

Political Differences:
Why We're "Divided" Politically

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Preface

Trump is *not* the subject of this paper. As much damage as he's doing, abusing Presidential power and putting ideological enemies of Executive agencies in charge of them, it's the *long-term* plans of those propping him up that are the permanent danger.

While optimists ("We'll survive this") see the "President Trump" part of this wrecking crew as the result of a temporary fit of anarchy by frustrated voters, other observers see the larger picture as the result of decades-long trends that we've ignored or assumed we could "fix it in the next election" (or the next...).

As long as we remain a democracy, politics¹ is our primary toolbox, but a vital tool is missing.

- Why does the number of people who vote fall off so drastically in mid-term elections (from the peak in Presidential elections)?
- Since 2010 (the U.S. Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision), our politics is threatened by the ever greater ability of corporate and billionaire money (much of it from hidden sources) to determine who runs for office and who wins. How can we counter that?
- Too many Americans are disgusted with "politics" because they believe that politicians are either *uncaring, ineffective, or corrupt*, and great numbers stay at home on election day. What can we do about it?
- Even if disgusted citizens vote, some may do so only to raise a middle finger to whoever they *believe* is responsible for their bitterness, by putting a wrecking ball in the White House. Can we reach these voters, or can we find enough other votes to counter them?
- Many of those eligible to vote say that "my vote wouldn't make a difference anyway" — but if that were true, Republicans wouldn't be making such an effort to *stop* many people from voting and spending billions of dollars to convince others *who (and thereby what) to vote for*. How can we convince them what a difference their vote can make?
- Any American who is eligible to vote and *voluntarily* fails to do so doesn't comprehend **what's at stake** — and that's where our solution lies, but *more about that below*.
- Many who do vote but are *single-issue* voters also don't grasp **what's at stake**. They've been convinced that "fixing" a single aspect of our national life (often by punishing some scapegoat group) will make their lives better (or at least resolve some grievance), but they've also been convinced to ignore the actors in the shadows who actually are holding them back, as we'll see below.

We don't usually talk about ideology² (progressive versus conservative), talking instead about Democrats versus Republicans and our opposing views on "issues." Such "Vote Democratic" campaigns assume that *all* voters (or those eligible to vote) are as focused on "party" labels as are candidate campaigns and are **clear about what the "party" labels mean.**

We've heard that we're so bitterly divided politically that we must start listening more to each other and find ways to reconcile our differences. But **such conversations can't occur until we can put into words exactly what those differences are.** What is it that needs to be "reconciled"? (See in the Appendix, "*The Elusive 'Compromise,'*" at the end of this paper.)

The intent of this paper is to make visible what *underlies* our own political actions, our opponents' actions, and the actions of voters who we want to persuade to vote *with us.* When we can show others what's at stake in our elections over the long term and why we're *inevitably* "divided," we can act strategically to stop conservatives from dragging us back to the 19th century and return to the advances in freedom that our nation has made, sporadically, *too often with suffering and loss of lives*, since that time.

1. Introduction

From George Lakoff (**bold** and *italic* type is the editor's):

“Conservatives know that politics is not just about policy and interest groups and issue-by-issue debate. They have learned that **politics is about family and morality, about myth and metaphor and emotional identification**. They have, over twenty-five years, managed to forge conceptual links in the voters' minds between morality and public policy. They have done this by **carefully working out their values, comprehending their myths, and designing a language to fit those values and myths** so that they can evoke them with powerful slogans, *repeated over and over again*, that reinforce those family-morality-policy links, until the connections have come to seem natural to many Americans, including many in the media. As long as liberals ignore the moral, mythic, and emotional dimension of politics, as long as they stick to policy and interest groups and issue-by-issue debate, they will have no hope of understanding the nature of the political transformation that has overtaken this country and they will have no hope of changing it.”³

2. Progressives, Conservatives: What's the Difference?

What are the differences between us — as progressives⁴, now less often called liberals⁵ — and our political opponents — conservatives^{6,7}

We don't simply “disagree.” When we look closely at the *basis* of those “disagreements,” we find that we have radically different **visions** of the kind of world we want for ourselves, for the rest of our lives, and for our children, grandchildren, and generations beyond.⁸

Radically different visions? But...we're all Americans. We have *nationality* in common, citizenship in the same square miles of dirt. Don't we agree on the basic definition of our nation (other than our physical borders): the U.S. Constitution and the values implied in it?

No. Continuing arguments over what the words of the Constitution *mean* show the disagreement over even this basic definition. These disagreements are settled by politics, which decides **who benefits** from

- the periodic re-shaping of our **government**, such as gerrymandering and the pendulum swings of Executive agency appointments, resulting in changes in the *rules* that govern every aspect of our lives (and enforcement — or not — of the rules),

- the nation’s **resources** (public lands and territorial waters and what lies under them; territorial airspace; radio and TV frequencies; public infrastructure; public waters; energy resources; protected ecosystems),
- the nation’s **international relations** (including who is favored by trade and immigration policies and who is protected or threatened by security policies), and
- whether progressives or conservatives receive lifetime appointments to the courts and especially to the **U.S. Supreme Court** — a simple majority of whose members is the ultimate *interpreter* at any given time of what the U.S. Constitution means.

So, we need to describe the differences between progressives and conservatives

1. so that we and those who might support us have *a clear understanding in our own heads* and
2. so that we can persuade others who are merely swept along in the political currents to support *our* vision.

3. The Difficulty with Issues⁹

Example: During the 2016 Democratic Presidential Primary contest, the websites of Bernie Sanders and Hillary Clinton each listed *dozens* of issues on which those candidates took positions. Then and later in the General Election campaigns, anyone already committed to voting Democratic could find the particular issue that he/she felt strongly about and might find satisfaction — confirmation of his/her own opinion — in that position statement.¹⁰

But in the General Election, voters or potential voters who were *not* already committed to the Democratic candidate or to the Democratic Party each would have to wade through those dozens of positions, then try to piece together what all that *meant* in terms of the voter’s own deep (and probably unconscious) feelings about the circumstances of his/her own life.

Such a “wading through” exercise was likely to be confusing, given that each issue could have solutions other than the one advocated by the candidate, each solution more or less complex and controversial. **Those of us already committed to a candidate or a party don’t see this confusion because our minds are already made up.** Still, we’re not consciously aware of *why* our minds are made up — *why* we take the positions we do about those issues. This becomes obvious when we try — without success — to explain to uncommitted others, in a *few* words, *why* we feel as we do and *why they should agree with us*.

The Inadequacy of Issues. The remedy for frustration with “issues” lies in our unconscious minds, where our *values* lie hidden (from our conscious minds) and so are unspoken.

Mid-term Elections. The problem with issues is more apparent in mid-term elections, those that fall between Presidential elections. There's a major decline in the number of voters from the peak in Presidential years. This means that for these mid-term *non-voters*, whatever the labels Democrat and Republican or the issues raised in Presidential campaigns presumably mean, they don't mean as much or even the same thing in mid-terms. Compared to the *national* campaigns of Presidential years, there is

- *less national media interest in particular campaigns* to catch the attention of voters,
- *less spending* on individual state-level candidates, so less messaging, therefore less attention, and
- *less name recognition* of state-level candidates.

This suggests the common complaint that Presidential-year politics is based on celebrity — attention to the personal characteristics of a candidate (“Would I want to have a beer with this person?”) — rather than insight into performance if elected.

But what of the motives of those who *do* vote in mid-terms as well as Presidential races? Maybe it's only *party* loyalty, not so much the candidate's name or issue positions; but what about swing voters (“I vote for the *person*, not the party”)? Maybe some of these mid-term voters have found a way to relate national issues to the state/local levels as well. I suggest that the difference for those voters is their recognition (whether conscious or unconscious) of the *values* described below.

4. Values: Isn't That a Republican Word?

Many words in the dictionary have been surrendered to conservatives as they've taken words *essential* to talking about our lives and changed the meanings of those words (in their messaging) to fit their ideology; for example, the words *liberal*, *patriotism*, *rule of law*, *national security*, *family values*, *life* (as in pro-life). (See the quote about “designing a language” at the beginning of the **Introduction**.)

Conservatives have talked about “values” as though they *own* the word, claiming to uphold “family values” and calling their supporters “values voters.” But there are no *agreed-upon* definitions of “American” values (although that term is thrown around loosely) except references to certain words of the Declaration of Independence¹¹ and of the Constitution¹². Rather, there is *more than one set of values*, so until those values are named and described, progressives and conservatives are not speaking clearly (or, in some cases, honestly) to voters.

5. What Are “Values”?

See https://valuesmessage.org/info/values_def.html and the further links for a description of the *characteristics* of values. A summary is repeated here:

- “1. All values are *learned* values....
- “2. Values are relatively *enduring*....
- “3. Values are *not* necessarily *consciously* known by either the individual or the society....
- “4. Values tend toward consistency, *i.e.*, like values attract like values....
- “5. Values enshrine and impart a society’s concepts of the *morally desirable*....
- “6. Values are inundated with *emotional* feelings and are held with strong conviction....
- “7. Values establish a *disposition to act*....”

These help to distinguish a *value* from related terms. Our values are the ***foundation*** on which we build a structure of principles, issues, and policies¹³ — different levels of the detailing and implementation of values.

6. Progressive Values: A Short List

Go to the website referenced in the endnote to download *Voicing Our Values: A Message Guide for Policymakers and Advocates*.¹⁴ This is one organization’s guide to messaging based on progressive values.

This guide advocates a *short, memorable* list of progressive values to attract the *initial attention* of voters.¹⁵ The short list is then expanded into detailed explanations. These progressive values are **Freedom, Opportunity, Security** (*Voicing Our Values*, pp. 92–93). (***Bold italics*** in the following are the editor’s.)

“Freedom

“***Where government has no proper role, because public action would violate our individual rights***¹⁶, progressive policy is based on freedom. Freedom means the absence of legal interference with our fundamental rights: freedom of speech, religion, and association; the right to privacy; the rights of the accused; and the right of all citizens to vote....

“Compared to an individual, government wields tremendous power¹⁷, so a progressive policy adds great weight — in the form of strong legal rights — to the individual’s side of the scale....

“Opportunity

“***Where government acts as a referee between private, unequal interests***, progressive policy is based on opportunity. Opportunity means a level playing field in social and economic affairs: fair dealings between the powerful and the less powerful, the elimination of discrimination, and a quality education for all.

“Competing interests usually hold unequal power, so progressive policy adds weight—guarantees of specific protections—to the weaker interest....

“Security

“*Where government acts to protect those who cannot reasonably protect themselves, including future generations*, progressive policy is based on security. Security includes protecting Americans from domestic criminals and foreign terrorists, of course. But it also means insuring the sick and the vulnerable, safeguarding the food we eat and products we use, and preserving our environment.

“There is always a threat that larger or unexpected forces will attack any one of us, so progressive policy adds weight, in the form of government institutions and programs, that helps protect us from harm....”

Some progressives, without knowing *our* definitions, initially said that these values sound “Republican” or “conservative.” “Freedom”...a *Republican* word? This shows how effective conservative organizations have been in planting in our brains their re-framing or re-definitions of these important, universally admired words.¹⁸ Progressives must actively *defend* these values from being twisted by such tactics.

7. Progressive Values: A Longer List

The following is a longer expression of progressive values, including the most important, *empathy*.¹⁹

“**Progressive morality...is based on empathy and responsibility.**

“Empathy is the capacity to connect with other people, to feel what others feel, to imagine oneself as another and hence to feel a kinship with others.

“Responsibility means acting on that empathy — responsibility for yourself and for others.

“From empathy and responsibility, a set of **core progressive values** follows. These are the values that define progressive thought and structure progressive positions on any issue. They all involve acting on your empathy to achieve the following:

- “**Protection** (for people threatened or under duress)
- “**Fulfillment in life** (so others can lead meaningful lives as you would want to)
- “**Freedom** (because to seek fulfillment, you must be free)

- “**Opportunity** (because leading a fulfilling life requires opportunities to explore what is meaningful and fruitful)
- “**Fairness** (because unfairness can stifle freedom and opportunity)
- “**Equality** (because empathy extends to everyone)
- “**Prosperity** (because a certain base amount of material wealth is necessary to lead a fulfilling life and pay for enough shelter, food, and health)
- “**Community** (because nobody makes it alone, and communities are necessary for anyone to lead a fulfilling life)....”

8. From Values to Principles²⁰

“Naturally flowing from these progressive values are **four core political principles**. These principles, largely unconscious, are found over and over again as the basis of arguments for progressive policies and programs.

“The Common Good Principle...

“Franklin Roosevelt said in his second inaugural address, ‘In our personal ambitions we are individualists. But in our seeking for economic and political progress as a nation, we all go up, or else we all go down, as one people.’ In short, the common good is necessary for individual well-being. Citizens bring together their common wealth for the common good in order to build an infrastructure that benefits all and that contributes crucially to the pursuit of individual goals....

“The Expansion of Freedom Principle...

“Progressive moral values lead — and have historically led — Americans to demand the expansion of fundamental forms of freedom....

“The Human Dignity Principle...

“Empathy requires the recognition of basic human dignity, and responsibility requires us to act to uphold it.

“This principle provides baselines for a wide range of progressive arguments: against torture, for intervention to prevent genocide, for programs to meet the basic needs of the poor, for women’s rights, against racism, and so on.

“As a country, we need to decide where the boundary of human dignity falls. Food, shelter, education, and health care are all basic rights for all people. Progressives, acting on their belief in human dignity, feel it is necessary to secure these rights for all our citizens.

“The Diversity Principle...

“Empathy — which involves identifying with and connecting socially and emotionally with the other — leads to an ethic of diversity in our communities, schools, and workplaces. Diversity fosters meaningful communities and creates a range of opportunities for citizens to lead fulfilling lives.

“‘Diversity’ has become a progressive code word for measures against the effects of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual preference. Because these forms of discrimination have been so widespread and their effects so long-lasting, they have reduced the possibilities for societal enrichment through diversity....”

9. Progressive versus Conservative

The impact on our lives of progressive values, principles, and policies is clearer when we contrast them with those of conservatives.

Conservatives are said to advocate “smaller government, lower taxes, strong military, family values,” and sometimes “free markets” (often merged into “smaller government,” that is, less regulation). But these terms are not values. They’re sort-of-quantitative goals toward *unspecified ends*. (Compare these to the *progressive-defined end-states* of Freedom, Opportunity, Security.) The values that these conservative goals support must be guessed from the details proposed to achieve each of these goals:

- “Smaller government”: What *parts* of government are to be made smaller? (Presumably not the ‘strong military’ and surely not the justice system or legislatures.) How much smaller?
- “Lower taxes”: How much lower? For whom? By cutting what?
- “Strong military”: What does “strong” mean? Pay and benefits for troops? Higher cost weapon systems? Number of ships, aircraft, troops, overseas bases? In alliances with whom? In comparison to or as protection against whom?
- “Family values”: What values? Economic support for families? Equal pay for women? Which families: Single parents? Same-sex couples?
- “Free markets”: Since markets²¹ are man-made, they require **rules** to exist:²² property and patent law, regulation of monopolies, contract law, bankruptcy law, and enforcement of all these rules. No one in a market is “free” to do *whatever* he/she pleases — unless the rules are changed to allow essentially that by corporations (sellers), *contrary to the interests of consumers (buyers)*, such as mandating private mediation in product disputes in lieu of civil suits.

Since only *government* has the authority to make and enforce these rules that serve businesses *and consumers*, will they be cut to achieve “smaller government” or “lower taxes”? Since these rules can be altered at every change in who holds political power, who benefits from the changes?

Given the “advertising slogan” quality of these conservative goals, more specific descriptions are needed. (See below.)

Remember that

“Progressive morality...is based on empathy and responsibility.

“Empathy is the capacity to connect with other people, to feel what others feel, to imagine oneself as another and hence to feel a kinship with others.

“Responsibility means acting on that empathy — responsibility for yourself and for others....”

An understanding of “empathy” inspires progressives to *apply* that value. **Principles** are the intermediate step in moving from the generality of *values* to specific *policies* (which are solutions to *issues*). The resulting progressive **core political principles** described above are contrasted here with conservative ideas:

“The Common Good Principle...”

In a democracy, “government” (from homeowners associations to the Federal government) is the means by which citizens *act together* (cooperate) to achieve goals that individuals desire but can’t achieve alone — the common good. This is seen in roads and bridges, schools, water and sewage treatment, libraries, airports, and other public infrastructure and institutions²³.

Conservative *ideology* rejects a “common good” in favor of each individual (or private company) pursuing his own interests through *competition* in a private “market” (except in the case of an indivisible good — where no citizen *can* choose a different quantity than another citizen — such as national defense).^{24, 25} (Contrary to the ideology, conservative individuals and businesses themselves *cooperate* to form groups or associations to advance their interests — but only the narrow interests of the group, not the common good.)

Contrary to this ideology, some advances of the society as a whole can’t be achieved through “the market” because the time frame required to achieve those advances is longer than the time limit allowed by private entities for *return on investment*. Examples are basic medical research or other research with *an unknown time span or probability of success*, such as that by the National Institutes of Health on medicine or DARPA on the Internet or NASA on space exploration — all examples of the common good.

(However, once such technologies or processes are *proved* at public expense, conservatives advocate handing these resources over to the private sector and having government contract with the private entities. Government — the taxpayers who paid for the original research — thereby not only will have to pay for further use of the technology it developed but the private entities' profits as well.)

Conservatives advocate privatization of government functions not only to satisfy their “competition, not cooperation” ideology but also to add private profit on top of basic costs to provide those functions. In the Iraq War, this involved contracting out some functions to private companies, which occurred on a large scale — although the *public* military remained there to guarantee the foundational security, to ensure the private profits. In a civilian context, this has involved, for example, contracting out water supply for communities to private companies — where the “competition” fundamental to markets is unlikely to be possible.

“The Expansion of Freedom Principle...”

Since the adoption of our U.S. Constitution (1788), we've seen the almost immediate addition of the Bill of Rights (1791), then a series of amendments to the Constitution that extended the rights consistent with U.S. citizenship to more and more Americans.

These expansions were resisted by conservatives who wanted to retain a *status quo* that restricted our freedoms to fewer people.

When the meanings of U.S. Constitutional provisions or amendments have been questioned, decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court have settled the questions (subject to legislative attempts, especially by some state legislatures, to limit the effect of those decisions).

Constitutional measures have been supplemented by **Federal statutes** (laws passed by Congress) that don't confer the protection of Constitutional amendments but satisfied the need for immediate action once the political will was found. The Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act in the 1960s as well as many provisions of the New Deal in the 1930s are examples. But these statutes can be **weakened or repealed** by conservative decisions of the Supreme Court or by subsequent conservative Congresses and Presidents.

The ultimate extension of *full* rights to *all* citizens is a defining expression of progressive values as implemented through this principle.

“The Human Dignity Principle...”

Many religions express this as variations of the “Golden Rule,”²⁶ for example in Christianity as, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.” (Mathew 7:12, King James version of the Bible).

George Lakoff notes that

“This principle provides baselines for a wide range of progressive arguments: against torture, for intervention to prevent genocide, for programs to meet the basic needs of the poor, for women’s rights, against racism, and so on.

“As a country, we need to decide where the boundary of human dignity falls. Food, shelter, education, and health care are all basic rights for all people. Progressives, acting on their belief in human dignity, feel it is necessary to secure these rights for all our citizens.”

Conservative ideology, again, insists that *competition* between individuals is the means for each to attempt to satisfy his/her own needs, while progressives believe that *basic* needs also should be met by *cooperation* among all of us.

“The Diversity Principle...”

To progressives, diversity contributes to the evolution of human society in the same way that diversity in DNA contributes to the possibilities of biological evolution.

Lakoff notes that

“‘Diversity’ has become a progressive code word for measures against the effects of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and sexual preference. Because these forms of discrimination have been so widespread and their effects so long-lasting, they have reduced the possibilities for societal enrichment through diversity.”

For conservatives, an increase in diversity — persons with a mix of race, religion, language, culture, or national origins *different* from the current mix (or an “original” or earlier mix) — means a *change* in the *status quo*, which is contrary to the definition of “conservative.”

10. The Highest Conservative Principle

“If there is one thing that must be maintained in a strict father family [see “*Lakoff Models (Metaphors)*” below], it is the authority of the father and his dominant role in family life. When applied to politics, this Maintenance of Authority principle has a crucial correlate that often goes unnoticed by progressives and the news media. The highest conservative political principle is the Maintenance of Conservative Authority—the preservation, support, and extension of conservatism itself.

“This principle explains something that progressives don’t understand and consequently don’t complain about. For example, President Obama often proposed policies that were originally conservative policies. A notable example is the Affordable Care Act, in which the taxpayers pay to get more customers for private insurance firms, customers who otherwise couldn’t afford health care....

Republican Presidential candidates say it is the first thing they would get rid of. The conservative-led House of Representatives has voted over forty times to eliminate it. Why? Because, if it is successful, as it appears to be, it would give President Obama a victory and thus hurt the overall conservative cause. It would violate the principle of maintaining conservative authority above all else (see Chapter 9, p. 166)”²⁷.

11. Contested Values

Some values — or rather, the *names* for them — are used by both progressives and conservatives but don’t *mean* the same thing to both. The same terms are being applied to different situations. These are “contested” values.²⁸ Examples are “fairness,” “freedom,” “equality,” “responsibility,” “integrity,” and “security.”

Progressives want voters to define and act on those values one way, and conservatives want voters to define and act on them in a different way. These contradictory meanings are one reason why progressives and conservatives seem not to understand each other even when they’re using the *same words*. And it’s *confusing* for voters who are not deeply involved in political arguments when they hear words used under the mistaken assumption that “everyone” understands what they mean.

It’s essential in messaging that we use not only the term but also the context or an example of what we mean. Then, over time, with repetition, a value as progressives intend it can prevail with the public. *We know this because conservative meanings, unchallenged by us, often have prevailed in the same way.*

12. “Family Values”: Progressive or Conservative

A highly detailed description of the opposing *sets of values* or “worldviews” — liberal (or progressive) versus conservative — is in George Lakoff’s lengthy *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*²⁹ and in a number of shorter books aimed at putting this knowledge into practice, for laymen.³⁰

As we grow from infancy, our brains become “wired” with experiences that are used as *metaphors*³¹ that help us to understand new information by relating it to what we already know.³²

For example, a metaphor based on the 2008 Great Recession and the fiscal stimulus response was related by President Obama (paraphrased): “The Republicans drove the car into the ditch; and now that we (Democrats) are pulling it out, they want the keys back.” A story of abstract³³ economic events (a recession) was described as a physical situation (a car in the ditch), the elements of which situation we can visualize and understand.

Lakoff uses the metaphor of the nation as “a family” — as do conservatives, in talking about “family values.” A Strict Father family is a metaphor for the conservative worldview, and a Nurturant Parent family is a metaphor for the liberal/progressive worldview.

These **metaphors, applied to our politics**, may be the ideological basis for laws passed by legislatures and regulations (rules) passed by executive agencies, and you’ll recognize them — once you’re familiar with the metaphors (see below).

13. Why Do Certain Values Go Together?

As noted earlier,

“4. Values tend toward consistency, *i.e.*, like values attract like values.”

From *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*. George Lakoff, 2016 (pp. 11–12) (editor’s **bold type**):

“...Around the time of the conservatives’ victory in the 1994 elections, I happened to be working on the details of our moral conceptual system, especially **our system of metaphors for morality**. During the election campaign, it became clear to me that liberals and conservatives have very different moral systems, and that much of the political discourse of conservatives and liberals derives from their moral systems. I found that, using analytic techniques from cognitive linguistics, I could describe the moral systems of both conservatives and liberals in considerable detail, and could list the metaphors for morality that conservatives and liberals seemed to prefer. **What was particularly interesting was that they seemed to use virtually the same metaphors for morality but with different — almost opposite — priorities.** This seemed to explain why liberals and conservatives would seem to be talking about the same thing and yet reach opposite conclusions — and why they could seem to be talking past each other with little understanding much of the time.

“At this point, I asked myself a question whose answer was not at first obvious: **What unifies each of the lists of moral priorities? Is there some more general idea that leads conservatives to choose one set of metaphorical priorities for reasoning about morality and liberals another?** Once the question was posed, the answer came quickly. It was what conservatives were talking about nonstop: the family. Deeply embedded in conservative and liberal politics are different models of the family. Conservatism, as we shall see, is based on a Strict Father model, while liberalism is centered around a Nurturant Parent model. **These two models of the family give rise to different moral systems and different discourse forms, that is, different choices of words and different modes of reasoning.**”

14. Lakoff Models (Metaphors)³⁴

(**Bold type** in the following text is the editor's.)

The Strict Father Model

A traditional nuclear family, with the father having primary responsibility for supporting and protecting the family as well as the **authority** to set overall family policy. He teaches children right from wrong by setting **strict rules** for their behavior and enforcing them through **punishment**. The punishment is typically mild to moderate, but sufficiently painful. It is commonly corporal punishment — say, with a belt or a stick. He also gains their cooperation by showing love and appreciation when they do follow the rules. But children must never be coddled, lest they become spoiled; a spoiled child will be dependent for life and will not learn proper morals.

The mother has day-to-day responsibility for the care of the house, raising the children, and upholding the father's authority. Children must respect and obey their parents, partly for their own safety and partly because by doing so they build character, that is, self-discipline and self-reliance. Love and nurturance are a vital part of family life, but they should never outweigh parental authority, which is itself an expression of love and nurturance — tough love. **Self-discipline, self-reliance, and respect for legitimate authority** are the crucial things that a child must learn. A mature adult becomes self-reliant through applying self-discipline in pursuing his self-interest. Only if a child learns self-discipline can he become self-reliant later in life. Survival is a matter of **competition**, and only through self-discipline can a child learn to compete successfully.

The mature children of the Strict Father have to sink or swim by themselves. They are on their own and have to prove their responsibility and self-reliance. They have attained, through discipline, authority over themselves. They have to, and are competent to, make their own decisions. They have to protect themselves and their families. They know what is good for them better than their parents, who are distant from them. Good parents do not meddle or interfere in their lives. Any parental meddling or interference is strongly resented.

The Nurturant Parent Model

A family of preferably two parents, but perhaps only one. If two, the parents share household responsibilities.

The primal experience behind this model is one of **being cared for and cared about**, having one's desires for loving interactions met, living as happily as possible, and deriving meaning from mutual interaction and care.

Children develop best through their **positive relationships** to others, through their contribution to their community, and through the ways in which they realize their potential and find joy in life. Children become responsible, self-disciplined, and self-reliant through being cared for and respected, and through caring for others. Support and protection are part of nurturance, and they require strength and courage on the part of parents. The **obedience** of children comes out of their love and respect for their parents, not out of the fear of punishment.

Open, two-way, mutually respectful **communication** is crucial. If parents' authority is to be legitimate, they must tell children why their decisions serve the cause of protection and nurturance. The questioning of parents by children is positive, since children need to learn why their parents do what they do, since children often have good ideas that should be taken seriously, and since all family members should participate in important decisions. Responsible parents, of course, have to make the ultimate decisions and that must be clear.

Protection is a form of caring, and protection from external dangers takes up a significant part of the nurturant parent's attention. The world is filled with evils that can harm a child, and it is the nurturant parent's duty to ward them off. Crime and drugs are, of course, significant, but so are **less obvious dangers**: cigarettes, cars without seat belts, dangerous toys, inflammable clothing, pollution, asbestos, lead paint, pesticides in food, diseases, unscrupulous businessmen, and so on. Protection of innocent and helpless children from such evils is a major part of a nurturant parent's job.

The principal goal of nurturance is for children to be fulfilled and happy in their lives and to become nurturant themselves. A fulfilling life is assumed to be, in significant part, a nurturant life, one committed to family and community responsibility. Self-fulfillment and the nurturance of others are seen as inseparable. What children need to learn most is empathy for others, the capacity for nurturance, cooperation, and the maintenance of social ties, which cannot be done without the strength, respect, self-discipline, and self-reliance that comes through being cared for and caring. Raising a child to be fulfilled also requires helping that child develop his or her potential for achievement and enjoyment. That requires respecting the child's own values and allowing the child to explore the range of ideas and options that the world offers.

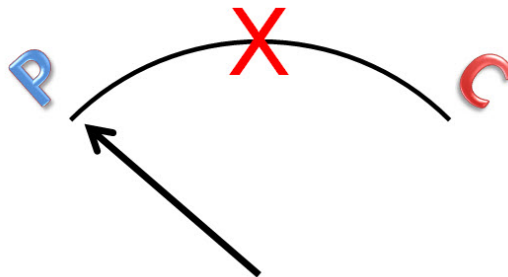
When children are respected, nurtured, and communicated with from birth, they gradually enter into a lifetime relationship of mutual respect, communication, and caring with their parents.

15. Biconceptuals

“Understanding whom we are talking to — and whom we *want* to talk to — is crucial before progressives begin to articulate what it is they have to say and how best to say it. This is true for progressive candidates as well as activists and activist groups. The real challenge in this area is twofold: First, **we want to activate our base while reaching swing voters at the same time**; second, we want to do so without having to lie, distort, mislead, or pretend to be something we aren’t.

“The pressure to dissemble comes from certain commonplace myths about swing voters and the ‘center.’ So for starters, let’s put to rest the notion of the political or ideological ‘center’ — it doesn’t exist. Instead, what we have are **biconceptuals** — of many kinds.”³⁵

Not everyone is either wholly a progressive or wholly a conservative. Some people are labeled by media or themselves as “moderate” progressives (progressives who have *some* conservative values) or “moderate” conservatives (conservatives who have *some* progressive values). But the media and pundits incorrectly use “moderate” (or “centrist”) as unthinking shorthand for “**mixture of values**” — sacrificing clarity to save a few words. There is **no** gas-gauge-like *range* of political values, from left to right (*figure below*). A **value is either progressive or conservative** — fits one of the “family” metaphors. Because “Values are inundated with *emotional* feelings and are held with strong conviction,” **there is no such thing as a “moderate” value.**



An issue position that doesn’t seem to fit either a progressive or a conservative value actually may combine more than one position: For example, “A woman should be permitted to get an abortion provided her husband (or her father) agrees to it.” This is a confused mix of a progressive position (a women should have autonomy over her own body) and a conservative position (a woman should be subject to male authority).

(The terms “conservative Democrat” or “progressive Republican” also might describe a mixture of values without the mistaken “moderate” label; but they also reflect **uncertainty about what “Democrat” and “Republican” mean.**)

16. “Moral Foundations”³⁶

“Moral Foundations Theory:...The five foundations of morality (first draft)” [p. 146]

	Care/harm [pp. 153–58]	Fairness/- cheating [pp. 158–61]	Loyalty/- betrayal [pp. 161–64]	Authority/- subversion [pp. 165–69]	Sanctity/- degradation [pp. 170–77]
Adaptive challenge	Protect and care for children	Reap benefits of two-way partnerships	Form cohesive coalitions	Forge beneficial relationships within hierarchies	Avoid contaminants
Original triggers	Suffering, distress, or neediness expressed by one’s child	Cheating, cooperation, deception	Threat or challenge to group	Signs of dominance and submission	Waste products, diseased people
Current triggers	Baby seals, cute cartoon characters	Marital fidelity, broken vending machines	Sports teams, nations	Bosses, respected professionals	Taboo ideas (communities, racism)
Characteristic emotions	Compassion	Anger, gratitude, guilt	Group pride, rage at traitors	Respect, fear	Disgust
Relevant virtues	Caring, kindness	Fairness, justice, trustworthiness	Loyalty, patriotism, self-sacrifice	Obedience, deference	Temperance, chastity, piety, cleanliness

Social psychologist Jonathan Haidt has a different approach to values, as shown in the table and in the descriptions below.

Haidt doesn’t use a model like Lakoff’s “family” metaphors but instead talks about evolutionary origins, the extent to which our brain’s response to “current triggers” in the modern environment was structured by its response to “original triggers” that guided the ancient formation of human society.

The first row of the table are Haidt’s terms for “moral foundations,” which appear to have the characteristics of values (described earlier). (Like Lakoff, Haidt describes instances of **contested values** — liberals and conservatives having different meanings for the same term).

“1. The Care/Harm Foundation...

“The moral matrix of liberals, in America and elsewhere, rests more heavily on the Care foundation than do the matrices of conservatives....

“...**conservative caring** is somewhat different — it is aimed not at animals or at people in other countries but at **those who’ve sacrificed for the group**. It is not universalist; it is more local, and blended with loyalty.” [pp. 156–58]

“2. The Fairness/Cheating Foundation...

“...The original triggers of the Fairness modules are acts of cooperation or selfishness that people show toward us. We feel pleasure, liking, and friendship when people show signs that they can be trusted to **reciprocate**. We feel anger, contempt, and even sometimes disgust when people try to cheat us or take advantage of us.

“The current triggers of the Fairness modules include a great many things that have gotten linked, culturally and politically, to the dynamics of reciprocity and cheating. On the left, concerns about equality and social justice are based on part on the Fairness foundation — wealthy and powerful groups are accused of gaining by exploiting those at the bottom while not paying their ‘fair share’ of the tax burden.... On the right, the Tea Party movement is also very concerned about fairness. They see Democrats as ‘socialists’ who take money from hardworking Americans and give it to lazy people (including those who receive welfare or unemployment benefits) and to illegal immigrants (in the form of free health care and education).

“**Everyone cares about fairness, but there are two major kinds**. On the left, fairness often implies equality, but on the right it means proportionality — people should be rewarded in proportion to what they contribute, even if that guarantees unequal outcomes.” [pp. 158–61]

“3. The Loyalty/Betrayal Foundation....

“...it now appears that warfare has been a constant feature of human life since long before agriculture and private property. For millions of years, therefore, our ancestors faced the adaptive challenge of forming and maintaining coalitions that could fend off challenges and attacks from rival groups. **We are the descendants of successful tribalists**, not their more individualistic cousins.

“...The Loyalty/betrayal foundation is just a part of our innate preparation for meeting the adaptive challenge of **forming cohesive coalitions**. The original

trigger for the Loyalty foundation is anything that tells you who is a team player and who is a traitor, particularly when your team is fighting with other teams....

“The love of loyal teammates is matched by a corresponding hatred of traitors, who are usually considered to be far worse than enemies....

“Given such strong links to love and hate, is it any wonder that the Loyalty foundation plays an important role in politics? **The left** tends toward universalism and away from nationalism, so it often has trouble connecting to voters who rely on the Loyalty foundation....” [pp. 163–64]

“4. The Authority/Subversion Foundation....

“...Cultures vary enormously in the degree to which they demand that respect be shown to parents, teachers, and others in positions of authority.

“The urge to **respect hierarchical³⁷ relationships** is so deep that many languages encode it directly....

“Human authority, then, is not just raw power backed by the threat of force. Human authorities take on **responsibility** for maintaining order and justice. Of course, authorities often exploit their subordinates for their own benefit while believing they are perfectly just. But if we want to understand how human civilizations burst forth and covered the Earth in just a few thousand years, we’ll have to look closely at **the role of authority in creating moral order**....

“The Authority foundation...is more complex than the other foundations because its modules must look in two directions — up toward superiors and down toward subordinates. These modules work together to help individuals meet the adaptive challenge of **forging beneficial relationships within hierarchies**. We are the descendants of the individuals who were best able to play **the game — to rise in status while cultivating the protection of superiors and the allegiance of subordinates**.

“The original triggers of some of these modules include patterns of appearance and behavior that indicate higher versus lower rank. Like chimpanzees, people track and remember who is above whom. When people within a hierarchical order act in ways that negate or subvert that order, we feel it instantly, even if we ourselves have not been directly harmed. **If authority is in part about protecting order and fending off chaos**, then everyone has a stake in supporting the existing order and in holding people accountable for fulfilling *the obligations of their station*.

“The **current triggers** of the Authority/subversion foundation, therefore, include anything that is construed as an act of **obedience**, disobedience, **respect**,

disrespect, **submission**, or rebellion, with regard to **authorities perceived to be legitimate**. Current triggers also include acts that are seen to subvert the traditions, institutions, or values that are perceived to provide **stability**. As with the Loyalty foundation, it is much easier for the **political right** to build on this foundation than it is for the **left**, which often defines itself in part by its opposition to hierarchy, inequality, and power....” [pp. 165–68]

“5. The Sanctity/Degradation Foundation....

“The original adaptive challenge that drove the evolution of the Sanctity foundation...was the need to **avoid pathogens, parasites, and other threats that spread by physical touch or proximity**. The original triggers of the key modules that compose this foundation include smells, sights, or other sensory patterns that predict the presence of dangerous pathogens in objects or people. (Examples include human corpses, excrement, scavengers such as vultures, and people with visible lesions or sores.)

“The **current triggers** of the Sanctity foundation, however, are extraordinarily variable and expandable across cultures and eras. A common and direct expansion is to **out-group members**. Cultures differ in their attitudes toward immigrants, and there is some evidence that liberal and welcoming attitudes are more common in times and places where disease risks are lower. Plagues, epidemics, and new diseases are usually brought in by foreigners — as are many new ideas, goods, and technologies — so societies face...[a] dilemma, balancing xenophobia and xenophilia....

“...The Sanctity foundation makes it easy for us to regard some things as ‘untouchable,’ both in a bad way (because something is so dirty or polluted we want to stay away) and in a good way (because something is so hallowed, so sacred, that we want to protect it from desecration). If we had no sense of disgust, I believe we would also have no sense of the sacred. And if you think, as I do, that one of the greatest unsolved mysteries is how people ever came together to form large cooperative societies, then you might take a special interest in **the psychology of sacredness**. Why do people so readily treat objects (flags, crosses), places (Mecca, a battlefield related to the birth of your nation), people (saints, heroes), and principles (liberty, fraternity, equality) as though they were of infinite value? Whatever its origins, the psychology of sacredness helps bind individuals into moral communities. When someone in a moral community desecrates one of **the sacred pillars** supporting the community, the reaction is sure to be swift, emotional, collective, and punitive.” [pp. 170–174]

The “sanctity/degradation foundation” has sometimes been expressed as “Your belief or behavior may not *harm* me (physically or economically), but it *offends* me (psychologically).” Enforcement of this foundation is implemented through politics when an authority passes laws to punish behavior or belief, overriding the autonomy of individuals.

Haidt notes that Republicans have an advantage in that, while Democrats appeal to two of these moral foundations, Republicans appeal to all five (using *contested* definitions of some values).

“Political parties and interest groups strive to make their concerns become current triggers of your moral modules. To get your vote, your money, or your time, they must activate at least one of your moral foundations....” [p. 156]

“Republicans don’t just aim to cause fear, as some Democrats charge. They trigger the full range of intuitions described by Moral Foundations Theory. Like Democrats, they can talk about innocent victims (of harmful Democratic policies) [**care**] and about **fairness** (particularly the unfairness of taking tax money from hardworking and prudent people to support cheaters, slackers, and irresponsible fools). But Republicans since Nixon have had a near-monopoly on appeals to **loyalty** (particularly patriotism and military virtues) and **authority** (including respect for parents, teachers, elders, and the police, as well as for traditions). And after they embraced Christian conservatives during Ronald Reagan’s 1980 campaign and became the party of ‘family values,’ Republicans inherited a powerful network of Christian ideas about **sanctity** and sexuality that allowed them to portray Democrats as the party of Sodom and Gomorrah....” [pp. 181–82]

Not only are the latter three foundations — loyalty, authority, sanctity — associated with conservatism, the first two — care and fairness — also can be *interpreted* to be acceptable to conservatives.

- “Care” is made acceptable as “charity,” because it’s an individual *choice* to care for others in contrast to government programs that imply that “care” is a responsibility of everyone.
- “Fairness,” as Haidt notes, is acceptable to conservatives not as equality (which would contradict social and economic hierarchies and the “stability” they enforce) but as “proportionality — people should be rewarded in proportion to what they’re believed to contribute, even if that guarantees unequal outcomes.”

17. Metaphors and Models: Predictability

These family metaphors/models and “foundations” are useful because if we comprehend them, they tell us **how conservatives think**, how (using their model either consciously or unconsciously) they decide on principles and policies that implement their values. More importantly, **they allow us to predict what they will do** in the future. This isn’t carnival fortune-telling; it’s understanding the power of *values* and applying the findings of cognitive science. We can re-examine the history of conservatives in the light of that analysis and more clearly see what they’ve advocated and what they’ve attempted to implement when they’ve been in power before (even if they failed at the time).

18. Message: Issues — and Values

There are practical reasons why our initial political messages should be based on values as well as issues:

- **Different people, different issues.** Different people in our audience each may have as his/her *priority* a different issue, so we would have to have a different “issue” message for each audience segment. This is easy enough to do on a campaign website, where interested parties can *choose* to read about “their” issues, but the volume of material is too great to *catch the attention* of the distracted part of the public that expects its politics in sound bites—a problem that every candidate must solve.

As mentioned before, when a candidate is speaking one-on-one with a voter, the candidate can focus on that particular voter’s priority issue. But with a live audience of hundreds or thousands or a TV audience of millions, the message must be broader but still persuasive (evoke an emotional response in the voter — “Values are inundated with *emotional* feelings and are held with strong conviction”).

- **One value, many issues.** A particular value can be the basis for positions on *more than one issue*, so that value will speak to the interests of more than one audience segment. This “common purpose” (common basis for our positions on several issues) could encourage the *different* audience segments to work together to mobilize all of our voters in election season.
- **Goals.** From above,
 - “5. Values enshrine and impart a society’s concepts of the *morally desirable*.”
 - “6. Values are inundated with *emotional* feelings and are held with strong conviction.
 - “7. Values establish a *disposition to act*.”

Rather than focus on only one specific solution for a particular issue, these characteristics impel us to set broader goals, ends that we might achieve through a *variety* of means/actions. The end of an election isn't solely political power but applying that power to implement our values.

19. Conclusions

Returning to the premise of “radically different **visions**” in the “Introduction,” if conservatives manage to impose their pure ideology on our country, it would be so foreign to what we now take for granted (after the elimination of slavery, those achievements were mostly over the last century³⁸) that the majority *then* would find it oppressive. Yet this is what conservative leaders plan for us, by devoting all of their considerable financial resources (from corporations and billionaires) and political skills (especially messaging) to it. They act strategically, and they're *patient* — which is how, over many years, they've taken control of the U.S. Supreme Court (whose members serve for life) and many state legislatures. While they occasionally lose the White House and Congress, they always come back, crippling Democratic Presidents in the process, and they will until we conduct politics differently.

Does *everyone* who now votes Republican want the triumph of conservative ideology? There are polls that ask people to state their ideology and the strength of that ideology, and they suggest that the answer is “no,” not everyone.³⁹ **Since we're often not consciously aware of our own values, most of us are not aware of the long-term implications of the few bits and pieces of conservative ideology to which we're exposed at any given time.** If, say, Social Security and Medicare are “privatized” — our basic retirement security put in the hands of an *unregulated* financial industry, the folks who brought us the 2008 Great Recession — what are the implications? If labor laws are repealed — minimum wage, 40-hour week, overtime, right to form a union, etc. — what are the implications? Such “radical” changes may be considered unlikely, but what term would we apply to the Supreme Court 5-to-4 “*Citizens United*” decision that allows corporations and billionaires to spend *unlimited* amounts of money buying our elections? Here's how we can put to use what we know about progressive and conservative values:

1. **Know What We're Getting.** Democrats can use the values described above in questioning candidates (or candidates' published positions) to determine whether they have specific progressive or conservative values. From this, we can judge how they're likely to vote as elected officials. Democratic candidates or elected officials who have some conservative values are likely to vote with the Republicans (the conservative party) when issues based on those values arise. Democratic voters will decide for themselves whether such votes by their representative would be acceptable — *given*

the ultimate objective of conservative ideology, which is to reverse Democrats' progressive achievements.

A candidate's *values* leave more room for negotiation in a legislature than demanding that he/she support a specific policy solution to an issue (see #2 below), so more voters might be attracted to the broader goals.

2. **Take a Long-Term View.** Having progressive values about, say, health care doesn't mean that there's only one acceptable solution to an issue.
 - For example, **conservatives** believe that each of us is on his own in paying for *whatever* insurance the private market offers, but they oppose imposition of any government regulations on insurance companies or healthcare providers and oppose helping low-income families pay insurance premiums.
 - In contrast, a **progressive** goal is to *guarantee* adequate health care for everyone, but it's possible to reach that goal in **intermediate steps**.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) left private insurance companies as the “gate-keepers” between consumers and health service providers and did *not* create Medicare-like price competition to those companies (both being concessions to conservatives, including some in the Democratic caucus). But the ACA moved in the *direction* of universal coverage by (a) offering subsidies for families that couldn't afford private market insurance premiums, (b) regulating the minimum services that healthcare insurance must cover, thereby eliminating “junk” policies that appeared cheap but left policyholders without realistic coverage, (c) requiring that insurance policies must cover pre-existing conditions, and other provisions. Conservative ideology opposes all of these provisions because they “interfere” with “the market.”

But **approaching a progressive goal in intermediate steps requires that we have an agreed-upon goal**. Otherwise, how can we know what steps to take? This is where **strategic planning** by conservatives is a lesson to progressives. *For example*, observers of the national judicial system note that conservatives have built a “bench” of conservative judges to move up to the U.S. Supreme Court. This has been an especially effective strategy, since by putting relatively young judges into lifetime positions on the Court (and on the District Courts) when conservatives are *in* power, their judicial appointees can impose conservative ideology on state and national policy for decades even when their politicians are *out* of power.

3. **Motivate Voters.** Many people who are eligible (by citizenship and age) never vote, and some people who vote don't *always* vote, especially in mid-term elections and in “down-ballot” races where they know less about the candidates (or the responsibilities of the office) than they know about the “personality” or “celebrity” at the top of the ballot.

What would induce more of these people to *always* vote—and vote Democratic? They might be more motivated by something that *doesn't change* with every election, every candidate, and every electoral office (the *unique* personality, resumé, and set of “issues” on which each candidate campaigns). That is, they might be more motivated by a set of *progressive values* on which Democratic candidates could run and, as importantly, *act* once they had a majority.

Further, if voters connect to us via common values, they'll have a strong reason to vote a “straight Democratic ticket.” Biconceptuals (swing voters, true independents, unregistered people who haven't committed to anything), by definition, have an unknown mixture of progressive and conservative values, and we have a chance to reach them through their progressive values — *if we talk about values*.

We also should be trying to reach *any* (currently) Republican voters who have *some* progressive values, by invoking progressive values in our campaigns. This has the advantage of being the same values that we should invoke to reach independents (for the same reason) and to energize our own “sometimes” voters for whom party loyalty obviously isn't enough motivation (or they would always vote).

Each of us has a set of values (progressive or conservative or a specific mixture), but we don't talk about them because we don't consciously think about them. Ultimately, our values determine how we vote but, aside from people who “always vote,” that determination may occur only after candidates have spent large sums of money on messages that reach into our brains enough to evoke those values and motivate us to vote. For those who *voluntarily* don't vote, those values have not been evoked. (The **seven characteristics of values** described earlier compel us to act once they're evoked.)

APPENDIX

The Elusive “Compromise”

From *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011:

com•pro•mise...*n.* **1a.** A settlement of differences in which each side makes concessions. **b.** The result of such a settlement. **2.** Something that combines qualities or elements of different things: *The incongruous design is a compromise between high tech and early American.* **3.** A weakening or reduction of one’s principles or standards: *a compromise of morality.* **4.** Impairment, as by disease or injury: *physiological compromise....*

From *The American Heritage Roget’s Thesaurus* (2013):

compromise *noun*

A settlement of differences through mutual concession ► accommodation, arbitration, arrangement, composition, concession, give-and-take, mediation, settlement, tradeoff.
See also **agreement**.

A *positive* view of “compromise” in politics is, “You agree to something that I want, and I’ll agree to something that you want.” Those “somethings” are expected to be *equal* in magnitude or significance, such as, “You approve X dollars for a bridge in my district, and I’ll approve X dollars for a bridge in your district (even if this increases the budget deficit).”

Difficulty arises when a proposed “compromise” is, say, “You vote for my U.S. Supreme Court nominee, and I’ll vote to expand that military base in your state,” where significance may not be seen as equal.

A *negative* view of “compromise” is, “We’re both giving up something.” For example, if conservatives propose to cut the size of Medicare or Social Security payments (or to privatize one or both programs), what should progressives propose that conservatives give up in return? Higher tax rates on the wealthy? More regulation of pollution? Reducing subsidies to fossil fuels and shifting them to renewable energy? Who benefits from the compromise? Who is hurt?

Remember (from above) that

“5. Values enshrine and impart a society’s concepts of the *morally desirable*.

“6. Values are inundated with *emotional* feelings and are held with strong conviction.”

It takes little thought in the face of political conflict to say, “We should compromise!” (appeal to “civility,” “bipartisanship,” etc.) if the question, “On what?,” is not examined. But when proposals deal with “the morally desirable” and engage our *emotions* (and especially if we feel that the opposition’s narratives are deceptive — from half-truths to

outright lies), the stakes become too high for compromise. Then the only solution is to persuade enough voters so that we win elections.

Endnotes

Sources of material in this paper are cited, and much of the discussion flows from that material. But I can't say where everything written herein about our politics originated. We're swimming in an ocean of political messages, some overt, many too subtle to notice until they've worked their way into our brains over time. The corruption of social media with innumerable fake accounts in 2016 and since is an example. Conclusions *without citations* are my paraphrases of material absorbed from many sources and from volunteering and talking with passionate, committed people on campaigns over many years. Material *cited* here also can be found in sources collected on the website *ValuesMessage.org*, which is updated as new material is found.

¹**pol-i-tics** *n.* **1.** (*used with a sing. verb*) **a.** The art or science of government or governing, especially the governing of a political entity, such as a nation, and the administration and control of its internal and external affairs.... **2.** (*used with a sing. or pl. verb*) **a.** The activities or affairs engaged in by a government, politician, or political party.... **b.** The methods or tactics involved in managing a state or government.... **4.** (*used with a sing. or pl. verb*) Intrigue or maneuvering within a political unit or a group in order to gain control or power... **5.** (*used with a sing. or pl. verb*) Political attitudes and positions.... **6.** (*used with a sing. or pl. verb*) The often internally conflicting interrelationships among people in a society. (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

²**i-de-o-l-o-gy** *n., pl. -gies* A set of doctrines or beliefs that are shared by the members of a social group or that form the basis of a political, economic, or other system. (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

i-de-o-logue *n.* An advocate of a particular ideology, especially an official exponent of that ideology. (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

³George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 19

⁴**pro-gres-sive** *adj....* **3.** Open to or favoring new ideas, policies, or methods: *a progressive politician; progressive business leadership....* ■ *n.* **1.** A person who is open to or favors new ideas, policies, or methods, especially in politics.... (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

⁵**lib-er-al** *adj.* **1a.** Favoring reform, open to new ideas, and tolerant of the ideas and behavior of others; not bound by traditional thinking; broad-minded.... **b.** Of, relating to, or characteristic of liberalism.... ■ *n.* **1.** A person with liberal ideas or opinions.... (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

⁶**con-ser-va-tive** *adj.* **1.** Favoring traditional views and values; tending to oppose change.... **3.** Moderate; cautious: *a conservative estimate.* **4a.** Of or relating to the political philosophy of conservatism. **b.** Belonging to a conservative party, group, or movement.... ■ *n.* **1.** One

favoring traditional views and values. **2.** A supporter of political conservatism.... (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

⁷These terms refer to people who consciously identify as progressives or conservatives. Many voters, on the other hand, may have no *conscious* ideological identity (and may call themselves “independents” rather than accept a “party” label) but nevertheless act on the basis of unconscious values evoked by progressive or conservative *messages*.

There are identifiable “progressive” and “conservative” values (see herein). There are no identifiable “moderate” or “centrist” values (per George Lakoff). Instead, individuals called “moderates” or “centrists” hold a *mixture* of progressive and conservative values. See “biconceptuals” elsewhere in this document.

⁸We don’t tend to think *consciously* in terms of generations, but Social Security has been around for over 80 years, Medicare and the Civil Rights Act for over 50 years. These and other progressive achievements have, in fact, protected *generations* of Americans.

⁹“...An **issue** is ‘a difficulty or problem that has a significant influence on the way the [society] functions or on its ability to achieve a desired future, for which **there is no agreed-on response**....” John M. Bryson and Robert C. Einsweiler, editors, *Strategic Planning: Threats and Opportunities for Planners* (1988) p. 69

issue *noun*... 4. A situation that presents difficulty, uncertainty, or perplexity ► case, matter, question. (*The American Heritage Roget’s Thesaurus*, 2013)

¹⁰When a candidate is speaking one-on-one with a voter, the candidate may be able to focus on that voter’s priority issue in detail. But with a live audience of thousands or a TV audience of millions, the candidate must have a broader message that still engages as many of the diverse listeners as possible.

¹¹“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed....”

¹²The preamble (“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America”) as well as the Bill of Rights (1st 10 amendments).

¹³**pol·i·cy** *n, pl. -cies* **1.** A plan or course of action, as of a government, political party, or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions, and other matters: *American foreign policy; the company’s personnel policy*.... (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

¹⁴Bernie Horn and Gloria Totten, *Voicing Our Values: A Message Guide for Policymakers and Advocates*, 3rd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Public Leadership Institute, 2017)
<https://publicleadershipinstitute.org/messaging-guide/>

¹⁵Political consultants say that we're exposed to roughly 5,000 messages a day, of all kinds (most of which we process unconsciously). Calling voters' attention to *our* political messages requires more than simply adding our drop of water to that flood.

¹⁶To ensure the civil rights of all citizens, action by a different level of government, the Federal government, was necessary to counter violation of those rights by some state governments. But the premise holds: It was the misuse of (state) government power that violated individual rights.

¹⁷**power** *n.* **1a.** The ability or capacity to act or do something effectively: *Is it in your power to undo this injustice?* **b.** often **powers** A specific capacity, faculty, or aptitude: *her powers of concentration....* **3a.** The ability or official capacity to exercise control, authority: *How long has that party been in power?* **b.** The military strength or economic or political influence of a nation or other group: *That country projects its power throughout the region.* **c.** A country, nation, or other political unit having great influence or control over others: *the western powers....*

¹⁸See George Lakoff, *Whose Freedom? The Battle Over America's Most Important Idea*. (New York: Picador - Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006)

¹⁹George Lakoff and the Rockridge Institute, *Thinking Points: Communicating Our American Values and Vision* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006) 37–39
(https://valuesmessage.org/sources/ThinkingPoints-2006_.pdf)

²⁰**principle** *n.* **1.** A basic truth, law, or assumption: *the principles of democracy.* **2a.** A rule or standard, especially of good behavior: *a man of principle.* **b.** The collectivity of moral or ethical standards or judgments: *a decision based on principle rather than expediency.* **3.** A fixed or predetermined policy or mode of action. **4.** A basic or essential quality or element determining intrinsic nature or characteristic behavior: *the principle of self-preservation.* (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

²¹**market** *n.* ...**2a.** A system of exchange in which prices are determined by the interaction of multiple, competing buyers and sellers.... (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, Fifth Edition, 2011)

²²Robert B. Reich, *Saving Capitalism: For the Many, Not the Few* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015) 8–9

²³**institution** *n.* ...**2a.** A custom, practice, relationship, or behavioral pattern of importance in the life of a community or society; *the institutions of marriage and the family.* **b. Informal** One long associated with a specified place, position, or function. **3a.** An established organization or foundation, especially one dedicated to education, public service, or culture....

²⁴For example, see Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, 1982 ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), especially Chapter II, The Role of Government in a Free Society.

²⁵George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd ed. (2016), 428–431

²⁶https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Golden_Rule

²⁷George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 427–428

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- ²⁸George Lakoff and the Rockridge Institute, *Thinking Points: Communicating Our American Values and Vision* (2006), https://valuesmessage.org/sources/ThinkingPoints/TP_Ch6.html
- ²⁹George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016)
- ³⁰George Lakoff, *The All New Don't Think of an Elephant: Know Your Values and Frame the Debate* (White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing, 2014)
- George Lakoff and Elisabeth Wehling, *The Little Blue Book: The Essential Guide to Thinking and Talking Democratic* (New York: Free Press, 2012)
- ³¹**met•a•phor** *n.* **1.** A figure of speech in which a word or phrase that ordinarily designates one thing is used to designate another, thus making an implicit comparison, as in “a sea of troubles” or “All the world’s a stage” (Shakespeare). **2.** One thing conceived as representing another; a symbol: “Hollywood has always been an irresistible, prefabricated metaphor for the crass, the materialistic....” (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition*, 2011)
- ³²George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980, 2003 Afterword)
- ³³**ab•stract** *adj.* **1.** Considered apart from concrete existence: *an abstract concept*. **2.** Not applied or practical; theoretical. **3.** Difficult to understand; abstruse: *abstract philosophical problems*. **4.** Denoting something that is immaterial, conceptual, or nonspecific, as an idea or quality: *abstract words like truth and justice....* (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition*, 2011)
- ³⁴George Lakoff, *Moral Politics: How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 65–67, **elaboration** 67–107; 108–110, **elaboration** 110–140
- ³⁵George Lakoff and the Rockridge Institute, *Thinking Points: Communicating Our American Values and Vision* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006) 14. Also “Chapter 2 – Biconceptualism” at https://valuesmessage.org/sources/ThinkingPoints/TP_contents.html
- ³⁶Jonathan Haidt, *The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*, First Vintage Books Ed. (New York: Vintage, 2013)
- ³⁷**hi•er•ar•chy** *n.* **1.** A group of persons or things organized into successive ranks or grades with each level subordinate to the one above: *a career spent moving up through the military hierarchy....* (*The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, Fifth Edition*, 2011)
- ³⁸The vote for women, labor rights, Social Security, civil rights, voting rights, Medicare, etc.
- ³⁹“Political Typology Reveals Deep Fissures on the Right and Left” (Washington, D.C.: Pew Research Center, October 24, 2017) <https://www.people-press.org/2017/10/24/political-typology-reveals-deep-fissures-on-the-right-and-left/>