

The heart of conservatism

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The Heart of Conservatism

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Abstract

The conservative movement in America expresses itself in many forms. Two of its biggest factions are the traditionalists and the libertarians. While they are both considered to be on the right side of the political spectrum, the two philosophies still disagree on many core philosophical issues. Politically, a common disdain for “big government” and a general commitment to personal liberty keeps the movement fairly united at the ballot box, supporting conservative leaders such as Barry Goldwater and Ronald Reagan. This brand of conservatism is called “fusionism” because it fuses together traditionalism and libertarianism by focusing on what the two factions have in common and downplaying their differences. But fusionism is more of a political compromise than a theoretical unity. While the differences between traditionalists and libertarians are too deep to truly reconcile, understanding the importance of humility in the philosophies of both factions can shed light on how the two can conflict on so many points, yet still come together to form a large and powerful political movement.

Important Questions

How many “types” of conservatives are there?

What differentiates one type of conservative from another?

What differentiates a conservative from a liberal?

What role does humility play in conservative thought?



The Conservative Movement

Libertarianism

Traditionalism

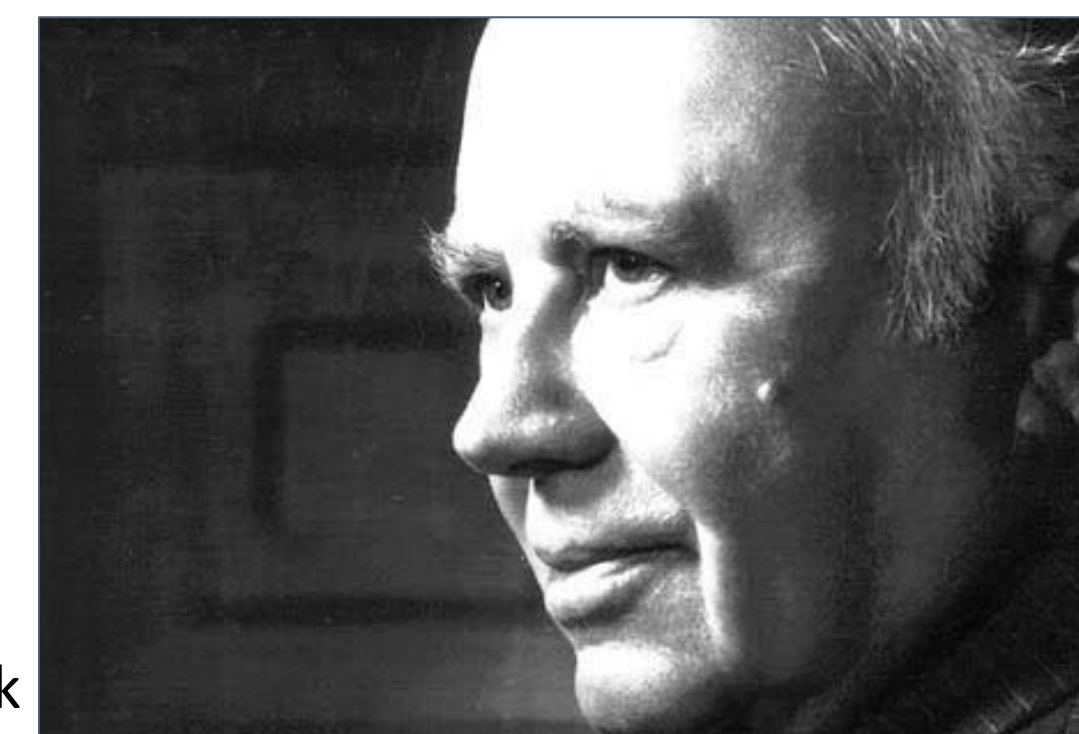
F.A. Hayek

Ayn Rand



F.A. Hayek

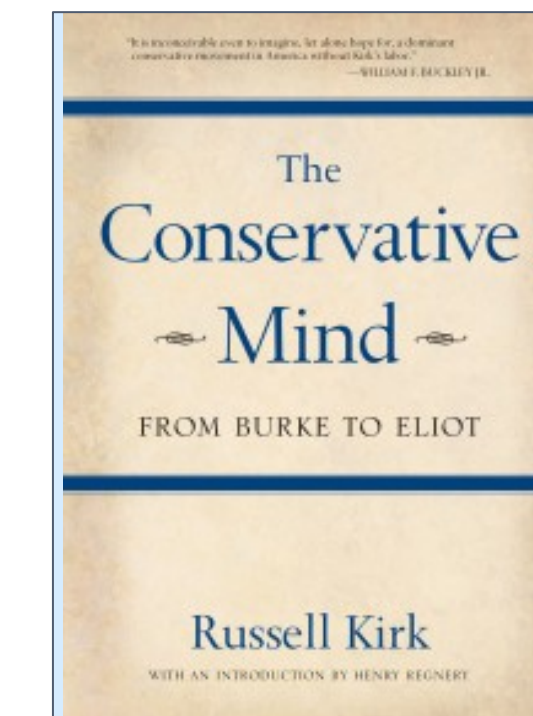
Personal Liberty
Individualism
Free Markets



Russell Kirk

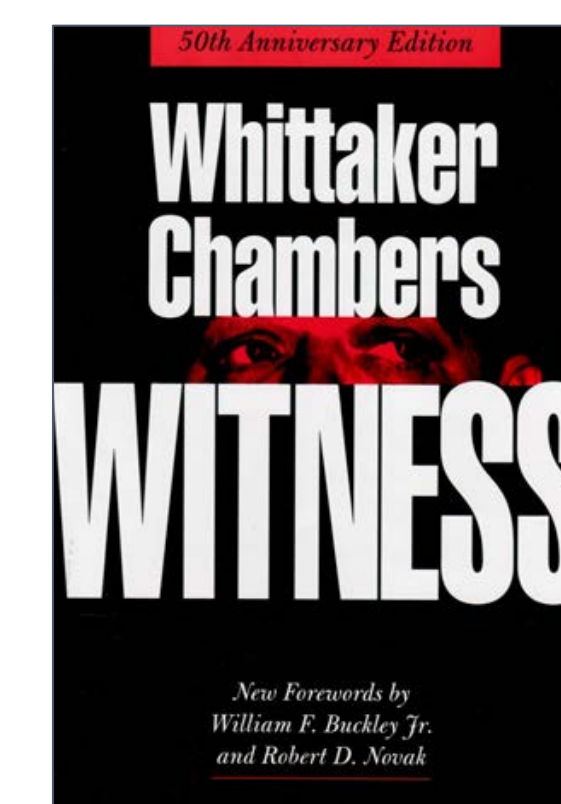
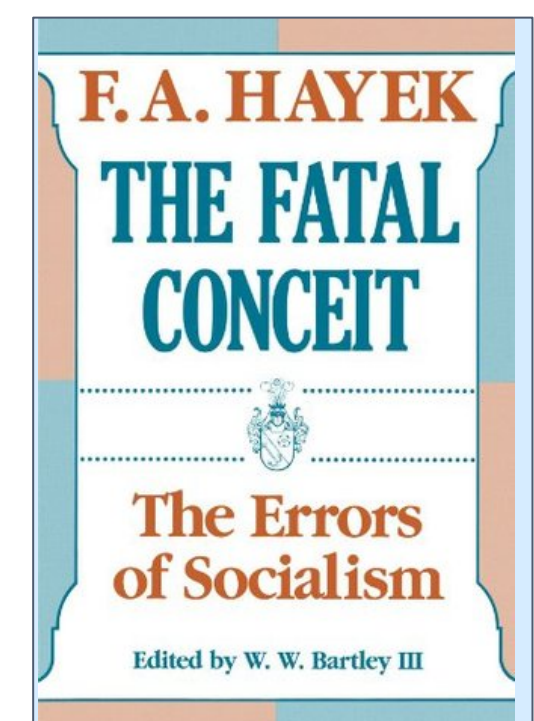
Tradition
Virtue
God

Important Books



Russell Kirk's most famous book, and the best introduction to traditional conservatism

A summation of Hayek's work written at the end of his life



The true story of how Whittaker Chambers ousted Alger Hiss as a Communist spy

Goldwater's short book is still one of the best descriptions of what conservatives believe

