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# The Radical Center: Middle Americans and the Politics of Alienation

Donald Warren

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## THE RADICAL CENTER



Middle Americans  
and the  
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**Donald Warren : The Radical Center: Middle Americans and the Politics of Alienation** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Radical Center: Middle Americans and the Politics of Alienation:

There is now compelling evidence that a new phenomenon, the Radical Center, has emerged as a unique political and social reality in America. The truckers strike, the Boston anti-bussing protest, and the West Virginia textbook controversy provide vivid confirmation that a growing number of Middle Americans are no longer willing to suffer political frustration and social alienation in silence. Under particular sets of conditions, the Radical Center is an explosive political force which can erupt in different geographical settings and over seemingly unrelated issues. Unlike others in the silent majority who are relatively secure, silent, and politically independent in their paradoxical blending of left and right attitudes. Their ideology has deep roots in society and thus they appear to be reactionary. However, they see themselves as being in the tradition of defending individual rights against oppressive and arbitrary policies. Drawing in extensive research and national survey data, sociologist Donald I. Warren here presents an in-depth analysis of the Middle American Radicals, who they are, what they believe, the major targets of their grievances, and the likelihood of their political mobilization. The evidence indicates that as many as one in five Americans shares the Radical Center perspective, including people who outwardly seem to have very little in common by way of economic, occupational, or education status. Of particular significance are the findings concerning potential support for the various presidential candidates and for a third national political party. Avoiding the pitfalls of viewing Middle American radicalism as either an intransigently conservative, proto-fascist danger, or as well-spring of democratic populism, Warren discusses reforms and new approaches with which governmental agencies, labor unions, churches, and other organizations can reduce Middle American alienation. He suggests the possibility of new and powerful alliances between the poor, the Radical Center, and the well-educated which could bring about major social reforms. Whatever the political future of the Radical Center, it is a force which can no longer be ignored. This book is a mine of social research and an indispensable tool for anyone wishing to take the pulse of contemporary America.

"Presents the results of research concerning the income, educational, and ideological characteristics of a segment of middle-income persons who have become increasingly supportive of political activism. . . . Because the research spans pre-and post-Watergate times, the book's relevance to understanding middle-American political ideology is enhanced."  
Choice