living. We now turn to a discussion of the touchy topic of politics, social work, and social welfare.

2

Competing Perspectives on Social Welfare

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In Dallas, Texas, the manager of a 24-hour convenience store called the police at about 11:00 one morning to report that there was a small child wandering around the store by himself. When the police arrived, they found the little boy contentedly munching on a bag of potato chips and drinking a Coke. They asked him where he lived and where his parents were. He pointed down the street to several apartment complexes and said, "Mama's asleep." The officers took the child to the apartments and asked if anyone recognized him. The manager of the third complex knew the child. He told the officers, "This is Bobby Patrick. I think he turned three about two weeks ago. With his parents, I wouldn't be surprised if he never turns four. The father travels all the time for his job and returns home only long enough to scream at his wife and knock her around a little bit. The police have come out several times, but Ms. Patrick won't press charges. She just stays in the apartment with the drapes drawn, watches soap operas on TV, and drinks. I don't think she ever wakes up before noon, and Bobby has learned not to disturb her. If he can't find anything to eat in the apartment, he goes outside to see if a neighbor will feed him. Lately, he has started to wander off to the shopping center, which means he has to cross a very busy street." The manager looked at the officers, sighed, and said, "Something should be done about situations like this."

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Explain why we cannot say that a conservative or a liberal political perspective is either correct or incorrect.
- Discuss why people often consider social work to be a liberal profession and whether this is or is not true.
- Explain why people with a conservative political orientation are likely to be less supportive of social welfare program expansion than are people with a liberal orientation.
- Analyze the conservative and the liberal view of whether or not our society is fair and relate these views to conflict and functional sociological theory.
- Explain why conservatives believe that "the government that governs least governs best" and what this means for the provision of social work and social welfare services.
- Analyze the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics in relation to conservative and liberal political perspectives and explain why it is not applicable to only liberal values.

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Five months into the fiscal year, the emergency welfare fund at First Church was out of money. Because of cuts in welfare programs, the church had been deluged with requests for emergency assistance. The minister appealed to the congregation for more money, explaining that people just couldn't live on the amount available from existing welfare programs. Everyone agreed, "Something should be done about situations like this."

In Detroit, a woman called the police one February day to report that for some time she had seen no activity from the residence of the elderly woman next door, and she feared that something might be wrong. When the police entered the house, they found the elderly woman's body. An investigation revealed that she had been dead for several weeks, having frozen to death after the power company shut off the electricity because she was behind on her payments. The woman had a son in town, but their relationship had not been good. He was just as happy when he did not hear from her. Likewise, she had alienated her neighbors over the years, so no one visited her. The result was an impoverished elderly person who was completely at the mercy of her environment. When things began to go wrong, she had no personal or financial resources to draw on. The neighbor said, "Something should be done about situations like this."

In a small college town in the South, it was revealed one year that of 246 girls in the junior high school, 6 were pregnant. Of the 6, 4 were in the seventh grade. The school board had a meeting, the PTA had a meeting, and the teachers' organization had a meeting. Everyone said, "Something should be done about situations like this."

Something should be done about situations like this. That is the subject of this text. How do we, as a society, deal with social issues that we collectively recognize as problems? Although it is easy to agree on the general principle that we should do something, it is not so easy to agree on what should be done, who should do it, how much should be done, and how efforts should be financed. In this chapter we will present an explanation of people's widely differing attitudes and opinions about social welfare issues, policies, and programs and, by extension, about the profession of social work.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIAL WELFARE ISSUES

We have often used the preceding situations as the basis for group discussions in classes, workshops, and community meetings. We divide the participants into groups and ask them to discuss the situations in terms of what caused them and what should be done about them. As we have listened to people voice their opinions about these situations, and by extension about the social welfare policies and programs that might ameliorate them, we have noticed that different people can take exactly the same issue, event, and data and come to very different conclusions, sometimes completely opposite conclusions. The really interesting thing is that, in many instances, the different analyses all make perfectly good sense. This observation led to the specific argument around which we organize this text: Understanding social work and social welfare is less a matter of understanding facts than it is of understanding the ideological lenses through which people filter these facts.

Take, for example, the situation of the neglected three-year-old child found wandering around the convenience store by himself. Most people became very angry about this situation, and some focused their wrath on the perceived shortcomings and sins of the mother. They argued

that people like this should not be permitted to be parents and that the obvious solution to this situation is to remove the child from the mother's care and place him in a good home where he will be loved and cared for. They often added that the mother, and perhaps the father, should be arrested and sent to jail for criminal child maltreatment. Interestingly, although this group of people felt that aggressive intrusion into this family was warranted, they were also very concerned about the government being the entity to do this. They argued that government intrusion into the family is a very dangerous thing, and often referred to it as a "slippery slope." By this they meant that if we permit government to intervene in situations such as this, where intrusion is clearly warranted, we need to be very careful, lest government begin to intervene in families where intervention is not warranted. For example, some parents have expressed concern about the possibility of government forcing parents to have their daughters vaccinated against HPV because they believe it could contribute to premarital sexual activity when the girls get older.

Other groups looked at this situation quite differently. These folks also were horrified by the spectacle of a three-year-old wandering about the city by himself, but they saw the dynamics of the situation and the required social response in different terms. Rather than looking at the mother as some kind of immoral criminal, they tended to view her as an unfortunate person with serious problems calling for compassionate treatment. They suspected that the mother was suffering from any number of mental health problems and almost certainly needed psychotherapy of some type. They suspected that she had been sent home with her baby shortly after his birth without the benefit of any kind of parenting training or assistance. They suggested that if we would spend a little money on parent training and on providing support services (periodic home visits by a child life specialist was one service frequently mentioned) we would more than recoup the cost in decreased need for services later in the child's life. These groups generally listed whole catalogs of services that young mothers need that are not provided in the United States, including child day care, nutritional education and provision of healthy food, parent support groups, and numerous others. They also frequently identified a marriage system that forgives a husband for being absent for long periods of time under the explanation that he "needs to make a living" and then blames the wife for any problems that develop at home.

People also had widely differing opinions as to what the proper reaction should have been by the members of First Church to the inadequacy of their emergency relief fund. Some of the groups thought that it was only right to expect increased aid from members of churches—after all, isn't helping the poor a basic obligation of a citizen, particularly of those of us who identify as part of a faith community? These groups argued that, because churches are so much more effective and efficient than government in administering aid to the needy, their efforts should be encouraged in every way. Some even argued that we should continue to cut government programs so as to increase the pressure on private groups such as congregations to step up to the plate. Other groups, however, argued that expecting churches to deal with poverty in a modern industrial democracy was like "spitting on a forest fire," and that only government programs could meet such needs. They argued that First Church would do more good if it devoted its resources to political action strategies to pressure government to provide adequate support for the poor.

The case of the woman found frozen to death yielded some interesting opinions. Some groups seemed to blame the woman for her own situation and eventual demise. They argued that she should have had the sense to make arrangements for someone to check on her. One person said, "I mean, I'm sorry she is dead, but let's face it—she behaved badly; she alienated her family and friends and neighbors; there are consequences to this type of behavior, and these consequences are generally not pleasant." On the other hand, other groups saw this situation as

an example of how heartless our society has become. Someone, probably a government agency, or perhaps a private agency with government help, should be tasked with checking up on vulnerable persons such as this lady on a regular basis to be sure everything is all right. These groups also often asked about what was up with the power company and argued that they should never be allowed to cut off someone's power in the middle of the winter.

Finally, the situation of the junior high school with the high pregnancy rate also resulted in mixed opinions. Some of the groups explained this situation as another indication of the breakdown of the family in modern society. They tended to argue that if these girls had been taught values—particularly abstinence before marriage—they would not find themselves in the situation they are in. Other groups argued that this situation would not occur if we had a healthy attitude toward sex in our society and particularly if we had good sex education in the public schools. Sure, these people said, abstinence, particularly for girls this young, is a really good idea. But regardless of how hard we preach, a certain number of young people are going to give in to their natural urges, and we need to be sure that they use a condom for the prevention of pregnancy and, sexually transmitted diseases.

These are just a few of many conversations we have heard illustrating widely varying views on social welfare issues. We wonder why these views are so different. Is one position right and the others wrong? One informed and the others ignorant? One progressive and the others old-fashioned? The answer is "no" to all of the questions. Like the old fable about the blind people trying to describe the elephant, these people represent different political perspectives; stated another way, they represent different social attitudes or ideologies. These terms, *political perspective, ideology*, and *social attitude*, as we are using them, are essentially interchangeable. Many schemes have been developed to classify and explain these ideologies or perspectives, but we prefer the old common sense classification of liberal and conservative. Although liberals and conservatives agree that something should be done about the situations described above, as we have seen, their analysis of the problems and proposed solutions are usually very different. The bases for these differences are described in the remainder of this chapter.

Ideology, social attitudes, and political perspectives describe what we might call a collective mind-set. They refer to the beliefs and values of a group of people that are systematized enough to have a semblance of universality, a "worldview."[1] Ideologies and attitudes are subjective; that is, they reflect how a person sees the world, not necessarily the world as it actually exists.[2] These are filters through which we screen our experiences and impose some sense on them. Social attitudes express the psychological orientation of people to their social environment; they enable us to make sense of our incredibly complex world. As Kerlinger has said, "Whether directed toward social issues, ethnic groups, or abstract ideas, attitudes are efficient psychological mechanisms that strongly influence social behavior—they represent emotional, motivational, and cognitive reactions of people to the social 'objects' of the environment and their predisposition to act toward those social objects."[3]

We generally classify political perspectives into two big groups labeled *liberal* and *conservative.* Although these are rather broad categories, most people in the United States would describe themselves as belonging to one or the other of these groups. There are, in addition, three other groups. One consists of people holding what is referred to as a *progressive perspective*, a view akin to the old label of radical that has been described by one writer as a "small but frequently refreshing stream" of thought in U.S. life.[4] The progressive perspective is sometimes referred to as the "far left." Then, there is the perspective currently referred to as Tea Party, alt-right, "far right," or *populist*, In most cases, this is an extreme version of the conservative perspective. Finally, there is the perspective referred to as *moderate*, which could perhaps be thought of as a non-perspective. Moderates deny that they have any set worldview and contend that they judge

each issue on its unique merits. Because the perceived reality of social welfare issues changes based on the political perspective within which they are viewed, in this text we will present these issues in the light of the various perspectives. We will devote the most time to the liberal and the conservative perspectives because these are dominant in U.S. society. But we will devote some space to the progressive perspective because people with this point of view present some influential critiques.

In the United States, the Republican Party is considered to be conservative, and the Democratic Party is considered to be liberal. Although regarding some issues, for example reproductive choice, some Democrats will take a conservative position and some Republicans a liberal position, Democrats are generally to the left of the political spectrum and the Republicans are to the right. Kerlinger has noted that "[al]though it has been said that there is no real difference between the policies and behaviors of Republicans and Democrats in the United States, there are actual and deep differences, especially in policies, that affect the conduct of business and social welfare. Such differences spring, at least in part, from ideological concerns that are reflected in liberal and conservative attitudes."[5] At the same time, both liberals and conservatives reflect traditional American beliefs in property rights and in individualism, although the value they place on these beliefs differs. There is no mainstream political party expressing the beliefs of either progressives or reactionaries, although occasionally the Socialist Party or the Libertarian Party is successful in getting a member elected to a (generally minor) political post. Currently, the most prominent politicians of these more extreme worldviews are, on the left, Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont, who is often identified as a Socialist (although he is registered as an independent and caucuses with the Democrats), and, on the right, Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky who is sometimes identified as a Libertarian (although he is registered as a Republican).

THE WORLDVIEW OF CONSERVATIVES, LIBERALS, AND PROGRESSIVES

The conservative, liberal, and progressive perspectives did not spring into existence recently. They have a long and interesting history, going back as far as the 17th century. They are based on assumptions of what we often call "human nature." The classic theorists of society were up front about their assumptions, though they differed quite a bit. Thomas Hobbes had a pretty low view of humanity. John Locke, who was very influential with those who wrote our Constitution, thought that people were decent but needed guidance. Most optimistic was Karl Marx, who thought that people were creative and wanted to work to express themselves. Their views of society corresponded to these assumptions. Hobbes wanted a strict monarchy so social order could be maintained. Locke wanted institutions that would reinforce our desire to do good and discourage our impulses to misbehave. Marx thought that once the oppressive institution of capitalism that he felt pitted classes against each other was eliminated, people would cooperate and human creativity would flourish. (This proved to be a fatal assumption that left early Marxists unprepared for what would happen after the Revolution in Russia.)

As social scientists, particularly anthropologists, began traveling around the world investigating other societies, they discovered an amazing diversity of human behavior and social organization. They began to believe that there was no such thing as human nature. At the very least, they became very careful about asserting that there was anything that we all had in common. They were embarrassed to talk about human nature. But it was such a convenient way to think that it never disappeared; it just went underground. We would like to bring it back to light. If

we are making assumptions about human nature and the nature of society, we should know what they are. We should understand how they are influencing our thinking about social welfare. We may not be able to rid ourselves of biases, but we should be honest about them and be able to control them when necessary. So we go back to three basic assumptions about people and society as they coalesced into political orientations. This boiled down in American society, or so we thought, to three positions: conservatism, liberalism, and radicalism. Conservatives valued tradition and thought it was dangerous to mess with the status quo. Liberals wanted to balance freedom and order, and thought the status quo could always stand a little tweaking. Radicals were ready to chuck the status quo and start over.

This played out on two levels. There was the strategic level: "This is a good idea." And there was the tactical level: "How do we get it done?" In American politics, the two levels have not always been in sync. Since the 1930s there have not been radical political organizations with the ability to implement radical ideas. And as we approach the 2020s, classical conservatism is less and less on anyone's political agenda. The biases of this text's authors have been for the most part liberal, but we have tried to treat the basic strategic ideas of both conservatives and radicals with respect and be realistic about their tactical potential.

As we write this edition, the political landscape is changing and the labels we have been using are causing problems. We are hearing other labels, ones that have a history in the 19th century, being used to describe current politicians and policies. Populists in the late 19th century were Midwest farmers who were angry at the banks, the railroads, and East coast elite politicians because they felt their livelihoods were being destroyed by the greed of others. The slogan of one of their leaders, "Pitchfork Mary" Lease, was "Raise less corn and more hell!" The progressives were more mild mannered, middle class reformers, also angry at certain Eastern elites. However, their targets were industrial corporations and financial trusts. Their ranks included people from the far West concerned about corporate destruction of natural resources.

Like their political ancestors, today's populists are largely based in the Midwest. They feel that they have "enemies" on both coasts who "fly over" them without noticing their problems. They see the coastal elites as promoting global economic affairs and neglecting American national interests. Among those neglected are industrial workers and coal miners, or former industrial workers and coal miners, living in the Rust Belt. They respond to the battle cry: "America First." Therefore, they might prefer to be called "nationalists" rather than populists. However, these labels have mostly been applied to them rather than adopted by them. They may call themselves "patriots," but that's a label far too broad to be useful.

Modern populists often share with conservatives a distrust of welfare programs, but more often regard such programs with a deep resentment. They feel that globalism undermines their hard won position in the economic world. They might also believe that globalism has unfairly granted special privileges to minorities and immigrants due to policies promoted by coastal elites. They feel that if they worked their way up, it is unfair that people are jumping in line ahead of them for available jobs.

Today's progressives are often people we used to call liberals, and they have embraced this label. A number of them have taken up causes, such as single-payer health care, that have been labeled in the past as radical. Thus, the line between liberal and radical is blurring. The blurry area is being filled in by progressives. The problem this presents for our scheme of political perspectives is that many of the people who are called progressives would not also be called radicals. And many of the people who call themselves progressives would not endorse many radical ideas. We have decided to maintain the label "liberal" because it has a long tradition and may still maintain some integrity and political viability. But for this edition of the text we have decided to replace the label "radical" with "progressive" because the ground seems to be shifting

in that direction. In addition to the mainstream embrace of radical ideas in health care, there are trends in the "smart decarceration" movement toward a radical restructuring of the prison system. In mental health, the radical idea of mental illness as a "myth" has led to a restructuring of institutions for the treatment of mental illness that some would call radical. In the area of poverty, the idea of a guaranteed income, generally considered a radical idea even though a classical conservative economist, Milton Friedman, promoted it, is gaining attention in this country as well as in Europe. In housing, the radical idea of considering shelter as a right rather than a commodity is still below the horizon. But it was not long ago that the idea of medical care as a right was also not taken seriously. So, for this edition of the text, progressives will now occupy the radical end of our continuum.

But on the other end of the continuum, things also are shifting. Traditional conservatism is in eclipse. This may be only momentary: conservatism also has a long and distinguished history. But, since the 2016 election, a new political position has taken center stage. First known as the Tea Party Movement, then as the Liberty Caucus, a wave of politicians has taken over the Republican Party and marginalized or silenced traditional conservatives. Faith in the power of a free market to solve problems has been replaced by fear of foreign businesses and immigrant laborers. Tariffs and walls are the preferred tactics, not open competition. The belief in small government has been transmuted into a rejection of governing altogether. Compromise is now a betrayal of principle, which results in Congressional gridlock. Instead of getting things done, politicians feel they were elected to prevent things from happening. And they have been very successful at it. Government, with its various agencies, is not a status quo to be defended but a Leviathan (Hobbes' term) to be dismantled. This seems genuinely radical.

We have decided to maintain "conservative" as one of our political perspectives. But if anti-government radicalism persists, we may need a new term. One candidate is "alt-right." This has been applied to the extreme members of the new radicalism on the right. It includes racism, sexism, and xenophobia that are not part of traditional conservatism. It may be, as some argue, that these factors have been inherent in conservatism all along and what is happening is a natural development, not a takeover. We'd rather not believe that. From the standpoint of the alt-right, social work and social welfare are not possible and American society would be quite different.

In the following pages, we break the major worldviews, or political orientations if you will, apart and look at their different conceptions of change, human nature, individual behavior, the family, the social system, government and the economic system, and their basic values.

Attitudes toward Change

Perhaps the most fundamental difference among liberals, conservatives, progressives, and populists is their attitude toward change. Conservatives (the word is derived from the verb "to conserve") tend to resist change. They believe that change usually produces more negative than positive consequences; thus, they generally favor keeping things as they are. Conservatives strongly emphasize tradition. Liberals are generally in favor of change; they believe that the world can be changed for the better. Liberals view history as progress, and they believe that continuing change will bring continuing progress. They usually view change as the reform, rather than the radical restructuring, of existing institutions. Progressives are also in favor of change but think that liberal proposals for change do not get to the core of problems. They doubt that moderate change can deal with the pervasive inequities in society. Therefore, progressives stress the need for more fundamental alterations in the social system. Modern populists, on the other hand, believe that change has already gone too far and think

that it would be good if things should be changed back to the way they were in some unspecified past.

These attitudes toward change go a long way toward explaining the general attitudes toward social welfare among people holding different political perspectives. Social welfare programs generally represent nontraditional means of dealing with problems. Public assistance substitutes a government subsidy of some kind for labor market participation; child protective services involve public agencies' participating in matters traditionally considered to be "family business"; health care reform substitutes some form of publicly-managed medical care for that provided by the free market. Liberals, with their faith that change can make things better, advocate for more and better social welfare programs. Conservatives are suspicious of almost all social welfare programs, believing that problems should be handled in time-tested, traditional ways to the greatest extent possible. Progressives believe that social welfare efforts do not go nearly far enough and that, in all probability, fundamental changes will need to be made in the basic structure of society to alleviate most of the problems being targeted by welfare programs. Progressives, in fact, suspect that the real purpose of social welfare programs is to distract attention from the real, deep-seated problems of society and thereby to obstruct meaningful change. Radical conservatives believe that many, if not all, social welfare programs should never have been implemented to begin with and that completely eliminating them would be a good thing.

Views of Human Nature

Our views of human nature undergird and color our attitudes toward nearly everything else. The meaning and purpose of human life, what we ought to do, and what we can hope to achieve—are fundamentally affected by our beliefs about the real or true nature of people. There are some basic differences between conservative and liberal views on this subject.

Conservatives tend to take a basically pessimistic view of human nature. People are perceived as being corrupt, self-centered, lazy, and incapable of true charity. They need to be encouraged to work. Conservative commentator Thomas Sowell says that those "who look everywhere for the mysterious causes of poverty, ignorance, crime, and war need look no further than their own mirrors. We are born into this world poor and ignorant, and with thoroughly selfish and barbaric impulses."[6] Conservatives argue that people need to be controlled because of their fundamentally negative nature, and that they should be swiftly and sternly punished when they get out of line; this is the only way they can live harmoniously with one another. Because of this view, conservatives have a basic distrust of democracy, doubting the ability of the masses to make decisions for the common good. They support democracy, however, because they believe it is better than the available alternatives.

Liberals take a much more optimistic view of human nature. They accept the "blank slate" view of John Locke that people are born with infinite possibilities for being shaped for the good, or the view of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, or more recently Abraham Maslow, that people are born good and, if not corrupted, are naturally social, curious, and loving. People do not need to be controlled; they simply need to be protected from corrupting influences and given the freedom to follow their natural inclinations, which will lead to the good.

Like liberals, progressives believe that people are basically good. Moreover, they believe that people are inherently industrious and creative. Like conservatives, progressives regard hard work as a virtue. Unlike conservatives, who follow the Puritan assumption that people are naturally lazy and must be forced to work, progressives believe that if people have control over their working conditions, they will take pleasure in working hard. The control is what's important. If that

control is lacking in any part of the process, what Marx called "alienation" will occur. The industrial assembly line is a prime example of how alienation can devalue work: the company controls the process, the process cuts off communication between workers, workers see only one small segment of the product, and they don't know who uses it. If that alienation is removed, workers will take pride in their work and do the best job they can. Alienation can afflict even human service work. Think about it.

These different views of human nature have tremendous consequences for views of social welfare. If you regard people as being basically bad, you will design social welfare systems to control people. You will suspect that people will take advantage of the system whenever possible, and thus you will make the prevention of cheating a major focus. You will view crime, drug dependency, child abuse, and similar problems as expressions of the basically negative nature of people and of the failure of external forces to control this nature. You will probably see punishment as the logical solution. On the other hand, if you regard people as being basically good, you will design social welfare systems to free people from problems that are preventing them from realizing their natural potential. You will be less concerned with control because of your conviction that people, if given the chance, will naturally do what is right.

Views of Individual Behavior

Our explanations of why people behave as they do are closely related to our views of human nature. Our ideas about the importance of heredity, the environment, and individual free will are all important components of our concept of individual behavior.

Conservatives generally view individuals as autonomous—that is, self-governing. Regardless of what a person's situation is or what problems he or she has had in the past, each person is responsible for his or her own current behavior. People choose to do whatever they are doing, and they are responsible for whatever gains or losses result from these choices. The conservative theorist Irving Kristol, for example, asserts that individual behavior is a result of motivation, which he views as an innate (inborn) characteristic present in all people in varying degrees. People possess free will and thus can choose to engage in behaviors such as hard work that help them get ahead or activities such as excessive leisure that contribute to failure.[7] Thus, poverty is often caused by individuals' lack of responsibility.

Although liberals and progressives do not completely deny free will and motivation, they put much more emphasis on the environment as a factor in individual behavior. An early expression of this view comes from Sigmund Freud, who said that individuals are programmed by early experiences, primarily with their parents, and that an individual's behavior in later life results from this programming. More recent theorists, such as Erikson, Glaser and Strauss, and Levinson[8] assert that the programming takes place throughout life, resulting in a series of developmental crises. If people successfully resolve the crises, they will experience happiness and fulfillment; if they do not, they will experience failure and discontent. Another view is based on the work of behavioral psychologists, notably Watson and Skinner.[9] According to this perspective, behavior is the result not of programming but of the immediate consequences of behavior. If an individual perceives the consequences of a behavior as positive, the behavior will increase; behavior in which the consequences are perceived as negative will decrease.

Our explanations of human behavior have important implications for our approach to social welfare. If we assume that people are autonomous and guided completely by free will, poverty and other social welfare problems will be seen as a result of laziness, irresponsibility, or lack of self-control. Conservative scholar Thomas Sowell asserts that welfare recipients "are people who

didn't bother to learn when they were in school, didn't bother to get work experience or job skills afterwards, and often don't bother to obey the law either. There are consequences to that kind of behavior. What the welfare state does is to force others to pay the consequences."[10] In other words, poor people would not be poor if they really wanted to be otherwise. Social welfare programs simply need to make sure that nothing interferes with people's efforts to better themselves and to solve their own problems.

If, on the other hand, we assume that people's behavior is strongly influenced by the environment, we will see changing the environment as the proper response to social welfare problems. For example, liberals support prison programs that provide counseling and education for convicted criminals or that even divert them from prison altogether and place them in community-based alternatives. Their argument is that criminal behavior is learned and, therefore, can be unlearned.

Views of the Family

Social welfare programs generally perform some function traditionally handled by the family. For this reason, attitudes toward the family have a significant influence on social welfare policy. This influence, however, is often confusing. In this area more than others, it seems, theory and practice are further apart for all groups. Conservatives and progressives have particular difficulty reconciling their ideals to the world in which they live.

Conservatives revere the "traditional" family and try to devise policies to preserve it. They see the family as a source of strength for individuals and as the primary unit of society. They oppose abortion, public funding of day-care centers, sex education in schools, birth control counseling for minors, and other developments that might undermine parental authority or make family breakups easier by giving too much independence to women and children. Conservatives believe that governmental welfare programs have weakened the family and thus contributed to poverty. Conservative theorist George Gilder asserts that:

> The key to the intractable poverty of the hardcore American poor is the dominance of single and separated men in poor communities. . . . Once a family is headed by a woman, it is almost impossible for it to greatly raise its income even if the woman is highly educated and trained. . . . Her family responsibilities and distractions tend to prevent her from the kind of all-out commitment that is necessary for the full use of earning power. Few women with children make earning money the top priority in their lives. . . . The first priority of any serious program against poverty is to strengthen the male role in poor families.[11]

Conservatives fought long and hard for the Defense of Marriage Act that would have legally prohibited same-sex marriages, but finally lost this issue when on June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, ruled that the Constitution guarantees the right to same-sex marriage.

The difficulty with this position is that the "traditional" model—father as sole wage earner outside the home and mother as full-time homemaker and caregiver—was the majority situation for a relatively brief period of U.S. history, and it is now obtainable by only a minority. A majority of women now work outside the home; many work because they need the income. The argument against government intrusion in family life, which conservatives use to resist sex education or birth control counseling for minors, must be put aside when conservatives advocate the outlawing of abortion. Divorce, long opposed by conservatives, has now been accepted by many of them. Thus, conservatives find themselves on a fairly small and uncomfortable base from which to defend their narrow definition of the family.

Liberals may have the easiest time in this difficult area. They view the family as an evolving institution, and they can be more flexible and pragmatic in the ways in which they support it. There are indications that conservatives are softening their opinions on the validity of diverse family types. Conservative commentator George Will, for example, speaking on the television program *ABC This Week*, opined regarding same-sex marriage, that there is "something like an emerging consensus. Quite literally, the opposition to gay marriage is dying. It's old people."[12]

Views of the Social System

Is our social system fair? Do people really get rewards in proportion to their contributions to society? Do people have equal opportunities? How important is change to the ideal of the good society? Is conflict inevitable and, indeed, desirable? These are some of the questions related to our view of the social system.

Conservatives view society in a manner that is close to what sociologists call the *functional perspective*. The basic assumption of this perspective is that society is a system composed of interrelated and interdependent parts. Each part makes a contribution to the operation of the system, and thus the entire system works. Each part fulfills a different function but contributes to the overall well-being of society. In this way, society is seen as analogous to a biological organism.

For our purposes, the most crucial aspect of this conservative perspective is the view that all parts of society, *as they are*, are beneficial to both society and the individuals within it. Society would not work as well without any of its existing arrangements or with major changes in any of its arrangements. Thus, the average salary of physicians is over $200,000 a year and the average salary of preschool teachers is under $29,000 a year because this is the arrangement that is most socially effective.[13] Conservatives would argue that the large discrepancy in earnings is the result of the greater effort and ability necessary to become a physician, the greater workload and responsibility of a physician, and the greater importance to the general well-being of society of a physician's work. If the salary gap were narrowed, fewer highly qualified people would choose the rigors of becoming a physician, and society would suffer. In this view, social inequality is a device by which societies ensure that the most important positions are filled by the most capable people.[14]

Liberals, like conservatives, tend to view society as an organic system, but they have less faith that the system will regulate itself without intervention. They point out, for example, that nature is notoriously inefficient; the average tree sends out thousands of seedlings, but only a few will grow into mature trees. With the intervention of human horticulture, those seedlings can be replanted, watered, fertilized, protected from insects, and allowed to grow to maturity. Liberals believe that the social system needs nurturing and regulating as well.

Liberals also see (and value) more diversity and friction in the social system than do conservatives. Different groups have different interests—things that are beneficial to them—and what is in the interest of one group may be to the disadvantage of another. Each group will struggle to promote its own interests, but it will usually have to compromise with and accommodate other groups in order to attain its goals. If there are enough interest groups, and if none are powerful enough to dominate the others, the system will embody the "checks and balances" of the Constitution. Government provides the rules and limits that keep the contest fair and open. Liberal economists such as Paul Krugman and political scientists such as Robert Dahl describe the virtues of this pluralistic system.[15]

Progressives, who usually follow the analysis of European Socialist thinking, see the social system as a class hierarchy in which one class has predominant power and uses it to control the others. This view is sometimes called the *conflict perspective.* To progressives, the interest-group politics that preoccupies liberals is only a sideshow. Behind the scenes, an elite of wealthy and powerful people is making the important decisions.[16]

Progressives believe that inequality is the result of the group with greater power using this power to perpetuate its position of advantage. Thus, the physician has six times the income of the preschool teacher, not because physicians are six times more valuable to the social system but because they have wealth and power and use these resources to increase, or at least to maintain, their affluence. The facts that the medical profession is predominantly male and that early childhood education is predominantly female are viewed as being significant. Also viewed as significant is the fact that as the proportion of physicians who are female has increased, the average salary of physcians in relation to other professions has declined.

The conservative perspective sees the social system as inherently fair. If some groups are poorer than others and have less power and lower status, it is because this situation is necessary for the well-being of society. Thus, conservatives view change with a great deal of suspicion. What exists is useful and necessary. Rapid and major changes may benefit particular groups, but they will usually result in a net loss to society. Change is sometimes necessary, but it must be slow and incremental.

The liberal perspective regards the social system as potentially fair but frequently unfair. Some interest groups are more powerful than others and, if unchecked by government regulation, will use their power to take advantage of less powerful groups. Change takes place, sometimes rapidly and sometimes slowly, through the competition and compromise of interest groups.

Progressives believe that fairness is unattainable in the present system. Fairness can be achieved only if society restructures its existing institutions to redistribute wealth and power.

It is not difficult to deduce the implications of these different perspectives for social welfare. Conservatives believe that everything in society has a function, and they are skeptical of proposals for change. If poverty were eliminated by, for example, the creation of millions of public sector jobs and an increase in the minimum wage, conservatives would argue that:

1. The new jobs would compete with private business.
2. A tax increase would be necessary and would hurt the economy.
3. The increased minimum wage would force businesses to pay more, which would cause them either to go broke or to raise their prices. This would cause inflation, which would reduce the value of the minimum wage to the same level it was before the increase.

The result would be a net loss to the U.S. economy. Thus, conservatives argue that kind-hearted efforts to help the poor would only result in harm to society. Conservatives tend to support social welfare programs that help people adjust to society as it currently exists and that help people improve their living standard within the current social and economic structure; they generally oppose programs that seek to change society.

Liberals do not view the existing society as the best one possible. They believe in changes that will reduce inequality and increase social justice. With regard to the previous example, many liberals would assert that the wealthiest members of society are putting forth these arguments in a predictable effort to retain their power, resources, and positions. Liberals reject social welfare programs that simply help people adjust to society as it is. They see these programs as means for the powerful to keep the powerless "in their place" rather than as efforts to help them.

Liberals view programs that change society more favorably than they do those that change individuals.

For progressives, the only way to prevent inequality is to change society completely. When power and wealth are distributed equitably and everyone is guaranteed the necessities of life, cooperation, rather than competition and conflict, will predominate. The struggle of oppressed groups to liberate themselves produces change in society. Some progressives believe that society can be restructured gradually and democratically; others see only revolutionary change as sufficient.

The populist view of inequality and the unfairness of the social system is a kind of mixture of the other three perspectives. Like conservatives, populists believe in the autonomous individual who is responsible for their own success or failure. But, like liberals and progressives, populists take a conflict perspective and view the system as being rigged in the favor of those with power and money. However, unlike liberals and progressives who see increased government regulation as the answer to unfairness and inequality, populists tend to think that government is actually the source of the problem rather than the solution. Populists believe that the smaller the government is, the fairer our society will be.

Views of the Government and the Economic System

Perhaps the area of the strongest and most emotional disagreement between liberal and conservative perspectives is the view of the proper role of government in the economy and in the lives of people. Conservatives embrace the old adage "that government governs best that governs least." They think that most government activities constitute grave threats to individual liberty and to the smooth functioning of the free market. Ginsberg observes that "the classic, conservative belief was that the federal government should provide defense, operate a money system, and maintain relations with other nations." He quotes the conservative political satirist P. J. O'Rourke, who said of conservatives, "opposition is where we belong. Being opposed to government is what defines true conservatism."[17]

Populists are vocal about government and economics. Populists, currently represented by the Libertarian Party and the alt-right movement, believe that any government beyond a bare minimum,is inherently evil. They support government activity only in areas such as national defense, criminal justice, and the maintenance of certain public utilities such as roads and sewers. Libertarians consider most taxation to be legal thievery. They advocate for the abolition of public welfare, public education, public social services, and almost every other tax-supported activity."[18]

Liberals believe that our social and economic systems contain imperfections that can be corrected only by governmental intervention. Such intervention is, therefore, justifiable and desirable. Progressives see liberal tinkering with government as inadequate; they feel that complete restructuring is necessary. The Socialist Party USA summarizes its basic philosophy in this regard as striving to place people's lives under their own control, to combat racism, classism, sexism, and to establish a new social order where government is under the control of people rather than large and rich corporations.[19]

The government is involved in the economy in two main areas, both of which grew tremendously during the 20th and early 21st centuries, particularly during the past 70 years. The first area is taxation and government expenditure. Before 1913, there was no federal income tax; the spending by all levels of government (federal, state, and local) amounted to only $3 billion, less than 9 percent of national income. Federal government spending in 2017 was $3.65 trillion, more than 21 percent of the gross domestic product.[20] A special bone of contention between liberals

and conservatives is redistribution of income: government's taking income from one group by means of taxes and giving it to another group in the form of cash grants (such as Supplementary Security Income) or some other form of benefit (such as Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program credits and Section VIII housing). Before the onset of the Great Depression in 1929, the federal government spent almost nothing on income redistribution programs. The Office of Management and Budget reports that in 2017 federal spending on Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, and other mandatory programs was over $2.5 trillion, more than 48 percent of the federal budget.[21]

The second area of government involvement in the economy includes laws, regulations, and executive orders governing economic affairs. For most of the 19th century there was virtually no governmental regulation of the economy. Economists Paul Samuelson and William Nordhaus have noted that:

> This philosophy permitted people great personal freedom to pursue their economic ambitions and produced a century of rapid material progress. But critics saw many flaws in this laissez-faire idyll. Historians record periodic business crises, extremes of poverty and inequality, deep-seated racial discrimination, and poisoning of water, land, and air by pollution. Muckrakers and progressives called for a bridle on capitalism so that people could steer this wayward beast in more humane directions.[22]

The "bridle" referred to by Samuelson and Nordhaus took the form of government regulations of various forms. In 1887, the Interstate Commerce Commission was established; in 1890, the Sherman Antitrust Act was passed; in 1913, the Federal Reserve System was established; and later, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the Federal Power Commission, the Federal Communications Commission, the Pure Food and Drug Act, the Securities and Exchange Commission, and numerous other commissions and laws were established and enacted. Of major importance were the Social Security Act of 1935, which made an "economic safety net" for all citizens a responsibility of the government, and the Employment Act of 1946, which established as a governmental responsibility the maintenance of "maximum employment, production and purchasing power."

Referring to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* as their bible,[23] conservatives fear and resist this growth of governmental involvement in the economy. They believe that, for the economy to function efficiently, economic exchanges must be, to the greatest degree possible, unregulated. As stated by Friedman and Friedman:

> Adam Smith's key insight was that both parties to an exchange can benefit and that, *so long as cooperation is strictly voluntary*, no exchange will take place unless both parties do benefit. No external force, no coercion, no violation of freedom is necessary to produce cooperation among individuals, all of whom can benefit. That is why, as Adam Smith put it, an individual who "intends only his own gain" is "led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was not part of his intention. Nor is it always the worse for the society that it was no part of it. By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good."[24]

In other words, a free-market economy is the best way to ensure that the country prospers and individual needs are met.

Conservatives feel that government regulations substitute the "dead hand of bureaucracy" for the invisible hand of the free market. The result will be, they feel, that "sooner or later—and perhaps sooner than many of us expect—an even bigger government will destroy both the

prosperity that we owe to the free market and the human freedom proclaimed so eloquently in the Declaration of Independence."[25] We should note again, however, that government involvement constitutes a conservative paradox; government interventions that benefit business, such as the periodic "bailouts" of large corporations for example, are often viewed as necessary and desirable.[26] The earliest examples of government involvement in the market occurred at the urging of conservative businesspeople. In the early 1900s, for example, employers reacted to the flurry of lawsuits brought against them by injured workers by pressing the government to establish workers' compensation laws.[27] Government intervention to support the free-market process is, therefore, considered legitimate; intervention that subverts the market process is not.

The liberal perspective, based on the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes, is that the government must be involved in all areas of the economy in order to ensure its optimal functioning.[28] Liberals believe that if the economy is left totally alone, people with power will take unfair advantage of those with a lack of power; people with more resources than they need will not necessarily share with those with fewer resources than they need; and with totally free choice, people will not always make the right decisions (for example, a person may choose to buy drugs rather than food). They assert that the government must provide certain goods, such as roads and national defense, because such goods cannot be divided up and paid for as used by consumers. Liberals accept the capitalist system but believe it needs regulation to avoid wild swings from prosperity to depression and back again. They contend that the government, through regulating the money supply (monetary policy) and expanding or decreasing government spending and taxation (fiscal policy), can stabilize the economy and prevent depressions.

Like conservatives and liberals, progressives have come to accept a "mixed" economy that contains both public and private elements. In terms of government involvement, they may prefer more public ownership of industry and services than do the other two groups, but they have seen in the experience of European socialist governments that public ownership does not guarantee either an equal distribution of power or a higher standard of living for workers. Some argue that ownership is irrelevant; what matters is who is in control. For example, U.S. corporations are "owned" by stockholders, many of whom are elderly women, but are controlled by a small group of mostly male managers.

Progressives would prefer an economic system in which workers have control over the conditions of their work; in which goods are produced for genuine need and not to satisfy whims created by advertising; in which money is not the measure of worth; and in which basic rights, such as medical care and housing, are not reduced to commodity status and sold in the marketplace to the highest bidder. Some progressives support the development of a welfare state in which government organizes the provision of medical care, housing, and other social welfare benefits to all citizens.

The conservative economic perspective is profoundly suspicious of, but not entirely unsympathetic to, social welfare programs. Reid observes that "the 'new conservatives' do not deny that government has responsibility for society, they simply want that responsibility carried out in a particular way."[29] That conservatives are not insensitive to social welfare is what George W. Bush meant when, as a 2000 presidential candidate, he used the term *compassionate conservatism*, a term that has been reiterated more recently by Republican President Trump's press secretary Sarah Huckabee Sanders. Harris has written that "it is a major failing of [conservatives] that more thought has not been given to the problem of public welfare and benevolence." Harris summarizes the basic principles of the conservative economic perspective on social welfare this way:

1. The needy do not have a "right" to assistance, but those who are able have a moral duty to be benevolent, "which, within certain limits, can be enforced by the state."

2. Social welfare programs should be designed to make use of the power of incentive: "It has been an assumption of capitalism since the time of Adam Smith that self-interest is a powerful motivating factor in human behavior. . . . In other words, we should use the natural motivating factors in human beings for moral ends."
3. "Finally, the advocate of the conservative welfare state will be suspicious of government programs to create jobs, remedy social ills, and care for the sick and the old. . . . The creation of new wealth and new jobs is the best way to alleviate poverty. Furthermore, governmental make-work programs can never be an adequate foundation for human dignity."[30]

Based on these principles, Harris argues that private retirement programs that invest contributions are preferable to government programs that immediately pay out contributions as benefits; a negative income tax would be preferable to the current welfare system; welfare benefits should be designed to increase incentive to work; and small, regional, private health programs such as health maintenance organizations (HMOs) are preferable to a large, centralized national health insurance program.

Many of today's conservatives find the voucher system a particularly appealing way to deal with poverty. Such a system works within the existing market economy. Vouchers are government certificates issued to people to use instead of money to pay for specific goods and services such as housing and education. (Food stamps are a good example.) Government plays a role in financing the vouchers and in making them available to people with low incomes, but essentially the vouchers turn their recipients into "powerful consumers," able to exercise free choice in the open market. Rather than having the government provide public housing or education to the needy, vouchers enable low-income individuals to purchase such goods and services directly from private organizations or businesses.[31]

The liberal economic perspective generally prefers governmental welfare programs to private programs. One reason is that, although private welfare programs may be preferable to government programs, as the conservatives argue, history has demonstrated that private charity is simply unable to deal with the massive problems of a modern industrial society. When the Great Depression began in 1929, the private relief organizations were overwhelmed within a few months. The government took over welfare programs, not because it wanted to but because it had to. A second argument is that welfare programs are good for the economy. The taxes that are taken from the wealthy come from idle funds (such as bank accounts, real estate, and jewelry), which are not being spent and are, therefore, not contributing to national income. When they are given out in the form of welfare benefits, they are immediately spent and thus contribute to national income. Finally, liberals argue that governmental welfare programs have grown in response to increasing societal standards of health, nutrition, and security. Samuelson writes:

> Society now rules that children shall not have rickets and bowed legs for life because of the bad luck or weakness of their parents. That poor people shall not die young because of insufficient money for operations and needed care. That the old shall be able to live out their years with some minimum of income.[32]

These increasing standards require programs beyond the capacity of private charity—only the government can meet them.

A study by Sirgo and Eisenman examined the perceptions of governmental fairness by liberals and conservatives. It is interesting that both groups perceived government as basically unfair. However, the ways in which the groups perceived the unfairness were surprisingly predictable. The authors found that "liberals see government as favoring economic elites (including business, corporations, and the wealthy), whereas conservatives see government as favoring minorities such as black people and the poor."[33]

Table 2.1 Comparison of Conservative, Liberal, and Progressive Perspectives

Attitudes Toward	Conservative	Liberal	Progressive
Change	Change is generally not desirable; it is better to keep things as they are.	Change is generally good; it brings progress. Moderate change is best.	Change is a good thing, especially if it means a fundamental change in the system.
Human nature	People are essentially selfish; they need to be controlled.	People are basically good; they need structure to reinforce good impulses.	People are basically good; they can be corrupted by institutions.
Individual behavior	Individuals have free will; they are responsible for their own lives and problems.	Individuals are not entirely autonomous or self-governing; environment plays a part in problems people face.	Individual behavior is strongly influenced by social and economic structures.
Family	The traditional family is the basic unit of society; it should not face government interference.	The family is changing; it needs social and government supports.	The traditional family is oppressive; the changing family needs government supports.
Society	Society is inherently fair, it functions well on its own, and it is a system of interrelated parts.	Society needs regulation to ensure fair competition between various interests.	Society contains inequalities and conflict between those with power and those without, and thus it needs changing.
Roles of the government and the economic system	A free-market economy is the best way to ensure prosperity and fulfillment of individual needs; the government role is to support, not regulate, the market.	A free-market economy needs regulation by government to ensure fairness; government programs are necessary to help meet basic human needs.	A market economy is exploitative and inherently unfair; alternatives include a mixed public/private economy and a socialist system.

Table 2.1 summarizes the previous discussion of conservative, liberal, and progressive perspectives.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE REAL WORLD

Like many academic constructs, political perspectives are "ideal types"—pure forms—that rarely, if ever, match the realities of the day-to-day world. People's perspectives generally tend to lean toward conservatism, liberalism, progressivism, or populism, but generally contain any number of inconsistent elements. In an attempt to categorize political orientations in a way that reduces these inconsistencies, there have been attempts to develop categories of political perspectives that are more precise than the old categories of liberal, conservative, and so on. The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, for example, has conducted six national surveys of political attitudes, beginning in 1987 and with the most recent in 2014. The survey asked twenty-five questions of respondents designed to elicit their beliefs and attitudes about issues regarding social policy, economic and domestic policy, and military and foreign policy. Based on

What Americans Believe

In this chapter, we have described major ideologies of the American people within a liberal to conservative matrix. This brings up the obvious question—a question that can be addressed with data—of how many Americans subscribe to different belief systems within this matrix.

The National Opinion Research Corporation (NORC) has, since 1972, conducted over 54,000 interviews with scientifically selected samples of Americans. The interviews have been conducted almost every year, most recently with 2,867 people in 2016. The questionnaire used in these interviews is called the General Social Survey (GSS). The GSS collects an immense amount of data from the respondents, including demographic data (age, race, gender, income, job, and much more), a few pieces of behavioral data (Who did you vote for in the 2016 presidential election? How often do you attend religious services?), and opinion data on a large number of social, political, and personal issues. The 2016 questionnaire included 942 variables.

One of the questions asked of respondents to the GSS is to identify where they would place themselves on a seven-point scale ranging from "very liberal" on one end to "very conservative" on the other. For our analysis of these data, we have collapsed the categories into three levels: liberal, moderate, and conservative. An argument could be made that we should have designated the "very liberal" position as progressive and the "very conservative" position as populist, but the GSS does not use these terms, so neither do we. Throughout this text we will use these data to identify how Americans with different self-identified ideological positions feel about the various social welfare issues we discuss.

For this chapter, we have prepared three tables from the GSS data. Table 2.2 summarizes all the responses people have given since 1972 to the question regarding how they would identify their political perspective, cross-tabulated by a number of demographic characteristics. The exact question asked was: "We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. On a seven-point scale from extremely liberal to extremely conservative, where would you place yourself?" Table 2.3 reports the data for 2016 regarding political perspective cross-tabulated with income level. Table 2.4 shows how people identified their political perspective at three points in time: 1974, 1994, and 2016.

Table 2.2 Political Leanings, Cumulative (percent responding by sex, race, age, and education: 2016)

	Liberal (slightly to extremely)	Moderate	Conservative (slightly to extremely)
Total	28.5	37.2	34.2
Men	29	33.6	37.4
Women	28.2	40.1	31.7
Black	31.7	42.7	25.6
Hispanic	26.3	44.5	29.1
White	27.7	34.4	337.9
Age 18 to 30	34.5	40.9	24.8
Age 31 to 40	32.3	38.4	29.3
Age 41 to 55	24.3	38.3	37.3
Age 56 to 89	26.6	32.8	34.4
Left high school	25.8	43	31
High school graduate	23.6	43.5	32.9
Associate's degree	23.1	40.6	36.3
Bachelor's degree	35.8	25.2	39
Graduate degree	46.2	24.7	29.1

Note: Numbers may not total 100 because "don't know" and no answer are not included.

(*continued*)

Table 2.3 Political Perspectives and Family Income, 2016

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Total Family Income:			
Under $20,000	24.6%	42.4%	33.1%
$20,000–$39,999	28.2%	39.4%	32.4%
$40,000–$69,999	28.1%	36.42%	35.6%
Over $70,000	34.2%	29.1%	36.6%
Total	28.5%	37.2%	34.3%

Table 2.4 Political Perspectives: 1974, 1994, 2016

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
1974	30.5%	40.0%	29.5%
1994	26.7%	36.3%	37%
2016	28.5%	37.2%	34.3%

Source: Smith, Tom W., Peter Marsden, Michael Hout, and Jibum Kim. General Social Surveys, 1972–2016 [machine readable data file]/ Principle Investigator, Tom W. Smith, Co-Principle Investigator, Peter V. Marsden, Co-Principle Investigator, Michael Hout; Sponsored by National Science Foundation. Chicago: NORC at the University of Chicago [producer and distributor]. Data accessed from the GSS Data Explorer website at gssdataexplorer.norc.org on March 3, 2018.

We would like to be able to tell you that we spent hours running appropriate tests on all the differences between the groups represented in these tables to determine statistical significance. But, actually, the Survey Documentation and Analysis software ran the tests; all we did was sit in our chairs, click a mouse, and report the results to you. The tests indicated that all the differences shown in these tables are statistically significant, although some (some of the age groups, for example) are small. "Statistically significant" means that, even though in some cases small, the differences are real, that they did not occur as a function of chance.

These tables provide a lot of information that will be useful as we study the American approach to social welfare. What is this information? First, Americans in general are more conservative than liberal, but the largest group of all comprises people who identify themselves as moderate. This means, we presume, that they will swing toward either end of the conservative–liberal scale depending on the issue. In the chapters that follow, we will see how the various groups align themselves within the liberal to conservative matrix regarding various social welfare issues. Second, more men consider themselves to be conservative than do women, but the difference is small. Third, blacks and Hispanics are considerably more liberal and less conservative than whites. Next, older people tend to be more conservative and less liberal than younger people. Finally, higher-income people are considerably less liberal and more conservative than less affluent people. If you've been staying awake and paying attention as you have been reading this, you are probably thinking, "Well, that's pretty much what I thought." In this observation, you would be correct—these data support conventional wisdom regarding those people who consider themselves liberal and those who consider themselves conservative. The one counter-intuitive finding is that in 2016 liberalism increased and conservatism decreased as income went up. The last time we looked at these data, looking at the years 1998 to 2004, we found the opposite relationship. We suspect that this may have something to do with the 2016 presidential election in which higher income voters were more likely to oppose the conservative candidate Donald Trump.

The relationship between education and political perspective is interesting: Increased education seems to reflect increased liberalism/decreased conservatism. The really interesting thing, however, is that, as education increases, so does the tendency to identify with one of the consistent ideologies, liberal or conservative. As the level of education increases, the number of people identifying themselves as moderate decreases at a fairly

steep rate. Only one person out of every four with a graduate degree identifies as moderate. This is consistent with the findings of political scientists, that most people do not hold consistent (or coherent) political positions, but the number increases as a function of increased education.*

The most important (at least in our opinion) point shown by these data is the trend. Another part of conventional wisdom says that political ideology is like a pendulum that swings from liberal to conservative and back again. We, and all our liberal friends, have been waiting forty plus years for the pendulum to begin its swing back to the left. The GSS data give little reason to think this is going to happen soon, although the 2016 data compared to 1994 gives a hint that this may finally be happening. In spite of this small change in direction, the data for most of the forty years for which the GSS has been collecting, has shown Americans to be a pretty conservative bunch. This means that conservative values and accompanying positions will continue to have a major influence on social welfare policies and programs for the foreseeable future. This underscores the point that, for those of us (and maybe some of you) who hold to liberal values and positions, understanding conservative values and positions is immensely important.

* Linda J. Skitka and Elizabeth Mullan, "Psychological Determinants of Public Opinion," in Victor C. Ottati, R. Scott Tindale, John Edwards, Fred B. Bryant, Linda Heath, Daniel C. O'Connell, Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, and Emil J. Posavac, eds., *The Social Psychology of Politics* (Chicago: Loyola UP, 2002), 107–34.

analysis of the 2014 survey, the researchers divided the American public into eight separate groups. However, when all was said and done, they classified two groups as conservative, one liberal, four as "less engaged" (two leaning right and two leaning left), and one group as "not engaged." Basically, the classification relied on the old liberal-conservative continuum we have been discussing, with the addition of the degree of political engagement.[34]

An ambitious attempt to describe the modern political landscape occurred using a large survey research project titled the Post-Modernity Project run by sociologists James Davison Hunter and Carl Bowman. These researchers conducted lengthy face-to-face interviews with a random sample of more than 2,000 people and performed a cluster analysis of the results. This analysis identified six significantly different political groups, which Hunter and Bowman label traditionalists, neotraditionalists, conventionalists, communitarians, pragmatists, and permissivists. Although these groups were found to differ along several dimensions (age, race, political involvement, religion, etc.), they appear to reflect fairly well the characteristics of what we have identified as conservative and liberal political ideology. The traditionalists, neotraditionalists, and conventionalists reflect a conservative to moderate stance. Communitarians, pragmatists, and permissivists tend toward the liberal end of the spectrum.[35]

Although we recognize that the reality of the political landscape is more complicated than our conservative/liberal/progressive typology, we believe that the typology is still a useful analytic tool. Even if *people* cannot be classified as purely liberal, conservative, and so forth, their ideas can be. Most people have a relatively consistent ideology toward social welfare issues, and this ideology generally follows fairly closely the attributes we have outlined.

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES AND SOCIAL WORK VALUES

In late 2007, the National Association of Scholars (NAS), a conservative group that is mostly concerned with what it sees as the problem of "political correctness" in U.S. colleges and universities, launched an attack on social work education. The attack was laid out in a 27-page report titled "The Scandal of Social Work Education" and quickly gained support in a column, "Code

of Coercion," penned by conservative columnist George Will in the *Washington Post* newspaper and syndicated nationwide. The report asserts that social work education has an unredeemable liberal bias that reflects that of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics and is further enshrined in Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) accreditation standards. Particularly troubling to the authors of the report and to Mr. Will is the emphasis on social justice that "today generally equates with the advocacy of more egalitarian access to income through state-sponsored redistribution. The phrase is also frequently used to justify new entitlement rights for individuals and whole categories of people, i.e., legally enforceable claims of individuals or groups against the state itself." The NAS report asks "How far has the trend toward advocacy in social work education gone?" The answer it comes up with is "On the basis of numerous anecdotes and fragments of evidence it began to appear increasingly likely that even within the ideologically colored environment of the contemporary university, social work education constituted an especially advanced case of politicalization, in which dogma, tendentiousness, and coerced intellectual conformity were becoming integral to the definition of the field." Will concludes that "there might as well be signs on the doors of many schools of social work proclaiming 'conservatives need not apply.'"[36]

This spirited critique of social work and social work education brings up an interesting question that social workers, social work educators, and those considering becoming social workers would do well to ponder—is social work a profession only appropriate for those with liberal values, or is there a place for conservatives within the ranks? To begin to answer this question, let's look at the NASW Code of Ethics, the source authority on matters related to social work values. The code states: "The mission of the social work profession is rooted in a set of core values. These values, embraced by social workers throughout the profession's history, are the foundation of social work's unique purposes and perspective." These core values are listed as service, social justice, dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, integrity, and competence. These values are discussed below within the framework of our previous discussion of basic elements of liberal and conservative value systems.[37]

Service

This value is accompanied by the ethical principle "Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems." There is nothing about this value and accompanying ethical principle that cannot be totally and faithfully adhered to by people with either a liberal or a conservative worldview. Liberals, as discussed earlier, tend to place more emphasis on the social environment as a cause of problems, and so are probably going to pay greater attention to the "addressing social problems" part of the principle. Conservatives, who emphasize individual responsibility and autonomy, are going to be more concerned with helping people in need to help themselves. When facing the reality of practice, however, liberal social workers will readily concede that it is necessary to help individuals, and this help generally includes encouraging them to take more responsibility for their own problems, even though they may believe that the ultimate solution to these problems resides in social and economic change. Conservative social workers, for their part, also will concede that it is ridiculous to help individual after individual solve a problem of living that is caused by an environmental condition, without addressing that condition. For example, after helping two or three clients, who are living in unhealthy and unsafe conditions due to being exploited by a slumlord, find better and more affordable housing, even the most conservative social worker concludes that something needs to be done about laws and regulations protecting the slumlord.

Social Justice

The ethical principle that accompanies this value is "Social workers challenge social injustice," and this is elaborated upon with the statement that "Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people." This is the value that drew the most ire from the National Academy of Scholars who argue that the way social work education defines social justice is totally within a liberal context and that no deviance from this definition is tolerated. The NAS report complains that "We merely wish to emphasize that NASW's 1997 Standard 6.01 and similar statements are, in effect, partisan declarations within these debates about policy. They take no notice of the existence of competing ideas, but grant a privileged status to a single, arguable view, which is thereby placed above critical examination." The support that the NAS provides for this conclusion is garnered from their analysis of one social work practice textbook, and from the handbooks of a small number of schools of social work. They don't bother to look at material from social work programs affiliated with more conservative institutions such as Baylor University, Philadelphia College of the Bible, and Brigham Young University, nor do they look at the writings of conservative social work scholars such as David Stoesz and David Hodges.

Also ignored by the NAS and Mr. Will is writing by social work scholars about the concept of social justice. For example, Michael Reisch observes that the concept of social justice as defined by social work includes elements from both conservative and liberal perspectives. He argues that, based on Western secular and religious ideas, social work's definition of social justice embraces the conservative beliefs in individual freedom and self-reliance based on the concept of a social contract. From the liberal tradition, social work's concept of social justice incorporates principles of mutuality and increasing social equality, leading to support for expansion of social and political rights and a more equitable distribution of societal resources.[38]

Although we do concede that the majority of social work faculty members probably do teach the concept of social justice from a liberal point of view, there is absolutely nothing in either the NASW Code of Ethics or in the CSWE accreditation standards that provides a litmus test defining social justice. A conservative social worker who believes that social justice will best be achieved by decreasing government services and increasing private, faith-based programs; that services are best paid for by voluntary private contributions rather than compulsory governmental taxation; that elderly people should be supported and cared for by their families and churches rather than by government programs, are well within ethical guidelines as long as they can demonstrate that their positions are based on ethical/intellectual reasoning, a respect for the innate worth and dignity of human beings and concern for their well being, and not on prejudice or self-interest (the views of liberal social workers are, incidentally, subject to the same tests).

Dignity and Worth of the Person, and Importance of Human Relationships

The ethical principle derived from these values are that "Social workers respect the inherent dignity and worth of the person," and "Social workers recognize the central importance of human relationships." These values, we suppose, could be classified as no-brainers. People, whether liberal or conservative, enter social work specifically because they respect human dignity and worth and are interested in human relationships and want to contribute to strengthening these and/or using them as a vehicle to help people solve problems of living and achieve a more satisfying life. These values seems to fit with equal comfort both a liberal and a conservative worldview.

Integrity

This value is accompanied by the ethical principle that "Social workers behave in a trustworthy manner . . . [they] act honestly and responsibly and promote ethical practices on the part of the organizations with which they are affiliated." Because conservatives tend to have a little more respect for authority than do liberals, it may be necessary for a conservative social worker to be more on guard to recognize ethical violations of an employing organization. However, besides this cautionary note, we see nothing that would indicate that a conservative would have any more trouble pledging allegiance to this value than would a liberal.

Competence

The ethical principle accompanying this value is: "Social workers practice within their areas of competence and develop and enhance their professional expertise." Once again, this is a value and ethical principle that appears to have no relationship to political ideology whatsoever. Liberals and conservatives are equally concerned with assuring that professional social workers are competent, that they strive to increase their level of competence, and that they don't practice outside of their area of expertise.

If the National Association of Scholars and Mr. Will are correct, and schools of social work are sites of heavy duty liberal indoctrination, one would suspect that the profession would be overwhelmingly populated by people considering themselves to be liberals, perhaps even progressives. Is this so? To address this question, researcher Mitchell Rosenwald drew a representative sample of 558 social workers from the 11,000 licensed social workers in the state of Maryland. He administered the validated Political Opinion Scale to this sample. Rosenwald concluded that the data did not demonstrate that social work is a "liberal monolith." He found that only slightly more than half of his sample (53%) identified themselves as liberal, with almost as many (45%) identifying themselves as moderate to conservative.[39] We note that, although perhaps not a "liberal monolith," these data show that social work is somewhat more liberal than the general population. General Social Survey data, reported in the What Americans Believe box on pages 17–23, indicates that only 26.7 percent of the total population self-reports as being liberal, while 72.8 percent identify themselves as moderate to conservative. However, Mr. Rosenwald's sample was almost totally comprised of graduate trained social workers, so comparing this group (53% liberal) to the graduate educated respondents to the General Social Survey (39.9% liberal), the difference between social workers and this general population group is much smaller. So, the National Association of Scholars and Mr. Will are wrong—the social work profession is not totally liberal. It is more liberal than is the general population but a large number of conservatives and moderates have been able to find a comfortable home within the profession's ranks.

THE AUTHORS' PERSPECTIVE

At one time, it was thought that social scientists could be value-free and, therefore, could write completely objective papers and texts. It is now generally agreed that this is not possible; no matter how hard authors try, their own social attitudes are bound to color their work. Therefore, we feel it is important that the reader know the authors' perspective before proceeding with this text.

We are both social workers and academics and reflect the generally liberal bias of those in our profession who hold faculty positions. One of us finds merit in many tenets of progressivism

as well. We both tend to vote Democratic, favor most welfare legislation, believe in social and racial equality for all men and women, and favor social action to further these ends. However, we recognize that there is also value in many conservative ideas. We believe that individuals, when possible, should take primary responsibility for the solution of their own problems; we believe that there is fulfillment in meaningful work; we believe that the family, in both its traditional and newer forms, is a strong source of support for individuals; and we recognize that the economic consequences of welfare programs need to be carefully thought out before the programs are enacted.

Social attitudes are neither right nor wrong; they just are. As a matter of practicality, however, the authors believe that the liberal perspective simply works better for those of us who are concerned with helping individuals and society solve problems. If we view people as being basically good and their problems as, at least partially, the result of factors they cannot control, and if we believe there are ways of structuring society that will make it more just and that government can be a force for good, then the opportunities for constructive social intervention are immense.