

All nations are steered by ideologies throughout the course of their history. An ideology is the idea or belief that society can be better. In unit 2, many ideologies were covered as an introduction into the world of political science; ideologies become the driving force of change. And, if you look at American history, our society is bound together by many ideologies; but nonetheless, no matter what ideologies we have implemented, we as a people are ultimately governed by the democracy of our republic. But what are these ideologies? Who and how do they affect us? Let us delve into some of the ideologies and briefly cover what they mean.

Our first ideology is classic liberalism. The term can be a little misleading (you may see liberalism and just think liberal). Classic liberalism is an ideology that was founded by Adam Smith. It eventually becomes U.S. conservatism; what we know today as the right wing. The main thing to remember with classic liberalism is that government intervention affects economic growth negatively (or that is at least what Smith believes). Next we have classic conservatism. Edmund Burke is the main proponent of classic conservatism; which is the basic idea that traditions and institutions cannot be all that bad (meaning, do not change things that are working). And then we get to modern liberalism. Modern liberalism is the exact opposite of classic liberalism; it favors government intervention. Modern liberalism is important because it brought important utilities and services to the people; things like minimum wage laws, health insurance, and the right to form unions. On the other side of modern liberalism, you have modern conservatism. Modern conservatism has taken parts of Burke's and Smith's ideologies, and blended them together for a more contemporary use.

Of course there are other ideologies that are much less common in the United States. These are Marxist Socialism (after Karl Marx), Communism, Fascism, and Libertarianism. Marxist Socialism was built around the idea that capitalism was bad, and destined to fail. Rather than explore and elaborate on the details of Socialism, Marx focused on the many issues surrounding capitalism. Of course, the general belief of Socialism is that the people, not the government or state, is in control of the goods. Marx saw a society that no longer needed to be policed or governed; that people would govern themselves. One thing to note, Marx's

vision has been labeled a utopian-type society that most likely will never exist. And, there is Communism. Communism is the combination of Marxist theory and Leninist organization to form a type of totalitarian party. Communism is really just the graduated, or fully mature, version of Socialism. The ideology of Communism creates a world that is classless, moneyless, where all the people are equal. This is a wonderful idea in theory; however, every time it has been put into practice, major corruption and greed have always surfaced. Communism fails due to greedy humans. A concept that is authoritarian in nature is Fascism. Fascism is a form of nationalism that turns catastrophic if we look at history; specifically Germany in the twentieth century. Fascism is what we would consider extreme right-wingers or those that resist and do not want change; many times having a hidden agenda where everything seems mysterious. We have all heard the term *greedy capitalist*; a greedy capitalist is well underway to becoming a fascist. But, whereas Fascism may be the darker version of Nationalism, Nationalism in itself is quite common. What is just Nationalism? It is basically just an exaggerated belief in one's country's solidarity, or greatness. You can say the United States has a high Nationalism ideology. I know while I have been in school for the last three years, not a day goes by that I do not hear that the United States is the greatest country on the planet. I would say that is high Nationalism.

And finally, there are a few other ideologies that are important to point out (oddly enough, all springing out of the 1960s); they are Libertarianism, Feminism, and Environmentalism. Libertarianism is the ideology that government should be extremely small; perhaps almost non-existent. This is important to note, because just in this past election, election 2012, government spending was a hot topic. And there are many Americans that believe that we have too big, and too much, government. Moving on to Feminism. Feminism was reintroduced to the United States in the 1960s. At Feminism's core, it just states that women are equal to men; in all areas of life, whether that be in the office, out of the office, in education, or in politics. Equal. And we end with Environmentalism; yet another 1960s movement. The Environmentalism ideology just states that we must regulate business, company, and human negative impact on the planet; we must protect our most precious resource.

Reference

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