



Eight Ways to Run the Country: A New and Revealing Look at Left and Right

By Brian Patrick Mitchell

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Political partisans want you to choose only between Left and Right, Red and Blue, Us and Them. But the reality is that Americans are deeply divided in more ways than one, and the savvy voter, no less than the savvy politician, must make more sense of things. *Eight Ways to Run the Country* explains what conventional political theory cannot, offering a profoundly illuminating look at our political past and our present differences.

Eight Ways doesn't do away with Left and Right, but it defines them in better terms and adds a whole new dimension to explain what Left and Right can't. It correctly pegs the ideological poles and thus brings easy-to-understand order to the dizzying diversity of political perspectives. It places neoconservatives into historical context, illuminating both what they share with other conservatives and how their differences have wrought a change in the character of the Right. It explains the recurring attempts to define an independent, non-ideological center. It provides the best definition of populism to be found. Finally, it relates the political heritage of the American Founders to the politics of today.

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Eight Ways to Run the Country: A New and Revealing Look at Left and Right By Brian Patrick Mitchell **Bibliography**

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Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Despite the momentary unity prompted by the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Americans are more polarized than ever, defying the simple demarcations of Right and Left, Republican and Democrat. Veteran reporter Mitchell refines current conventional wisdom about the Right and the Left in American politics. He begins by exploring the historical context for the current political positions and personalities, and the influence of economic and social concerns. Mitchell identifies four main political traditions (republican constitutionalism, libertarian individualism, progressive democracy, and plutocratic nationalism) that have been boiled down to the Left and the Right, in gross terms. These traditions have actually given rise to eight distinct political perspectives, and Mitchell devotes a chapter to each: communitarian, progressive, radical, individualist, paleolibertarian, paleoconservative, theoconservative, and neoconservative. He includes commentary from politicians, religious leaders, and others. In the final chapter, he examines political trends and how the eight political perspectives may change or affect public policy. Readers will enjoy trying to find themselves on the various scales provided. *Vanessa Bush*

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Review

"Whether a pro-politico, a C-Span junkie, or a political neophyte, Brian Mitchell's *Eight Ways to Run the Country* is the best shortcut I have seen to really knowing what you are talking about when it comes to the complicated 21st century political landscape. power in these increasingly confusing political times." -

Examiner.com/Washington Examiner

"Veteran reporter Mitchell refines current conventional wisdom about the Right and the Left in American politics. He begins by exploring the historical context for the current political positions and personalities, and the influence of economic and social contexts. Mitchell identifies four main political traditions (republican constitutionalism, libertarian individualism, progressive democracy, and plutocratic nationalism), that have been boiled down to the Left and the Right, in gross terms. These traditions have actually given rise to eight distinct political perspectives, and Mitchell devotes a chapter to each....Readers will enjoy trying to find themselves on the various scales provided." - **Booklist**

"Dissatisfied with prior schemes for categorizing political ideologies, Mitchell proposes his own typology. He begins by boiling down political differences down to support or opposition to *arche* (the concept of rank) and *kratos* (the use of force by the state and others) and then deriving from this distinction the four political traditions of the Anglo-American experience: republican constitutionalism, libertarian individualism, progressive democracy, and plutocratic nationalism. Further identifying intermediate steps between them, he argues that the contemporary American political scene can be characterized as consisting of eight political perspectives: individualist, paleolibertarian, paleoconservative, theoconservative, neoconservative, communitarian, progressive, radical, and individualist. He offers a chapter on each of these perspectives, detailing how they are the result of differing attitudes towards *arche* and *kratos* and the positions this leads them towards." - **Reference & Research Book News**

"What to my mind makes his book valuable is less its reconceptualization of the categories of left and right than its usefulness as a political and philosophical primer for those who would like to understand the ideological landscape in America....[i]f you'd like to understand and make sense of the various branches of conservatism and libertarianism, as well as the various divisions that exist to this day on the left, Brian

Patrick Mitchell has written a useful and worthy introduction that will entertain and inform. Before you know it, you'll know all the lingo, the key people, and a brief history of all these schools of thought. Not bad for such a quick read." - **LewRockwell.com**

Review

"Are you tired of the media's unrelenting oversimplification of American politics? Are you sick of Republican versus Democratic, with everything being painted in ruby red and bright blue? If so, then stretch your mind and read this stimulating book. Brian Mitchell creatively paints the complex portrait of American political thought, from left to right and everything in-between and outside the lines." (Larry J. Sabato, Director, University of Virginia Center for Politics)

"If you prefer nuanced analysis to fatuous conventional wisdom, pick up a copy of *Eight Ways to Run the Country*. You'll gain more insight into the current state of American politics from Brian Mitchell's book than you would from a year's worth of punditry on the cable news shows." (Ken Silverstein, Washington Editor, *Harper's Magazine*)

"With this book, Brian Mitchell has made the lives of us pundits easier, by helping us understand the different kinds of political animals populating Washington--neos, paleos, radicals, populists, and all the rest. But outside-the-beltway readers can 'eliminate the middleman' by reading this book, thus gaining for themselves the taxonomic tools needed to know the DC bestiary. Such widespread empowerment might be bad for the punditical priesthood, but I offer this blurb anyway, because better information is vital for the success of representative democracy." (Jim Pinkerton, Columnist for *Newsday* and Senior Fellow, New America Foundation)

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