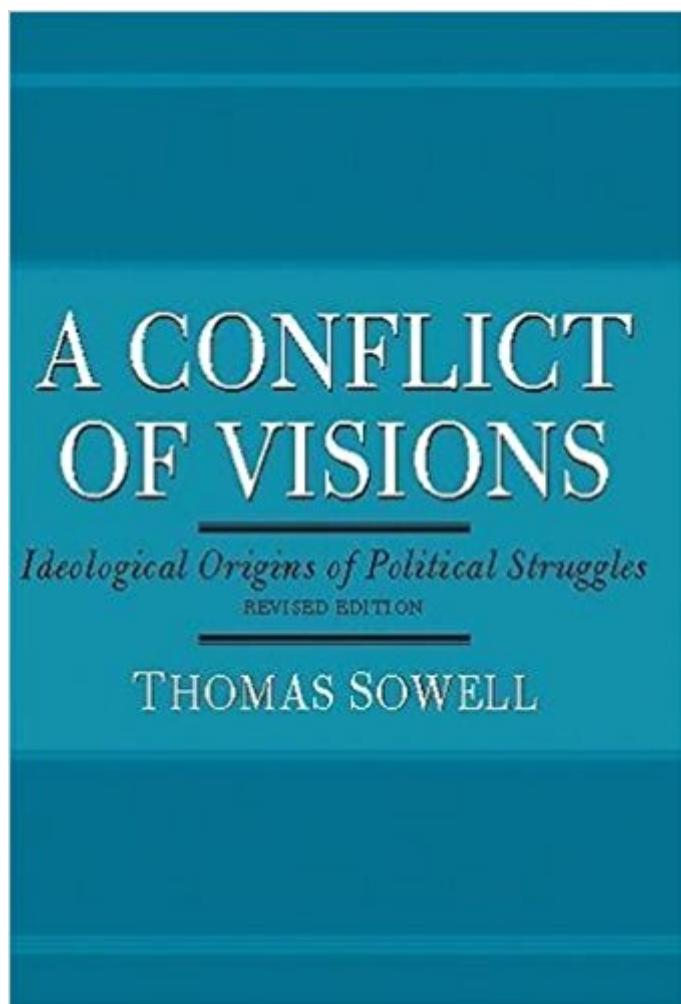


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# A Conflict Of Visions: Ideological Origins Of Political Struggles



## Synopsis

In this classic work, Thomas Sowell analyzes the two competing visions that shape our debates about the nature of reason, justice, equality, and power: the "constrained" vision, which sees human nature as unchanging and selfish, and the "unconstrained" vision, in which human nature is malleable and perfectible. He describes how these two radically opposed views have manifested themselves in the political controversies of the past two centuries, including such contemporary issues as welfare reform, social justice, and crime. Updated to include sweeping political changes since its first publication in 1987, this revised edition of *A Conflict of Visions* offers a convincing case that ethical and policy disputes circle around the disparity between both outlooks.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Thomas Sowell has taught economics at a number of colleges and universities, including Cornell, University of California Los Angeles, and Amherst. He has published both scholarly and popular articles and books on economics, and is currently a scholar in residence at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

"Ideologies" are rarely to never objective. If they were we would have an informed electorate and citizenry and 'Command and Control' governments would never see the light-of-day. 'Inalienable Rights' can never become fully actualized while 'intellectuals' espouse an 'ideology' conducive to their desire for power and control. H.L. Mencken says it best: "As democracy is perfected, the office

of the President represents, more and more closely, the inner soul of the people. On some great and glorious day, the plain folks of the land will reach their heart's desire at last and the White House will be occupied by a downright fool and complete narcissistic moron."H.L. Mencken surely was addressing and purposely leaving out the operative identifier - "Republic" as in 'Democratic Republic'. Thomas Sowell helps the 'willing' to consider how centuries of the 'Conflict of Visions' has impaired humanity to form and live by a government 'of the people', 'by the people' and 'for the people'. Simple and straight forward; but leave it to the 'intellectuals', those wily foxes to impose their 'ideology' for the 'greater good'.

I have often wondered why certain issues are conflated in modern U.S. political discourse. There is little or no reason that being for an expanded state role in the economy would be connected to being in favor of restricting the ownership of firearms, and there are exceptions, but that is the way the lines are drawn. In this book, Sowell discusses the ancient division between the constrained and unconstrained views of human nature and of reality and some connections become clear.

One of the greatest books ever written about human thinking and perception. Sowell defines the everyday conflicts between the two most common world views in a way that left me edified. I recommend this book to anyone that has an interest in understanding the world and their fellow men better. This book explains mankind's most common disagreements in a way that is shocking and satisfying at the same time.

I'm still reading this book, one of his I bought after reading many of his articles published on various websites. He is a true scholar, not unlike W.F. Buckley, Jr. in his writings and convincing common sense offerings on various topics of current interest. His intellectual journey through academia didn't start with any conservative-leaning viewpoint to be sure. He was an avowed liberal in his early days, but kept an open mind on all issues, as opposed to those in academia that swallow the "progressive" dogma obediently if they wish to be "in the club" of academic know-it-alls that have never been outside their ivy covered halls in their lifetime. Being a black conservative makes him a thorn in the sides of those that surround him but he has always been able to stand his ground using much more solid fundamental footing than his peers with their specious arguments that are void of any honest unadulterated facts. This particular book, "A Conflict of Visions" sets the agenda for several of his books written after this one, and is recommended as a "primer" for his subsequent writings. He is thoroughly enjoyable to read on any topic you can think of, and I would highly

recommend to the younger generation that wants to escape the nonsensical gibberish coming from their "progressive" clueless friends and find a wonderful spokesman for the other side of the political aisle. His arguments supporting his viewpoints are extremely difficult for the liberals to deal with and usually leave them groping for answers they just don't have.

I would highly recommend Sowell's book to anyone who's interested in gaining a better understanding of the intellectual conservative argument. As a liberal-leaning individual, I rarely get a real take on conservative ideology. I wouldn't say Sowell flipped my perspective, but he certainly allowed me to understand and appreciate the value and sincerity of conservatism beyond the hackneyed hot-takes that flood cable news on both sides of the aisle.

One of the most important political economy books ever written in my opinion. Confirms Sowell as one of the great contemporary thinkers. Even handed, deeply perceptive, pregnant with valuable insight on almost every page. An essential work in any philosophy/politics/economics degree. Valuable for anyone anywhere on the political spectrum.

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