

Conservative vs. Liberal Beliefs

“We all want...the same things in life. We want freedom; we want the chance for prosperity; we want to be the best we can be; we want as few people suffering as possible, economically; we want healthy children; we want to have crime-free streets; all these things, they’re pretty common...The argument is how to achieve them.”

<p>CONSERVATIVES – believe in personal responsibility, limited government, free markets, individual liberty, traditional American values and a strong national defense. Believe the role of government should be to provide people the freedom necessary to pursue their own goals.</p> <p>Conservative policies generally emphasize empowerment of the individual to solve problems.</p>	<p>LIBERALS – believe in governmental action to achieve equal opportunity and equality for all, and that it is the duty of the State to alleviate social ills and to protect civil liberties and individual and human rights. Believe the role of the government should be to guarantee that no one is in need. Believe that people are basically good.</p> <p>Liberal policies generally emphasize the need for the government to solve people’s problems.</p>
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THE ISSUES:

ISSUE	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL
Abortion	<p>Human life begins at conception. Abortion is the murder of a human being. Nobody has the right to murder a human being.</p> <p>Support legislation to prohibit partial birth abortions, called the “Partial Birth Abortion Ban” (partial birth abortion - the killing of an unborn baby of at least 20 weeks by pulling it out of the birth canal with forceps, but leaving the head inside. An incision is made in the back of the baby’s neck and the brain tissue is suctioned out. The head is then removed from the uterus.)</p>	<p>A fetus is not a human life.</p> <p>The decision to have an abortion is a personal choice of a woman regarding her own body and the government should stay out of it. Women should be guaranteed the right to a safe and legal abortion, including partial birth abortion.</p>
Affirmative action	<p>People should be admitted to schools and hired for jobs based on their ability. It is unfair to use race as a factor in the selection process. Reverse-discrimination is not a solution for racism.</p>	<p>Due to prevalent racism in the past, minorities were deprived of the same education and employment opportunities as whites. We need to make up for that.</p> <p>Support affirmative action based on the belief that America is still a racist society. Minorities still lag behind whites in all statistical measurements of success. Also, the presence of minorities creates diversity.</p>
Death penalty	<p>The death penalty is a punishment that fits the crime; it is neither ‘cruel’ nor ‘unusual’. Executing a murderer is the appropriate punishment for taking an innocent life.</p>	<p>We should abolish the death penalty. The death penalty is inhumane and is ‘cruel and unusual’ punishment. It does not deter crime. Imprisonment is the appropriate punishment. Every execution risks killing an innocent person.</p>
Economy	<p>The free market system, competitive capitalism, and private enterprise afford the widest opportunity and the highest standard of living for all. Free markets produce more economic growth, more jobs and higher standards of living than those systems burdened by excessive government regulation.</p>	<p>Favor a market system in which government regulates the economy. We need government to protect us against big businesses. Unlike the private sector, the government is motivated by public interest. We need government regulation to level the playing field.</p>
Education - school vouchers	<p>School vouchers will give all parents the right to choose good schools for their children, not just those who can afford private schools. Parents (who pay the taxes that fund the schools) should decide how and where to educate their child.</p>	<p>School vouchers are untested experiments. We need to focus on more funding for existing public schools -to raise teacher salaries and reduce class size.</p>
the Environment	<p>Desire clean water, clean air and a clean planet, just like everyone else. However, extreme environmental policies destroy jobs and damage the economy.</p> <p>Changes in global temperatures are natural over long periods of time. So far, science has not shown that humans can affect permanent change to the earth’s temperature.</p>	<p>Conservatives don’t care about protecting the environment. Industrial growth harms the environment.</p> <p>Global warming is caused by an increased production of carbon dioxide. The U.S. is a major contributor to global warming because it produces 25% of the world’s carbon dioxide. The U.S. should enact laws to significantly reduce that amount.</p>

Gun control	The Second Amendment gives the individual the right to keep and bear arms. Gun control laws do not thwart criminals. You have a right to defend yourself against criminals. More guns mean less crime.	The Second Amendment gives no individual the right to own a gun, but allows the state to keep a militia (National Guard). Guns kill people. Guns kill children.
Health care	Free healthcare provided by the government (socialized medicine) means that everyone will get the same poor-quality healthcare. The rich will continue to pay for superior healthcare, while all others will receive poor-quality free healthcare from the government. Health care should remain privatized. Support Healthcare Spending Accounts.	Support universal government-supervised health care. There are millions of Americans who can't afford health insurance. They are being deprived of a basic right to healthcare.
Homeland security	Wary of parts of the Patriot Act	Oppose the Patriot Act
Immigration	Support legal immigration at current numbers, but do not support illegal immigration. Government should enforce immigration laws. Oppose President Bush's amnesty plan for illegal immigrants. Those who break the law by entering the U.S. illegally should not have the same rights as those who obey the law by entering legally. If there were a decrease in cheap, illegal immigrant labor, employers would have to substitute higher-priced domestic employees, legal immigrants, or perhaps increase mechanization.	Support legal immigration and increasing the number of legal immigrants permitted to enter the U.S. each year. Support blanket amnesty for current illegal immigrants. Believe that regardless of how they came to the U.S., illegal immigrants deserve: - U.S. government financial aid for college tuition. - visas for spouse/children to come to the U.S. Families shouldn't be separated. Illegal immigrants do the jobs that Americans do not want to do.
Religion	The phrase "separation of church and state" is not in the Constitution. The First Amendment to the Constitution states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." This prevents the government from establishing a national church. However, it does not prevent God from being acknowledged in schools and government buildings. Oppose the removal of symbols of Christian heritage from public and government spaces. Government should not interfere with religion and religious freedom.	Support the separation of church and state. Religious expression has no place in government. Support the removal of all references to God in public and government spaces. Religion should not interfere with government.
Same-sex marriage	Marriage is between one man and one woman. Opinions differ on support for the creation of a constitutional amendment establishing marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Believe that requiring citizens to sanction same-sex relationships violates moral and religious beliefs of millions of Christians, Jews, Muslims and others who believe marriage is the union of a man and a woman.	Marriage should be legal for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender couples to ensure equal rights for all. All individuals, regardless of their sex, have the right to marry. Believe that prohibiting same-sex citizens from marrying denies them of their civil rights. Opinions differ on whether this issue is equal to civil rights for African Americans.
Social Security	The current Social Security system is in serious financial trouble. Changes are necessary because the U.S. will be unable to maintain the current system in the future. Support proposal to allow a portion of Social Security dollars withheld to be put into an account chosen by the individual, not the government.	Generally oppose change to the current Social Security system. Opinions vary on whether the current system is in financial trouble. Changing the current system will cause people to lose their Social Security benefits. Support a cap on Social Security payments to the wealthy.
Taxes	Support lower taxes and a smaller government. Lower taxes create more incentive for people to work, save, invest, and engage in entrepreneurial endeavors. Money is best spent by those who earn it.	Support higher taxes and a larger government. High taxes enable the government to do good and create jobs. We need high taxes for social welfare programs, to provide for the poor. We can't afford to cut taxes.
United Nations	The UN has repeatedly failed in its essential mission: to preserve world peace. The wars, genocide and human rights abuses of the majority of its member states (and the UN's failure to stop them)	The United States has a moral and a legal obligation to support the United Nations (UN). The UN can be effective in promoting peace and human rights. The U.S. should not have acted in Iraq without UN approval. The U.S. should

(UN)	prove this point. History shows that the United States, not the UN, is the global force for spreading freedom, prosperity, tolerance and peace. The U.S. should never subvert its national interests to those of the UN.	submit its national interests to the greater good (as defined by the UN).
War in Iraq	<p>This was a preemptive strike to protect the U.S. All intelligence indicated that Saddam Hussein possessed and used weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) in the past and was prepared to use them again. He would not allow United Nations weapons inspectors to confirm his claim that he had destroyed his WMDs.</p> <p>A democracy can succeed in Iraq if the people are given the opportunity to create one. All people want to live in freedom.</p>	<p>This is Bush's war for oil. Saddam Hussein was no real threat. We have not found weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), so Saddam did not have any. President Bush lied about WMDs and the dangers posed by Saddam. We should have given the UN more time. We have alienated the rest of the world by our unilateral action ('go it alone' attitude).</p> <p>A democracy can't succeed in Iraq. Not everyone wants to live in a democracy.</p>
War on terror/terrorism	The world toward which the Militant Islamists strive cannot peacefully co-exist with the Western world. In the last decade, Militant Islamists have repeatedly attacked Americans and American interests here and abroad. The terrorists must be stopped and destroyed.	9/11 was caused by America's arrogant foreign policy. America needs to stop angering other countries. The threat posed by terrorism is exaggerated by President Bush for his own political advantage.
Welfare	Oppose long-term welfare. We need to provide opportunities to make it possible for poor and low-income workers to become self-reliant. It is far more compassionate and effective to encourage a person to become self-reliant, rather than keeping them dependent on the government for money.	Support welfare. We need welfare to provide for the poor. Conservatives oppose welfare because they are not compassionate toward the poor. We have welfare to bring fairness to American economic life. Without welfare, life below the poverty line would be intolerable.