



Makers and Takers: Why conservatives work harder, feel happier, have closer families, take fewer drugs, give more generously, value honesty more, are less materialistic and

By Peter Schweizer

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In *Makers and Takers* you will discover why:

- * Seventy-one percent of conservatives say you have an obligation to care for a seriously injured spouse or parent versus less than half (46 percent) of liberals.
- * Conservatives have a better work ethic and are much less likely to call in sick than their liberal counterparts.
- * Liberals are 2½ times more likely to be resentful of others' success and 50 percent more likely to be jealous of other people's good luck.
- * Liberals are 2 times more likely to say it is okay to cheat the government out of welfare money you don't deserve.
- * Conservatives are more likely than liberals to hug their children and "significantly more likely" to display positive nurturing emotions.
- * Liberals are less trusting of family members and much less likely to stay in touch with their parents.
- * Do you get satisfaction from putting someone else's happiness ahead of your own? Fifty-five percent of conservatives said yes versus only 20 percent of liberals.
- * Rush Limbaugh, Ronald Reagan, Bill O'Reilly and Dick Cheney have given large sums of money to people in need, while Ted Kennedy, Nancy Pelosi, Michael Moore, and Al Gore have not.

* Those who are “very liberal” are 3 times more likely than conservatives to throw things when they get angry.

The American left prides itself on being superior to conservatives: more generous, less materialistic, more tolerant, more intellectual, and more selfless. For years scholars have constructed—and the media has pushed—elaborate theories designed to demonstrate that conservatives suffer from a host of personality defects and character flaws. According to these supposedly unbiased studies, conservatives are mean-spirited, greedy, selfish malcontents with authoritarian tendencies. Far from the belief of a few cranks, prominent liberals from John Kenneth Galbraith to Hillary Clinton have succumbed to these prejudices. But what do the facts show?

Peter Schweizer has dug deep—through tax documents, scholarly data, primary opinion research surveys, and private records—and has discovered that these claims are a myth. Indeed, he shows that many of these claims actually apply more to liberals than conservatives. Much as he did in his bestseller *Do as I Say (Not as I Do)*, he brings to light never-before-revealed facts that will upset conventional wisdom.

Conservatives such as Ronald Reagan and Robert Bork have long argued that liberal policies promote social decay. Schweizer, using the latest data and research, exposes how, in general:

- * Liberals are more self-centered than conservatives.
- * Conservatives are more generous and charitable than liberals.
- * Liberals are more envious and less hardworking than conservatives.
- * Conservatives value truth more than liberals, and are less prone to cheating and lying.
- * Liberals are more angry than conservatives.
- * Conservatives are actually more knowledgeable than liberals.
- * Liberals are more dissatisfied and unhappy than conservatives.

Schweizer argues that the failure lies in modern liberal ideas, which foster a self-centered, “if it feels good do it” attitude that leads liberals to outsource their responsibilities to the government and focus instead on themselves and their own desires.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Schweizer (*Do as I Say [Not as I Do]*) expands his critique of modern American liberals to contend that liberalism not only leads to social decay, but can also lead to personal decay. Drawing upon polls and psychological studies, the author argues that conservatives work harder, feel happier, have closer families, take fewer drugs, give more generously, value honesty more, are less materialistic and envious, whine less... and even hug their children more than liberals. Schweizer is noticeably silent on current affairs; instead, he focuses on the culture wars of the 1990s, demonstrating how Clinton lied... and did so in a fine fashion, that Al Gore has also told lies and that the Clinton administration was notable for its tolerant attitude toward drugs. Schweizer refrains from making substantive commentary on the upcoming election; he spends more time attacking Garrison Keillor, for whom he reserves a special distaste. The readable prose and vigorous defense of Republican voters ensure that this book—despite its dated material and lack of analysis of the current campaign—will rally and rouse conservatives. (June 3)

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About the Author

Peter Schweizer is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, and is the author of numerous books, including the *New York Times* bestseller *Do as I Say (Not as I Do): Profiles in Liberal Hypocrisy*. He lives in Florida with his wife and sons.

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1. THE MIGHTY ME

Or, Why Liberals Are More Self-Centered Than Conservatives

The archetype of the modern liberal is not John F. Kennedy, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Martin Luther King, Hubert Humphrey, or even Jimmy Carter. It is Peter Pan, the mythical character who avoids responsibility, refuses to grow up, and is terribly self-absorbed.

Ronald Reagan kept a plaque on his Oval Office desk that read: "There is no limit to what a man can do, if he doesn't care who gets the credit." Reagan often reflected this attitude. After he left the White House, the economy was strong, the Cold War was won, and national pride had been restored. Dismissive of praise, he headed quietly back to California. "I'm not a great man," he would say. "I just believe in great ideas."

In contrast, Bill Clinton has spent his post-White House years giving speeches about what he accomplished as president. Even his closest friends recognize that he is obsessed with his favorite subject—himself. In an in-depth profile of Clinton in the usually friendly *Vanity Fair*, veteran journalist Robert Sam Anson explained the frustrations of his friends. "He just talks. You don't really have a conversation with him...He is just self-absorbed. Totally." According to Anson, Clinton has "a hankering for attention that makes him a joke even to admirers." His 957-page memoir *My Life* has been called one of the most "self-absorbed" pieces of literature in American history.(1)

Clinton may seem to be an easy target. But he is not alone. He is in fact a perfect reflection of contemporary liberalism and its obsession with self, individual freedom, personal growth, and "doing what feels good." One of the central aims of modern liberalism is avoiding commitment and responsibilities by outsourcing them to the government. Autonomy and independence, avoiding constraints imposed by family, tradition, churches, and community are a major preoccupation. If you don't believe me, consider these results from the highly regarded General Social Survey:

Do you get happiness by putting someone else's happiness ahead of your own? Of those who described themselves as "very conservative," 55 percent said yes. Those who described themselves as "very liberal"? Only 20 percent agreed.

Would you endure all things for the one you love? More than half--55 percent of conservatives--said yes, compared with only 26 percent of liberals.

Are you willing to sacrifice your wishes to let the one you love succeed? Only 33 percent of liberals said yes, compared with 57 percent of conservatives.

Is it your obligation to care for a seriously injured/ill spouse or parent, or should you give care only if you really want to? Fully 71 percent of conservatives said it was. Less than half (46 percent) of liberals agreed.(2)

Today's liberalism is completely wrapped up with the notion of self. The legacy of the sixties' "if it feels good do it" ethos is alive and well. Modern liberals, as we shall see, often embrace these teachings and incorporate them in the way they live their lives and maintain their relationships.

For dramatic proof, go to the streets of a liberal enclave like San Francisco, Seattle, or Vermont. There will be plenty of expensive boutiques, antique dealers, health spas, sushi bars, and upscale coffee shops. But you won't see very many children. The reason is not that right-wingers have dumped buckets of birth control pills into the San Francisco municipal water supply. The simple fact is that many on the liberal-left today just don't want to have children.

A 2004 survey showed that a typical sample of 100 unrelated adults who called themselves liberal will have 147 children. That contrasts with the typical conservative, who is likely to have 208 children per 100 unrelated adults. That's 41 percent more.(3) Why is this important? Because raising children is a difficult and selfless act that is also an important civic duty. The survival of our society--not to mention our Social Security system!--rests on individuals bringing up a new generation.

The liberal Northeastern states--Vermont, Maine, Massachusetts, and New York--have the lowest fertility rates in the country. They also have the lowest percentage of population under the age of five. In progressive San Francisco, there are more dogs than children. Joel Kotkin points out that Seattle (my hometown) has roughly the same population as it did in the 1960s, but barely half as many children. Indeed, there are nearly 45 percent more dogs than children.(4) Dogs, of course, offer companionship without the burdens and responsibilities of children.

Some might conclude that this is a result of the high cost of living in desirable cities like Boston, New York, and San Francisco. But in these childless meccas we also see some of the highest per capita expenditures on luxury goods, spas, and personal therapies. (Kotkin regards San Francisco as a "childless liberal boutique city.") (5) It's not a lack of money; it's a lack of interest. The General Social Survey found that 69 percent of those who called themselves "very conservative" said it was important to them to have children. Only 38

percent of corresponding liberals agreed. An online survey (admittedly not scientific) taken by the left-wing website daily kos.com asked readers if they had children and how many. The most popular answers: "No children," "Not going to have any," and "Don't want any."

Meanwhile, the highest fertility rate in the country is found in the most conservative state, Utah, followed by Arizona, Alaska, and Texas, otherwise known as "red states," according to the latest National Center for Health Statistics survey. States with the lowest fertility rates are Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, all "blue states." Over half of the women of childbearing age--15 to 44--are childless in liberal bastions such as the District of Columbia, Vermont, and Massachusetts.(6)

Many on the left proudly proclaim themselves to be "child-free." (They angrily reject the term child-less because it implies that they are missing out on something.) Partly this is a result of liberal pessimism about the future. Concerned about overpopulation, dwindling environmental resources, global warming, etc., some liberals don't want to have children because they see them as an environmental hazard. Billionaire Ted Turner reflected this attitude when he thoughtfully announced his regret at having five children. "If I was doing it over again, I wouldn't have had that many, but I can't shoot them now and they're here."(7) No doubt this sort of sentiment makes for charming conversation around the Turner dinner table.

Far more common is the modern liberal notion that children are a burden, something that will get in the way of one's self-fulfillment. As any parent knows, raising children is hard work. It requires emotional commitment, selfless acts, large quantities of time, and scads of money. Many liberals just don't want the inconvenience. When asked by the World Values Survey whether parents should sacrifice their own well-being for those of their children, those on the left were nearly twice as likely to say "no" (28 percent to 15 percent) when compared to conservatives.(8)

A look at some popular websites offers plenty of evidence that this is a major strand in modern liberal thinking: "The trouble is, many of us bright, liberal people know that procreation is a quaint, antiquated concept." And another: "I read somewhere a while back that it costs about 1 Million to raise a child from birth to 21 years assuming they attend college. So buy a house in SF or have a kid? I'm not actually looking for an answer but kids are expensive." And another: "I'll have the babies if you pay for them."(9)

Another offers: "I have not been asked very often why I'm childless. If I am I just say the truth. That I am too selfish, that I want to spend my time and money on things other than children, that I am doing my part to counteract all of the overbreeders. The thought of attending a child's athletic event, and sitting through the whole thing, is almost enough in itself."(10) Peter Pan could not have put it better.

This birth gap presents a quandary for politically active liberals. Not wanting to be inconvenienced with raising their own children, they still want to see their ideas perpetuated. Professor Darren Sherkat of Southern Illinois University worries that because conservatives "who have lots of children" are not being matched by those on the political left who "may well not have kids," these demographic trends will push the country in a more conservative direction. (Data indicates that 80 percent of children end up adopting the political attitudes of their parents.) To counterbalance this trend, he argues for increasing immigration and expanding the black population. He also hopes that childless liberals will "be able to reproduce themselves in strangers," by taking on jobs as teachers, writers, and other people of influence. The idea is to let conservatives raise their children, while liberals influence them through the schools and universities.(11) One liberal proposes a more extreme solution: "We could just start kidnapping those babies of conservative parents and raise them to be ACLU-card toting liberals. That would address the imbalance without raising populations."(12) The last comment is a joke, of course, but it highlights a disturbing reality: Liberals who express little interest in having children of their own want control over how other peoples' children are

raised.

As Hillary Clinton once told *Newsweek*, "There is no such thing as other people's children."

Another lefty concurs: "I'd say that the author of a popular book has far more aggregate influence than do one set of parents. So if the book is very popular and captures the imaginations of kids, presto, you've done a lot to insure that the ideas that are important to you live long after you pass on. . . . If it's the ideas that matter then I suppose that there are ways that folks like you can propagate the ideas without having your own kids be your lab rats."(13)

This lack of interest in raising children is matched by the lack of enthusiasm among liberals for making a commitment to marriage. Many on the left prefer to fly solo because marriage gets in the way of their individual freedom. According to the General Social Survey, 65 percent of those who were very conservative said marriage was important to them, compared with just 30 percent who were very liberal. Nearly half on the left (48 percent) said it was "not at all important."(14)

This should not be surprising to anyone paying attention to the drift of liberal thinking over the past forty years. While a majority of liberals clearly still prefer the security and rewards of married life--although they may go through several spouses in their restless search for the ideal partner--many on the "progressive" left have a clear disdain for family life.¹⁵ Barbara Ehrenreich, a popular fixture on college campuses and a bestselling lefty author and columnist, has written: "There is a long and honorable tradition of 'anti-family' thought." She approvingly quotes Charles Fourier, the French philosopher who "taught that the family was a barrier to human progress," and British anthropologist Edmund Leach, who said, "Far from being the basis of a good society, the family with its narrow privacy and tawdry secrets is the source of all discontents." In another *Time* essay, the twice-married Ehrenreich slammed marriage and encouraged transitory and ad hoc relationships. She hoped that in the future, kids would be raised by communal groups of adults.(16)

Meanwhile, law professor Catharine MacKinnon declares that "feminism stresses the indistinguishability of prostitution, marriage, and sexual harassment." Feminist Vivian Gornick has claimed that "being a housewife is an illegitimate profession."(17) Professor Linda Hirshman of Brandeis says that "the Family--with its repetitious, socially invisible, physical tasks--is a necessary part of life, but it allows fewer opportunities for full human flourishing than public spheres like the market or the government."(18) That's no doubt how Peter Pan would view it, absent the academic language.

Nobel laureate Toni Morrison likewise observed, "The little nuclear family is a paradigm that just doesn't work. . . . Why we are hanging on to it, I don't know." The National Organization for Women has over the years distributed a bumper sticker that proclaims: "One Nuclear Family Can Ruin Your Whole Life." Alice Rossi, former head of the American Sociological Association, explains that a broad alliance on the left now shares the view that "the nuclear family and monogamous marriage are oppressive, sexist, 'bourgeois,' and sick."(19)

Gloria Steinem advised two generations of young people to seek out self-love rather than loving someone else. "The truth is finding ourselves brings more excitement and well-being than anything romance can offer," she wrote in her 1992 book *Revolution from Within*.(20)

Adrienne Frost, a self-described feminist comedian and onetime correspondent for Comedy Central's *The Daily Show*, has written a book called *I Hate Other People's Kids*. The more highbrow *Washington Monthly* has featured such articles as "The Case Against Kids," which explains how parents should not sacrifice their careers for their children.(21)

Other feminists complain about the inconveniences posed by parents with children. One childless feminist professes to be put out because "everyone will make way for a woman with a stroller or a child in tow." (22) Professor Debra Mollen at Texas Woman's University complains that "pregnant women get preferential parking." (23)

Professor Christopher Clausen, writing in *American Scholar*, notes that "in intellectual circles the phrase 'family values' has become a term of ridicule," in part because so few liberal academics are interested in the burdens of having children. He points out the attraction that going childless--excuse me, child-free--poses for academics on the left. This interest has less to do with high-minded idealism than with preventing children from distracting you from yourself. He notes that he admires a friend of the family who decided not to have children, in contrast to his own parents. "They liked their freedom too much. Although the man was subordinate to my father at the National Institutes of Health, the couple inhabited a cavernous eighteenth-century house in Georgetown instead of, like us, a suburban three-bedroom in Bethesda. They had no need to worry about local schools and playgrounds. They took trips to New York whenever they wanted, and occasionally to Europe. They frequently ate in restaurants." (24) All the important things in life.

Linda Hirshman gets down to brass tacks in her book *Get to Work: A Manifesto for Women of the World*, a clarion call for women to be more self-focused. Why avoid having children? Because they get in the way of reaching your full potential, Hirshman explains. The only life worth living is one that includes a high income and a satisfying career. Having kids and staying home to kiss boo-boos is a losing proposition. She advises women to "find the money." (25)

When Rabbi Shmuley Boteach published an essay on the Internet about the contempt that many liberals show toward parents of large families, he was barraged with nasty e-mails upbraiding him for the idea that large families are good. Some of them called people with large families "breeders." One wrote: "What is the income tax deduction for 10 children? It comes to \$32,000 doesn't it? Now, if that religious person happens to give, for example, \$5,000 tithing to his church, the first thing you know they are paying little or no taxes while the rest of us are paying through the nose." (26)

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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