

# Political Ideology

POLS 4790: Political Polarization

Weeks 13-15, Fall 2013

# Looking Ahead

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- ▶ Everyone will be randomly assigned to argue the liberal and conservative sides on each issue.
- ▶ Format of the debates: 2-3 minutes statements from everyone, back and forth between the liberal and conservative sides, with questions from me.
- ▶ Focus of the statements and debate will be on the values underlying liberal and conservative ideologies, rather than statistics (although stats are not unwelcome).



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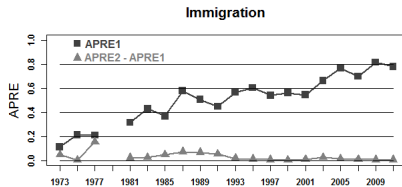
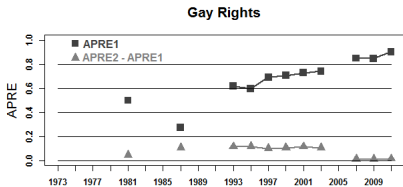
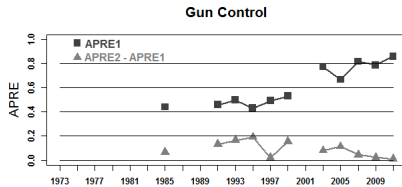
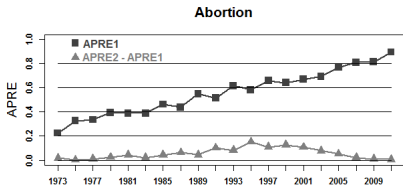
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- ▶ Indeed, an ideology entails a configuration of issue positions that are bound by some form of *constraint* (Converse 1964).

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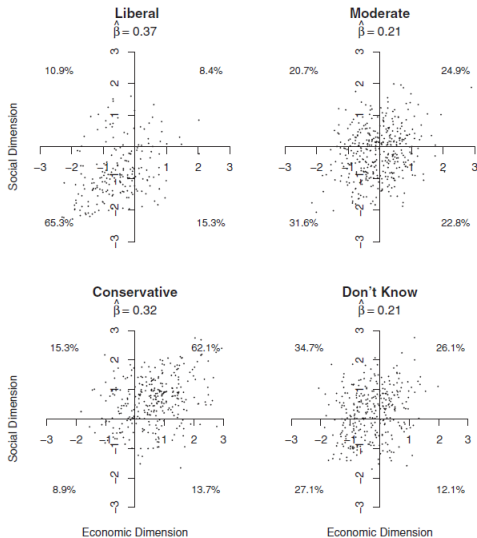
- ▶ What is ideology?
- ▶ Often *measured* by summarizing legislators' or citizens' positions on multiple policy issues.
- ▶ Indeed, an ideology entails a configuration of issue positions that are bound by some form of *constraint* (Converse 1964).
- ▶ Debate arises over whether these issue positions are connected (*constrained*) by underlying “crowning postures”: core values and basic premises (for example, those involving human nature); or whether they are an artificial creation of random chance and elite packaging.

# Elite Ideological Constraint



Source: Hare and Poole (2014)

# Mass Ideological Constraint



Source: Treier and Hillygus (2009)

# Political Ideology



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- ▶ Different branches of political ideologies form that address the central problem in different ways.

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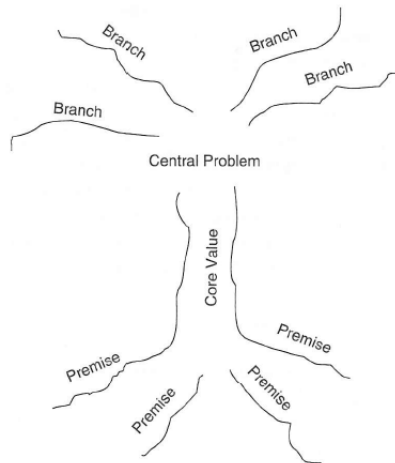


Figure 1.1 An Ideology Tree

Source: Marietta (2012)

# Conservatism

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  - ▶ Anti-Utopianism (The road to hell is paved with good intentions). Liberal fascism?

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  - ▶ This helps explain seeming contradictions of conservative fears about an intrusive federal government (especially with regard to economic matters) coupled with support for government enforcement of personal matters like drug usage or abortion.

# Conservatism

- ▶ The Central Question:

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  - ▶ The Glue Problem: How do we best hold together a fragile society while maintaining the value of ordered liberty?

# Conservatism

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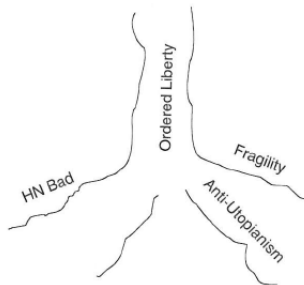
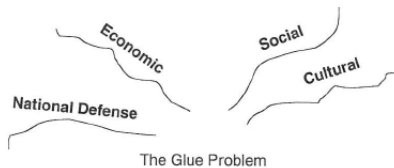


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  - ▶ Cultural Conservatism: tradition (cultural homogeneity or the melting pot creates stability).
  - ▶ Branches are not only not mutually exclusive, but are generally reinforcing with some exceptions.

# Conservative Ideology Tree



Conservative Branches

Source: Marietta (2012)



# Conservatism

- ▶ So, what makes support for tax cuts, opposition to legalized abortion, support for the Iraq War, and opposition to amnesty for illegal immigrants go together?

# Liberalism

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  - ▶ Anti-Foundationalism: We can't be sure of any absolute truths, and so must be tolerant. Relativism and subjectivism.

# Conservative and Liberal Epistemology

	Can Know	Can't Know
Conservative	good v. bad right v. wrong	consequences of government action
Liberal	how to improve society	absolute values

Figure 6.2 Conservative and Liberal Knowledge

Source: Marietta (2012)

# Liberalism

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  - ▶ Social justice: the value that arises when combining the beliefs that humans are good and society is improvable with a criticism of present conditions.
  - ▶ An emphasis on equality (economic and individual) over order (why?).

# Liberalism

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  - ▶ The Oppression Problem: Where do we begin in our task of improving society? Start with the oppressed (either through intolerance or inequality).

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  - ▶ Environmentalism: Nature and animal rights.

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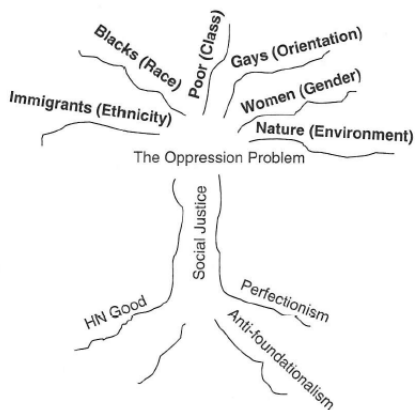


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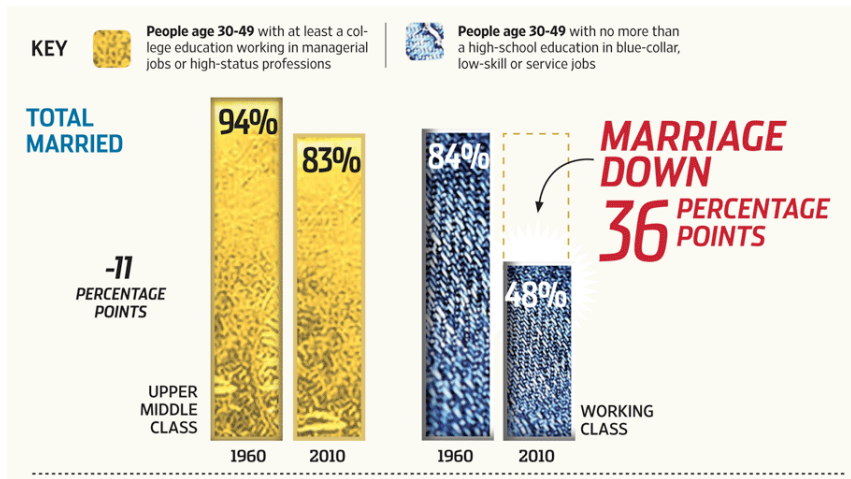
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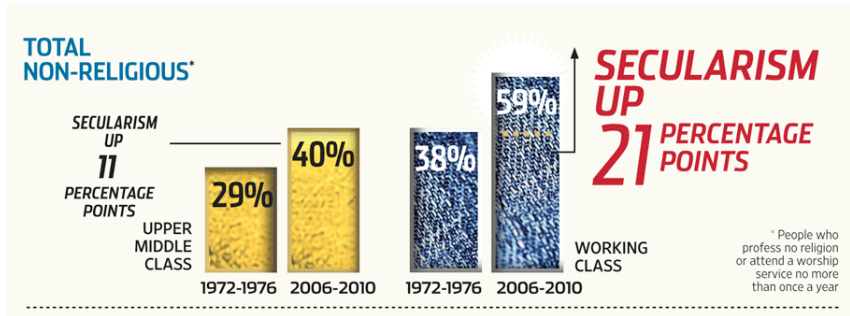
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- ▶ Conservatives could argue that this may not be a problem to be solved and just a byproduct of natural market forces (it may be undesirable, but many things in the natural world that are undesirable that we can't do anything about).
- ▶ Or, if it is a problem, efforts to redistribute income will likely cause more harm than good. We should look instead to *cultural inequality*: forces like the breakdown of family structure and traditional values (which have disproportionately affected the low income class) that are likely to have caused the problem in the first place.

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