



# The Hidden Agenda of the Political Mind: How Self-Interest Shapes Our Opinions and Why We Won't Admit It

*Jason Weeden, Robert Kurzban*

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When it comes to politics, we often perceive our own beliefs as fair and socially beneficial, while seeing opposing views as merely self-serving. But in fact most political views are governed by self-interest, even if we usually don't realize it. Challenging our fiercely held notions about what motivates us politically, this book explores how self-interest divides the public on a host of hot-button issues, from abortion and the legalization of marijuana to same-sex marriage, immigration, affirmative action, and income redistribution.

Expanding the notion of interests beyond simple economics, Jason Weeden and Robert Kurzban look at how people's interests clash when it comes to their sex lives, social status, family, and friends. Drawing on a wealth of data, they demonstrate how different groups form distinctive bundles of political positions that often stray far from what we typically think of as liberal or conservative. They show how we engage in unconscious rationalization to justify our political positions, portraying our own views as wise, benevolent, and principled while casting our opponents' views as thoughtless and greedy.

While many books on politics seek to provide partisans with new ways to feel good about their own side, *The Hidden Agenda of the Political Mind* illuminates the hidden drivers of our politics, even if it's a picture neither side will find flattering.

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