

Trump: Flaming Liberal?

**(An analysis of the New Nationalism as a descendant of
Liberalism)**



Karla Eickhoff

What is ideology?

Ideology = Beliefs + Thinking Patterns/Heuristics

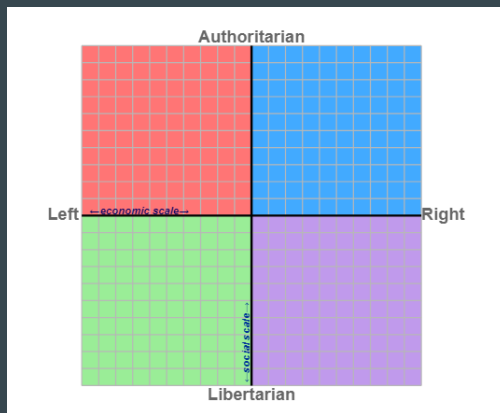
Normative Beliefs + Descriptive Beliefs

Can be more than just what you identify with, especially given modern tendency to overestimate one's centrism/non-bias

Typology (and why I'm NOT using it)

-Unidirectional left-to-right is just a theory -- and not a useful one

-One alternative: Political Compass



(Exemplifies the flawedness of typology, but still too reductive for my purposes)

-The self-identification problem

Liberalism and its History

Definition (debatable, but we have to use one):

Liberty & Equality are to be maximized, as achieved by fair, neutral institutions.

-Built into US ideals (FREEDOM!!!), Alliances with Leftism & Rightism

-Neoliberalism

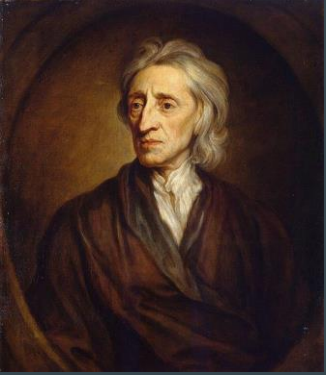
-New Nationalism

How Ideals Get Twisted



Four Exemplary Thinkers, Four Telling Tenets

John Locke: Founder of Liberalism



F. A. Hayek: Founder of Neoliberalism



Ronald Reagan: Neoliberal Policymaker



Donald Trump: Magnate of 'Liberal' Plutocracy



1. Valorization of Freedom: Do they think that liberty is the most important societal value?
2. Territorialism of Progress: Do they think their thinking is the only way to move society forward?
3. Distrust of Institutional Thought: Do they think that institutions and collectivized thinking are dangerous or malicious?
4. Economism: Do they identify the free market as a liberative alternative to formal institutions?

Tenet 1: Valorization of Freedom

Locke:

- “State of Nature” (absence of political power) as utopia
- Law still exists, but is Natural Law, upon which any person can judge

Hayek:

- Taken as a given, most ideas boil down to preserving freedom
- Economic freedom as more authentic/permanent than political freedom

Reagan:

- Government as anti-freedom, major spending cuts: education, arts, etc.

Trump:

- To supporters, represents reclamation of freedom
- Freedom of businesses equivalent to freedom of individuals

Tenet 2: Territorialism of Progression

Locke:

- Mostly unclear (Liberalism was new)
- Contrast with Patriarchal Monarchism in First Treatise
- Progress is backwards--pre-government is natural state

Hayek:

- Every single aspect of Communism is antithetical to freedom & progress
- Opposed conservatism: "free market wants to go somewhere."

Reagan:

- Revived & Crystallized American Exceptionalism

Trump:

- Fiercely American Exceptionalist
- Claims ideological ancestors /w convenience

Tenet 3: Distrust of Institutional Thought

Locke:

- “State of Nature” utopia is absence of institutions.
- When Natural Law is evident, institutions are not required to judge upon it

Hayek:

- Rejected “social justice”
- Claimed “invisible hand” was more effective than rational design
- Criticized “scientism”

Reagan:

- Partially unclear, commented little on academia/scholarship (tellingly?)
- Saw his views as independent of ideology: “I didn’t leave the Democrats, they left me”

Trump:

- Fierce distrust of academia, scientific authorities, most media
- Does not categorize his ideology

Tenet 4: Economism

Locke:

Unclear & debated

-Labour theory of property

-Lockean Proviso

-Connection to Adam Smith

(Also unclear & debated)

Hayek:

-Heavily emphasized: Economic freedom > Political freedom

Reagan:

-Reaganomics: top policy priority

-Free market is the best arbiter

Trump:

-Entrepreneur history as leadership style

-Retains Reagan-like policies, but less central to ethos

Brief Discussion: What does this mean for the Left?

- Within this context, what is today's Democratic Party?
- What does this mean about the 2016 outcome and Biden's chances in 2020?
- Can Left Liberalism be a consistent ideology?
- *Will* Left Liberalism be a consistent ideology?