COMPLETE NOTES FOR
THE POLITICAL BRAIN

Introduction


3. I describe here only the slides of interest to the general reader. Experts in neuroimaging interested in precisely what we contrasted to generate the images and test hypotheses should refer to the original source.

4. This may help account for the finding, reported in multiple studies, that threatening information often strengthens partisan biases. It also suggests why partisan biases are so difficult to shed—because they are associated not only with a reduction of distress but also with the satisfaction of a “job well done.”
Chapter One:
Winning States of Mind


Chapter Two:
Rational Minds, Irrational Campaigns


3. Philosophers of a more romantic bent of mind—most notably Rousseau—broke with many of their liberal philosophical counterparts by celebrating emotion. However, as an eighteenth-century Frenchman witnessing both the potential for self-determination and
the potential for unbridled violence, even Rousseau foresaw the possibility that a government like the one he helped inspire in the United States could someday commit atrocities in times of mass hysteria. So even Rousseau, the consummate Romantic, ultimately turned to reason, arguing that if people reasoned “correctly,” they would come to see the “general will”—the good of the community—even if it did not coincide with the “will of all”—the momentary view supported by the majority (or what today we might call “public opinion”). The problem was that Rousseau had no assurance that voters would “reason correctly,” and thus had to invent a fanciful, divinely inspired “legislator” who would descend to Earth to enlighten people about their best interest when democratically elected governments made choices (often based on paroxysms of emotion) that were not ultimately in their best interest. Most of the political theorists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were highly concerned that emotions could derail democracies, and they often wed the rational self-interest of capitalism with democratic theory in the hopes of containing disruptive political passion. Many believed that rational self-interest—and material self-interest in particular—would lead people to keep their heads cool and make judgments that were not only in their own but in the collective interest; see Hirschman, A. (1977). *The passions and the interests*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.


5. But the framers made clear in their deliberations in the *Federalist Papers* that emotion—at least in temperate forms—also played a role in democracy, most importantly, as James Madison recognized, by bestowing legitimacy on, and ultimately some form of emotional attachment to, the nation and its political institutions—which ultimately became the case in the “American experiment.” Indeed, the notion of frequent elections (every two to four years) was in part a ritual for the re-endowment of moral and emotional legitimacy in the state. See Marcus, 2002.

6. Ibid.


15. I will not reprise here the infamous sighs and eye-rolling that led most pundits to conclude that Gore “lost” that debate—other than to note that what pundits implicitly meant by “lost” was that he had left a *less favorable emotional impression* than Bush. The eye rolling was just a symptom of the underlying malady: a campaign wedded to the wrong vision of mind. Gore’s team knew their candidate had a problem with a public perception as condescending, stiff, and intellectually aloof. Such characteristics are betrayed primarily by nonverbal behaviors and are not readily addressed by wearing open-necked shirts and doing the Macarena. Gore’s consultants apparently warned him before the debates not to come off as condescending, and even made him watch parodies of his stiffness by the late-night comics; see Halperin, M., & Harris, J. F. (2006). *The way to win: Taking the White House in 2008*. New York: Random House. However, such “habits of mind” do not fall away easily, and they are largely not under conscious control.
They require sustained coaching (and self-deprecating humor) to off-set.


17. Ironically, despite his conscious efforts not to repeat the sins of the father, Gore fell prey to exactly the same appeal Bill Brock used to unseat Al Gore Senior thirty years earlier in the Tennessee race for the Senate. Brock portrayed the elder Gore, a veteran senator, as out of touch with the everyday Tennessean, putting up billboards that simply read, “Bill Brock Believes What You Believe.” See Mark, D. (2006). *Going dirty: The art of negative campaigning.* New York: Bowman & Littlefield, 78.


23. Bounded rationality models take their critique of pure reason a step further, arguing that because people rarely have complete information and limitless time, they often do *better* to take shortcuts in making inferences and decisions that save time, and to focus their attention on things that really matter; Gigerenzer, G., & Goldstein, D.G.
Reasoning the fast and frugal way: Models of bounded rationality. *Psychological Review, 103,* 650–669. Rather than making *optimal* judgments, people typically make *good-enough* judgments. The economist and cognitive scientist Herbert Simon [Simon, H. A. (1990). *Invariants of human behavior.* *Annual Review of Psychology, 41,* 1–19] called this *satisficing,* a combination of *satisfying* and *sufficing.* To use a political example, a classically rational voter would learn about every candidate for every race, from the school board on up to the presidency. Realistically, however, few people (other than perhaps a handful of civic-minded retirees) have that kind of time on their hands. Instead, most people use a simple shortcut—party affiliation—to make determinations on most votes but may stray from those affiliations in races that seem more consequential to them. From the point of view of a bounded rationality theorist, party affiliation is a good-enough proxy for a candidate’s stance on issues most of the time that it actually *makes more sense* (i.e., is more reasonable) to “satisfice” than to reason fully about every possible candidate or referendum.


Chapter Three: The Evolution of the Passionate Brain

3. http://www.boston.com/news/globe/ideas/articles/2006/03/05/how_the_south_was_won.


8. Research suggests that vertebrate animals evolved two defense systems, one attending to defense of the gut (and hence favoring associations between nausea and sensory cues relevant to food), and the other attending to defense of the skin (favoring associations between pain and sights and sounds); Garcia, J., Lasiter, P. S., Bermudez-Rattoni, F., Deems, D. A. (1985). A general theory of aversion learning. Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 443, 8–21.


12. For example, numerous studies using brain imaging techniques have shown that presenting pictures of fearful (as opposed to neutral or happy) faces activate certain parts of the amygdala, and that the amount of activation is correlated with the amount of fear displayed in the pictures; Morris, J. S., Frith, C. D., Perrett, D. I., Rowland, D., Young, A. W., Calder, A. J., & Dolan, R. J. (1996). A
differential neural response in the human amygdala to fearful and happy facial expressions. *Nature,* 383, 812–815. From an evolutionary perspective, this suggests that humans have evolved particular mechanisms for detecting fear in others, and that these “fear detectors” are anatomically close to the neural circuits in the amygdala that produce fear. This makes sense, given that fear in others is likely a signal of danger to ourselves.


15. Weinberger, J., & Westen, D. (2007). RATS, we should have used Clinton. Manuscript under revision.


19. At the very back of the brain, the primary visual cortex is capturing information from the retinas of the two eyes. As that information passes forward and downward along a pathway near the ears, the brain is deciphering precisely what it has seen—its color, shape, size, and ultimately its meaning. As the information passes forward and upward, above the ears, the brain is deciphering where the object is, whether it’s moving, and how fast and in what direction. Not until the information passes still further forward does the brain integrate the what and the where—let alone to put this visual information together with data from the ears, nose, mouth, or skin—or with words. All this happens so quickly and unconsciously that we have no idea what is
happening within the walls of our own skulls. We just know that our two-year-old is about to slip from the bathtub.


22. In one study, Damasio and his colleagues presented patients with damage to the frontal emotion circuits with a set of neutral images interspersed with disturbing pictures. Individuals with no brain damage or damage to other parts of the brain showed emotional arousal when viewing the upsetting images, not only by their reports but by their physiological reactions (assessed by skin conductance, a measure of arousal assessed from sweat on the skin). In contrast, patients with lesions to the frontal emotion circuits showed no emotional reaction at all. One patient acknowledged that the pictures looked distressing but they did not make him feel distressed—a reaction similar to the reports of men who develop quadriplegia after breaking their necks and subsequently report looking at sexually attractive women and thinking they look sexy but not feeling it.


Chapter Four: The Emotions Behind the Curtain


2. For those expert in Darwin’s theory of emotion, the Skinnerian tradition on operant conditioning, and psychoanalytic theory, these may seem like unlikely bedfellows. In each case, I have deleted some important aspect of their theories (often an aspect they held dear) because doing so pointed toward a very similar view of the function of emotion in mind and brain. But in any case, all three are dead so if I am doing an injustice to their work, may their amygdalas rest in peace. For the broader theoretical rationale for doing so, see Westen, D. (1985). Self and society: Narcissism, collectivism, and the development of morals. New York: Cambridge University Press; and Westen, D., & Blagov, P. (2007). A clinical-empirical model of emotion regulation: From defenses and motivated reasoning to emotional constraint satisfaction. In J. Gross, (Ed.), Handbook of emotion regulation. New York: Guilford.


7. By feelings, I include sensory states of pleasure and pain that are often amplified or minimized in humans by the capacity to reflect on them and their causes, leading to brief emotional states and longer-lasting moods.


10. Interestingly, research using electroencephalography (EEG), which measures electrical activity in the brain from different points
on the scalp, finds that people who tend to be angry also tend to show more activity in the left than the right frontal lobe—precisely the pattern seen in people who tend to experience more positive than negative emotion. Harmon-Jones, E., & Allen, J.J.B. (1998). Anger and frontal brain activity: EEG asymmetry consistent with approach motivation despite negative affective valence. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology, 74,* 1310–1316.


14. This is suggested by research documenting that trying to suppress a thought leads not only to its continued activation but to the creation of a “censor” outside of awareness designed to suppress the thought if it should rear its ugly head—Wegner, D. (1992). You can’t always think what you want: Problems in the suppression of unwanted thoughts. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology,* 25, 193–225.


Chapter Five:
Special Interests in Mind


2. This is an example from Rumelhart, D. E., McClelland, J. L., & the PDP Research Group (1986). *Parallel distributed processing: Explorations in the microstructure of cognition*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.


8. It was Buchanan’s use of these phrases that led me to begin studying such phenomena, as it seemed to me that when Pat Buchanan starts talking about civil rights, it’s time to call in a shrink.


23. http://www.comedycentral.com/sitewide/media_player/play.jhtml?itemId=24039. As numerous commentators have noted, the majority opinion in Bush versus Gore actually reads like such a document.

24. These particular questions may seem secondary to the broader facts of the case; however, a large body of research in political science suggests that questions of just this sort provide a reliable index of the extent to which people are following political events because such peripheral details would only be known by someone following the situation closely; Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. New York: Cambridge University Press; Delli Carpini, M., & Keeter, S. (1997). *What Americans know about politics and why it matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press; and Converse, P. E. (2000). Assessing the capacity of mass electorates. *Annual Review of Political Science, 3*, 331–353.
25. The study showed something else as well. Many Democrats and White House supporters had argued throughout the Kenneth Starr investigation and Clinton’s impeachment trial that a cabal of far-right Republicans and Clinton-haters were consumed with fear and loathing toward the president and engaged in a systematic effort to destroy him. If this were the case, we might expect to see greater bias among those with strong Republican leanings.

That was just what we found. Whether or not there was a vast right-wing conspiracy against Clinton, there a vast right-wing “emotional conspiracy” that led those on the far right to demonize the president and interpret ambiguous situations in the worst possible light.


**Chapter Six: Trickle-up Politics**


3. Ibid., 36.


8. More specifically, the two best predictors of voters’ disposition to vote for Reagan or Mondale were the extent to which they felt good about the job Reagan was doing and the extent to which they associated positive feelings with one or the other of the two men. The next two best predictors (with about half as much predictive power) were party identification (essentially, their orientation toward the parties, or how they feel toward them; Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1960) and the extent to which they associated negative feelings with one or the other candidate.


15. I don’t mean to minimize the extent to which such sentiments can be manipulated. The less meaning people find in their jobs, the more they are likely to feel frustrated and angry—a phenomenon
Marx, at his most psychologically astute, called “alienation.” And the more they feel alienated in their work, the more likely they are to seek meaning elsewhere. As Tom Frank makes clear, in a prior era, blue-collar workers sought solidarity in unions and funneled their anger at the companies that failed to protect their safety or their jobs in times of economic downturn, and hence voted Democratic. Despite its massive decline, union membership remains a strong predictor of Democratic Party affiliation and voting among working-class males. Yet today, the combination of alienation and solidarity generally leads to rage directed at “liberal elites” and a corresponding tendency to vote for precisely the politicians who have the least interest in their interests.

16. Thus, Marx imagined that workers would eventually realize they were being duped, overthrow the monopolies and the states that protected them, and assume control over their lives and labor. Marx would not have been surprised to see proponents of corporate interests trot out gay marriage and flag burning (and now “immigration reform”) every two years to “mobilize their base,” only to turn their attention to tax cuts for the wealthy. But he underestimated both the primate propensity for hierarchy that is, like it or not, a part of human nature, and its opposite, our need for being a part of something bigger than ourselves that often unites people across class lines.

21. Corroborating this view, homicides in the context of insults—but not in other contexts, such as burglaries—are much more prevalent in the South than the North.


Chapter Seven: Writing an Emotional Constitution


3. As manifest in the polarized political climate in which we currently live, despite the fact that more people call themselves Independents than once was the case, the impact of partisanship on voting has substantially increased since the days of Eisenhower in the early 1950s, particularly in presidential elections. See Bartels, L. (1990). *Partisanship and voting behavior, 1952–1996. AJPS*.


5. Carville & Begala, 11.


12. George Lakoff has described many of the features of radical conservatism that stand in opposition to the narrative of expanding freedom. Although intended to alert those on the left rather than to provide a narrative intended to convey a similar message to those who are not already converted, it defines many of the essential features of the radical right that is now so dominant in American politics and political discourse: “They want to go back to before these progressive freedoms were established. What they want to conserve is, in most cases, the situation prior to the expansion of traditional American ideas of freedom: before the great expansion of voting rights, before unions and worker protections and pensions, before civil rights legislation, before public health and environmental protections, before Social Security and Medicare, before scientific discoveries contradicted fundamentalist religious dogma” (Lakoff, 2006, *Whose Freedom?* 5).

13. For superb descriptions of how thoroughly the right has captured public discourse, see Lakoff, G. (2004). *Don’t think of an elephant! Know your values and frame the debate*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green Publishing; Lakoff, 2006; and Nunberg, G. (2006). *Talking right: How conservatives turned liberalism into a tax-
raising, latte-drinking, sushi-eating, Volvo-driving, New York Times-
reading, body-piercing, Hollywood-loving, left-wing freak show. New
York: PublicAffairs.

Chapter Eight: Aborting Ambivalence


4. Survey researchers have come to recognize in the last decade that people’s responses to opinion polls are dynamic, “on-the-fly” constructions, reflecting a mixture of their attitudes at the moment and the framing of the questions. The opinions they report are not faithful representations of attitudes engraved in stone.

5. This unidirectional approach to message-craft, from the center to the periphery, not only inverts the appropriate relation between candidates and pollsters but also eliminates the possibility for the “natural selection” of candidates, campaign strategies, messages, and promising consultants from the hinterlands that Republicans have capitalized on so successfully with their less-centralized approach to managing campaigns. Most Democrats share many of the same core principles as well as most of the same values, but they do and should vary, by virtue of who they are and where they live, on the issues they find most compelling and the ways they prefer to address them.


8. This kind of black-and-white thinking about others’ intentions, which is characteristic of most of the narratives of the extreme right, is also characteristic of the stories told by preschoolers and elementary school children. The inability or unwillingness to imagine others’ mental states, and to attribute pure evil to anyone with a different worldview, likely emanates from the same psychological well-springs that render fundamentalists receptive to ideologies pitting God against the devil, and often renders them devoid of compassion toward others into whose minds they would have to enter imaginatively in order not to hate them for their differentness (gays, blacks, Jews, immigrants, or whoever happens to be the target of their hatred). See Westen, D. (1991). Social cognition and object relations. Psychological Bulletin, 109, 429–455.

9. As the reader may have divined, propagating my own particular political biases is not my goal in this book. My goal is simply to provide an emotional “toolbox” that can be used by those on the left, regardless of how far they lean toward the left or the center.


18. Ibid., 240.

Chapter Nine:

Gunning for Common Ground


11. Data from Jarding & Saunders, 2006, 46.


15. Ibid., 51.

16. If we wanted to add a fifth sentence, we could add the following: “And we support background checks and registration for all guns so that law-abiding citizens can exercise their right to bear arms, those who commit crimes with guns can be readily brought to justice, and those who would endanger the innocent, whether criminals or terrorists, can’t get them.”


Chapter Ten: Racial Consciousness and Unconsciousness


3. It didn’t help Allen that new data emerged on his involvement as governor with a group whose mission statement declared, “We also oppose all efforts to mix the races of mankind, to promote non-white races over the European-American people through so-called ‘affirmative action’ and similar measures, to destroy or denigrate the European-American heritage, including the heritage of the Southern people, and to force the integration of the races,” which Webb’s campaign did post on the Internet (see Feld, L. [2006]. George Allen and the CCC “hate group.” Retrieved August 29, 2006, from http://www.raisingkaine.com/showDiary.do?diaryId=4172). And it also didn’t help the incumbent senator that his opponent was a conservative ex-Republican with strong military credentials who had presciently taken a stand in 2002 against a war that had become increasingly unpopular by Election Day.


11. For a more thorough elaboration of the model, see Weinberger & McClelland, 1990.


15. The song may also have been in part a response to Young’s “Alabama.”

16. The story is actually even a little more complicated. Ronnie Van Zant told a Rolling Stone reporter that his beef with Neil Young was that he was overgeneralizing, pinning the racism of the few on the “southern man” in general, and he professed great admiration for Young, at whom the band considered “Sweet Home Alabama” good-natured jabbing, see Brant, M. (2002). Freebirds: The Lynyrd
Skynyrd story. Billboard Books. At the same time, the band surely understood the multiple meanings of the confederate flag that served as the backdrop to “Sweet Home Alabama” to the “southern man” in the audience, who was responding both to Young’s dishonoring of the south and to the racial message implicit in the song.


20. Ibid.

21. Ibid.


36. In a speech that drew little attention in 1965, Bobby Kennedy spoke with the kind of honesty that has been too seldom heard on the left: “Opponents of welfare have always said that welfare is degrading, both to the giver and to the recipient. They have said that it destroys self-respect, that it lowers incentive, that it is contrary to American ideals. . . . Most of us deprecated and disregarded those criticisms. . . . But in our urge to help, we also disregarded elementary fact.” Cited in Kuo, D. (2006). *Tempting faith: An inside story of political seduction*. New York: Free Press, 82.

37. One of the most truly enlightening experiences I had in researching this book was reading the original words of the founders such as Washington and Jefferson as they struggled with the relation between church and state and self-consciously built a wall between them. See the compilations of writings in Cousins, N. (1958). *In God we trust*. New York: Harper.


Chapter Eleven: Death and Taxes


2. For the academic reader, I do not mean to suggest that positive and negative emotions are entirely independent. As described below, they tend to show moderate negative correlations, and some of their neural circuitry is shared. My emphasis here, however, is on what makes them different.


5. My apologies to my colleague Paul Wachtel, who used the phrase “can’t get far in neutral” in a different context, but it seemed particularly apt here.


13. The linguist George Lakoff recently expanded upon an important distinction between uncontested and contested concepts, in Lakoff, G. (2006). *Whose freedom? The battle over America’s most important idea.* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. The Contract largely drew on essentially uncontested values, or to put it another way, on the components of networks representing those values that most Americans share.


19. Ibid., 11.


26. Another potential reframe for the president’s tax cuts was offered by James Carville and Paul Begala, who juxtaposed them with the sacrifice our soldiers were making in Iraq:

“For the first time in history, we have a president and a Congress who have cut taxes in a time of war. George Washington didn’t ask for a tax cut when his men were freezing at Valley Forge. Lincoln didn’t call for a capital-gains tax cut at Gettysburg. FDR didn’t cut taxes while thousands of soldiers were dying at the Battle of the Bulge. But President Bush is made of sterner stuff. Soldiers in Iraq may lack body armor, but millionaires in tuxedoes will not lack for tax cuts. Young heroes may drive Humvees in the desert without armor plating, but fat cats in gated communities will be driving sparkling new Jaguars” (Ibid., p.206). Several features render this re-framing emotionally compelling. It places Bush’s actions in historical context, juxtaposing his behavior to the actions of three of our most revered presidents and three battle scenes that symbolize the nation’s fight for freedom. It then links two issues—two networks—that were previously unconnected in people’s minds, one of which represented a strength for the president (national security) and the other a liability (tax cuts for the wealthy). When these two networks are linked, their combination places in bold relief the deeply unpatriotic nature of a tax cut in a time of war, particularly when it leaves American soldiers dying for lack of body armor. And it is impossible to read their words without picturing those soldiers without armor and those millionaires in their tuxedoes. In juxtaposition, these images generate moral outrage. And they should.

27. An alternative framing is that the War in Iraq could not have been prosecuted with such incompetence by the Bush administration had the Republican Congress exercised its constitutional duty to provide congressional oversight, and every Republican incumbent who thought that steroids in baseball required hours of congressional hearings but that the emergence of a civil war in Iraq barely merited discussion was responsible for it. The same is true of dozens of policies, from ignoring the unanimous agreement of scientists on catastrophic climate change, to instituting torture camps around the
world, to requiring the government to pay for full-priced prescription drugs to line the pockets of pharmaceutical companies at the expense of our children and grandchildren. When the Republicans had absolute power, they revealed their agenda, which is far from the mainstream of public opinion. Democrats should clearly articulate and run against that agenda in 2008, alongside a hopeful, coherent message of their own for a new start in the twenty-first century.

28. I learned this from someone who directed his advance team, who, twenty years later, remained shocked and amused that Democrats had never figured out the importance of something so simple.


30. In case the reader suspects the advantages of twenty-twenty hindsight, I wrote a commentary for National Public Radio that addressed this issue in August of 2004, before the Republican convention.


32. CNN, Decision 2006, November 4, 2006, 9:40 AM.


34. Brader, 2006, 10.


37. Success records are an imperfect index because some strategists may take on “long shot” candidates who pull down their win-loss record, while others may seem successful because they handle incumbents in safe congressional seats. But as a rough index, win-loss records are a good place to start.


39. To increase the value of this kind of test, the consultant could then send a follow-up e-mail a week later asking voters to make the same ratings and to describe, in their own words, what they remem-
bered of the ad they had seen. The consultant could then compare the “residue” of the ads on voters’ feelings a week later as well as their memorability. In principle, consultants could market-test components of ads as well. Colleagues and I have already shown the feasibility of such tests, described at www.thinkscan.com.


Chapter Twelve: Hope, Inspiration, and Political Intelligence


5. Television has undoubtedly amplified the role of emotions in electoral persuasion, as images tend to be far more evocative than words in activating emotions, and as viewers have come to see and hear the emotions on a candidate’s face and intonation in a way newsprint just can’t convey.


9. The only academic reference of which I am aware that uses this term was written by the maverick cultural anthropologist Chris Boehm, see Boehm, C. (1997). “Egalitarian behavior and the evolution of political intelligence.” In D. Byrne and A. Whiten, (Eds.), *Machiavellian intelligence II*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.


27. Ibid., 156.

29. For incumbents, positive emotions, such as satisfaction and pride, tend to signal that things are going well. For challengers, the most important positive emotion is often hope, combined with enough negative emotion (particularly anxiety) to grab voters’ attention and get them to consider changing course; see Marcus et al., 2000.

30. His challenger, Walter Mondale, could never do what he needed to do to unseat a president associated with so much positive emotion: get Reagan’s negatives up. Although Reagan made a lot of Democrats angry, he elicited excitement and pride from the majority of voters. Mondale actually had lower negatives than Reagan; he was a hard guy to get excited about hating. But at no point between January and October 1984 did more than 40 percent of voters associate Mondale with enthusiasm, and most of that time his positives hovered in the thirties. Neither his style nor his message elicited voter excitement. See Marcus et al., 2000.

31. Nor did the Democrats ever try to tell a coherent story about the sides of Reagan’s history that might have made his history an issue, such as the fact that he was the first president ever to have been divorced (an odd distinction for a candidate running on “family values”), or that he was a Hollywood informant for Joe McCarthy, or that he was an opponent of civil rights legislation.


34. Klein, 2006, 185.


37. See www.thinkscan.com; Weinberger, J., & Westen, D. (2006). *RATS, we should have used Clinton: Subliminal stimulation in political campaigns*. Manuscript under revision.
Chapter Thirteen: Positively Negative


15. Ibid.


18. Gore’s best response came in September 2004 on an appearance on *Letterman*, when he took advantage of the kind of unconventional venue that had catapulted Clinton into the presidency, by reading his list of the “Top Ten Rejected Gore-Lieberman Campaign Slogans.” The first two were brilliant, addressing the concerns the American people had about him in a wonderfully disarming way: 10. Vote for me or I’ll come to your home and explain my 191-page economic plan to you in excruciating detail. 9. Remember, America, I gave you the Internet, and I can take it away.


20. Ibid., 21.


22. Ibid., 240.


Chapter Fourteen: Terror Networks

2. Ibid.
search. In J. Greenberg, S. Koole, & T. Pyszczynski, (Eds.), Handbook of experimental existential psychology. New York: Guilford Press.


21. It is also a profound indictment of the media. Every major newspaper to which the scientists who spent two decades studying terror management sent a brilliant, beautifully written op-ed piece summarizing their work and its implications for understanding what was happening in 2004 declined to publish it, and a major network cancelled a documentary on it in 2004 at the last minute without explanation.


Chapter Fifteen:
Civil and Uncivil Unions


7. Perhaps the most trenchant comment during the brief but tumultuous debate in Congress over “saving Terri” (I have to say, I was always offended by the use of her first name by legislators and journalists who had never met her, who spoke with familiarity to which they were not entitled) came from Michael Schiavo’s attorney, George Felos, who expressed shock and disgust at both parties’ participation in the affair. With respect to the Democrats, he added, in a sentiment shared by many on the left and center, “If they don’t stand up for Terri Schiavo, they deserve to be the minority party.” See Hulse, C., March 19, 2005. The Iraq War ultimately saved the Democrats from remaining a permanent minority.


19. As with religion, the right has redefined the meaning of national symbols, such as the flag, in ways that have created a deep ambivalence on the left. A party and its candidates cannot win elections if they allow the other side to capture the symbols of the nation and its institutions because, ultimately, they will find themselves ambivalent about these symbols. As we have seen, ambivalence leaks.
32. To the extent that Republican leaders’s mix of action and inaction on the issues that matter to evangelical Christians reflects a cynical policy of exploiting them, too, evangelical Christians should know about it. According to David Kuo, who helped head President Bush’s office of faith-based initiatives until it was clear to him that it was a show pony designed to be trotted out whenever politically expedient, senior Bush administration officials routinely rolled their eyes when talking about Christian conservatives and referred to them as “the nuts.” See Kuo, 2006, 229. Kuo’s moving account of his efforts to do God’s work in the Republican Party were in print long before the 2006 election, yet, remarkably, not a single Democrat, to my knowledge, ever spoke about it, even as the Foley affair broke.


42. Spong, 2005.


60. Carter, 2005, 98.


63. Spong, 2005, 46–47.


66. Ibid.

67. Ibid.

68. Kuo, 2006, 222.


70. Carter, 2005, 119–120.


72. Put this together with an economic extremism that puts our children and grandchildren into debt so that the super rich can manage their portfolios with greater enthusiasm; hands polluters the earth to shepherd with malfeasance, forever changing the world we leave our children and grandchildren; allows corporate executives to pilfer their companies with enormous salaries, bonuses, and golden parachutes while the wages of the average American have remained stagnant over thirty years; and forces millions of children go to without health care, and you have a recipe for a political realignment similar to
the one Roosevelt engineered. But it is only a recipe for realignment if progressives can enunciate, with moral clarity, the destructive moral principles of the right, and a clear progressive moral alternative.

73. The best moments of John Kerry’s convention speech of 2004 came as he challenged the notion that values are the property of the Republican Party, in a way that should be a central theme of Democratic campaigns for the next decade:

For four years, we’ve heard a lot of talk about values. But values spoken without actions taken are just slogans. Values are not just words. They’re what we live by. They’re about the causes we champion and the people we fight for. And it is time for those who talk about family values to start valuing families.

You don’t value families by kicking kids out of after school programs and taking cops off our streets, so that Enron can get another tax break.

You don’t value families by denying real prescription drug coverage to seniors, so big drug companies can get another windfall.

You don’t value families if you force them to take up a collection to buy body armor for a son or daughter in the service, if you deny veterans health care, or if you tell middle class families to wait for a tax cut, so that the wealthiest among us can get even more.

We believe that what matters most is not narrow appeals masquerading as values, but the shared values that show the true face of America. Not narrow appeals that divide us, but shared values that unite us. Family and faith. Hard work and responsibility. Opportunity for all—so that every child, every parent, every worker has an equal shot at living up to their God-given potential.


75. Ibid., 75.
On Rove’s father, see Moore, J., & Slater, W. (2006). The architect: Karl Rove and the master plan for absolute power. New York: Crown. What is astounding is that Democrats never made an issue of Rove’s “family values,” let alone his contempt for the Ten Commandments, in launching a hate campaign against his own father; or of the fact that Ken Mehlman, the chairman of the Republican National Committee, like numerous Republican congressmen and their aids, himself a closeted homosexual, refused to answer questions about his sexual orientation or his numerous sightings in gay bars. If the Republicans were going to run this kind of hate campaign, Democrats should have taken the gloves off, not let them run it with pious impunity.


His senior colleague from Massachusetts, Ted Kennedy, had much stronger words for the president, stating that Bush would “go down in history as the first president to try to write discrimination back into the Constitution. . . . We have amended the Constitution only seventeen times. . . . [It] has often been amended to expand and protect people’s rights, never to take away or restrict their rights.”


Carville & Begala, 2006, 56.


Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. (2006, March 22). Less opposition to gay marriage, adoption and military service. Ser-


