POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES
Their Origins and Impact

Leon P. Baradat and John A. Phillips

THIRTEENTH EDITION

ROUTLEDGE

"*Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impacts* is an excellent book. It is very easy to understand and yet is very comprehensive. The authors are very good in defining terms, and providing examples. They also explain in excellent detail the major figures of the respective ideologies they are discussing. This provides a good frame of reference for students. In addition their historical discussions are very useful for students giving them a frame of reference for understanding the respective ideologies. This work is very useful in more advanced classes on ideology and political theory, and at the same time is easily understandable for students in lower level classes. The discussion questions at the end of each chapter make for good exercises for the students and are excellent reviews of the chapters."

— John Miglietta, Professor of Political Science, Tennessee State University

"A much loved and much used textbook, here in its updated 13th edition! In contrast to standard textbooks on political ideologies, this one recognizes the prevalent logic of nationalism and its imprint on other dominant ideologies. It also pays due attention to understanding democracy and the democratic process: an ideological intervention often underscored in other collections. Accessibly written, this textbook offers an entertaining yet rich narrative, engaging with political philosophy and politically relevant literature (e.g. Tolstoy!). The range of aptly selected photographs and active learning suggestions make this textbook a pedagogically invaluable tool in the classroom."

— Nevena Nancheva, Kingston University London

"The authors have done a masterful job addressing issues of the day by showing the relevance of Political Theory. This updated text is a demonstration that theory is not divorced from reality. It is superbly structured, clearly written, lucid, and engaging. Both teachers and students will find this text useful, timely, and highly relevant."

— Daniel K. Gibran, Professor of International Security and Intelligence Studies, Tennessee State University

Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact

Comprehensive yet accessible, this classic text, now in its thirteenth edition follows the evolution of political thought over 300 years. Organized chronologically, this text examines each ideology within a political, historical, economic, and social context. In addition to a thorough updating of examples and data, here's what you'll find in the new edition:

- Analyses of President Trump's rollback of Obamacare, trade war with China, and changes to immigration, taxation, and environmental policy.
- Conservative justifications for supply-side economics and liberal rationale for drug legalization and "trigger-word" bans.
- Brexit's effects on the Scottish independence movement.
- Resurgence of feminist protest, including the Me Too movement, alongside anarchist protest, following Trump's election, including groups like Black Bloc and Antifa.
- China's rising environmental and social problems, including unrest among its heavily controlled Uighur population.
- Cuba's transfer of power from the Castros to President Díaz-Canel, and their fraught rapprochement with the U.S.
- Russia's disinformation campaigns, and alternating brinksmanship and détente between Trump and North Korea's Chairman Kim Jong-un.
- The ascent of the alt-right in the U.S., and white supremacist influence on parties in the U.S. and Europe.
- The continuing salience of Islamism, the teetering Iran deal, and ongoing degeneration of the Arab Spring to the Islamist Winter.

Leon P. Baradat was Professor Emeritus of Political Science at MiraCosta College.

John A. Phillips is Professor of Political Science at MiraCosta College.

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LEON P. BARADAT

JOHN A. PHILLIPS

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Leon Baradat
To Elaine,
wife, partner, and friend.

And to David H. Provost,
professor, mentor, friend.
Thank you for everything, Dave.

John Phillips
To my wife and children,
Lisa, Sophia, and Leo,
and my parents David and Carol;
for all their love and support.

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PREFACE

Since the first edition of this book, we have witnessed many changes in the currents and undertows of world politics. The Cold War ended, and people became hopeful momentarily that the political waters would calm. However, although the frightening possibility of a nuclear confrontation between the superpowers has diminished, albeit tenuously, we still find ourselves confronted with a threatening political environment. The Middle East festers, even more than before; religious fundamentalism engenders violence; political terrorism has become commonplace; racism divides peoples; nationalism and neo-fascism emerge again; hate groups are resurgent; famine emaciates millions in the Developing World while the insatiable developed economies squander resources (although important progress has recently been made, especially in China); at home a corporate state emerges as the middle class dwindles and vast wealth siphons into the hands of the very few; meanwhile, the Earth is warming in response to overcharged industrialized economies, threatening unprecedented disaster; and the pressure of the world's exploding population on finite potable water, food supplies, breathable air, and other resources has become so acute as to cause serious people to wonder whether the Earth remains capable of sustaining its burgeoning population.

These problems, and many others, demand solutions. To resolve our difficulties, we must have a firm understanding of our own values and political system so that our efforts can enhance what we cherish rather than sacrifice it. We must also realize that we have to work together with other people in the world, since, driven by a global economy, many of our problems span national boundaries, and exceed the capacity of single states to solve them. We must learn to deal with people who have values, views, and ideas quite different from our own.

This book is a good place to begin such a critical endeavor because a clear understanding of current world ideologies is essential if one is to grasp the political realities of our time.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

Besides a thorough updating of examples, detail, and data, the following items are either wholly new or considerably expanded in this edition:

- Ideological analyses of President Trump's rollback of Obamacare, trade war with China, and changes to tax policy, immigration law, foreign aid, and environmental regulation.

- Conservative justifications for supply-side economics and public education vouchers; and liberal rationale for demand-side economics, drug legalization, and "trigger-word" bans in colleges.
- The rise in extremist violence on both ends of the spectrum; and Russia's attempts to incite extremism with disinformation campaigns on social media.
- Brexit's effects on the Scottish independence movement.
- Growing nationalism in wealthy democracies; and its relationship to demographic changes, refugee crises, and rising economic insecurity, including the "gig economy."
- The role of subprime mortgages and derivatives markets in causing the Great Recession, and President Trump's changes to legislation intended to prevent another calamity.
- The US tax system's mal-distribution of wealth and its implications for the middle class and American democracy.
- Resurgence of anarchist protest following Trump's election, including groups like Black Bloc and Antifa.
- China's waning economic expansion and rising environmental and social problems, including unrest among its heavily controlled Uighur population.
- Cuba's transfer of power from Fidel Castro to his brother Raul, and now to President Miguel Díaz-Canel, and their fraught rapprochement with the United States; including Trump's shift on Guantanamo Bay, and his recall of embassy staff due to mysterious "health attacks."
- Alternating brinksmanship and détente between President Trump and North Korea's Chairman Kim Jong-un.
- The re-emergence of authoritarianism in the Russia and Developing World, including the "brown tide" sweeping over Latin America (as in Hitler's *Brown Shirts*).
- The mounting electoral success of right-wing parties in Europe, particularly in Germany and Italy.
- Recent spikes in white-supremacism and hate-crime in America, including the ascent of the alt-Right, and its influence on the Trump administration.
- The continuing salience of Islamism, the teetering Iran nuclear deal, and the ongoing degeneration of the Arab Spring to the Islamist Winter.
- The shift in ISIS strategy from territorial gain to lone-wolf terrorist attacks across the globe.
- Feminism's resurgence after the election of Donald Trump and the Me Too movement.
- President Trump's about-face on environmental policy, including his withdrawal from international accords on climate change.

FEATURES

Pedagogy

We think of ourselves as teachers, not authors. This book, therefore, is written as a vehicle for teaching some of the world's great political ideas. Several features have been incorporated into it that will help the reader learn its contents more easily.

Each chapter begins with a preview of the material to be covered. It alerts students to the principal ideas developed in the text that follows. Equipped with this overview, the details in the chapter become more meaningful. At the end of each chapter, questions are provided that will stimulate thought and discussion about the major themes in the chapter. You'll also find a bibliography there that can be used in further pursuit of the subject. These lists are certainly not exhaustive, but they can be used as jumping-off places for more detailed inquiry into the subject.

The text also includes *italicized* words and phrases. When you encounter them, take special note of them: it is our way of saying this material is particularly important. The glossary and the index at the end of the book should also be especially useful. The names and concepts appearing in **boldface** in the text can be found in the glossary, and you should pay close attention to them as well.

Approach and Organization

Fundamentally this book arranges the important ideologies chronologically so students not only learn the discrete ideas but also witness how modern political thinking has evolved. It is critical that students recognize the relevance to their lives of these ideas. Thus, care is taken to offer apt examples and to demonstrate the interrelationship of theoretical concepts and practical politics. To this end, great effort is made to display the social, intellectual, and political consequences of our economic progression from handcrafted goods, through mechanization, to cybernetics. Finally, it is essential that students receive a balanced presentation of this controversial subject, so a broad range of viewpoints is presented for each topic.

Chapter Content

Chapter 1 examines the origins and implications of ideologies. Special consideration is given to the Industrial Revolution's role in generating the social and political catalysts for ideologies, a theme continued throughout the book. Additionally, the differences between political philosophy and ideologies are also explored.

In Chapter 2 students are introduced to the spectrum of political attitudes, and it distinguishes between attitudes about change and values as motivations for policy choices.

Nationalism, the most powerful political idea of the past three centuries, is studied in Chapter 3 from the perspectives of its origins, its utility, and its prospects for continued efficacy in a world confronted with exploding populations and inadequate resources.

The next three chapters focus on the theory and practice of democracy. Chapter 4 surveys the theories of seventeenth-century philosophers whose ideas become the foundation for contemporary democratic practice.

Chapter 5 analyzes adjustments to democratic theory made necessary by its application to practical politics. It takes particular note of the adjustments to theory made by leaders on the left and the right.

In Chapter 6 the practice of contemporary liberal democracy and the institutions used in its application are explored. In this and the preceding chapter, students are encouraged to think about the relationship of theory and actual political, economic, and social realities.

Chapter 7 introduces anarchism as a rejection of depersonalization in modern societies, and it is considered from historical and contemporary perspectives.

Socialism is the subject of inquiry in the next two chapters. Chapter 8 studies the two fundamental approaches to socialism: democratic and "scientific." It investigates the components of socialism and the ideas of socialist thinkers from Babeuf, through the Utopians, to Marx.

Consistent with the text's approach throughout, Chapter 9 examines socialism as applied to existing social and political circumstances.

A comparative analysis of fascism and National Socialism opens Chapter 10. It then goes on to discuss contemporary right-wing extremist movements abroad and in the United States.

The cultural diversity, economic strife, social complexity, and political turmoil in the Developing World, which give rise to its spectrum-spanning ideologies, are the focus of Chapter 11.

Chapter 12 explores the ideological aspects of feminism and the strengthening and weakening interests in them.

Finally, Chapter 13 concludes with a study of environmentalism as an ideology, including an exposition of deep and humanist ecologists.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Leon Baradat

Whereas any inaccuracies in this book are completely my own responsibility, several people have made such substantial contributions to it that I take pleasure in mentioning them here. My deepest gratitude belongs to my wife, Elaine. Her unselfish help and her unfailing support have been instrumental to the book's success. I am also indebted to our sons, Leon and René, who, in the early editions of the book, sacrificed time we might have spent together so that the book could be written.

For the lucidity the first edition enjoyed, all credit and many thanks go to Professor Julie Hatoff. Spending untold hours reviewing the manuscript, suggesting improvements, and correcting errors, Professor Hatoff was of invaluable assistance. Her conscientious attention to my misplaced modifiers, arbitrary punctuation, and eccentric spelling was very helpful, and I am most grateful to her. It is with great pleasure that I welcome John Phillips of MiraCosta College as my co-author of this edition. John is a respected colleague, an excellent teacher, and a good friend who stepped in at a critical moment, for which I shall always be grateful. Additionally, I am personally indebted to the following reviewers for their corrections and suggestions: Shaheen Ayubi, Rutgers University-Camden; Lynda Barrow, Coe College; JoAnne Myers, Marist College; John Miglietta, Tennessee State University; Wendy Scattergood, St. Norbert College; Jeff Colbert, UNC-Greensboro; and Akwasi Osei, Delaware State University. I would also like to thank my editor Natalja Mortensen, editorial assistant Charlie Baker, production editor Tamsin Ballard, and copyeditor Liz Riley for their guidance and help throughout this process.

Besides those who did so much to make this book a reality, I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the people of California for providing an excellent and free public education system to its youth. Were it not for the opportunity to attend state-supported schools and colleges, I would almost surely not have received an education. In addition, I would like to single out three teachers who have had particular influence on my professional life and whose pedagogical and scholarly examples have been important inspirations. To N. B. (Tad) Martin, formerly professor of history at the College of the Sequoias, who has a grasp of history and a teaching ability worthy of emulation, my sincere appreciation. To Karl A. Svenson, former professor of political science at Fresno State University, whose lectures were memorable and whose advice was timely and sound, my heartfelt thanks. Finally, and most important, to David H. Provost, formerly professor of political science at Fresno State University, my lasting gratitude for the help, encouragement, scholastic training, and friendship he so abundantly extended. His example has been particularly meaningful to me.

John Phillips

I would like to echo Leon's gratitude to the state of California and its public education system; and most importantly, thank you to Leon and Elaine for all their advice and support over the years.

A NOTE TO THE STUDENT

We would like to share with you a few thoughts about general education requirements. Responding to economic and social pressures, students understandably want to complete their studies so that they can begin to make

a living. Courses that do not immediately translate into dollars are often viewed by students as superfluous impositions on their time. The course for which you are reading this book may be one of those offerings. Yet there is more to life than materialism, and we must learn to appreciate and enjoy what we are and who we are while we make a living. In fact, it is likely that we will make a better living, and probably live better, if we appreciate and better understand the world in which we live.

Education is the major custodian of civilization. Its function is to transmit the knowledge and values of our civilization to each succeeding generation. General education courses are the principal vehicle by which this function is executed at the college level. They offer you the world's wisdom, a priceless treasure. Immerse yourself in them, savor them, absorb them, enjoy them. Let general education courses expose you to the intellectual wonders of our world, expanding your vision and deepening your appreciation of life so that, as educator Stephen Bailey wrote, "Later in life when you knock on yourself, someone answers."

Leon P. Baradat

John A. Phillips

CHAPTER 1

Ideology

PREVIEW

Ideologies are predicated on the Age of Enlightenment belief that people could improve their conditions by taking positive action instead of passively accepting life as it came. This new belief was accompanied by the great economic and social upheaval caused by the mechanization of production (the earliest stage of the **Industrial Revolution**). Indeed, one of the major themes of this book is that ideologies are the result of political accommodations to the economic and social conditions created by the Industrial Revolution.

Political scientists do not agree on the exact definition of the term *ideology*, but their opinions have enough in common to allow us to support the following definition: *Political ideologies are usually simply stated and oriented toward masses of people. They are materialistic, activist, and often impatient with delay.*

Ideology and political philosophy each express theories of politics, but political philosophy is addressed to the individual and is more intellectually profound and introspective.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF IDEOLOGY

Prior to the modern era, with a few brief exceptions, people were discouraged from seeking solutions to their problems. They were expected to do what they were told by their spiritual and temporal superiors. Politics had not yet become democratized. Ordinary people were not allowed to participate in the political system. Politics was reserved for monarchs heading a small ruling class. Indeed, the Prussian king and military genius Frederick the Great (1712–1786) once said, "A war is something which should not concern my people." In other words, politics was not the business of ordinary people. Rather than enjoy a voice in government, the masses were expected to work, producing material goods to sustain the state; they were not mobilized for political activity. In exchange for their obedience and productivity, the ruling class provided order and stability. Such was the social contract.

This attitude would be viewed as arrogant by contemporary observers, but only because every modern society is democratic in at least one sense of the word. *Every modern political system is motivational*; that is, leaders attempt to motivate and mobilize citizens to accomplish the political, economic, and social

goals of the society. They are all intensely interested in involving their citizens in efforts to accomplish the objectives of the state, and ideologies are among the most important tools used by modern governments to mobilize people. Consequently, modern ideologies call upon people to join in collective efforts. The goals of each ideology and the precise methods used to reach these goals are different, but they each call for mass mobilization and collective efforts to accomplish desired ends. In this sense, ideologies are indispensable tools of the people who govern and of the people who are governed. As a consequence, familiarity with the most important ideologies is critical to our understanding the world in which we live.

The Source of Ideology

Knowledge, as it was commonly understood before the Enlightenment, was to be revealed by an authority with superior wisdom; common folk were to understand and conform to such knowledge as best they could. Consequently, little questioning or challenging was encouraged among ordinary people, and as a result, change came very slowly.

Gradually, however, people began to challenge this intellectual straitjacket. Some, like Galileo Galilei, were punished for doing so. Galileo proved the Copernican theory that the Earth and other planets revolve around the sun, making it—not the Earth—the center of the universe. Fearing that this assertion threatened the Catholic Church's primacy over truth, the pope had Galileo tried before the Inquisition and forced to recant. Of course, as Galileo must have known, the truth could not be suppressed forever.

Despite extreme efforts of the spiritual and temporal leaders to suppress "inconvenient truths," scholars and philosophers continued to probe and question, and in time, their efforts led to discoveries that revolutionized human existence. The net result of these accomplishments was the development of science and its practical application: technology. Successful early attempts to solve problems through the application of science, such as curing disease or developing labor-saving devices, gave people a new sense of empowerment. Liberation from the fetters of ignorance filled some with exhilaration, inquisitiveness, and inventiveness. Suddenly, after centuries of slavish obedience to tradition and conventional wisdom, the world became more rational and could be approached systematically. Invigorated by this secular epiphany, people were encouraged to apply human reason to an ever-widening range of problems.

In time, innovators developed machines that greatly increased productivity and drastically changed people's relationship to the things produced. Whereas production and consumption were once limited to the tiny quantities that could be fashioned by hand, the new technology permitted a previously unimagined abundance, and thereby introduced important economic, social—and eventually—political transformations. For example, the average worker was no longer actually making goods. Instead, workers found themselves simply the custodians of machines that wove fabric, forged steel, or carved

wood. Rather than building a whole carriage, for example, workers now found themselves on an assembly line monotonously performing one tiny aspect of automobile production and then passing it on to the next person to contribute their minute task. Eventually the finished vehicle rolled off the line, but no one could claim credit for actually building it. Thus, industrialization brings abundance, but it also shrouds production with anonymity, and some of the satisfaction of accomplishment is lost.

These changes in productivity had enormous social consequences. People who once led relatively healthy, albeit poor, lives in rural settings were brought together to live in cities. The workers' neighborhoods were crowded and unsanitary. Ironically, life became less social as people found themselves psychologically estranged from their neighbors at the very time when they were forced to share the same city block. For millennia, people had depended on a close relationship with the soil for the necessities of life. Now, suddenly, they found themselves divorced from the land. Urbanization and industrialization, accomplished by brutal methods during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, caused massive confusion and insecurity among most ordinary

PHOTO 1.1

This scene of an eighteenth-century cotton mill illustrates how dangerous jobs assigned to children could be in the early Industrial Revolution. That this mill was located in the state of Georgia reminds us that child labor exploitation existed no less in the United States than in any other industrializing society of the era.

Source: © Bettmann/Getty Images

people, who then became disoriented and frightened. No longer could they produce most of the things they needed themselves. They were transformed into anonymous cogs of giant economic systems and, as such, were dependent for their well-being on people they did not know, in places they had never seen. Scholars, philosophers, and politicians tried to comprehend these events, to explain and rationalize them, and to accommodate the social and political changes they evoked in this "brave new world." Some of these rationalizations became political ideologies.

If the mechanization of production, the urbanization of society, and the separation of people from an intimate relationship with the land had been all that people had to face, the impact on human life would have been great indeed. However, even more turmoil lay ahead. Economic dislocation became a severe problem. Unemployment, depression, and inflation began to plague society and disrupt the order of things to a degree previously not experienced. Workers became disoriented as the skills that had once been a major source of self-identification and pride were made unnecessary by automation. It became necessary to learn new skills to accommodate the new technology. At the same time, workers became dissociated from owners. The capital investment necessary to buy machines, factories, and resources became so great that owners had to spend their time managing their money (becoming capitalists); they were no longer able to work alongside their employees as they once had in their cottage-industry shops. Lulled by the monotony of the assembly line, workers became separated from their employers—who may no longer be the master craftsman in the shop, but simply the owner of the factory—estranged from impersonal managers, and ultimately alienated from their work.

Meanwhile, as family farms and businesses have disappeared, society has become increasingly mobile. Roots have disintegrated. Families, the most basic of all social units, have become dislocated from ancestral foundations, and the institution of the family itself seems to be dissolving, at least in the West. While we are being crowded closer together, we seem to be losing concern for one another and are becoming increasingly isolated. Ironically, we are developing a self-oriented world at the very time that we are becoming more and more dependent on others for our most basic needs. As the pace of change quickens and the basic institutions of society are weakened, change becomes virtually inevitable in societies ill-equipped to cope with it.

Although our economic success has presented us with new opportunities, it has also tended to exacerbate our social problems. Industrialization has produced great wealth for those who are fortunate enough to profit from it. For others, however, it has produced a new kind of indentured servitude. The new servants, be they neo-colonial suppliers of cheap raw materials, industrial toilers, office workers, or even business executives and professionals, are exploited more fully than those of previous eras because of the efficiency of the modern system. For example, computers, tablets, droids, and smart phones are usually presented by their vendors and enthusiasts as technologies

PHOTO 1.2

Our world is becoming more self-oriented, perhaps nowhere better illustrated than by the ubiquitous "selfie." Even as technology can liberate us and bring us together, so too can it exploit and alienate.

Source: © Shutterstock/gmstockstudio

that liberate people, and often they do. They are credited with increasing productivity, as indeed they have. But they also tether us to the workplace long after traditional business hours, extending the length of time we spend on the job. Employees who initially exalted at being allowed to telecommunicate, thus working from home, often find themselves compulsively checking their phones and computers for information, a process that quickly develops into ten-, or even twelve-hour, days rather than the standard eight hours. They become ensnared in an electronic bondage before they realize what is happening.

The gap between the user and the used, between the haves and the have-nots, is also increasing, threatening frightful results for a world that remains insensitive to it. In addition, industrialized economies have become voracious consumers of natural resources. Some of these vital commodities are already reduced to a short supply. Competition for the remaining fuel and mineral resources increases the tension between industrialized and developing nations as well as among the industrialized nations themselves. As we come hard upon the Earth's limits of some resources—certain foods, living space, water supplies—we witness the beginnings of what could become a devastating contest for survival, the likes of which humankind has never yet experienced.

Many technical advances not only increase the demand for resources, but also increase the population and thus further escalate the demand for resources. Medical and nutritional discoveries have lengthened life expectancies and eradicated certain diseases so that today the world's population exceeds 7.6 billion, a figure that will certainly increase by half again within

the next half-century. Feeding, clothing, and housing these multitudes increases the drain on resources, causing scarcity and anxiety as competition for the remaining resources intensifies.

Prior to the present era, people relied on religion for answers to adversity, putting their faith unquestioningly in their God and in their religious leaders. However, as **rationalism** developed and science seemed to contradict certain basic tenets of the church, some people began to rely on science for solutions to their difficulties. The world became less and less spiritualistic, and increasingly materialistic. Unfortunately, science brought humanity mixed blessings. For each problem it solved, it created new difficulties. Automobiles give us mobility, yet they also emit pollution and greenhouse gases; birth control pills prevent unwanted children, but now ancient moral scruples are rejected and society faces venereal disease and AIDS in epidemic proportions; the computer has opened to us vast new opportunities, creating the Information Age, but it has also brought us eye strain, carpal tunnel syndrome, a dangerous loss of privacy, and it has greatly expanded the workday for many. Texting and other forms of electronic communication have increased our connections with others while, at the same time, impoverished relationships and social skills as face-to-face encounters get replaced by cyberspaced ones and zeros. Nuclear energy offers cheap and virtually inexhaustible energy, yet as the tragedies at Chernobyl and Fukushima attest, a mishap at a power plant can

PHOTO 1.3

An Iranian plant begins complying with its agreement to curtail production of heavy-water used in the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

Source: © AP Photo/Iranian Students News Agency, ISNA/Arash Khamoushi

be disastrous. Furthermore, although nuclear deterrence kept an uneasy peace until the Soviet Union collapsed, and although the United States and Russia have been reducing their aging nuclear warheads, their disarmament is far from total. And nuclear proliferation (witness current developments in Pakistan, North Korea, and Iran), together with the new weapons the United States and Russia are producing, constitute a dire threat, perhaps one even more dangerous than the bipolar confrontation of the Cold War.

As if these problems were not enough, their impact has been magnified because they have been forced on us over an extremely brief period. Most of the developments just mentioned have occurred during the span of only a few generations. People have never before experienced the rate of change they face today. We find ourselves catapulted into the future before we can fully understand the present or the recent past; and the more distant past—history—that indispensable text for progressive human development, is being ignored to make room in the curricula for avalanches of new technical information. Such fundamental change, to say nothing of the rate at which it is occurring, has tended to disorient and confuse people. Values and institutions have become temporary.

The industrialization of our economy has ignited social change, thus foisting upon us political transformation. It is, of course, political change with which we are concerned in this study. However, the political developments of the past several centuries have been fostered by economic and social conditions. As such, the political ideologies described in later chapters may be viewed as *attempts to find a political accommodation to the social and economic conditions created by the* Industrial Revolution.[1] Madison, Marx, Mussolini, the Mullahs, and others developed their ideas in response to the conditions confronting them. If those conditions had been different, political thought would have been different. The two factors most responsible for the political world in which we now live are (1) *the belief that people themselves can take active steps that will improve their lives* and (2) *the Industrial Revolution*. Almost every modern social condition and political idea is supported by these two factors. The phenomenon of political ideologies is

1 *Industrialization* and the *Industrial Revolution* began when machinery was developed and set to the task of producing goods. Some people suggest that the transition from handmade to machine-made factory goods is all that the Industrial Revolution is about. But a broader view sees it continuing today. Having gone through stages of mechanization and automation, the Industrial Revolution continues to evolve and refine. Its most current phase, although probably not its last, is **cybernetics**.

Cybernetics in general has to do with the generation and exchange of information. As such, it has had a large impact on economics and production. The facet of cybernetics that is most at issue in this study is production that finds machines (computers, for example) running other machines (robotic welders, for instance). This development not only has significant economic impact but also has important social and political implications for us and is evidence that the Industrial Revolution is still in progress. Indeed, the cybernetic transition may, in the long run, visit as much social and political turmoil upon society as did the original transition from handmade to machine-made goods.

unique to our era because it is a response to a unique set of economic, social, and political circumstances.

IDEOLOGY DEFINED

The meaning of the word **ideology** is frequently debated. Dozens of different definitions have been suggested, and each has been challenged and contradicted. Indeed, political scientists cannot agree on whether ideology is a positive, negative, or neutral feature of modern society. While we have no hope of settling this controversy here, we do wish to discuss the origins of the term, explain its varying definitions, and arrive at a definition that will be useful to us during the rest of this study.

The Origin of the Term

It is generally agreed that the term *ideology* was first used by the French in the early nineteenth century, but we do not know for sure who coined it. Most of the evidence indicates that the French noble and scholar **Antoine Louis Claude Destutt de Tracy** (1754–1836) probably originated the word. Writing at the turn of the nineteenth century,[2] he used the word *ideology* in his systematic study of the Enlightenment. Like other thinkers of his time, De Tracy believed that people could use science to improve social and political conditions. To him, ideology was a study of the process of forming ideas—a "science of ideas," if you will. Ideas, De Tracy believed, are stimulated by the physical environment. Hence, *empirical learning* (the kind that is gained through observation and experience) is the only source of knowledge. Supernatural or spiritual phenomena play no part in the formation of ideas.

Although the thrust of De Tracy's thought is psychological, and therefore not of immediate concern to us, two aspects of his theories should be noted. The first is *materialism*. Thought, according to De Tracy, is generated by material stimuli only, and the formation of an idea is a physical rather than a spiritual or mystical process. The scientific and materialistic basis of ideology will be pointed out later. For now, it is sufficient to note that materialism is a dominant theme in the concept of ideology.

The second important aspect of De Tracy's thought is that *social and political improvement* was his main goal. De Tracy wanted to apply the knowledge developed from his "science of ideas" to the whole society and thereby attempt to improve human life. Thus, ideology has been closely associated with

2 Interestingly, the first English version of De Tracy's most influential work, *Elements of Ideology*, was translated by Thomas Jefferson. It was published in English in 1817.

politics from the beginning. It is therefore appropriate to give the word a political connotation unless a different context is indicated.

Karl Marx (1818–1883) and **Friedrich Engels** (1820–1895) developed a second theory about what ideology is. In *The German Ideology*, they contradict De Tracy. They argue that rather than a "science of ideas," ideology is nothing more than a fabrication used by a particular group of people to justify themselves. The concepts in an ideology were completely subjective, they said, and were used to justify the ruling class of society. Thus, the dominant political ideas, or ideology, of any society would always reflect the interests of the ruling class and, according to Marx and Engels, were based on incorrect interpretations of the nature of politics.

The distinguished German scholar Karl Mannheim (1893–1947) also studied ideology. While he basically agreed with Marx's conclusions, Mannheim contributed an analysis from a historical perspective. He compared the ideology of one historical era to that of another, arguing that no ideology could be fully understood unless this historical relationship was clear. No ideology, in other words, can be understood unless we grasp the ideas of the previous era, and investigate the impact of the previous ideology on the current one.

Contemporary Definitions

Americans tend not to view political issues ideologically. Impatient with theoretical arguments, they consider ideologies idealistic and impractical concepts. Yet, political theory and ideology give us statements of objectives by which to guide our actions and by which to assess our accomplishments. Without theory, political policy can be shortsighted, eclectic, and inconsistent. Further, ideologies are often used to persuade people to accomplish the goals of the state. Most political scientists readily agree that ideology is an important factor in our lives. Still, they are no closer than earlier authorities to an agreement on exactly what the term means.

Frederick Watkins, in his insightful book *The Age of Ideology*, suggests that ideology comes almost entirely from the political extremes. Ideologies, he argues, are always opposed to the status quo. They propose an abrupt change in the existing order; therefore, he says they are usually militant, revolutionary, and violent. Watkins goes on to point out that most ideologies are stated in simplistic terms, utopian in their objectives, and usually display great faith in humankind's potential for finding success and happiness. Conservatism, lacking such optimism in human faculties, he writes, defends the status quo, resisting change, and thus is an *anti-ideology*, according to Watkins. Ideology emerged from the rationalist tradition, in which it was assumed that most problems could be solved if people applied reason rightly. As will be seen in Chapter 2, however, the conservative rejects this optimistic assumption about the capacity of human reason. Watkins, therefore, argues the conservative is opposed to the basic assumption of any ideology.

This particular point occasions some difficulty. It is true that conservatives are quick to argue that reason has its limits. Yet, they do not completely reject reason as a means by which political problems can be solved. To argue, therefore, that conservatism is not an ideology may be to misinterpret. Another modern commentator, David Ingersoll, suggests that each ideology includes an assessment of the status quo and a view of the future. The future is always represented as something better than the present or the past. Exactly what is better for the society is usually expressed in materialistic terms; for example, both Marx and Hitler envisioned a society of great bounty. In addition, Ingersoll asserts that each ideology contains a definite *plan of action* by which this better future can be attained. Indeed, the plan of action is central to any ideology, according to Ingersoll. Ideologies tend to convey a sense of urgency. Moreover, they are intended to stimulate people to achieve utopian objectives.

L. T. Sargent approaches the definition of ideology differently. He sees ideologies as based on the value systems of various societies. Yet, modern societies are complex and often contradictory. Thus, individuals within a society may not accept a single ideology; they may appropriate parts of several ideologies, or they may become completely attached to a single idea system. In any event, Sargent makes the point that ideologies are simplistic in their approach to problem solving. Ideology, he writes, "provides the believer with a picture of the world both as it is and as it should be, and, in so doing … organizes the tremendous complexity of the world into something fairly simple and understandable."[3]

Finally, Terrence Ball cautions that developing too rigid a definition of ideology would be to miss the point. Rather than a phenomenon composed of precise ingredients, Ball views ideology in more flexible and academic terms. It is, he suggests, "an agenda of things to discuss, questions to ask, hypotheses to make. We should be able to use it when considering the interaction between ideas and politics."[4] For Ball, ideology exists whenever politics is motivated by intellectual rather than random impulses. Hence, the definition of ideology should not be construed narrowly or be understood to be dependent on any but the loosest criteria.

Clearly, the authorities do not agree on the definition of ideology. Opinions range widely, from the exclusive views of Watkins to the expansive perspective of Ball. In any case, it is clear that, at least for our purposes, five properties can be identified that are significant to the definition of ideology. It may be true, as Ball implies, that not all of these factors are essential for ideology, but, at the same time, these factors are both common and important in the ideologies we will study.

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3 L. T. Sargent, *Contemporary Political Ideologies*, rev edn. (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1972).

4 Terrence Ball and Richard Dagger, eds, *Ideals and Ideologies*, 2nd edn. (New York: HarperCollins, 1995).

Ideology is first and foremost a *political term*, though is often applied to other contexts. Second, ideology consists of a view of the present and a vision of the future. This preferred future is presented as a *materialistic* improvement over the present, and is often attainable within a single lifetime. As a result, one of the outstanding features of an ideology is its offer of hope. Third, ideology is *action-oriented*. It not only describes reality and offers a better future, but most important, it prescribes specific steps that must be taken to attain this goal. Fourth, ideology is *directed toward the masses*. If nothing else, Karl Marx, Benito Mussolini, Vladimir Lenin, Mao Zedong, and Adolf Hitler had one thing in common: they directed their appeal to the masses. They were interested in mobilizing huge numbers of people. Finally, because ideologies are directed at the masses, they are usually couched in fairly *simple* terms that can be understood by ordinary people. For the same reason, ideologies are usually *motivational* in tone, tending to call on people to make a great effort to attain the ideological goals. This mass appeal in itself implies confidence in people's ability to improve their lives through positive action. Remember, *all modern societies are democratic in this sense of the word*.

Applying these criteria to documents as seemingly different as the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Communist Manifesto*, we can see that the two tracts are not only ideological statements, but are also very similar in important ways. Each of them is assuredly political. They each made statements about the world as seen by their authors and, implicitly at least, conjured how the world could be better. These observations were set out in common, assertive language appropriate for the times in which they were written, and they were each addressed to a wide readership. **Thomas Jefferson** wrote of the existence of certain inalienable rights and contended that governments were created to further these rights. He then went on to allege a large number of British violations of American rights. Similarly, Karl Marx focused on the essential equality of people and lamented that society had been divided into exploiting and exploited social classes. Finally, each document calls for action—the same action, interestingly enough—*revolution*. Each author claimed that the downtrodden have an inherent right to rise up and cast off their oppressors or exploiters. In these terms, the two essays are virtually identical.

Of course, in other respects, they differ. Jefferson focused on political factors and asserted the authority of natural law, but he confined his statement to explaining why the Anglo-American colonies were in rebellion against the British government. Any invitation for others to engage in rebellion could only be inferred. Marx, on the other hand, invoked what he understood to be economic laws governing all people, and he called on workers *everywhere* to unite and to make themselves free. The theoretical differences and the intended focus of each essay aside, however, the two documents are remarkably similar as ideological statements.

Ideology and Philosophy

Finally, it may be useful to distinguish between philosophy and ideology. Previous eras enjoyed much more stable conditions than we now do. Although not much was known, almost everything was explained by spiritual or metaphysical propositions. Things were as they were because God intended them to be; and, consequently, to question the basic order of life was certainly inappropriate and perhaps even heretical.

Moreover, government was the province of an elite. If actions were guided by theory at all, the theoretical base was normative and lodged in complex tracts that only the best educated were likely to understand. Ordinary people were not involved in politics, nor were they expected to be acquainted with the goals or justifications for government beyond the most rudimentary principles. Accordingly, the *philosophy* that served as the theoretical base for the society was available to only a tiny percentage of the population.

Although each ideology is founded on a set of philosophical beliefs, philosophy is composed of three basic characteristics that distinguish it from ideology. First, philosophy tends to be *profound*. It attempts to penetrate the veneer of human existence and to address the actual meaning of life itself. To do so, it must deal with the subject in a very complex and holistic manner. It tries to analyze the totality of human experience to find the meaning contained therein. And, by so doing, philosophy produces generalizations by which future conduct should be pursued and by which actions can be assessed. By contrast, ideology is shallow and uncomplicated. The world is usually explained in very simple terms, and little attempt is made to deal with the multitudinous variables we confront. Usually, "right" and "wrong" are made very clear, and people are simply asked to believe in them and to act accordingly.

Second, although philosophy can be the set of principles upon which an entire society bases its actions, it can also be taken up by a single *individual*. Indeed, when reading philosophy, one is often struck by the feeling that the author is communicating directly with the reader and is not necessarily trying to reach a larger audience. Ideology, on the other hand, is addressed to huge numbers of people rather than to the individual. Ideology, as previously indicated, is the theoretical base for the mass mobilization upon which each modern nation is founded.

Third, philosophy tends to encourage *introspection*. The objective of philosophy is to explain the universe and help the reader find a place in it. Philosophy requires sustained contemplation and examines profound questions about the human condition. While philosophy may advise measures to improve society, *action is not its central focus—understanding is*: it is through greater understanding that human happiness is presumably achieved. Ideologies, instead, ask for people to take definite steps to improve their lives. People are not asked to investigate the complex and underlying variables of human existence. Instead, they are called on to act, and this emphasis on

action often demands suspending contemplation. Indicative of the orientation towards action, Marx, himself holding a Ph.D. in philosophy, said, "The philosophers have only *interpreted* the world, the point is to *change it*" (emphasis added).

While ideologies may ask people to transform themselves, the objective of such personal change is not limited to creating a better person. Instead, most ideologies are directed outward. People should change themselves in order to better modify the environment around them. The world must be made to conform to the needs and conditions of the people who subscribe to a given ideology.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What have important economic and social factors of the past two centuries contributed to the development of ideologies?
2. How does ideology relate to government and to politics?
3. In what ways have scholars viewed the nature and utility of ideologies?
4. What are the five traits common to most ideologies?
5. Differentiate between ideology and philosophy.

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CHAPTER 2

The Spectrum of Political Attitudes

PREVIEW

The terms *radical*, *liberal*, *moderate*, *conservative*, and *reactionary* are some of the most common words used in political discourse. In order to gain a clear understanding of what these five terms represent, the concepts of political change and political values must be discussed in relation to them. Radicals are people who find themselves extremely discontented with the status quo. Consequently, they wish an immediate and profound change in the existing order, advocating something new and different for society.

Liberals are considerably less dissatisfied, but still wish to change the system significantly. All liberals share a belief in the equality, intelligence, and competence of people. Moderates find little wrong with the existing society, and their reluctance to change it is exceeded only by the conservatives. Differing from liberals in most respects, conservatives are dubious about bold efforts to improve the world for fear that incompetent meddling might actually make things worse. Only the reactionaries reject current institutions and modern values. They would see society retrace its steps and adopt former political norms and policies.

Being clear about the values people hold is usually more revealing about where they fall on the spectrum than simply knowing what policy changes they want. Basically, people on the right of the political spectrum revere authority, tradition, elitism, and property rights, whereas those on the left emphasize political liberty, social change, human equality, and human rights.

Beyond these philosophical convictions, there are several other motivations that cause people to lean to the left or right. Psychological factors about the need for change are important. Economic circumstances also play a part. Age is another factor. Finally, one's view about the condition of human nature is probably the most important consideration in determining with which side of the spectrum one will identify. Each of these factors helps predict people's attitudes about policy alternatives.

UNDERSTANDING THE SPECTRUM

Before studying specific ideologies, we should develop an understanding of certain basic concepts. The terms *radical*, *liberal*, *moderate*, *conservative*, and *reactionary* are among the most commonly heard words in political discussion. Any coherent explanation of these terms must include consideration of two basic concepts: *change* and *values*. We will begin with an analysis of political change, and then turn to an investigation of these terms as they relate to intent, or political values. Before proceeding, however, we should arrange the terms radical, liberal, moderate, conservative, and reactionary along a continuum in order to gain a graphic perspective on them (see Figure 2.1).

When the terms are arrayed from left to right like this, we can see certain relationships emerge. For instance, the radical is at the far left of the spectrum, and the reactionary is at the opposite extreme.[1] This alignment tells us something important. In politics, the term *radical* means an extremist of the left but not of the right. In everyday conversation, however, the term radical is used simply to refer to something extreme, with no reference to either side of the spectrum or any particular philosophical conviction.

CHANGE, OR POLICY OPTIONS

People at each point on the political spectrum have an attitude about changing the existing political system—that is, the **status quo**—by adopting certain policies or pursuing certain courses of action.[2] Political change is endemic to any society. By learning each group's attitude about fundamental changes, we will be taking a large step toward understanding what the terms radical, liberal, moderate, conservative, and reactionary mean.

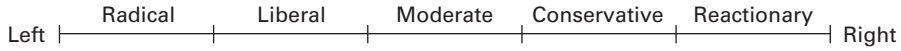

FIGURE 2.1
The political spectrum

1 The terms *left* and *right* come to us from the French political experience. Those who generally supported the policies of the monarch were seated to his right, and those who proposed changes in the system were arranged to his left.

2 While *status quo* means existing conditions, one should not be too literal about it when applied to the spectrum. In this case, it pertains only to fundamental things, like deep-rooted beliefs or foundational institutions. For example, if a conservative wants to change a system in order to make it more conservative, their wish for change is certainly conservative and not liberal or reactionary. Put differently, the mere fact that a conservative wishes a superficial change to an institution does not mean he or she is no longer conservative. The deciding question is whether a particular policy is intended to change society fundamentally or keep it the same.

Political change can be a very complex subject. With reference to the spectrum of political attitudes, we must learn four things about the change or policy option desired. First, what is the *direction*—forward or backward—in which a proposed change would carry society? In other words, is the change progressive or retrogressive?

At this point, the reader should be on guard. Our society generally has a favorable bias toward progress. This is so because our ideological origins are rooted in eighteenth-century British liberalism—*classical liberalism*—which advocated progressive change. But, in fact, progress is not necessarily good or bad. It has no intrinsic value at all. *Progressive change* simply means a change from the status quo to something new and different in that society. Conversely, *retrogressive change* refers to a return to a policy or institution that has been used by that society in the past. For instance, imagine the adoption of a universal compulsory government medical insurance program in the United States, paid for with federal tax money. This would be a progressive policy because, except for Medicare, such a *single-payer system* has never existed in the United States before, and is much more extreme than the current system provided by Obamacare (especially after cuts made to the program under President Trump). On the other hand, if someone said there should be absolutely no involvement of the federal government in the health of our citizens, this would suggest returning to a condition that used to be the case in the United States, so denying the government a role in public health would be quite retrogressive, or reactionary.

The watershed between progressive and retrogressive change lies between the conservative and reactionary sectors on the spectrum, and the line between these two sectors can be taken to represent no important change at all, or a continuation of the status quo (see Figure 2.2). In other words, everyone to the left of reactionary is progressive. Even conservatives are progressives in that, although they do not want a great deal of change to the status quo, the change they will allow is new and different from what currently exists. Only the reactionary wants a change that abandons the status quo and returns to something that previously existed.

Some people might protest that they consider themselves conservative or liberal, but that on a given issue they prefer a previous institution to the present

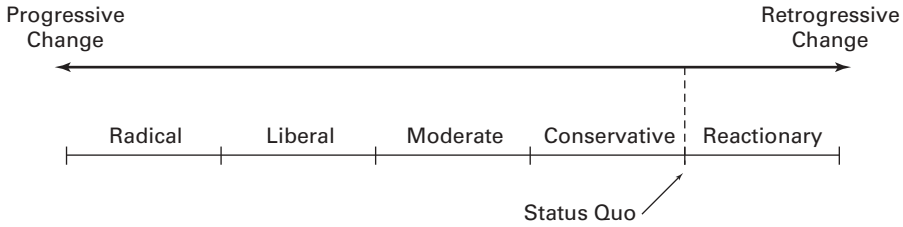

FIGURE 2.2
The position of status quo on the political spectrum

one. Does this make them reactionaries? Yes, it does—in relation to that particular issue. Although they might correctly consider themselves to be elsewhere on the spectrum in general, they—like most of us—will find themselves at several different places on the spectrum in relation to a variety of specific issues. Few of us are absolutely consistent in our views, nor is there any particular reason to be so. Indeed, upon careful scrutiny, most people will find it difficult to place themselves in any single category because their attitudes on various issues will range over two or even more sectors on the spectrum. Typically, however, we can identify a general pattern; that is, we might find ourselves supporting conservative policies more frequently than any other position on the spectrum, and consequently, we might correctly characterize ourselves as conservative, even though our views on a few ideas might be liberal or radical.

Aside from the *direction* of change, the second thing one must determine when trying to locate desired policy options on the spectrum is the *depth* of a proposed change. Would the desired change amount to a major or a minor adjustment in their society? Would it modify or replace an institution that is fundamental to their society as it now exists? If so, what is the likelihood that the proposed change will cause unforeseeable and uncontrollable effects once it is implemented? For example, a proposal at the state level to require an introductory course in political science for graduation from college would undoubtedly inconvenience and annoy some students. However, such a policy change would probably have almost no disruptive effect on the society as a whole. On the other hand, if a state were to greatly reduce funding for its college system, as some have recently done, the long-term impact is potentially enormous, changing thousands of lives and perhaps eventually affecting the society as a whole.

Once again, as with the direction of change, the watershed for the depth of change is at the line between conservative and reactionary, or at the status quo point on the spectrum. The farther people find themselves from the status quo, the more dissatisfied they are with the existing order and the more intense their desire for change (see Figure 2.3).

With the questions of direction and depth of change settled, the third aspect we must consider is the *speed* at which people want change to occur. Obviously, the more upset people are with the status quo, the more impatient they are likely to be, and, therefore, as a general rule, the more rapidly they would like to see the existing order transformed.

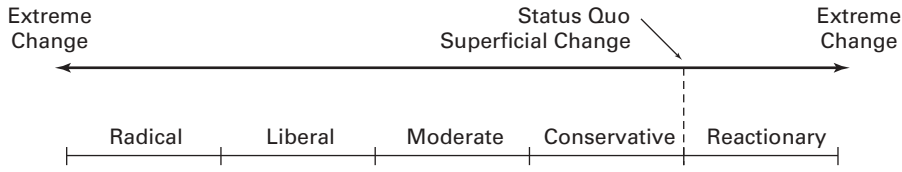

FIGURE 2.3
The desire for change as shown on the political spectrum

The last factor we must consider regarding the concept of change is the *method* used to accomplish it. Political change can take place in a variety of ways: officially or unofficially; legally, illegally, or extralegally; smoothly or abruptly; peacefully or violently. It is tempting to conclude that those who use violence to gain their political objectives are extremists. This, however, is not necessarily the case. It is true that violence is a major tool of certain extremist political groups. However, *violence is used by people at practically every point on the political spectrum*. The death penalty, property expropriation, chokeholds and other police techniques, and warfare itself are all examples of violence supported by people all along the political continuum. Thus, it is unwise to jump to conclusions about the methods others use to accomplish their political goals.

Nonetheless, it is possible to make some generalizations about the methods employed for political change. For example, the farther we are from the status quo on the political spectrum, the more likely we are to oppose the laws of society. This is because the law is a form of communication that sets forth the purposes, goals, and structures of society. People opposed to those purposes, goals, or structures will necessarily be at odds with the law. Thus, it is usually easier for conservatives to be law-abiding and patriotic, since they are satisfied with the system. Radicals, liberals, or reactionaries, by contrast, find it more difficult to abide willingly by all the laws or to wave the flag as enthusiastically as their conservative counterparts.

Still, one should not assume from this discussion that conservatives would never violate the law to achieve their political objectives. It sometimes happens that even those who control the laws of a society may not benefit from them at a given time. In such circumstances, an otherwise upstanding "pillar of society" could ignore or even violate the law. Examples include the refusal of corporations to comply with legally mandated health and safety requirements, stock market wizards and energy magnates defrauding pensioners of billions, and ordinary people cheating on their taxes.

In sum, it should be clear that the methods people use to achieve political change are complex. It is inaccurate to conclude that certain tactics are the monopoly of a single sector of the political spectrum. With the preceding general guide in mind, let us now turn to a consideration of each term on the political spectrum to determine the specific attitude of each group toward the concept of political change.

Radical

In general terms, a **radical** may be defined as a person who is extremely dissatisfied with society as it is and therefore is impatient with less than extreme proposals for changing it. Hence, all radicals favor immediate and fundamental change in society. In other words, *all radicals favor revolutionary change*. The criterion that distinguishes one radical from another most clearly is the methods they would use to bring about a particular change.

All radicals want *immediate* change at society's *foundation*, but the less extreme among them do not insist on violence as the necessary vehicle by which

to bring about social transformation. Indeed, one group of radicals, the *pacifists*, completely reject violence as a means to achieve justice. These people hold human rights to be of such great importance that no one, they believe, has the right to injure or kill another in pursuit of their political goals. Excellent examples of this attitude can be found in the careers of Mohandas Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and labor leader Cesar Chavez. Each leader organized great movements demanding immediate and profound change, yet each refused to use violence to reach his goals, even after he had suffered violence at the hands of defenders of the status quo.

Even though not all radicals are violent, they tend to be received by their adversaries with inordinately severe reactions. Owing a great debt to the philosophy of **Jean Jacques Rousseau** (1712–1778), extreme leftists make the establishment terribly uncomfortable. They challenge the most cherished values and assumptions of society. They reject the institutions of the establishment, calling for a more humane, egalitarian, and idealistic social and political system. In fact, radicals demand a society which many of us desire in the ideal but which, for practical reasons or expedience or lack of commitment, we have been unable or unwilling to create. Put differently, the radical causes us to wonder if we failed —if we settled for a less than perfect world because it was more convenient. Thus, the idealism of radicals tends to place the rest of us on the defensive.

The radicals' contempt for society's values is so complete, their remedies so unorthodox, and, perhaps, the establishment's feelings of guilt at the thought it may have failed so threatening, that radicals are often feared with an intensity far beyond what is necessary to deal with the challenge they pose. Thus, even though their numbers and influence do not demand such severe action, radical movements are often abjectly crushed. Examples of overreactions would be the official surveillance and harassment of civil rights leaders during the 1950s and 1960s, the same for leftists calling for peaceful relations between the United States and the Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China during the Cold War, and the same again for protesters of the Vietnam War (1960s and 1970s) and Afghanistan war. In some cases violence was used, like the 1968 brutalization of demonstrators by government officials at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, who, while loud and vulgar, hardly constituted a clear and present danger to the republic. Even more egregious was the 1970 National Guard shooting at Kent State University of students protesting the war in Southeast Asia.

It must be quickly pointed out that extremists on the right have also suffered egregiously at the hands of the authorities. The FBI shootouts with the Weaver family at Ruby Ridge, Idaho (1992) and with the Branch Davidian sect in Waco, Texas (1993) are examples. But they were apparently the product of boorish and arrogant government officials, rather than ones frightened by ideology.

Liberal

Liberals are placed closer than radicals to the status quo on the continuum because they are less dissatisfied with the fundamentals of society. Indeed, the

PHOTO 2.1

In 1970, protesting students were fired upon by National Guard troops at Kent State University in Ohio. A 2010 analysis of an audiotape of the shooting revealed that someone may have given the order to fire on the students.

Source: Kent State University News Service

liberal supports the basic features of that society, such as its system of government or basic economic system. Nevertheless, liberals are quick to recognize deficiencies in society and therefore are anxious to reform the system, favoring rapid and relatively far-reaching, progressive changes.

One of the most fundamental differences between radicals and liberals is the attitude of each toward the law. Radicals are basically opposed to the political system that governs them, so they are likely to oppose the law; they see it as a tool used by the elite to maintain their control. Liberals, on the other hand, generally appreciate the concept of the law, and although they want to change certain specifics of it, they will usually not violate it to accomplish their political objectives. Instead, they try to change the law through legal procedures.

Liberalism is one of the intellectual by-products of the Enlightenment, of the scientific method, and ultimately of the **Industrial Revolution**. During the medieval era, people looked heavenward for Divine relief from their wretched earthly existence. Faith in human potential, as well as esteem for humankind in general, was very low. However, the discoveries of inquisitive people such as Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton revolutionized people's attitudes toward themselves and their function in life. Through use of the scientific method, people began to make

improvements in their material existence; and in so doing, they began to develop confidence in their ability to solve problems they had previously borne with little complaint. It was not long before people concluded that if physical difficulties could be solved through the use of human reason, perhaps the same could be done with social and political problems.

This speculation led to the keystone of liberalism: *optimism about people's ability to solve their problems through the use of reason*. Accordingly, liberals are likely to apply reason to problems and be confident that, if a solution can be found, it will be discovered by rational exercise, rather than by means less responsive to human will. Liberals, therefore, tend to address social difficulties with a vigor that conservatives see as meddlesome and dangerously overconfident. The liberals' willingness to "trifle" with "tried and true" social institutions in efforts to improve them causes conservatives—those who do not share such confidence in human reason—anxiety and disquiet.

Classical and Contemporary Liberalism Change has remained the major tool of liberalism throughout its long history. Consequently, what was once desirable to liberals may be passé and unacceptable to them today, so that the exact meaning of liberalism has evolved over the years. For example, the original, or **classical liberals**, whose principal spokesman was **John Locke** (1632–1704), believed all human beings were capable of being moral, competent, and intelligent. Furthermore, Locke asserted that **natural law** applied to all people in equal measure, thus assuring their fundamental moral equality.[3] By natural law, he meant certain rules of nature governing human conduct that could be discovered through the use of reason. Revering the individual above all things in society, classical liberals believed that government oppressed people when it had too much power—therefore, the less government the better. Consider Thomas Jefferson's famous admonition, "That government governs best which governs least." In addition, private property was held in high esteem. Indeed, classical liberals believed that property was a **natural right** and that an individual's possessions were to be protected from government confiscation. However, liberals have since moved beyond Locke's views.

Contemporary liberalism, as will be seen in Chapter 5, was fathered by **Jeremy Bentham** (1748–1832), and its followers continue to uphold several of the notions developed by their classical predecessors. Contemporary liberals still view people as intelligent creatures, and remain optimistic about our ability to improve life through reason. Change, therefore, is still a major tool of the liberal. Human equality is another concept that the liberal continues to

3 Please note that by "moral equality," Locke did not mean that all people were equally moral. Instead, he meant only that all people were subject to the same moral prescriptions and limitations. No one had a greater right to kill or steal. The democratic implications of this belief are obvious.

support, but the basis for that equality has changed. Few liberals still believe in the concept of natural law. Instead, the contemporary liberal is more likely to argue that although there are many differences among individuals, all people are equally human, and their equality with one another is supremely important. Therefore, since no person is less human than any other, and since equals have no moral right to treat one another unequally, all people have the right to expect certain treatment and consideration from other people. These are called the **human rights** and are fundamentally the same as the natural rights, except for their different justifications.

In addition, contemporary liberals disagree with their classical counterparts about the nature of government. Modern liberals note that the concentration of wealth has deposited vast power in the hands of the wealthy. Further, they posit that people with economic power will use it, in part, to sustain and increase power in their own hands, thus placing the have-nots at a disadvantage. Thus, over time, the rules and power structure of society will become increasingly unequal, with the well-to-do enjoying privilege and advantage over others. Contemporary liberals, therefore, are concerned that economic power can be as oppressive as political power.

In response to this view, contemporary liberals believe government can be used by the economically weak to protect themselves against oppression by the powerful. Discovering that some people have used their control of property to unfair advantage over the less fortunate, contemporary liberals temper their belief in the individual's right to accumulate property with their concern for the happiness of society as a whole. Thus they tend to be more *egalitarian* (those who wish power and wealth to be more equally shared by all people) than the classical liberal. Moreover, rather than believing government tends to deny human liberty, as the classical liberals did, contemporary liberals believe they can use government to expand liberty by limiting the oppression that the wealthy would ordinarily impose on the poor.

Moderate

It is somewhat awkward to write about moderates because, unlike other positions on the political spectrum, there is no philosophical foundation for this category. One could cite Aristotle's advice about seeking the Golden Mean, of course, but even this goal is more one of temperament than philosophy. One must be moderately something: either moderately liberal or moderately conservative. We introduce the moderate category only because it is so often used in political discussion to describe those who find themselves liberal or conservative about some things but not really committed to either side of the spectrum with any degree of intensity.

Moderates are fundamentally satisfied with society, although they agree there is room for improvement and recognize several specific areas in need of modification. However, they insist that changes in the system should be made gradually and that no change should be so extreme as to disrupt society.

To say that moderates typically take a mild stance on the issues does not suggest that being moderate is always easy. Being moderate on an issue that engenders a highly emotional response in most others can be very difficult indeed. For example, holding a moderate position on whether abortion should be legal could be problematic. Affirmative action, tactics used against the Islamic State (ISIS), the death penalty, feminism, and extreme unequal distribution of wealth are other examples of issues on which the pro and con sides have so hardened that a less-than-absolutist stance can be unfairly seen as faint-hearted, ambivalent, and uncommitted.

Interestingly, like beauty, ideology often depends on the eye of the beholder. This phenomenon can be seen in relation to former President Barack Obama. Petulant conservatives viewed his foreign policy in the Middle East; his pledge to vacate the alleged terrorist prisoners from the American base at Guantanamo, Cuba; his effort to reform health care; and his policies to rejuvenate the economy as irresponsibly liberal and unconscionably disruptive. Meanwhile, bitterly disappointed, liberals regarded his delay in closing down the prisons at Guantanamo; his support of government collecting "megadata," information about every citizen's phone calls; and his use of drone bombings to battle Middle Eastern terrorists as betrayals of liberalism. This discontent with Obama's moderate approach to many policies must remind the president of the title of Jim Hightower's book, *There's Nothing in the Middle of the Road But Yellow Stripes and Dead Armadillos*.[4]

Conservative

Conservatives are the most supportive of the status quo and therefore are reluctant to see it changed. Being content with things as they are does not suggest that conservatives are necessarily happy with the existing system, however. Conservatives are often accused of lacking vision, but this charge is unfair. It is not the case that liberals dream of achieving a better world, whereas conservatives think the status quo is the best conceivable existence. In fact, conservatives may desire a future no less pleasant than that of the liberals—a future free of human conflict and suffering. The essential difference between the two viewpoints rests on their respective confidence in when (or, indeed, whether) the ideal can be accomplished. Conservatives support the status quo not so much because they like it but because they believe that it is the best that can be achieved at the moment. Put differently, conservatives oppose change because they doubt it will result in something better, not because they do not want improvement.

4 When it comes to Obama's successor, Donald Trump, most of his policies thus far have been decidedly more conservative. As only a few examples, consider his tax cuts, immigration restrictions, and environmental deregulation. However, that has not stopped conservatives from criticizing his profligate deficit spending.

Lacking confidence in society's ability to improve through bold policy initiatives, most conservatives support only very slow, incremental, and superficial alteration of the system. The most cautious among them often resist even seemingly minor change. They tend to see an intrinsic value in existing institutions and are unwilling to tamper with them, claiming that doing so might seriously damage that which tradition has perfected.

Those conservatives closest to the status quo on the spectrum are the least inclined to desire change. And, although it seems unlikely that many people are absolutely content with the system and are opposed to any change whatsoever, some people do take this position, and each of us could probably find some issues where we would prefer no change at all. However, not all conservatives are equally resistant to change. In fact, most conservatives will accept some deviation from the status quo, be it ever so slight, and *the change they will accept is progressive*.

The primary reason conservatives are suspicious about the prospects of improving society through deliberate political policy is that *they do not believe human reason is powerful enough* to completely understand, let alone solve, society's problems. They obviously acknowledge the existence of reason; but they are wary of relying too heavily on it for solutions to human problems. Liberals and conservatives agree that people have complex natures composed of moral and immoral, rational and irrational impulses. They differ, however, on which attributes dominate. Liberals believe that human reason is powerful, that it can be used successfully to solve society's problems, and that it can also be employed by people to overcome evil impulses. Thus, liberals see human beings as trustworthy creatures who will normally behave themselves when left alone. Conservatives have less faith that people can use reason to restrain their animalistic impulses and their emotions; they mistrust human nature. Conservatives see people as relatively base and even somewhat sinister. They suspect the motives of others and tend to believe that, unless deterred somehow, people will take advantage of unsuspecting or weaker fellows. Consequently, whereas liberals believe that little government control is normally necessary to ensure human compatibility, conservatives tend to favor authoritarian controls over individuals in society. This explains why conservatives are the "law and order" advocates in society. They believe that unless police forces are large, laws harsh, and prisoners uncomfortable, people will not be deterred from crime.

Because they mistrust reason, conservatives often rely on **irrationalist**[5] rather than rationalist solutions to complex social, economic, and political problems. To conservatives, human reason is of limited use in making life better in these areas. Although reason can be used to deal with minor difficulties—technological improvements, for example—it cannot be counted on to successfully solve difficult

5 The term *irrationalist* is not intended to imply that conservatives lack the rational or intellectual prowess of their opponents. In this book, the term *irrationalist* applies only to persons who see severe limitations in people's ability to solve complex socio-economic problems through the use of reason.

problems such as eliminating poverty or ending war. Therefore, conservatives tend to place great reliance for dealing with society's problems on the passage of time, authority, institutions, religions, and traditions. For example, whereas liberals might try to solve a social problem such as poverty by creating a government program to eliminate it—President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty for example—conservatives are likely to eschew this rationalist approach and counsel that the matter be left to the "market" to decide. The market is beyond anyone's direct control. It operates in response to the demand and supply of hundreds of millions of individuals with no overriding scheme or management. In fact, conservatives often talk about the market as though it is guided by some sort of *superhuman* wisdom, such as **Adam Smith's** "invisible hand" (see Chapter 5). For instance, a conservative solution for poor-performing public schools is not to increase their budgets, as liberals would suggest, but rather to introduce more *competition* and *consumer choice* for parents (free market concepts). This would entail issuing vouchers or tax rebates that parents could use to enroll their child in any school, including private ones; or, converting traditional public schools to "charter" schools that operate more independently of the local bureaucracy (and often without union protections for teachers and staff).

Whether this free market approach works or not—strong arguments can be made on either side of this case—the point is that conservatives prefer to leave solutions to major social problems to phenomena uncontrolled by deliberate rational acts. Moreover, conservatives value longevity for its own sake and believe that one of the justifications for preserving a practice or an institution is the fact that it was worthwhile in the past, and has survived the test of time. Obviously, this attitude encourages very little change in society.

Liberals and conservatives also differ with respect to the concept of human equality. Liberals recognize that people differ from one another: some are stronger, more intelligent, better looking than others, and so on. But, these are only superficial differences according to the left. "We all bleed red," they argue, emphasizing that beneath the surface all people are alike. The most important and determining feature of people is that they are all human, and they are each equally human—no one is more human than the other. Thus, if humanity is the most important of our features, and we are each equally human, then equality must be the condition that governs our conduct toward one another.

Conservatives take the opposite view. Yes, they recognize the biological similarity among people, but they argue that this is relatively unimportant given the enormous variation in qualities among us. To the liberal protestation about everyone having red blood, conservatives respond by asking, "So what?" Emphasizing that crucial inequalities have always existed among people, conservatives insist that to construct a society on any other assumption is folly.

Far from a simple academic debate, questioning the importance of human equality is fundamental to politics. Politics is largely caught up in the problem of how to distribute wealth and power justly in society. If one believes that human equality is fundamental, then morally one must distribute societies'

benefits equally. If, however, human equality is inconsequential—or does not exist at all—it would be unjust to insist on an equal distribution of wealth and power.

Because liberals believe all people are equal, and that human equality is the most compelling fact about people, they are *egalitarians*; believing a just society will take steps to distribute wealth and power equally. Just how equally wealth and power should be distributed depends upon one's view about how important human equality is. While all leftists believe it is the most compelling feature, only the most extreme leftists—certain radicals—demand that equality eclipse all other qualities in determining the distribution of society's benefits.

On the contrary, most conservatives and reactionaries believe that human equality is a myth. And while *American* conservatives may accept the principle of human equality because of the heavy influence of classical liberalism in the US, they still oppose society's doing much to reward human equality. In other words, although American conservatives agree that people are equal, they do not believe that human equality is important. Life, they aver, is like a race or contest. Equality is only the beginning point and therefore should not be rewarded. Instead, people's accomplishments throughout life should be rewarded. Although people are equally human, the rightists say, they did nothing to become human or equal and therefore deserve no particular social or political benefits because of it. Both of these are powerful arguments, and indeed, the way you come down on this issue will go a long way toward determining where you might find yourself on the spectrum.

Conservatism has long been a prominent political position, but it was not until **Edmund Burke** (1729–1797) put pen to paper that it was given a formal philosophical base. The well-governed society, Burke argued, is one in which people know their place. "The rich, the able, and the well-born" govern, whereas the people of lower social rank recognize their betters and willingly submit to their rule. Should they refuse—should the ordinary people try to govern themselves, as in France during Burke's time—the end result can only be disaster, for nothing noble can come from the mediocre.

Burke was not content, however, to see the elite rule with no admonition for temperance; for although they were the best in society, they too were human and were afflicted with the same frailties as the commoners, albeit to a lesser degree. The elite, according to Burke, are responsible for ruling benevolently and effectively. Power is not to be used by the rulers to suppress the masses. Still, nothing good will result if either group pretends that inferior people share equal political rights with the ruling group. Decrying the "false" values of liberalism, Burke put his case bluntly when he wrote:

> The occupation of a hair-dresser, or of a working tallow-chandler, cannot be a matter of honor to any person—to say nothing of a number of other more servile employments. Such description of men ought not to suffer

> oppression from the state; but the state suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, are permitted to rule.[6]

Interestingly, the present conservative position on private property is, to some extent, quite close to the classical liberal attitude, in that both regard private property as an inalienable right of the individual. The similarity is limited, however, since the conservative goes on to suggest that wealth is one of the important factors that distinguish one person's value to society from another's. Conservatives believe that property rights dominate virtually every other right. Consequently, government has no legitimate power to interfere with the individual's accumulation or use of private property unless this activity causes injury, death, or the destruction of another's property, and even those conditions are allowable under certain circumstances. For example, the American Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers are among the most vociferous opponents of the government mandating dramatic action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These gases heavily contribute to global warming, and its attendant effects of rising sea levels, longer and more destructive wildfire seasons, severe drought, and other worrisome trends (see Chapter 13).

On the other hand, persuaded that people with great wealth often use their influence to stack the deck against the less fortunate, liberals tend to favor using government as an equalizer. For example, they usually favor government regulation of business, arguing that irresponsible corporate behavior encouraged by the profit motive should be tempered by the law. In the case of pollution or otherwise harmful products, liberals assert that free market solutions are insufficient because most shoppers focus on the finished product and its price, rather than the conditions under which it was produced. This lapse, however, should not be used as an excuse to allow manufacturers to knowingly endanger consumers, as many continue to do. Consider just two of the most egregious cases: for over a decade, Takata Corporation concealed evidence that its airbags could explode while deploying, shooting shrapnel into the car interiors. Several deaths and many injuries have been reported and now more than 65 million cars from different manufacturers have been recalled in America alone, the largest recall in U.S. history. Similarly, General Motors (GM) ignored reports of defective ignition switches for a similar period of time, resulting in hundreds of injuries and deaths and the recall of 30 million vehicles GM produced over more than a decade.

Different Strains of Conservatism Just as there are two distinctly different kinds of liberals, classical and contemporary, conservatism can also be divided. Whereas liberals tend to be egalitarians, conservatives tend toward *elitism*, favoring a stratified society based on one or another perception of merit. Those who are referred to as *Tories* closely follow the prescriptions of Burke. They make no bones about the fact that the excellent of society should rule, but at the

6 *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790.

same time, they should govern with dignity and benevolence. Tories look for leadership in a ruling class, one that has a civic duty to govern the less able. They call upon the rulers to ignore selfish impulses and govern in the interests of society as a whole. As Burke's statement above directs, the mediocre should certainly not rule, but neither should they be oppressed. Although it is a paternalistic approach, Toryism at least demands that the elite rulers govern with a social conscience and strive to do what is "best" for all people in society.

A second group, who are called the *entrepreneurs*, are much more individualistic and sometimes almost populist in their approach. Whereas the Tories look to an elite class to rule, the entrepreneurs might be seen as "democratic elitists," believing that the nation's leaders can come from any stratum of society. "The cream rises to the top," they believe, and the government and other social institutions should allow the greatest latitude possible for individual accomplishment. Otherwise, they might impede the excellent from excelling. In contrast to the Tories, the entrepreneurs demand less self-restraint and see government not as an obligation of one's station, but as an instrument by which superior individuals can better express their own authority. Instead of viewing government as a tool to shepherd society to noble goals, entrepreneurs want to limit government restraint on individual economic behavior so as to facilitate the elevation of the excellent and the devolution of the uncompetitive. Hence private enterprise, unregulated by the government, is the principal objective of the entrepreneurs. Columnist George Will and, to a much lesser extent, former President George H. W. Bush are American examples of Toryism. But the number of American Tories is very small today. Much more numerous are the entrepreneurs, who are led, at least symbolically, by former President Ronald Reagan, former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich, talk-show host Rush Limbaugh, and more recently, President Donald Trump. Curiously, former President George W. Bush was also an entrepreneur. His policies were much closer to Ronald Reagan's than to his father's in that he had a simple "good" versus "evil" approach in foreign policy, and on the domestic side he pursued a classic supply-side economic policy (explained later in this chapter) and each often promoted economic development at the expense of the environment (see Chapter 13). The same can be said for President Trump's domestic policies of deregulation and tax cuts that predominantly benefit businesses and wealthy investors.[7]

Complicating the mix further is the recent emergence of two other strains of American conservatism: the *social conservatives* (sometimes called "theocons") and the *neoconservatives* (*neocons*). Focusing largely, although not entirely, on domestic policy, the social conservatives are closely associated with fundamentalist religious groups (Pentecostals, Evangelicals, Southern Baptists,

7 Of course, the conservative entrepreneurs might balk at President Trump's interference in the free market with protectionist trade tariffs aimed at China, Europe, and others, and his hard-line stance on immigration, both legal and illegal, but these populist policies can be explained under the banner of another core conservative value discussed later in the chapter: nationalism.

Jehovah's Witnesses), who comprise about 26 percent of the U.S. population, and Roman Catholics and Mormons. Brushing aside constitutional prohibitions against government "respecting an establishment of religion," these social conservatives insist that public policy unerringly reflect their Christian beliefs and insist that tax dollars be used to support their social organizations. (These efforts were successful under President George W. Bush, and, perhaps surprisingly to the theocons, many of their values and objectives were also endorsed by President Obama; witness Obama's support of Bush's faith-based initiatives, regardless of the entanglement of government funds and religious organizations.) Thus, social conservatives are less interested than economic conservatives in tax cuts, low government spending, and balanced budgets. Instead, they focus on government support of Christian social issues, including prayer in public schools, faith-based initiatives for social services, removing Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection from school curricula, securing school vouchers and tax write-offs for students attending parochial schools, prohibiting abortion, banning same-sex marriages, and so forth.

While religious fundamentalists were already mobilized before the 2000 presidential election of George W. Bush, his victory galvanized and energized

PHOTO 2.2

US Representative Steve King speaks at a Tea Party protest against big government. [Image cropped around Rep. Steve King and surrounding signs]

Source: © Bloomberg/Contributor

the movement, and they became a powerful force of support for his re-election in 2004. Since then, the theocons have aggressively advanced their agenda. It is important, however, to note that while social conservatives agree on many things, they do not march in lockstep on all issues. For instance, Catholics oppose the death penalty, while fundamentalists strongly favor it. Some fundamentalists are sure "end times" (Armageddon) are near and want government policy towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to reflect that; whereas other theocons see this as an inappropriate and futile attempt to meddle with God's plan. Extremism among Christian fundamentalists is also a factor to be considered. Their conviction of righteousness has encouraged pandering politicians to mouth platitudes about their issues, while casting votes contrary to the economic interests of these supporters. Moreover, pursuing "God's will," they have grown impatient with other points of view, and have taken to shouting down opponents and even committing violence.[8] This growing incivility and righteous extremism has also infected other elements of the right-wing such as the Tea Party movement and recent election campaigns, causing more temperate people to turn away from the public discourse on some of our most important issues. This is dangerous because democracy is based on open expressions of opposing ideas.

The second group of recently emerged conservatives is the neoconservatives who focus on foreign policy and were the most influential advisors to President George W. Bush in that field. Although a tiny group of people, the neocons are well financed and creative intellectually. They posit that American values and institutions are superior to all others throughout the world, and with the demise of the Soviet Union, the United States is the victor of the Cold War and the world's sole superpower. It therefore has a responsibility to use its might to bring American virtues to the rest of the world. The 2003 American invasion and occupation of Iraq is a manifestation of this chauvinistic and imperialistic policy. Vice President Dick Cheney, Paul Wolfowitz, Douglas Feith, I. Lewis (Scooter) Libby, Richard Pearl, Robert James Woolsey Jr. (CIA director under President Clinton), and William Kristol are leading neocons, all of whom held high government posts and/or exercised substantial influence during the George W. Bush administration. Their failure to find an active WMD (i.e. weapons of mass destruction) program in Iraq, which neocons used as a primary justification for the war, and the costly and tragic debacle that followed, have greatly diminished neocon influence among conservatives. Still, Wolfowitz and several other prominent neocons served as foreign policy advisors to 2016 Republican presidential hopeful, Jeb Bush.

Their differences aside, all conservatives share similar goals. They revere tradition, history, and established institutions. Most important, because they are suspicious of human efforts to make great improvements in society through

8 A worrying trend also seen in extremist leftist groups like Antifa (anti-fascists), who have used similar tactics to disrupt speeches by conservatives on college campuses, or engage in violent counter-protests at far-right rallies.