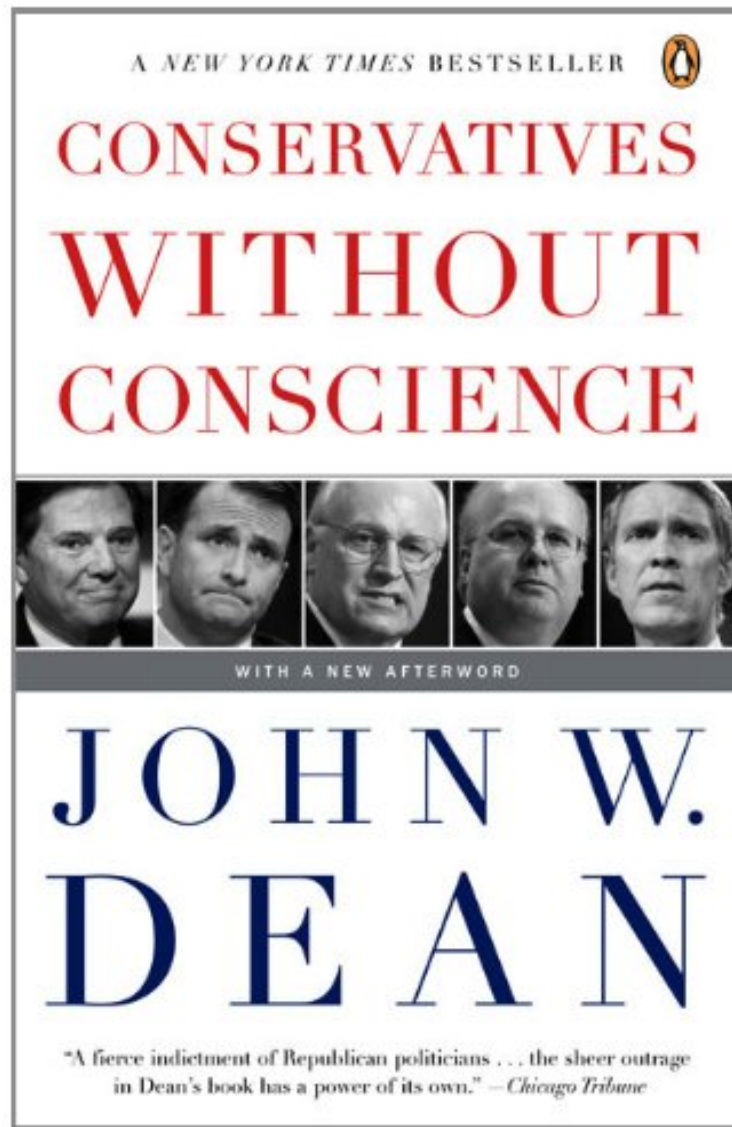


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## Conservatives Without Conscience

*John W. Dean*

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**John W. Dean : Conservatives Without Conscience** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Conservatives Without Conscience:

7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Five Stars By BookLuvR Interesting book to read in current political climate. Still relevant. 36 of 36 people found the following review helpful. To understand the direction that W took us, and Trump et al. would like to take us, please read this book. By Sam Wxnill I gotta tell ya -- this is one scary book, written by a smart lawyer who has clearly done his homework (despite what the negative reviews may claim) and has

had first-hand experience with politically-powerful authoritarian personality types. The chapter on "Right Wing Authoritarians" (RWA; followers) and "Social Dominance Orientation" (SDO; leaders) explains a great deal of the observed behavior. That's behavior I've seen in others right in my personal life (we all have THAT uncle or brother-in-law, right?) -- and that we've all seen in the daily tragicomedy that is our national political news coverage. Note that these labels do not necessarily refer to political leanings, but certain personality types, although the studies he cites point to an empirical relationship between these personality types and hard Right political leanings, at least in North America. "Left wing authoritarians," if they exist, are exceedingly rare. That's hard for some on the Right to except, but a profound lack of insight and deep denial of the facts (even when presented with them) are common characteristics of RWA followers. Dean summarizes the RWA follower personality type using the following headings: 1. Submissive to authority, thus intolerant of criticism of that authority 2. Aggressive support of authority, and pre-disposed to cause harm to others when that harm is sanctioned by authority 3. Highly conventional, and intolerant of those that are not Please see the book for details. He also goes into the "Double Highs," that is, those that score high on both the RWA and SDO scales. These folks, comprising about ten percent of the broader category that contains both RWA and SDO types, can probably also be called sociopaths, in that they see human beings as objects to be manipulated toward certain self-serving ends, and any means can be justified for achieving these ends. Double Highs do not possess a functioning conscience -- they will do or say anything to accomplish a goal, regardless of the consequences to others, thus the title of the book. Yes, this sounds quite familiar. 10 of 10 people found the following review helpful. best analysis of current political authoritarianism By Paul Corr If the past is prologue, this book is essential reading. John Dean was on staff in the Nixon White House and began this book after an unprovoked attack on his integrity. As a result of his need to understand how this came about, we have this valuable book. Written in 2006, it has great ongoing relevance as the environment of political discourse has changed for the worse. Here's hoping media steps up and challenges and holds those in office accountable.

On the heels of his national bestseller *Worse Than Watergate*, John Dean takes a critical look at the current conservative movement. In *Conservatives Without Conscience*, John Dean places the conservative movement's inner circle of leaders in the Republican Party under scrutiny. Dean finds their policies and mind- set to be fundamentally authoritarian, and as such, a danger to democracy. By examining the legacies of such old-line conservatives as J. Edgar Hoover, Spiro Agnew, and Phyllis Schlafly and of such current figures as Dick Cheney, Newt Gingrich, and leaders of the Religious Right, Dean presents an alarming record of abuses of power. His trenchant analysis of how conservatism has lost its bearings serves as a chilling warning and a stirring inspiration to safeguard constitutional principles.

.com In *Conservatives Without Conscience*, John Dean, who served as White House counsel under Richard Nixon and then helped to break the Watergate scandal with his testimony before the Senate, takes a vivid and analytical look at a Republican Party that has changed drastically from the conservative movement that he joined in the mid-1960s as an admirer of Senator Barry Goldwater. Listen to our interview with Dean as part of our July 13 Wire podcast (along with interviews with Garrison Keillor and Henry Rollins) to hear how he originally conceived of the book with the late Senator Goldwater, and the social science research he drew on to put together his portrait of the "conservative authoritarian." (You can subscribe to regular Wire podcasts here.) And take a look at Dean's choices for the best books to read on the American presidency in our Grownup School feature. From Publishers Weekly In his seventh book, Dean, the former Nixon legal counsel whom the FBI has called the "master manipulator" of the Watergate coverup, weighs in with a rebuke to Christian fundamentalists and other right-wing hard-liners. A self-described Goldwater conservative (indeed, Goldwater had planned to collaborate on this book before his death), he rails against the influence of social conservatives and neoconservatives within his party. Suffused with bitterness stemming from the controversies in which he has been embroiled, Dean's book paints a thin social science veneer over a litany of mostly ad hominem complaints. Purporting to show that social conservatives and neoconservatives are, on the whole, demonstrably authoritarian, bigoted, irrational and amoral, *Conservatives Without Conscience* offers helpful hints such as "Conservatives without conscience do not have horns and tails," and evinces a telling fascination with politicians' shady book deals. Though there is clearly much to condemn in the policies and tactics Dean deplores, assailing everyone from French political theorist Joseph de Maistre to Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist to the chairman of Yale University's conservative association as "Double High" social- dominance-oriented authoritarians undermines his journalistic credibility. Dean's lurid accusations may be entertaining, but they add little to the reasoned debate that Washington so sorely lacks today. (July 11) Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist \*Starred \* With the perspective of a former Republican political insider, and experience in the Watergate scandal when he was White House counsel to Nixon, Dean takes a sincere, well-considered look at how conservative politics in the U.S. is veering dangerously close to authoritarianism, offering a penetrating and highly disturbing portrait of many of the major players in Republican politics and power. Looking back on the development of conservative politics in the U.S., Dean notes that conservatism is regressing to its

authoritarian roots. Dean draws on five decades of social science research that details the personality traits of what are called "double high authoritarians": self-righteous, mean-spirited, amoral, manipulative, bullying. He concludes that Chuck Colson, Pat Robertson, Newt Gingrich, and Tom DeLay are all textbook examples. Dean calls Vice-President Cheney "the architect of Bush's authoritarian policies," and deems Bush "a mental lightweight with a strong right-wing authoritarian personality." Dean maintains that conservatives without conscience have produced such a hostile, noncollegial environment in Congress that threats of resistance through filibusters have been met with threats of a "nuclear option" and that conservatives have used fearmongering about terrorist attacks to the point where the nation faces a greater threat of relinquishing its ideals of democracy. Dean appeals to conservatives to find their consciences and to all Americans to take serious heed of what is going on in the nation. Readers of all political perspectives will find this book riveting. Vanessa Bush Copyright American Library Association. All rights reserved