THE POLITICAL THEORY READER

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Preface

Political theory has an honorable past, a vibrant present, and an uncertain future. Studying the history of political ideas – as developed by such great thinkers as Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Madison, Burke, Hegel, and Marx – has long been central to being an educated person and leading a thoughtful public life. During the past 50 years, the content of political theory has exploded, as the canonical works have been supplemented by important new developments in our thinking about community life and governance. Feminists, environmentalists, and religious fundamentalists are just a few of the "new" voices that have raised and debated issues that had previously received only passing attention. Our basic political identities, opening and closing the borders of our communities, balancing citizen rights and responsibilities, and providing social justice both within and across nation-states are just some of the matters that have spawned intense and stimulating debates – even while older questions, such as those about the desirability and requirements of democracy and the legitimate roles of government, remain hotly contested.

The future of political theory is uncertain, not just because innovative political ideas and paradigmatic changes can occur spontaneously, but also because it remains unclear how a continuation of present trends will be received. As in other fields of inquiry, political theory is experiencing increasing specialization and fragmentation. Contemporary political theorists normally work within particular traditions (such as liberalism and Marxism), emphasize particular concepts (such as justice and citizenship), and focus on more specific topics within such broad conceptual areas (such as global justice and special rights for marginalized groups of citizens). The outburst of books and articles within these traditions and topics makes it difficult, if not impossible, for even professionals to keep abreast of the field as a whole. This development is sometimes viewed with anxiety, as it diminishes the capacity of political theory to play its historical role of integrating political ideas into coherent understandings of the entire range of political activity.

However, there are some ways that this development can be viewed positively. First, persons who do not consider themselves political theorists, but rather specialists in the study of various kinds of political (as well as social and economic) institutions, actions, and events, can more readily access and employ that work in political theory bearing directly on their concerns; in this sense, it is possible to see political theory increasingly informing the work of social scientists generally. Second, it may be that the search for grand and universal theories of politics has been a quixotic and even misguided venture. Perhaps conservatism and communitarianism provide the best answers to questions of community identities, while liberalism provides the best answers to questions of structuring political communities, and socialism and feminism offer important ideas about justice. Moreover, different kinds of political communities (such as cities, nation-states, regional organizations, and global society),

other social communities (such as families, voluntary associations, and workplaces), and diverse cultural communities (such as those where secular, Christian, and Islamic values are dominant) may best be guided not by a universal and grand political theory but by political principles that are particular to each of them. Perhaps the future will witness leaders and citizens accessing – with the help of new communication technologies and search engines – relevant specialized work in political theory as resources for generating their own public philosophies to guide the governance of the various particular communities in which they live and work.

This reader introduces students to some of the more significant past and present contributors to political theory and to the central issues that they have raised. It has been developed to complement my introductory text in political theory, *From Ideologies to Public Philosophies*, based on the premise that students require not only the sort of interpretations of the field that texts provide but also they should have direct access to important original sources in it. The readings here are organized so they parallel my account of political theory in *From Ideologies to Public Philosophies*, but instructors could, of course, adopt this reader independently of that text.

Political theory has always been concerned with questions about the good life, the good society, and good government, and political theorists have usually regarded efforts to understand politics without deep concern about such moral and normative matters as incomplete, if not foolish. They generally credit Plato with developing the first major political philosophy, and subsequent works in that tradition have usually been expressed as abstract, complex, and idealized formulations that have eluded widespread intersubjective understandings and clear applications to current political issues. About two centuries ago, ideologies emerged seeking to overcome such difficulties. Various ideologies can be seen as more accessible, applied political philosophies that seek to rally political leaders and citizens behind social and economic goals that could be expressed as general principles having defensible (or at least appealing) philosophical foundations. While ideologies remain important – indeed, many analysts claim that ideological thinking and polarization are more widespread now than ever – political theorists have usually expressed skepticism about ideologies, regarding them as clever intellectual disguises for getting others to support the goals of particular interests at the expense of the public good and the legitimate concerns of others. Ideological thinking seems to resist alternative ideas in ways that make political discussion based on debate among proponents of competing ideologies resemble a winner-take-all sporting event rather than an exercise in political deliberation that seeks the widest possible agreement on how to govern our communities.

As an antidote to ideological thinking, political theorists have increasingly used the term "public philosophy" to capture efforts to develop political principles that have the accessible, applied qualities of ideologies while avoiding their more rigid and closed features. While a great thinker like Locke or Marx could generate a political philosophy and his followers could work out the applied implications and sell this philosophy as an ideology to leaders and citizens of political communities, public philosophies are generated by broader publics – ideally, the most inclusive public possible. Rather than develop their own political principles, political theorists have increasingly sought to become public philosophers who *articulate* what they perceive as the widely accepted public or social understandings of the good life, good society, and good government that prevail in political communities – even while they often criticize these understandings.

I believe that political pluralism is the best term for summarizing such understandings in America and other modern Western societies. In *From Ideologies to Public Philosophies*, I have tried to articulate the broadest consensus that I find among "the friends of pluralism," the most prominent ideological competitors within these societies today. Perhaps the label pluralism is unfortunate because, a half-century ago, political scientists used that term for a much narrower theory of politics than the concept of pluralism had historically conveyed. Along with a growing number of political theorists, I have been involved in expressing pluralism as a more general and basic public philosophy having increasing worldwide appeal. But I doubt that understanding and embracing pluralism exhausts our theoretical needs in politics. While I believe that our first and most basic political commitments should be to pluralism as a set of ideas for tolerating and reconciling our inevitable political differences, I also believe that leaders and citizens need a second and more specific set of *partisan* principles that, compared to the broader public philosophy of pluralism, provide clearer guidance to their immediate political concerns and establish priorities among competing values and ideals. Pluralist societies will always contain people committed to alternative political doctrines containing competing ideas on how our particular political communities should be governed and how emerging issues should be resolved. If people's first commitment is to pluralism, their partisan

principles will be more open to alternative viewpoints than is the case when people come to politics with rigid ideological orientations that resist the give-and-take that pluralist politics requires.

This reader provides resources for students seeking to understand both the basic principles of pluralism and many of the partisan principles that might become part of their more specific public philosophies. Such understanding is important for students to become participants in democratic deliberations about public life. Once pluralism as our most basic public philosophy is understood, they can become effective contributors in public conversations that defend, criticize, and transform present social understandings. Once the main issues that all public philosophies address and the leading alternative principles regarding these issues are understood, they can think clearly about the more specific political principles that seem worthy of their allegiance and that they can defend in the company of their fellow citizens. The readings in Chapter 1 address these introductory matters in more depth; they provide overviews of political theory, political philosophy, ideologies, public philosophies, and pluralism.

Part I introduces the ideological traditions whose ideas we can survey, compare and contrast, and critically evaluate as we generate our political commitments. Chapter 2 provides excerpts from canonical texts for the ideological traditions that developed during the nineteenth century: classical liberalism, traditional conservatism, Marxism, and anarchism. In Chapter 3, students are exposed to ideologies that have been most influential in the twentieth century: communism, fascism, contemporary liberalism, and contemporary conservatism. Chapter 4 provides readings from some of the more radical quasi-ideologies that have arisen in recent decades: perspectives like communitarianism, the religious right, feminism, and "green thought" that seek fundamental changes in particular elements of prevailing pluralist public philosophy. Such radicals regard contemporary liberalism as insufficiently committed to various aspects of social equality that have been the concern of the political left,[1] or they regard contemporary conservatism as insufficiently committed to the protection of traditional values that has been the concern of the political right. In subsequent chapters, other radical and more extreme voices will be encountered, as they bear on particular philosophical and political issues.

Part II focuses on philosophical issues. Political theorists have long understood that our most basic political beliefs are often rooted in philosophical assumptions about ontology, human nature, images of society, and epistemology – sometimes only by implication but sometimes clearly specified by those seeking a complete articulation of their political claims. While early modern thought contained great confidence that universal political theory could be built on firm philosophical foundations, this confidence has slowly eroded and many postmodern thinkers wish to expose the limitations of all philosophical foundations and build understandings of politics without such foundations. Contemporary pluralists seem to seek a middle path between these positions, as they acknowledge that philosophical assumptions are never beyond contestation, but also recognize that they cannot be entirely eliminated from deeper political thinking. Pluralists seek as much common ground as possible on basic philosophical assumptions, and believe that this consensus can only be had on "thin" ontologies, minimal assumptions about human nature, unrestrictive images of society, and modest epistemological claims. They believe our commitments to more specific political philosophies than pluralism should be guided by rigorous analysis of thicker philosophical assumptions about the determining role of divine, popular, economic, and other forces on the fate of the world, about more specific ideas about human characteristics and motivations, about the precise composition of societies, and about the best methods for acquiring knowledge about politics.[2]

Alternative ontological bases of political thought are presented in the readings in Chapter 5; they address beliefs in "higher" (often divine) ultimate realities beyond human perceptions about the natural world, assumptions that material forces or human ideas are the ultimate determinants of the course of history, and the postmodern skepticism of any ultimate reality or causal forces. Alternative conceptions of human nature are presented in Chapter 6; some such conceptions focus on human frailties and limitations, while others provide more optimistic accounts of human instincts, capacities, and potential. Alternative images of society are contained in Chapter 7; both cooperative and conflictive conceptions of political societies are presented, as are individualistic and group-centered images of society.

[1] As Sheri Berman argues in *The Primacy of Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), democratic socialism was also highly influential, especially in Western Europe during the twentieth century, and remains an important voice on the radical left. Selections addressing democratic socialist concerns are included throughout this reader.

[2] For a related discussion, see Michael Walzer, *Thick and Thin* (Notre Dame, IN: Notre Dame University Press, 1994).

A variety of attempts to base politics on knowledge other :han the pre-modern emphasis on "the word of God," :he teachings of some other authority, and traditional ınderstandings are presented in Chapter 8. Readings ıere propose or discuss various scientific epistemologies hat promise some solid political "truth," emphasize nore tentative socially constructed political understand- ngs, or criticize all efforts to generate political certainty ır even political consensus.

Part III addresses directly the great political issues. ›ecause political theorists focus on different social and conomic problems, have different goals that reflect dif- :rent values (or at least different priorities among alues), and bring alternative philosophical assump- ons to their thinking, they have expressed and defended broad array of political principles addressing our most asic concerns as we seek desirable social, economic, ıd political arrangements. As in *From Ideologies to ublic Philosophies*, I organize these concerns into ques- ons of communities, citizenship, structure, rulers, ıthority, justice, and change. This reader provides :tracts from both past and present political theorists ntaining competing principles on each of these cen- ıl concerns, as well as readings proposing minimal inciples upon which all pluralists can agree.

Chapter 9 deals with the type of political communities olities) that invoke people's loyalties and support. The ractions of and bases of identity with local, national, d global communities are considered. Chapter 10 pro- les readings that deal with questions of citizenship. ould polities open or close their borders to new citi- ıs from abroad? What are the rights and responsibili- ; of citizenship? Are there certain political virtues that citizens should possess? Chapter 11 deals with how itical communities should be structured. Some read- s emphasize the need for a large private sphere where ividual thoughts and actions are subject to minimal ımunity influences, while others seek more extensive ial control over individuals within the community. : roles of economic markets, voluntary associations, :ural norms, religion, and government in structuring ımunity life are addressed in the readings here. ıpter 12 addresses the sorts of people who should gov- polities. The desirability and possibility of having rulers who are unaccountable, minimally accountable, and highly accountable to citizens are considered. Whether and how democracy can be strengthened beyond the sorts of representative democracies that presently govern in pluralist societies are questions addressed in other readings in this chapter. In Chapter 13, some readings call for no or very limited government, while others provide arguments for more extensive governmental authority to protect the environment, regulate the economy, and promote certain moral values. The growing economic inequalities and the questions of distributive justice that such inequalities provoke are considered in Chapter 14. John Rawls' egalitarian liberalism and some of the responses his theory has elicited are included in the readings in this chapter. Finally, Chapter 15 addresses the concept of political change – which is useful for summarizing and drawing conclusions arising from issues addressed in earlier chapters. In addition to considering readings that doubt the desirability of significant change, the readings consider various strategies for achieving it.

This reader thus provides a broad survey of the range and scope of political thinking on the most central political issues that thoughtful and informed citizens must confront. To achieve this breadth within the limited space of an anthology, it has, of course, been necessary to extract from larger works those portions that focus on the issues under consideration in various chapters. Some instructors will object to this "reader's digest" approach, but it should be remembered that the purpose of this book is to introduce students to the major contributors to political thought, the central issues they address, and the most important alternative answers they provide. If this reader achieves these goals, students will return for more advanced studies in political theory where they read in their entirety some of the works extracted here, as well as other important books and articles that deserve our attention. But these readings (especially if accompanied by my text) will provide a host of philosophical and political ideas that will engage the interest and deepen the political thinking of most students, and they will provide a basis for stimulating class discussions, as students search for the best answers to the good life, the good society, and good government.

Chapter 1

Political Theory, Public Philosophy, and Pluralism

Introduction

- Nation-states are yielding their centrality to the global community, to the betterment (or detriment) of people everywhere.
- National communities should open (or close) their borders to immigrants from other countries who seek citizenship.
- The cultural norms that sustain strong and well-ordered political communities are becoming increasingly debased (or enriched).
- Political life has greatly improved because democratic processes are becoming increasingly adopted globally (or is declining because democracy is eroding in the US or elsewhere).
- To protect and sustain our environment, governments must impose many regulations on economic activity and citizen behaviors (or should allow market forces to function freely and produce those profitable technical innovations that will protect our environment).
- Rising economic inequality creates economic growth for the betterment of everyone (or social polarization that undermines community life).
- We are experiencing increasingly disturbing social, economic, and political problems, so we need to return to our old ways of governing ourselves (or we need revolutionary political changes).

We have all heard such ideas, and most of us have uttered such ideas. To that extent, we are all familiar with political theory, and we all partake in political theory. Politics concerns how we live in community with others, how we cooperate to achieve collective benefits, how we engage in conflict for greater shares of the things we value, and how people are governed. Political theory consists of general or abstract ideas about how politics works and how it should work. Such political ideas flood newspapers, television, radio, and the Internet. Libraries are full of books and journals containing such political ideas, even when they are located in places far removed from collections devoted to elections, legislatures, the law, and other obviously political subjects. Abstract political ideas are discussed not only in governmental forums, but also in classrooms, churches, and taverns. Given the sheer magnitude of political theory, the extent of ignorance and confusion about political life and political ideals is astonishing.[1]

While we are exposed to many theoretical ideas about politics, we seem to comprehend, assimilate, and appreciate few of them. Many such ideas are obviously conflicting, mere opinions of others that have no obvious validity. Many are expressed to serve the interests of others, and seem repugnant to our interests or the public interest. Many seem unrealistic – distortions of the politics we perceive, utopian fantasies containing unattainable goals, and paranoid expressions of others' fears. Many such ideas are simply incoherent – too abstract, too complex, or too removed from our own experiences

[1] Michael X. Delli Carpini and Scott Keeter, *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

and thinking to make much sense to us. Not surprisingly, people often turn away from political ideas.

But escaping from serious political reflection is dangerous, especially in democracies that proclaim that governance reflects the beliefs and values of their citizens, and even more in democracies where leaders have learned to pander to citizen emotions and mislead the public in order to pursue their own ideological agendas.[2] Democracies that are effective, that are oriented toward the public good, and that seek justice for all require citizens who are competent political thinkers.

Citizen competence no doubt begins with awareness of changing social, cultural, and economic conditions in our communities and with informed judgments about the effectiveness of our leaders and the programs and policies they have established to improve these conditions – or at least prevent their deterioration. Competent citizens must be able to choose effectively among political parties and candidates those that reflect their interests and aspirations and that offer the most promising solutions to social problems, and they must actively pursue their preferred policies between elections. But effective choices and actions presuppose that citizens have some sort of broad cognitive framework to help them choose and act. Citizens need maps that organize various understandings of political life and help them to choose among competing ideas, to judge the directions in which their communities are heading, and to evaluate and hold accountable those who lead them. For competent citizens, political theory is not just a mishmash of conflicting, self-serving, utopian, paranoid, and distant ideas; rather, it provides them comprehensive and coherent maps of political life, helps them sort out valid from dubious ideas, and facilitates their making informed judgments and good political choices.

Four types of maps for organizing and understanding political ideas can be useful. The most general is merely a *conceptual matrix* that organizes ideas along two dimensions. On one axis are arrayed the major political issues (e.g., questions of citizenship, of rulers, of government authority, and of justice) and their philosophical foundations (questions of ontology, human nature, the nature of society, and epistemology). On the other axis are alternative answers to these questions (e.g., as provided by competing ideologies or by different cultural traditions). Sorting political ideas on the basis of the major issues they address and the general perspectives they reflect is the beginning of making sense of political discourse and politics itself.

[2] Alan Wolfe, *Does American Democracy Still Work?* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).

This reader, like my accompanying text (*From Ideologies to Public Philosophies*), is organized on the basis of such a matrix. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 introduce major ideological perspectives. Chapters 5 through 15 provide a sample of readings from these perspectives (and other earlier political theorists not identified with any modern ideology) that provide alternative answers to the major philosophical and political issues developed at the beginning of each chapter. If you encounter a political idea and can place it within a conceptual framework according to the great issue(s) it addresses and the perspective(s) it represents, you will have made a significant step in removing confusion about the bewildering onslaught of political ideas that compete for your attention.

But competent citizens not only can place political ideas in such a matrix, they choose among alternative answers, developing philosophical assumptions and political principles to which they are allegiant. The political principles they adopt and the philosophical assumptions that are the basis of these principles and help provide support and justification for these principles comprise *individual public philosophies* enabling citizens to know where they stand on the concrete political issues that arise in their communities. Most citizens lack comprehensive and coherent political perspectives, while others have simply adopted those of their parents, friends, some charismatic political leader, or the cultures in which they are embedded. But some citizens develop their own political views by thinking long and hard about the alternative ideas on the great issues, adopting those principles that they find most valid and justified. Sometimes these individual public philosophies closely match those of well-established ideologies, but they can also be unique personal constructions. The readings and the way they are organized here are intended to help you develop such a perspective.

Coherent sets of political principles should guide not just individual citizens; they should also guide political communities. A regime or dominant party that has articulated a set of ideas that most citizens have endorsed during elections can govern a polity on the basis of *a specific governing philosophy*. While we often imagine democratic communities as functioning in this way, the failure of candidates and parties to express and remain true to such a philosophy, the failure of citizens to choose among candidates and parties on the basis of their articulated philosophies, and electoral arrangements that make it difficult to ascertain the dominant principles of citizens from electoral outcomes can result in our being governed more by pure power than by any governing philosophy.

Since particular regimes and parties have authority for specific time periods, the public philosophies by which they (ideally) govern are many and temporary. In the US, for example, Democrats governed on the basis of a brand of contemporary liberalism during much of the mid-twentieth century, only to give way to a form of contemporary conservatism during the Reagan and Republican years. Bill Clinton brought a somewhat different liberalism to national politics during the 1990s, while George W. Bush governed under another conservatism from 2000 to 2008. Now Barack Obama seeks to govern using a highly pragmatic and nondogmatic form of liberalism. But these variations and changes in governing philosophies should not obscure the existence of a broader public philosophy containing general political principles and (weak) philosophical assumptions to which all these regimes subscribe and to which most Americans (and many leaders and citizens elsewhere) also subscribe. Thus, a fourth map of political theory that people can effectively understand and utilize is composed of these most general ideas that are widely held within political communities and that endure over time, even while different regimes apply their more particular governing philosophies. This most general map of political ideas – which I call *pluralist public philosophy* – helps those with more specific competing principles understand and appreciate their commonalities and thus helps provide a basis of resolving political conflicts in a democratic, civil, and peaceful manner.

While subsequent chapters will provide readings chosen to help you understand and appreciate these various kinds of maps, the readings in this chapter address the "map making" activity of political theorists. It provides some general accounts of what political theorists are trying to achieve and why their work is important. It discusses what political philosophers do, the role of ideologies in political theory, the public philosophies that political theorists have found and seek to promote, and it provides an introduction to pluralism as the most general public philosophy affecting politics today.

Our first selection by Leo Strauss (1899–1973) provides the classical statement about the meaning and importance of political philosophy. It was written in 1957, at a time when political philosophy was "in a state of decay and perhaps putrefaction." Claiming that political philosophers had since Plato been engaged in the search for knowledge of "the nature of political things, and the right, or the good, political order," Strauss discusses the limitations of the "social science positivism" that was ascendant in political science at the beginning of its behavioral revolution and that sought to understand politics in a value-free manner. For Strauss, who taught for many years at the University of Chicago, Claremont College, and St. John's College in Annapolis and who influenced the education of a large group of political philosophers (the Straussians), efforts to understand politics without deep concern about moral and normative matters are incomplete, if not misguided.

Strauss believed that the true activity of a political philosopher was to help relieve the human suffering that occurs from ill-advised attempts to use political power in ways that assume greater understanding and control than humans can actually have; thus, he was not only hostile to the positivist quest for scientific certainty but also to the various ideologies that had arisen since the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century. While ideologies are normally regarded as "any visionary and grandiose scheme of social reform," Judith Shklar (1928–92), who had a long and distinguished career as the first woman in Harvard's Department of Government, argues that ideologies are more precisely understood as specific "forms of untruth." She points out that Karl Marx had used the term to reveal that classical liberalism (which was becoming a dominant public philosophy) did not contain universal truths about politics but was instead "a mask" used to obscure the fact that its principles supporting capitalism and representative democracy served the interest of the rising middle class (the bourgeoisie) at the expense of the working class (the proletariat). She also points out that subsequent students of ideology – most notably Karl Mannheim – claim that other public philosophies including democratic socialism, conservatism, communism, and fascism were also mere weapons that particular interests employed in their efforts to gain support and power, and thus succeed in political struggles. In short, Shklar and other students of ideology maintain that none of these outlooks have any claim to providing superior understandings of political life.

Writing in the 1950s and 1960s, Strauss and Shklar lamented the decline of political philosophy. But stimulated by the work of John Rawls (1921–2001) and many others, there was a revival in political philosophy. While Rawls' seminal *A Theory of Justice*, published in 1971, was seen by some as yet another ideology, he subsequently argued in *Political Liberalism* (1993) that his work, like that of other political theorists, actually sought to articulate liberal pluralism as a public philosophy expressing an "overlapping consensus" at least within contemporary Western societies among those holding diverse moral and political doctrines. In Chapters 6, 8, and 14 of this reader, you will encounter some of Rawls' most important ideas in this regard.

If Rawls intended his theory of justice to be a public philosophy, it was a more idealized articulation of political ideas in America than those that actually prevail, at least according to Theodore Lowi, who has been a professor of American Institutions at Cornell University since 1972. In *The End of Liberalism*, first published in 1969 but substantially revised and extended in a subsequent 1979 edition, Lowi argues that America's public philosophy has been transformed since the 1930s. Its old public philosophy was capitalism, understood as a version of classical liberalism that emphasized economic processes and "the sanctity of property and the binding morality of contract." However, its new public philosophy is "interest-group liberalism," in which national government has acquired an expansive role by giving all organized interests access to its authority. According to Lowi, Democrats and Republicans do not really pursue different principles but merely respond to different interests. Lowi can be interpreted as arguing that this new interest-group liberalism is a deformed type of pluralist public philosophy. It must be criticized because its ideas encourage governments to minimize the use of their legitimate powers of coercion and to dispense with philosophically defended standards; instead, such governments merely pursue the sentiments of those who participate and have power.

Our final two selections look more directly at pluralist public philosophy. Avigail Eisenberg – a professor of political science at The University of Victoria (in British Columbia, Canada) – has sought to reconstruct political pluralism. Many political scientists still understand pluralism as either Lowi's interest-group liberalism or as a theory of democratic politics that focuses on the (relatively dispersed) distribution of power among many groups in society and that became the dominant paradigm in the discipline during the 1950s and 1960s. However, most political scientists abandoned pluralism when that formulation encountered many problems and criticisms (such as those suggested by Lowi). Eisenberg regards this understanding of pluralism as limited. Pluralism has a much longer historical legacy that provides a broad array of resources for a more adequate public philosophy – one that focuses on individual moral development as well as the distribution of power and one that not only depicts existing society but also can help transform political life.

William E. Connolly, a professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University, addresses these themes in his recent book entitled *Pluralism*, from which our final extract in this chapter is taken. Connolly takes up the question of whether pluralism – with its uncertainty and relativism, its recognition of the legitimacy of diverse viewpoints and interests, and its commitments to negotiation and compromise among interests – is "a philosophy for wimps." He endorses pluralism because those committed to it "expose and resist such dark resonance machines" that deny and oppress alternative voices. He endorses pluralism, because it permits people to have a "bicameral orientation," a commitment not only to pluralism but also to another "faith, creed, ideology, or philosophy" that enables one to participate as a committed partisan in the public realm. While pluralism has too often been equated with a resignation to politics as it is currently practiced, Connolly proclaims the possibility of being both a pluralist and a person with commitments to radical changes that reduce the deep inequalities that pervade pluralist societies.

In sum, the readings in this chapter invite us to think more clearly about the general modalities of political theory. Political philosophy is not the quest for political certainty, but a search for political understanding in light of human limitations. Political ideologies do not provide clear guidance for political programs and policies, but rather are perspectives that justify the goals of particular interests. Public philosophies are not singular perspectives that demand universal allegiances, but are instead diverse sets of political principles and philosophical assumptions that should be arrived at through careful reflection by both individuals and collectivities. Pluralism is not a well-established paradigm that claims that power is widely and justly distributed in democratic societies, but rather is a general public philosophy that contains the most widely embraced political understandings that people have about the good life, a good society, and good government in a world where most such understandings are highly contested. As such a public philosophy, pluralism remains a work in progress. As such, the voices of all citizens and students can contribute significantly to its articulation and future development.