

# NEOCONSERVATISM: WHY WE NEED IT BY DOUGLAS MURRAY



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## About the Author

Douglas Murray is the author of *Bosie: A Biography of Lord Alfred Douglas*, a bestselling biography of Lord Alfred Douglas published while Murray was still an undergraduate at Magdalen College, Oxford.

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# NEOCONSERVATISM: WHY WE NEED IT BY DOUGLAS MURRAY PDF

Neo Conservatism: Why We Need It is a defense of the most controversial political philosophy of our era. Douglas Murray takes a fresh look at the movement that replaced Great-Society liberalism, helped Ronald Reagan bring down the Wall, and provided the intellectual rationale for the Bush administration's War on Terror. While others are blaming it for foreign policy failures and, more extremely, attacking it as a Jewish cabal, Murray argues that the West needs Neo-conservatism more than ever. In addition to explaining what Neo conservatism is and where it came from, he argues that this American-born response to the failed policies of the 1960s is the best approach to foreign affairs not only for the United States but also for Britain and the West as well.

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## Most helpful customer reviews

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful.

Immensely pleasurable, thought provoking, intellectually enriching

By Science Lover

I'm surprised to find myself, a lifelong lefty, recommending a book on conservatism (with both big and small Cs), but I think it broadens the liberal mind to realise that not everyone who subscribes to right-of-centre views is either stupid or evil — and Douglas, who is a classic right winger, has a luminous intellect and is scrupulously moral. Douglas is an old school patriot of a kind that has long gone out of fashion: the intellectual love child of Edmund Burke and Christopher Hitchens. His prose is refreshingly lucid and sincere and infused with a stop-fiddling-while-London-burns sense of urgency. I disagree with some of the stances he takes in the book and was quite surprised by his fervent defence of the Anglican church, its belief system and its faith-based Anglican schools, since he is an atheist. But, on some issues, I believe he is absolutely spot on: especially in chapter 3, which deals with Islamism, and in his scathing debunking of moral relativism. This is old-fashioned oratory at its best: a bracing antidote to political correctness, Orwellian doublespeak, spin and academic obscurantism. Whether or not you subscribe to his views (and I don't always), he's worth taking seriously. And if you love good writing, he's an enormous pleasure to read.

5 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Well Researched and Intellectually Satisfying.

By Claudius Marcellus

Murray does an excellent job of demonstrating the broad foundational conceptions of the ideology by virtue of historical chronology, philosophical application, and the political implications involved. He also discusses

at great length the esoteric nature of the ideology in relation to the popular misconceptions of it which are pervasive. Neoconservatism offers a dynamic, cohesive, and comprehensive vision for the future that is premised out of the realities of the modern era, and the eternal rights which were self-evident to the founding fathers of America. Unlike mainstream conservatism, neoconservatism is not fixated on the politics of nostalgia but is in contrast almost entirely focused on the future, and has a captivating, intellectual, as well as convincing vision for it. Perhaps the most appealing aspect of neoconservatism is the intellectual diversity within the ideology that is only binded together by a broad set of principles that all neoconservatives agree upon.

A criticism would be that Murray only briefly touches upon the famed 'New York Intellectuals' which Irving Kristol was a part of, and never directly mentions them specifically from what I can remember. Additionally, Murray could have spent more time discussing the intellectual evolution of Kristol from his original far-left ideological predilections, which were predominant early in his life.

30 of 41 people found the following review helpful.

a call for democracy

By Frank Bunyard

Douglas Murray has written a book that is easy to read and understand. I always favor books on timely and serious subjects that appeal to the widest possible readership. Such writing is definitely in need at this crucial point in history. I admire Murray's book, generally agree with it, and think it is important as part of the ongoing discussion about how to proceed in our dangerous world.

The first chapter is used to provide a brief history of neoconservatism from its origins in the thought of 20th Cent. political philosopher, Leo Strauss. Murray provides an overview of Strauss's political theory, but wisely refers the reader to Strauss's work rather than getting bogged down in the complexities of this profound thinker. To oversimplify, Strauss believed there is a "natural right" within human beings and human history which make it "self evident" that democracy is the best form of governance for individual freedom, happiness and fulfillment.

In the remaining three chapters Murray takes the gloves off. Exposition gives way to exhortation. It becomes increasingly a polemic and a call to action. It calls for a return to unalloyed belief in democracy and the discarding of the nihilistic "multi-culturism" and "moral relativism" concepts that clutter the minds of liberal and leftist intellectual elites.

Murray intersperses his polemic with numerous historical examples so his ideas are well grounded in the realities of world politics. He doesn't put it in these terms, but it's almost as if the question of the day is: if not democracy, then what? There aren't that many choices in political governance. Socialism is a bygone fantasy, and that leaves basically only democracy or one of the variants of autocracy that plague the world with backwardness and threats of violence and destruction.

Douglas Murray has done all that can be done to rehabilitate neoconservatism as the only viable political option for our times. But can the theory be put into practice? So far the experiment in Iraq has been unpromising. But can political thinkers as well as politicians afford to sit on the sidelines and take a "wait and see" attitude? Or worse yet, duck and run for cover? If Murray is right politicians and intellectuals must join the battle for world-wide democracy with words and actions. Our attitude must be hopeful and optimistic, rather than hopeless and defeatist.

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