

# Politics and Government



## Max Weber

Politics: The distribution of power in society

Power: Ability to achieve one's ends despite opposition

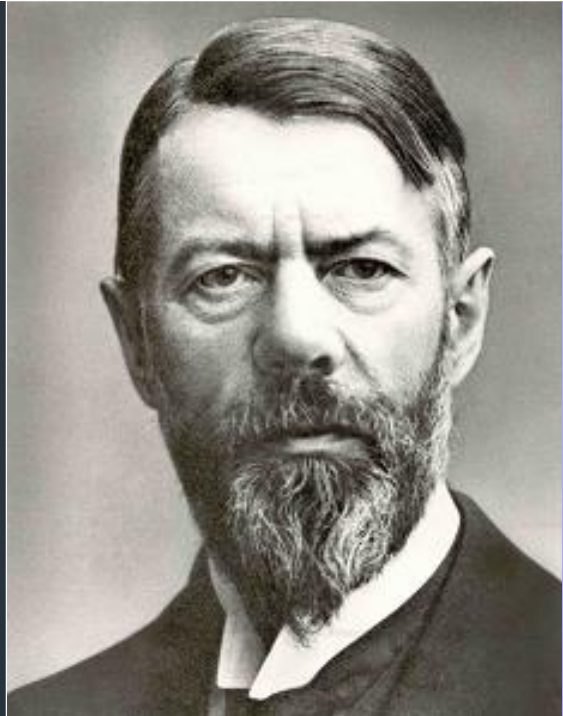
Legitimate Authority:

- Traditional

- Legal Rational

- Charismatic

State: Institution possessing the legitimate authority to use violence



# Theories of Power and Government

## Pluralism

### **Functionalist:**

Government serves as the arbiter between competing interest groups

Group power rises and falls

Veto Power = Compromise

### Dysfunction

Group becomes disproportionately powerful

Government loses legitimacy



Elite Models:  
C. Wright Mills

*The Power Elite*

Power Elite =  
Corporate Leaders,  
Executive Officers,  
Military Brass

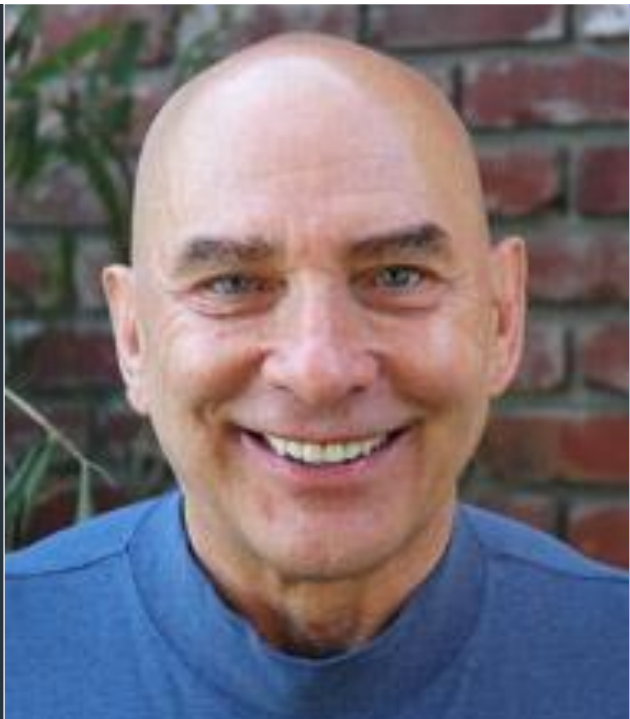
Shared interests  
Revolving Door

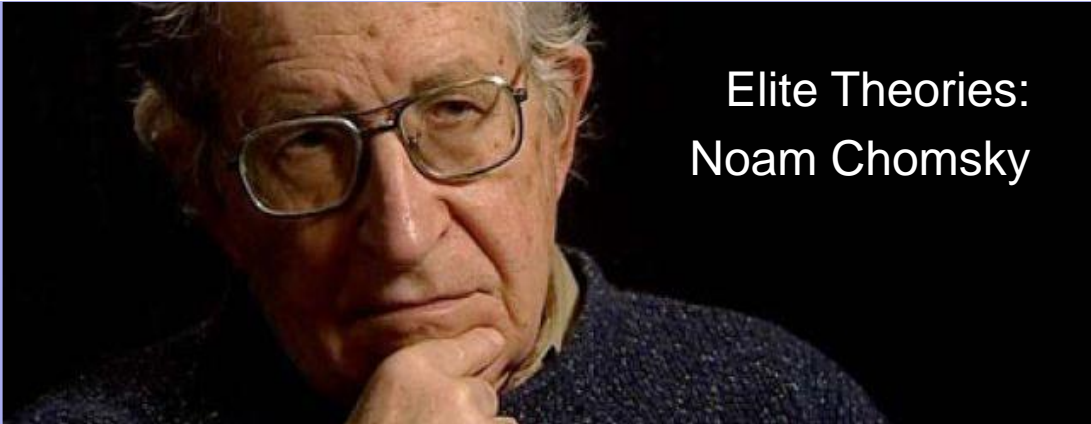
Elite Theories:  
G. William Domhoff

*Who Rules America?*

The 1%

- ▶ Government and Military serve the interests of the Economic Elite

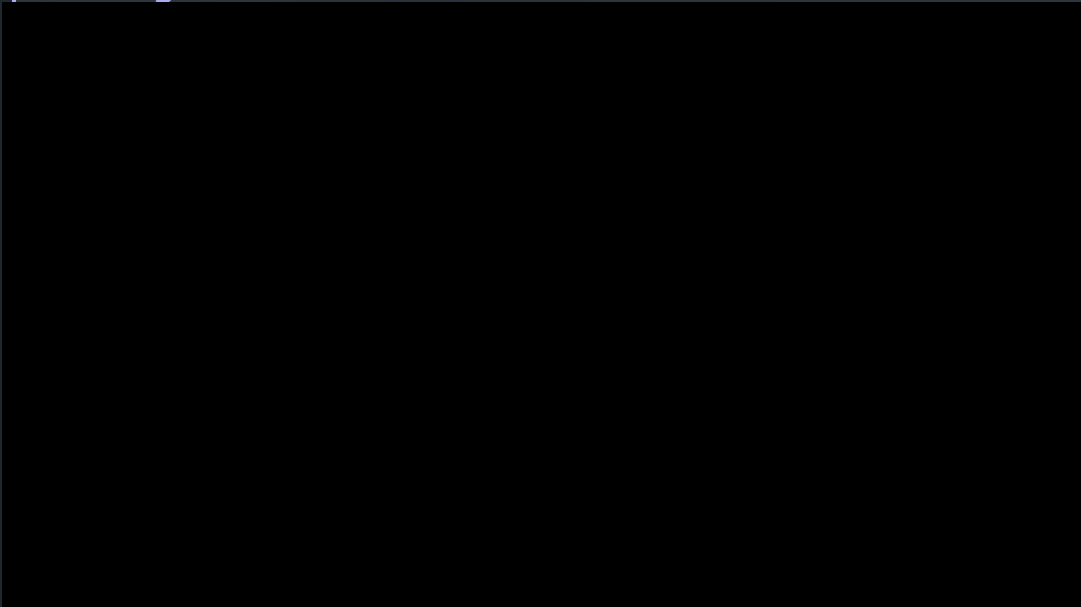




## Elite Theories: Noam Chomsky

### *Manufacturing Consent:*

- The media is complicit in maintaining elite rule



# Myths of Modern Government

▸ **The United States is a Republic, not a  
Democracy**

**Truish:**

**Republic: Res Publica**

Elite without a royal tradition

Founding Fathers

**Democracy: Rule by the “Demos”**

Result of social movements



## Democrats are Liberal, Republicans are Conservative

### Mostly True → For Now

Ideological Partisanship is relatively new

Two Party System: Internal Coalitions

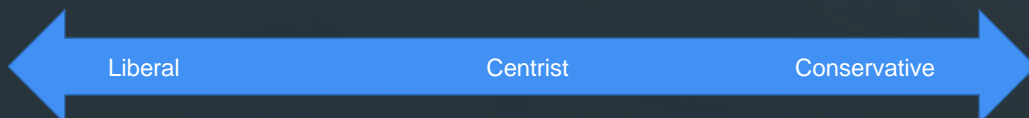
Parliamentary Systems: External Coalitions

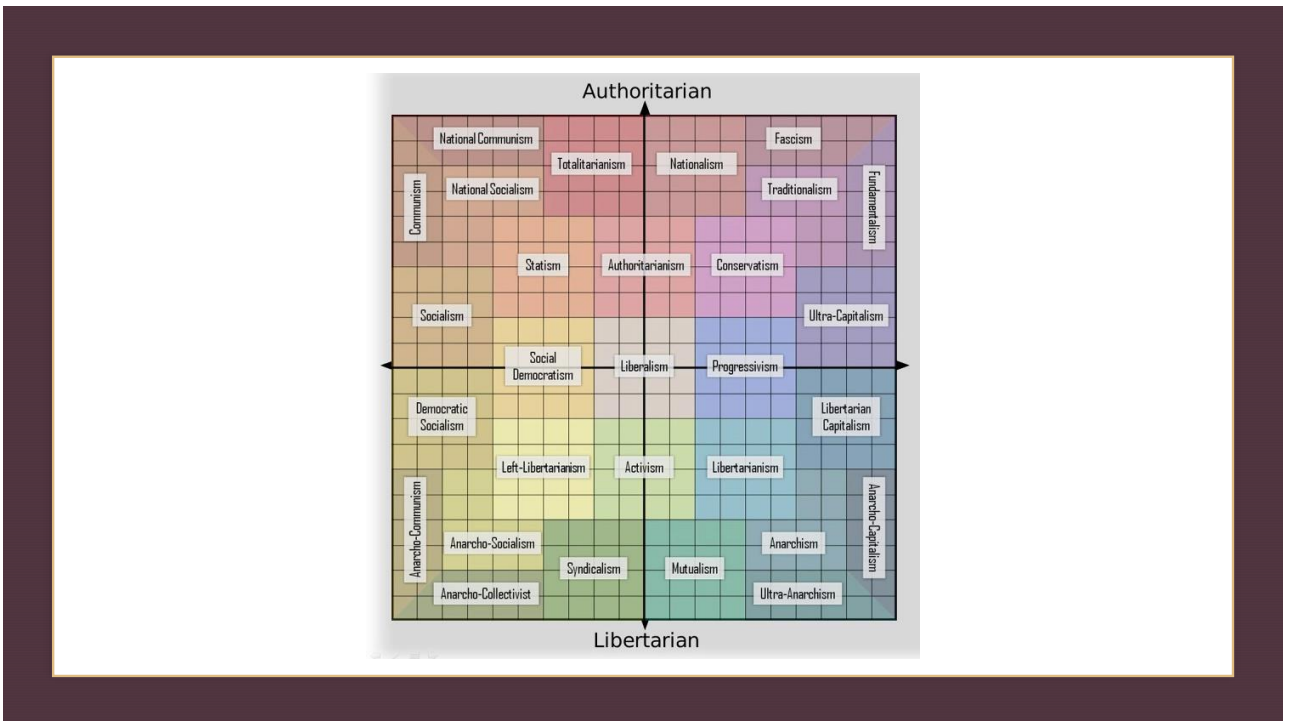
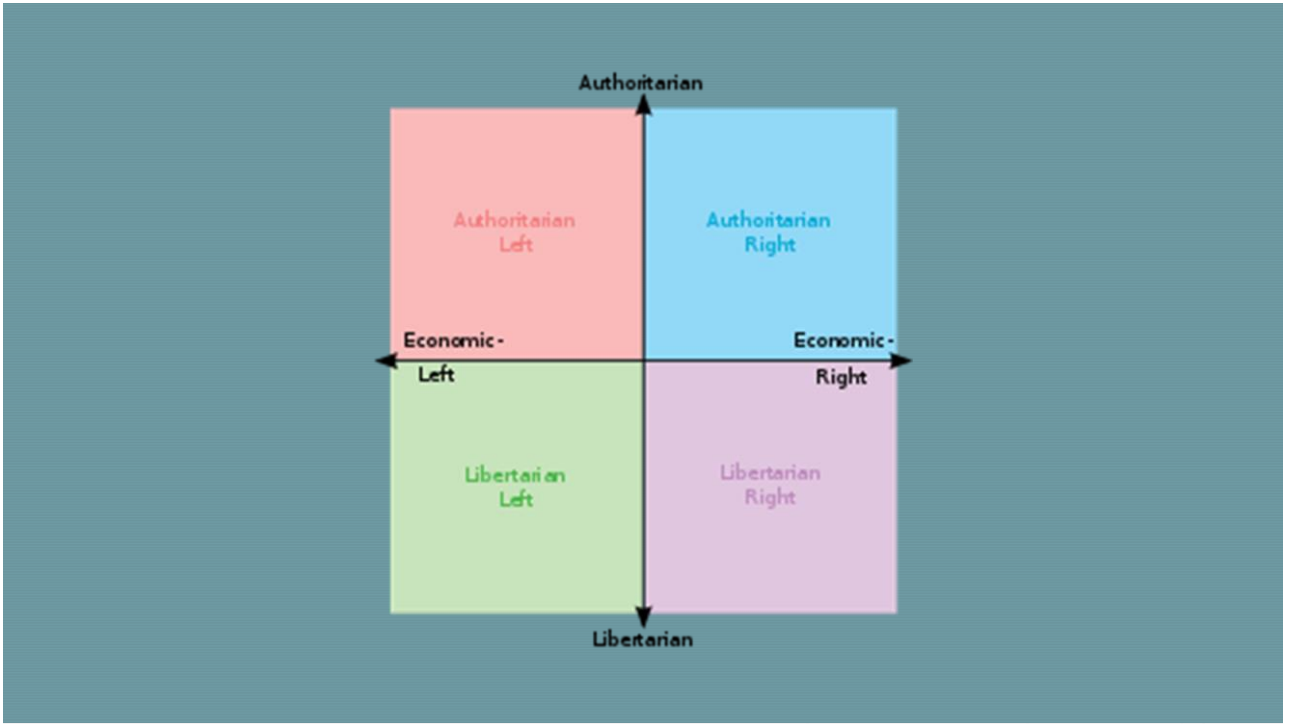
## Liberalism is about big government, Conservatism is about small government

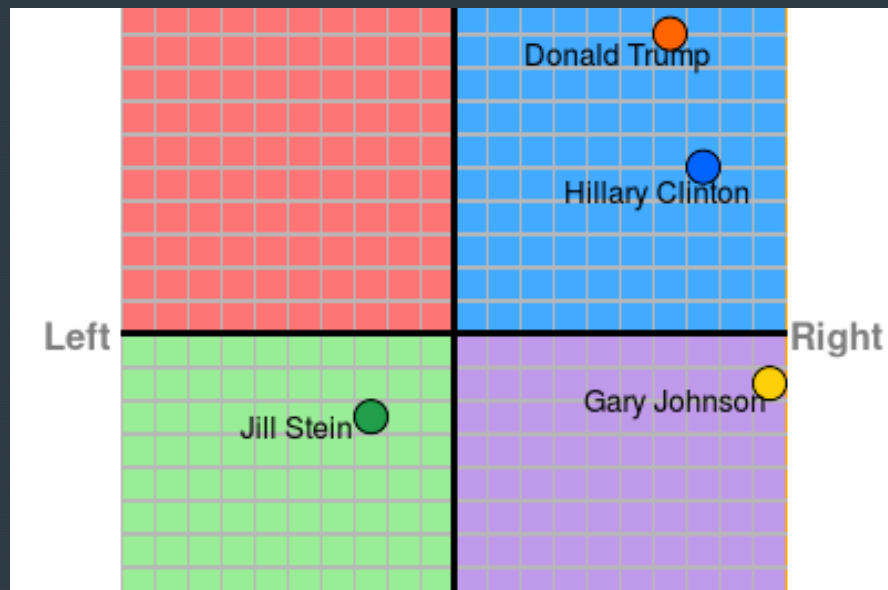
**False: Almost everyone loves big government, they just want it for the stuff they prioritize**

Social Justice vs. Social Stability

Safety Nets vs. Law and Order







▸ **All politicians are corrupt. There's just no use.**

**False: Individual politicians are mostly sincere**

Corruption depends on point of view

Selection Process

The Party Decides

The Voter Decides