

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought

The Necessity of Choice in Nineteenth Century Political Thought

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought emerges as a profound theme when examining the intellectual landscape of that era. The nineteenth century was a period marked by rapid social transformations, industrial revolutions, and the rise of nation-states. Political thinkers of the time were deeply engaged with questions about freedom, governance, and individual agency. Central to their debates was the role of choice—how individuals and societies make decisions, the limits of those choices, and the implications for political order and justice.

Understanding why choice was so crucial helps us appreciate the complex interplay between emerging ideas of democracy, liberalism, conservatism, and socialism. It also sheds light on the broader philosophical currents that shaped modern political thought, including discussions on autonomy, responsibility, and the nature of human will.

The Context of Nineteenth Century Political Thought

To grasp the necessity of choice in nineteenth century political thought, it's essential first to acknowledge the historical backdrop. After the upheavals of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, Europe and the wider world were in flux. Monarchies were challenged, new ideologies were born, and the citizens' role in governance became a hotly contested issue.

Industrialization brought unprecedented economic opportunities, but also stark inequalities and social dislocations. The question of how individuals and communities could or should navigate these changes was not merely economic or social—it was deeply political. Political thinkers debated how much freedom individuals should have, what kind of governments would best respect human choice, and how to balance order with liberty.

The Rise of Liberalism and the Emphasis on Individual Choice

Liberalism, as a dominant political ideology of the nineteenth century, placed a strong emphasis on the liberty and autonomy of the individual. Thinkers like John Stuart Mill argued passionately about the importance of personal choice and freedom of expression. Mill's famous work, "On Liberty," champions the necessity of choice as a fundamental human right—he believed that allowing individuals to make their own decisions was essential for personal development and societal progress.

This focus on liberty made the concept of choice not just a philosophical abstraction but a political imperative. It was about expanding suffrage, protecting freedom of speech, and limiting the powers of the state. The liberal idea was that individuals, when free to choose, could contribute to a more just and prosperous society.

Conservatism's Response: Order and the Limits of Choice

In contrast, conservative thinkers of the nineteenth century, such as Edmund Burke, recognized the importance of choice but were wary of its unchecked exercise. For conservatives, the necessity of choice had to be balanced against tradition, social stability, and moral order. They questioned whether absolute freedom of choice was always beneficial, fearing that too much individualism could erode social cohesion.

Conservatism emphasized the wisdom embedded in longstanding institutions and customs, suggesting that not all choices should be available or encouraged. This perspective added a layer of complexity to political debates: the necessity of choice was acknowledged but framed within the boundaries of responsibility and social harmony.

Socialism and the Collective Dimension of Choice

While liberalism and conservatism focused on individual and institutional aspects of choice, socialism introduced a collective dimension. Thinkers like Karl Marx critiqued the capitalist system for constraining the choices of the working class. Marx argued that economic conditions and class structures severely limited genuine freedom, making the necessity of choice a political struggle as much as a philosophical ideal.

From the socialist viewpoint, political thought had to consider how economic power shapes choices and how society could be reorganized to empower the many, not just the privileged few. This expanded the discussion to include questions about equality, justice, and collective decision-making.

The Dialectic of Freedom and Necessity

One of the intriguing philosophical debates of the nineteenth century was the dialectic between freedom and necessity. This debate revolved around whether human beings truly have free will or if their choices are determined by social, economic, or natural forces.

Hegel's philosophy, for example, suggested that freedom is realized through the recognition of necessity—meaning that understanding the constraints and conditions of one's situation is part of genuine freedom. This idea influenced many political thinkers who wrestled with how to reconcile individual autonomy with social realities.

The Legacy of Nineteenth Century Debates on Choice

The necessity of choice in nineteenth century political thought did not merely reflect abstract theorizing; it had real-world consequences. The debates influenced the expansion of democratic institutions, the development of human rights discourse, and the shaping of modern political ideologies.

Political reforms, such as the gradual extension of voting rights, labor laws, and educational access, were often justified by appeals to individuals' capacity and right to make meaningful choices. At the same time, the era's thinkers warned about the dangers of unrestrained choice without ethical or social considerations.

Why the Necessity of Choice Still Matters Today

Reflecting on these nineteenth-century ideas helps us understand contemporary political challenges. Discussions about personal freedom, social justice, and the role of government all hinge on how we conceive of choice.

In today's world, where decisions can be influenced by technology, media, and economic power, revisiting the necessity of choice reminds us to critically evaluate the conditions under which freedom is exercised. It encourages a balanced approach—one that respects individual autonomy while recognizing social responsibilities and constraints.

Insights from Nineteenth Century Political Thinkers

To better appreciate the nuances of choice in political thought, here are some key insights drawn from nineteenth-century figures:

- **John Stuart Mill:** Advocated for the "harm principle," where choice is free as long as it doesn't harm others, highlighting the ethical limits of liberty.
- **Edmund Burke:** Emphasized the importance of tradition and social institutions in guiding and constraining choice.
- **Karl Marx:** Highlighted how economic structures limit the freedom to choose, pushing for systemic change to expand real choices for the working class.
- **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel:** Explored the idea that freedom is actualized through understanding the necessities that shape our choices.

These perspectives provide a rich foundation for thinking about how choice functions within political systems and human societies.

Applying Nineteenth Century Lessons in Modern Politics

Modern political discourse benefits greatly from the nineteenth-century emphasis on the necessity of choice. For policymakers, activists, and citizens alike, the challenge lies in crafting environments where choices are meaningful and informed.

This might involve:

1. Ensuring access to education and information so individuals can make informed decisions.
2. Protecting civil liberties while maintaining social order.
3. Addressing economic inequalities that limit genuine freedom of choice.
4. Balancing individual rights with collective responsibilities.

By integrating these lessons, contemporary societies can better navigate the tension between freedom and order that nineteenth-century political thought so vividly illuminated.

The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought remains a vital lens through which we can examine the ongoing evolution of democracy, rights, and governance. It challenges us to think deeply about what freedom means and how it can be realized in a complex, interconnected world.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does 'the necessity of choice' mean in nineteenth-century political thought?

In nineteenth-century political thought, 'the necessity of choice' refers to the idea that individuals and societies must actively make decisions regarding governance, rights, and social organization, emphasizing agency and responsibility in shaping political life.

How did nineteenth-century thinkers view the role of individual choice in politics?

Nineteenth-century thinkers often emphasized individual choice as central to political participation and freedom, advocating for expanded suffrage and personal autonomy as

means to achieve democratic governance.

Which nineteenth-century political philosophers discussed the necessity of choice?

Philosophers like John Stuart Mill, Alexis de Tocqueville, and G.W.F. Hegel explored the necessity of choice, focusing on liberty, democracy, and the dialectical process of freedom and ethical life.

How is the necessity of choice connected to liberalism in the nineteenth century?

The necessity of choice underpins liberalism by promoting individual rights, freedom of conscience, and political participation, asserting that meaningful political systems must allow individuals to make informed and autonomous choices.

Did nineteenth-century political thought consider collective choice as well as individual choice?

Yes, many nineteenth-century political thinkers recognized the importance of collective choice through democratic institutions, political parties, and social movements, balancing individual liberty with the needs of the community.

How did the concept of necessity of choice influence democratic theory in the nineteenth century?

It reinforced the idea that democracy requires active participation and decision-making by citizens, making political choice a fundamental aspect of legitimate governance and social progress.

What challenges to the necessity of choice were identified in nineteenth-century political thought?

Challenges included debates over the limits of individual freedom, social inequalities restricting genuine choice, and tensions between authority and autonomy in emerging nation-states.

How did the necessity of choice relate to the debates on free will and determinism in the nineteenth century?

The necessity of choice in politics was often linked to broader philosophical debates about free will, with some thinkers arguing that political agency requires acknowledging individual freedom against deterministic social or historical forces.

In what ways did industrialization impact the necessity of choice in nineteenth-century political thought?

Industrialization raised questions about economic freedom and social choice, highlighting issues of labor rights, class struggle, and the extent to which individuals could exercise meaningful choices within capitalist societies.

How is the necessity of choice relevant to contemporary interpretations of nineteenth-century political thought?

Contemporary scholars view the necessity of choice as a critical framework for understanding nineteenth-century debates about freedom, democracy, and agency, offering insights into ongoing political struggles over participation and autonomy.

Additional Resources

The Necessity of Choice in Nineteenth Century Political Thought

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought emerges as a pivotal theme when examining the intellectual landscape that shaped modern political ideologies. The 1800s were a period of profound transformation marked by revolutions, industrialization, and the rise of nation-states, all of which demanded new frameworks for understanding governance, liberty, and social order. Political thinkers of this era grappled with fundamental dilemmas about individual freedom versus collective responsibility, the role of the state, and the mechanisms through which societies should be organized. This article delves into why the concept of choice was indispensable in nineteenth-century political thought and how it influenced the development of liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and other ideological currents.

The Contextual Backdrop of Nineteenth Century Political Thought

The nineteenth century was characterized by seismic shifts in social, economic, and political structures. The aftermath of the French Revolution left a legacy of questioning monarchy and aristocratic privilege, while the Industrial Revolution prompted debates over capitalism, labor, and social justice. Political thinkers were thus forced to confront new realities where traditional authority was increasingly challenged by calls for popular sovereignty and individual rights.

In this milieu, the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought became an essential theme because it underscored the tension between competing values and interests. Whether it was the choice between monarchy and democracy, individualism and collectivism, or freedom and order, political theorists sought to articulate principles that could guide societies through unprecedented change.

The Role of Individual Choice in Liberalism

Liberal political philosophy, which gained significant traction during the nineteenth century, placed the individual at the center of political life. Thinkers such as John Stuart Mill championed the notion that individuals must have the freedom to make choices about their own lives, provided these choices did not harm others. This concept of liberty was foundational to the liberal agenda and reflected a profound belief in personal autonomy.

Mill's seminal work, *On Liberty* (1859), argued that the liberty of the individual was essential not only for personal development but also for societal progress. The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought is particularly evident here: without the ability to make choices, individuals would be unable to exercise moral agency or contribute meaningfully to democratic governance.

However, liberalism also wrestled with the limits of choice. The rise of industrial capitalism revealed that economic inequalities could restrict genuine freedom, prompting debates about the role of the state in protecting or expanding individual liberties. Thus, the necessity of choice was not merely about freedom from tyranny but also about creating conditions where meaningful choices could be made.

Conservatism and the Emphasis on Order and Tradition

In contrast to liberalism, conservative thinkers of the nineteenth century emphasized the importance of social order, tradition, and continuity. Figures such as Edmund Burke warned against rapid change and the dangers of unrestrained individual choice, which they feared could lead to chaos and social disintegration.

Here, the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought took on a different hue. Conservatives acknowledged that choices must be made but argued that these choices should be informed by historical wisdom and social cohesion. The emphasis was on balancing freedom with responsibility, highlighting that unchecked individualism could undermine the very fabric of society.

This perspective underscored a key tension: while choice was necessary, it was not absolute. The conservative critique illuminated the potential downsides of prioritizing individual choice without regard for collective stability or moral order.

Socialism and the Quest for Collective Empowerment

Socialist thought in the nineteenth century introduced a powerful critique of the liberal focus on individual choice by stressing economic justice and the collective good. Thinkers like Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels argued that true freedom could not exist under capitalist exploitation, where workers had little real choice due to structural inequalities.

The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought within socialism centered on the idea that political and economic choices were deeply interconnected. Socialist theory

posited that expanding democratic choice required not only political rights but also economic empowerment, such as communal ownership or redistribution of resources.

This ideological stance challenged the liberal assumption that formal political freedoms alone were sufficient. Instead, socialists contended that without addressing economic disparities, individual choice remained constrained and illusory for the working class.

Intersecting Debates: Freedom, Authority, and the Scope of Choice

The nineteenth century's rich political discourse was defined by intersecting debates over the scope and limits of choice. These debates spanned a spectrum from anarchism, which advocated for maximal individual freedom and the abolition of the state, to authoritarianism, which prioritized centralized control to maintain order.

The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought was reflected in the way these ideologies grappled with the paradox of freedom and authority. For example, anarchists like Pierre-Joseph Proudhon argued that genuine choice required dismantling oppressive institutions, while authoritarian theorists contended that certain sacrifices of choice were necessary to preserve societal stability.

These tensions revealed the complexity of political choice as not merely a theoretical abstraction but a practical challenge: how to design institutions that balance liberty with security, individual rights with social duties.

Political Choice and the Rise of Democracy

The expansion of democratic institutions during the nineteenth century further highlighted the importance of choice in political thought. The extension of suffrage, the formation of political parties, and the rise of mass politics meant that millions now had a direct say in governing themselves.

The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought here took on a concrete dimension: the legitimacy of political authority increasingly depended on the ability of citizens to make informed choices at the ballot box. This democratization process also raised new questions about education, political participation, and the quality of choice available to ordinary people.

Moreover, the rise of nationalism intertwined with democratic choice, as peoples sought self-determination and the right to choose their political destinies. This dynamic added layers of complexity to discussions about sovereignty, representation, and the rights of different groups within nation-states.

The Philosophical Foundations of Choice

Underlying these political debates were philosophical inquiries into human nature, rationality, and morality. The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought was grounded in Enlightenment ideals that emphasized reason and individual dignity.

Philosophers like Immanuel Kant influenced political theorists by arguing that autonomous choice was central to moral responsibility. This philosophical underpinning legitimized political systems that valued freedom and participation, while also framing the ethical limits of choice.

However, nineteenth-century thinkers also wrestled with critiques of rationality and questioned whether individuals always made truly free or rational choices. These critiques opened space for later developments in political theory that considered power dynamics, social conditioning, and the role of ideology in shaping choices.

- **Choice as a foundation for political legitimacy:** The ability of individuals to choose their rulers and laws was increasingly seen as essential for just governance.
- **Economic and social conditions shaping choice:** Recognition that freedom to choose is contingent on material and social realities.
- **Balancing individual and collective choice:** Reconciling personal autonomy with the needs of the community remained a persistent challenge.

The necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought thus served as a lens through which to examine the evolving relationship between citizens and the state, freedom and authority, and individual rights and social responsibilities.

By analyzing the competing ideologies and historical developments of the period, it becomes clear that the concept of choice was not simply a theoretical abstraction but a critical element in shaping modern political institutions and debates. The legacies of these nineteenth-century discussions continue to influence contemporary political discourse, reminding us that the capacity and conditions for choice remain central to the project of democratic governance and social justice.

[The Necessity Of Choice Nineteenth Century Political Thought](#)

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: The Necessity of Choice
Louis Hartz, 2011-12-31 Louis Hartz is best known for his classic study, *The Liberal Tradition in America*. At Harvard University, his lecture course on nineteenth-century politics and ideologies was memorable. Through the editorial hand of Paul Roazen, we can now share the experience of Hartz's considerable contributions to the theory of politics. At the root of Hartz's work is the belief that revolution is not produced by misery, but by pressure of a new system on an old one. This approach enables him to explain sharp differences in revolutionary traditions. Because America essentially

was a liberal society from its beginning and had no need for revolutions, America also lacked reactionaries, and lacked a tradition of genuine conservatism characteristic of European thought. In lectures embracing Rousseau, Burke, Comte, Hegel, Mill, and Marx among others, Hartz develops a keen sense of the delicate balance between the role of the state in both enhancing and limiting personal freedom. Hartz notably insisted on the autonomy of intellectual life and the necessity of individual choice as an essential ingredient of liberty.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *The Conundrum of Class* Martin J. Burke, 1995-09 Martin Burke traces the surprisingly complicated history of the idea of class in America from the forming of a new nation to the heart of the Gilded Age. Surveying American political, social, and intellectual life from the late 17th to the end of the 19th century, Burke examines in detail the contested discourse about equality—the way Americans thought and wrote about class, class relations, and their meaning in society. Burke explores a remarkable range of thought to establish the boundaries of class and the language used to describe it in the works of leading political figures, social reformers, and moral philosophers. He traces a shift from class as a legal category of ranks and orders to socio-economic divisions based on occupations and income. Throughout the century, he finds no permanent consensus about the meaning of class in America and instead describes a culture of conflicting ideas and opinions.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *Edoardo Weiss* Paul Roazen, 2017-12-04 Edoardo Weiss (1889-1970) was a favored disciple of Freud and is acknowledged as the founder of psychoanalysis in Italy. Although he was the author of six books and over a hundred professional papers, he has remained a shadowy figure. In this volume, Paul Roazen provides a definitive portrait of this notable individual. Based on his extensive interviews with Weiss, Roazen evaluates the significance of Weiss's own contribution to psychoanalytic thought and practice and presents a fascinating picture of the reception given to Freud's thought in Italy. Despite his prominence, Weiss's life and work has not been well documented. Roazen shows that his links to modern Italian history and culture were extensive and closely bound to the political and social conflicts of the twentieth century. Born in the cosmopolitan city of Trieste, Weiss was the nephew of the novelist Italo Svevo, whose masterpiece *The Confessions of Zeno* remains one of the principle psychoanalytic novels in modern literature. Another Triestine, Umberto Saba, one of the great modern Italian poets, was Weiss's patient. Weiss's career also intersected with Italian politics. The daughter of one of Mussolini's cabinet ministers was one of his patients, an analysis that has raised questions about Freud's own relation to the Italian dictator. Roazen documents Weiss's tribulations in trying to establish a psychoanalytic culture opposed not only by the fascist regime but the Catholic Church. In spite of these instances of opposition, Roazen shows that the Italian intellectual world was highly receptive to Freudian ideas and that psychoanalysis is flourishing today in Italy. Weiss has never before been recognized as a front-rank analytic thinker, but he was leader of the movement in Italy, a country that mattered deeply to Freud. This, along with the genuine intimacy of his contacts with Freud makes Weiss a figure of considerable interest to students of psychoanalysis, Italian culture, and intellectual history.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *Out of Many, One* Ruth O'Brien, 2013-05-21 Feared by conservatives and embraced by liberals when he entered the White House, Barack Obama has since been battered by criticism from both sides. In *Out of Many, One*, Ruth O'Brien explains why. We are accustomed to seeing politicians supporting either a minimalist state characterized by unfettered capitalism and individual rights or a relatively strong welfare state and regulatory capitalism. Obama, O'Brien argues, represents the values of a lesser-known third tradition in American political thought that defies the usual left-right categorization. Bearing traces of Baruch Spinoza, John Dewey, and Saul Alinsky, Obama's progressivism embraces the ideas of mutual reliance and collective responsibility, and adopts an interconnected view of the individual and the state. So, while Obama might emphasize difference, he rejects identity politics, which can create permanent minorities and diminish individual agency. Analyzing Obama's major legislative victories—financial regulation, health care, and the stimulus package—O'Brien shows how they

reflect a stakeholder society that neither regulates in the manner of the New Deal nor deregulates. Instead, Obama focuses on negotiated rule making and allows executive branch agencies to fill in the details when dealing with a deadlocked Congress. Similarly, his commitment to difference and his resistance to universal mandates underlies his reluctance to advocate for human rights as much as many on the Democratic left had hoped. By establishing Obama within the context of a much longer and broader political tradition, this book sheds critical light on both the political and philosophical underpinnings of his presidency and a fundamental shift in American political thought.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *Liberty and Justice for All?* Kathleen G. Donohue, 2012 A wide-ranging exploration of the culture of American politics in the early decades of the Cold War

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing Kelly Boyd, 2019-10-09 The Encyclopedia of Historians and Historical Writing contains over 800 entries ranging from Lord Acton and Anna Comnena to Howard Zinn and from Herodotus to Simon Schama. Over 300 contributors from around the world have composed critical assessments of historians from the beginning of historical writing to the present day, including individuals from related disciplines like Jürgen Habermas and Clifford Geertz, whose theoretical contributions have informed historical debate. Additionally, the Encyclopedia includes some 200 essays treating the development of national, regional and topical historiographies, from the Ancient Near East to the history of sexuality. In addition to the Western tradition, it includes substantial assessments of African, Asian, and Latin American historians and debates on gender and subaltern studies.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: The Just City Susan S. Fainstein, 2011-05-16 For much of the twentieth century improvement in the situation of disadvantaged communities was a focus for urban planning and policy. Yet over the past three decades the ideological triumph of neoliberalism has caused the allocation of spatial, political, economic, and financial resources to favor economic growth at the expense of wider social benefits. Susan Fainstein's concept of the just city encourages planners and policymakers to embrace a different approach to urban development. Her objective is to combine progressive city planners' earlier focus on equity and material well-being with considerations of diversity and participation so as to foster a better quality of urban life within the context of a global capitalist political economy. Fainstein applies theoretical concepts about justice developed by contemporary philosophers to the concrete problems faced by urban planners and policymakers and argues that, despite structural obstacles, meaningful reform can be achieved at the local level. In the first half of *The Just City*, Fainstein draws on the work of John Rawls, Martha Nussbaum, Iris Marion Young, Nancy Fraser, and others to develop an approach to justice relevant to twenty-first-century cities, one that incorporates three central concepts: diversity, democracy, and equity. In the book's second half, Fainstein tests her ideas through case studies of New York, London, and Amsterdam by evaluating their postwar programs for housing and development in relation to the three norms. She concludes by identifying a set of specific criteria for urban planners and policymakers to consider when developing programs to assure greater justice in both the process of their formulation and their effects.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *On Hallowed Ground* John P. Diggins, 2000-01-01 Contests the validity of Marxist and poststructuralist theory in a review of the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *The Historiography of Psychoanalysis* Paul Roazen, 2018-01-16 Today Sigmund Freud's legacy seems as hotly contested as ever. He continues to attract fanaticism of one kind or another. If Freud might be disappointed at the failure of his successors to confirm many of his so-called discoveries he would be gratified by the transforming impact of his ideas in contemporary moral and ethical thinking. To move from the history of psychoanalysis onto the more neutral ground of scholarly inquiry is not a simple task. There is still little effort to study Freud and his followers within the context of intellectual history.

Yet in an era when psychiatry appears to be going in a different direction from that charted by Freud, his basic point of view still attracts newcomers in areas of the world relatively untouched by psychoanalytic influence in the past. It is all the more important to clarify the strengths and the limitations of Freud's approach. Roazen begins by delving into the personality of Freud, and reassesses his own earlier volume, *Freud and His Followers*. He then examines Freud Studies in the nature of Freudian appraisals and patients. He examines a succession of letters between Freud and Silberstein; Freud and Jones; Anna Freud and Eva Rosenfeld; James Strachey and Rupert Brooke. Roazen includes a series of interviews with such personages as Michael Balint, Philip Sarasin, Donald W. Winnicott, and Franz Jung. He explores curious relationships concerning Lou Andreas-Salome, Tola Rank, and Felix Deutsch, and deals with biographies of Freud's predecessors, Charcot and Breuer, and contemporaries including Menninger, Erikson, Helene Deutsch, and a number of followers. Freud's national reception in such countries as Russia, America, France, among others is examined, and Roazen surveys the literature relating to the history of psychoanalysis. Finally, he brings to light new documents offering fresh interpretations and valuable bits of new historical evidence. This brilliantly constructed book explores the vagaries of Freud's impact over the twentieth century, including current controversial issues related to placing Freud and his theories within the historiography of psychoanalysis. It will be of interest to psychoanalysts, intellectual historians, and those interested in the history of ideas.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *Erasing the Invisible Hand* Warren J. Samuels, 2011-09-12 This book examines the use, principally in economics, of the concept of the invisible hand, centering on Adam Smith. It interprets the concept as ideology, knowledge, and a linguistic phenomenon. It shows how the principal Chicago School interpretation misperceives and distorts what Smith believed on the economic role of government. The essays further show how Smith was silent as to his intended meaning, using the term to set minds at rest; how the claim that the invisible hand is the foundational concept of economics is repudiated by numerous leading economic theorists; that several dozen identities given the invisible hand renders the term ambiguous and inconclusive; that no such thing as an invisible hand exists; and that calling something an invisible hand adds nothing to knowledge. Finally, the essays show that the leading doctrines purporting to claim an invisible hand for the case for capitalism cannot invoke the term but that other nonnormative invisible hand processes are still useful tools.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: *Reconsidering American Liberalism* James Young, 2018-02-06 Forty years ago Louis Hartz surveyed American political thought in his classic *The Liberal Tradition in America*. He concluded that American politics was based on a broad liberal consensus made possible by a unique American historical experience, a thesis that seemed to minimize the role of political conflict. Today, with conflict on the rise and with much of liberalism in disarray, James P. Young revisits these questions to reevaluate Hartz's interpretation of American politics. Young's treatment of key movements in our history, especially Puritanism and republicanism's early contribution to the Revolution and the Constitution, demonstrates in the spirit of Dewey and others that the liberal tradition is richer and more complex than Hartz and most contemporary theorists have allowed. The breadth of Young's account is unrivaled. *Reconsidering American Liberalism* gives voice not just to Locke, Jefferson, Hamilton, Madison, Lincoln, and Dewey but also to Rawls, Shklar, Kateb, Wolin, and Walzer. In addition to broad discussions of all the major figures in over 300 years of political thought—with Lincoln looming particularly large—Young touches upon modern feminism and conservatism, multiculturalism, postmodernism, rights-based liberalism, and social democracy. Out of these contemporary materials Young synthesizes a new position, a smarter and tougher liberalism not just forged from historical materials but reshaped in the rough and tumble of contemporary thought and politics. This exceptionally timely study is both a powerful survey of the whole of U.S. political thought and a trenchant critique of contemporary political debates. At a time of acrimony and confusion in our national politics, Young enables us to see that salvaging a viable future depends upon our understanding how we have reached this point. Never without his own opinions, Young is

scrupulously fair to the widest range of thinkers and marvelously clear in getting to the heart of their ideas. Although his book is a substantial contribution to political theory and the history of ideas, it is always accessible and lively enough for the informed general reader. It is essential reading for anyone who cares about the future of U.S. political thought or, indeed, about the future of the country itself.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: The Trauma of Freud Paul Roazen, 2018-04-24 Over one hundred years have passed since Sigmund Freud first created psychoanalysis. The new profession flourished within the increasing secularization of Western culture, and it is almost impossible to overestimate its influence. Despite its traditional aloofness from ethical questions, psychoanalysis attracted an extraordinary degree of sectarian bitterness. Original thinkers were condemned as dissidents and renegades and the merits of individual cases have been frequently mixed up with questions concerning power and ambition, as well as the future of the movement. In *The Trauma of Freud*, Paul Roazen shows how, despite this contentiousness, Freud's legacy has remained central to human self-awareness. Roazen provides a much-needed sequence and perspective on the memorable issues that have come up in connection with the history of Freud's school. Topics covered include the problem of seduction, Jung's Zurich school, Ferenczi's Hungarian following, and the influence of Melanie Klein and Anna Freud in England. Also highlighted are Lacanianism in France, Erik Erikson's ego psychology, and Sandor Rado's innovations. In considering these historical cases and related public scandals, Roazen continually addresses important general issues concerning ethics and privacy, the power of orthodoxy, creativity, and the historiography of psychoanalysis. Throughout, he argues that rival interpretations are a sign of the intellectual maturity and sophistication of the discipline. Vigorous debate is healthy and essential in avoiding ill-considered and dogmatic self-assurance. He observes that potential zealotry lies just below the surface of even the most placid psychoanalytic waters even today. Examining the past, so much a part of the job of scholarship, may involve challenging those who might have preferred to let sleeping dogs lie. Roazen emphasizes that Freud's approach rested on the Socratic conviction that the unexamined life is not worth living and that this constitutes the spiritual basis of its influence beyond immediate clinical concerns. *The Trauma of Freud* is a major contribution to the historical literature on psychoanalysis.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: American National Biography John A. Garraty, Mark C. Carnes, 2005-05-12 *American National Biography* is the first new comprehensive biographical dictionary focused on American history to be published in seventy years. Produced under the auspices of the American Council of Learned Societies, the ANB contains over 17,500 profiles on historical figures written by an expert in the field and completed with a bibliography. The scope of the work is enormous—from the earliest recorded European explorations to the very recent past.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: The American Liberal Tradition Reconsidered Mark Hulliung, 2010 Eight prominent scholars consider whether Louis Hartz's interpretation of liberalism in his classic 1955 book should be repudiated or updated, and whether a study of America as a liberal society is still a rewarding undertaking.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: The Promise of Pragmatism John Patrick Diggins, 1995-05-15 For much of our century, pragmatism has enjoyed a charmed life, holding the dominant point of view in American politics, law, education, and social thought in general. After suffering a brief eclipse in the post-World War II period, pragmatism has enjoyed a revival, especially in literary theory and such areas as poststructuralism and deconstruction. In this sweeping critique of pragmatism and neopragmatism, one of our leading intellectual historians traces the attempts of thinkers from William James to Richard Rorty to find a response to the crisis of modernism. John Patrick Diggins analyzes the limitations of pragmatism from a historical perspective and dares to ask whether America's one original contribution to the world of philosophy has actually fulfilled its promise. In the late nineteenth century, intellectuals felt themselves in the grips of a spiritual crisis. This confrontation with the acids of modernity eroded older faiths and led

to a sense that life would continue in the awareness, of absences: knowledge without truth, power without authority, society without spirit, self without identity, politics without virtue, existence without purpose, history without meaning. In Europe, Friedrich Nietzsche and Max Weber faced a world in which God was dead and society was succumbing to structures of power and domination. In America, Henry Adams resigned from Harvard when he realized there were no truths to be taught and when he could only conclude: Experience ceases to educate. To the American philosophers of pragmatism, it was experience that provided the basis on which new methods of knowing could replace older ideas of truth. Diggins examines how, in different ways, William James, Charles Peirce, John Dewey, George H. Mead, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., demonstrated that modernism posed no obstacle in fields such as science, education, religion, law, politics, and diplomacy. Diggins also examines the work of the neopragmatists Jurgen Habermas and Richard Rorty and their attempt to resolve the crisis of postmodernism. Using one author to interrogate another, Diggins brilliantly allows the ideas to speak to our conditions as well as theirs. Did the older philosophers succeed in fulfilling the promises of pragmatism? Can the neopragmatists write their way out of what they have thought themselves into? And does America need philosophers to tell us that we do not need foundational truths when the Founders already told us that the Constitution would be a machine that would depend more upon the counterpoise of power than on the claims of knowledge? Diggins addresses these and other essential questions in this magisterial account of twentieth-century intellectual life. It should be read by everyone concerned about the roots of postmodernism (and its links to pragmatism) and about the forms of thought and action available for confronting a world after postmodernism.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: Enduring Liberalism

Robert Booth Fowler, 2021-10-29 Has the United States become more pluribus than unum? In terms of the nation's political beliefs, Robert Booth Fowler answers both yes and no. While his study affirms significant diversity among an elite cadre of public intellectuals, it vigorously denies it in a general public that collectively adheres to the same set of liberal core values. *Enduring Liberalism* pursues two objectives. One, it explores the political thought of public intellectuals and the general public since the 1960s. Two, it assesses contemporary and classic interpretations of American political thought in light of the study's findings. Fowler interprets the writings of public intellectuals like Robert Bellah, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Michael Walzer, William Bennett, Seymour Martin Lipset, William Galston, and others, as well as survey data of American political attitudes, to spotlight this oft-ignored divide between citizens and high-profile commentators, whose contentious debates are mistakenly assumed to reflect countrywide rifts. Fowler's argument is straightforward, but the interpretation is controversial. He recounts how the consensus liberal view in post-World War II American political thought collapsed among public intellectuals during the tumult of the 1960s and remains so to this day. His book examines the resultant diversity among contemporary public intellectuals, focusing on three predominant themes: concern for community, worry about the environment, and interest in civil society. In marked contrast to these disputatious commentators, Fowler finds the realm of popular opinion to be characterized by much greater consensus. Indeed, there seems to be a trend toward an even more general embrace of the liberal values that characterize our attitudes toward the individual, individual liberty, political equality, economic opportunity, and consent of the governed. Liberal values-above all the celebration of the individual and individual rights-have revolutionized the so-called private realms of life like family and religious communities to an extent unimagined in the 1950s. From these conclusions, Fowler demonstrates that most interpretations of American political thinking have exaggerated the extent of conflict and diversity in our nation's often raucous policy disputes. But he also cautions us not to overstate the public's widely shared liberal values and, by doing so, miss opportunities to facilitate problem solving or to recognize the ways in which our reform efforts may be constrained.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: Anglo-America and its

Discontents Peter J. Katzenstein, 2012-03-15 Anglo-America is a clearly identifiable part of what is commonly referred to as the West. The West exists, this book argues, in the form of multiple

traditions that have currency in America, Europe, the Americas, and a few outposts in the Southern hemisphere. Led by the British Empire until the beginning and by the United States since the middle of the twentieth century, Anglo-America has been at the very centre of world politics. Bridging the European and the American West, Anglo-America is distinctive, not unique. These multiple Wests coexist with each other and with other civilizations, as parts of one global civilization containing multiple modernities. And like all other civilizations, Anglo-America is marked by multiple traditions and internal pluralism. Once deeply held notions and practices of imperial rule and racial hierarchy now take the form of hegemony or multilateralism and politically contested versions of multiculturalism. At its core Anglo-America is fluid, not fixed. The analytical perspectives of this book are laid out in Katzenstein's opening and concluding chapters. They are explored in seven outstanding case studies, written by widely known authors, which combine historical and contemporary perspectives. Featuring an exceptional line-up and representing a diversity of theoretical views within one integrative perspective, this work will be of interest to all scholars and students of international relations, sociology and political science.

the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: The Hero in History Sidney Hook, The interaction of the individual in history and politics has posed major theoretical questions of historical analysis for the past two centuries: is social destiny shaped by forces beyond the power of the individual, or can the future be mastered by collective effort under the outstanding leadership of heroic men and women? In this classic study, a major philosopher and social theorist of the twentieth century offers a searching examination of the conditions under which individuals make choices that significantly alter the course of historical events and presents a scathing critique of various forms of social determinism that deny the individual freedom of action or a decisive role in history. The myth of the hero as the savior of the tribe or nation, as Hook notes, is older than written history. Until the nineteenth century, the hero functioned not merely as a cult figure but as a principle of historical explanation, a key to the rise and fall of countries and even of cultures. The exaggerations and omissions of this point of view produced an equally simplistic reaction with the formulation of determinist historiographies in which physical, racial, social, and economic forces replaced individuals as the dynamic factors in the development of events. Hook singles out orthodox Marxism as the most all-encompassing determinist system and subjects the historical thinking of Engels, Plekhanov, and Trotsky to sharp and meticulous scrutiny. Using the Russian Revolution as a test case, Hook observes that while the February 1917 Revolution was an inevitable development, the October revolution was, according to the best historical evidence, contingent upon the personality and actions of Lenin. In his 1978 reconsideration of the subject of heroism, appearing new to this edition, Hook defines a middle ground between the extremes of voluntarism and determinism that explains why the presence of strong personalities are decisive under certain conditions while under others key actors would appear to be almost interchangeable. He points us toward an understanding of a fascinating problem in history and raises essential questions about the role of great men and women in a democracy. The Hero in History will be of interest to intellectual historians, philosophers, political scientists, and sociologists.

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the necessity of choice nineteenth century political thought: Old England, New England, and the Civil War Len Gougeon, 2025-05-01 The first study to document how the Civil War brought about a bitter cultural and political conflict between Great Britain and the United States, a conflict that ignited a global struggle for racial equality and human rights. This study tells for the first time the story of a bitter cultural and political conflict that arose between the leading writers and intellectuals of Great Britain and the United States during the Civil War. The latter were virtually all New Englanders. Ralph Waldo Emerson was a central figure. The British side included such notables as Thomas Carlyle, Matthew Arnold, and John Ruskin. The conflict was focused on the viability of liberal democracy and the notion that all men are created equal. The question was: What type of social, political, and cultural paradigm was best suited to ensure the advancement of

civilization—one in which all have equal rights, regardless of race or class, or one where a small number of privileged white elites exercise a controlling power? The New Englanders embraced the former and the British the latter. The result was a bitter alienation that ignited a global campaign for racial equality and universal human rights.

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