

against history against leviathan

Against History Against Leviathan: Exploring the Resistance to Centralized Power and Historical Narrative

against history against leviathan—this phrase invites us into a rich and complex dialogue about resistance, skepticism, and the challenge to dominant structures. It evokes the notion of pushing back against not only the grand narratives that history often imposes but also against the metaphorical leviathan, a towering symbol of centralized authority and state power. In this article, we'll unravel the layers embedded in this concept, exploring how individuals and societies have historically questioned and opposed hegemonic forces, both in the telling of history and in the structures of governance.

Understanding this dual resistance sheds light on critical themes in political philosophy, historiography, and social movements. It also resonates today as debates about power, truth, and authority continue to shape our world. So, let's dive into what it means to be "against history against leviathan," examining the roots, implications, and relevance of this stance.

The Meaning Behind "Against History Against Leviathan"

Before we delve deeper, it's important to define the key elements of this phrase. "Against history" suggests a challenge to the accepted or official versions of historical events. It embodies a skepticism about the narratives that have been handed down, often shaped by those in power to serve particular interests.

On the other hand, "against Leviathan" references a famous political metaphor introduced by Thomas Hobbes in his 1651 work *Leviathan*. Hobbes described the leviathan as a powerful sovereign or state that maintains order but also wields immense control over individuals' lives. Being "against Leviathan" thus signals opposition to overwhelming centralized authority, surveillance, or authoritarian governance.

Together, these two ideas emphasize a critical posture: questioning the stories we are told about the past and resisting the concentration of power that can distort or enforce those stories.

Questioning Historical Narratives: Why It

Matters

History isn't just a series of dates and facts—it's a narrative shaped by perspectives, biases, and agendas. Those who hold power often control how history is recorded and taught, which can marginalize alternative voices or inconvenient truths.

Historical Revisionism and Counter-Narratives

Being “against history” doesn't mean rejecting history itself but rather advocating for a more nuanced, inclusive understanding. Historical revisionism involves re-examining accepted accounts to uncover overlooked perspectives, especially those of oppressed or minority groups.

For example, indigenous histories frequently challenge colonial narratives that portray colonization as a benign or civilizing mission. Similarly, feminist historians critique traditional accounts that marginalize women's contributions.

By engaging in this process, societies can confront past injustices, understand the complexities of human experience, and foster empathy.

The Role of Memory and Myth in History

Memory and myth often intertwine with history, influencing how communities remember the past. National myths can unify but also exclude or erase difficult realities. Being “against history” invites us to critically examine these collective memories and question whose stories are amplified and whose are silenced.

Resisting the Leviathan: Opposition to Centralized Power

The Leviathan metaphor captures the tension between order and liberty. While a strong state can provide security and stability, it can also suppress freedom and enforce conformity. Being “against Leviathan” thus involves resisting authoritarianism, surveillance, and unchecked government power.

Historical Examples of Resistance

Throughout history, movements have risen to challenge the leviathan-like

authority of states:

- **The Magna Carta (1215):** Early efforts by English barons to limit royal power and protect certain rights.
- **The American Revolution (1775-1783):** Colonists opposing British imperial rule and demanding self-governance.
- **The Chartist Movement (19th century):** Advocates for political reform and expanded suffrage in Britain.
- **20th-century civil rights and anti-authoritarian movements:** Challenging systemic oppression and state overreach worldwide.

These examples highlight the persistent human desire for autonomy and justice, pushing back against leviathan's potential for tyranny.

Modern Leviathans: Surveillance and Control

In the 21st century, concerns about the leviathan have expanded beyond traditional state power to include technologies that enable unprecedented surveillance and control. Governments and corporations can monitor communications, data, and behavior, raising critical questions about privacy, consent, and freedom.

Opposition today often takes the form of digital activism, encryption advocacy, and demands for transparency. These efforts continue the tradition of being "against leviathan" by resisting new forms of centralized domination.

Intersections: How History and Leviathan Interact

The relationship between history and leviathan is deeply intertwined. States often use historical narratives to legitimize their authority, shaping collective memory to maintain social order.

State-Sanctioned Histories

Governments may promote particular versions of history that glorify national achievements, justify policies, or suppress dissenting viewpoints. This practice is evident in propaganda, education systems, and public

commemorations.

Challenging these sanctioned histories is a crucial part of resisting the leviathan's ideological control. It opens space for alternative voices and critical reflection.

Historical Lessons for Resisting Leviathan

Looking back at history can also provide valuable lessons for those opposing leviathan-like powers. Understanding past successes and failures in resisting oppression helps inform strategies for activism and reform.

For instance, decentralized movements, grassroots organizing, and coalition-building have often proven effective in confronting centralized power.

Practical Tips for Engaging “Against History Against Leviathan” Today

Whether you're a student, activist, or curious thinker, there are ways to embody the spirit of being “against history against leviathan” in everyday life.

- **Question dominant narratives:** Seek out diverse sources and perspectives, especially from marginalized communities.
- **Engage critically with media:** Be mindful of how history and current events are presented and whose interests they serve.
- **Protect your privacy:** Use encryption tools and be aware of data collection practices to resist surveillance.
- **Support decentralized movements:** Participate in community-led initiatives that promote autonomy and justice.
- **Educate others:** Share alternative histories and promote awareness about the risks of concentrated power.

The Ongoing Relevance of Being “Against History Against Leviathan”

In an era marked by political polarization, misinformation, and expanding

state and corporate power, the call to be “against history against leviathan” feels more urgent than ever. It challenges us to remain vigilant, to question authority, and to embrace complexity in our understanding of the past and present.

This stance encourages a dynamic engagement with history—not as a fixed set of facts but as a living dialogue—and a commitment to safeguarding freedom and pluralism in the face of growing leviathans, whether they be governments, institutions, or ideologies.

Ultimately, standing against history and leviathan is about empowering individuals and communities to reclaim their stories and their rights, fostering societies that are more just, open, and resilient.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'Against History Against Leviathan'?

The main theme of 'Against History Against Leviathan' is a critical examination of historical narratives and state power, challenging traditional interpretations of history and authority.

Who is the author of 'Against History Against Leviathan'?

The author of 'Against History Against Leviathan' is Fredric Jameson, a prominent Marxist literary critic and theorist.

How does 'Against History Against Leviathan' critique traditional historical narratives?

The book critiques traditional historical narratives by arguing that they often serve to uphold dominant power structures and ideologies, particularly those related to the state and capitalism.

What role does the concept of the Leviathan play in the work?

The Leviathan symbolizes the state or sovereign power, and the work critiques how history and political theory have justified the expansion and authority of the Leviathan, often at the expense of individual freedoms.

In what ways does 'Against History Against

Leviathan' relate to Marxist theory?

The book incorporates Marxist theory by analyzing history through the lens of class struggle, ideology, and the critique of capitalist society, emphasizing the role of economic and political power in shaping historical narratives.

What is the significance of the title 'Against History Against Leviathan'?

The title signifies a dual opposition: against traditional historical accounts that legitimize authority, and against the Leviathan, representing state power, suggesting a need to rethink both history and sovereignty.

How does Fredric Jameson propose we rethink history in 'Against History Against Leviathan'?

Jameson proposes rethinking history by adopting a more critical and dialectical approach that recognizes the socio-political contexts and power dynamics influencing historical narratives rather than accepting them as objective truths.

What impact has 'Against History Against Leviathan' had on contemporary political and historical theory?

The work has influenced contemporary debates on the nature of history, state power, and ideology, encouraging scholars to question dominant historiographies and explore alternative perspectives that challenge established authority.

Additional Resources

Against History Against Leviathan: An Analytical Review of Power, Narrative, and Resistance

against history against leviathan is a phrase that resonates deeply within contemporary debates surrounding authority, governance, and the construction of historical narratives. It evokes a dual resistance—one against the dominant interpretations of history and another against the metaphorical "Leviathan," a symbol of centralized power and control. This article delves into the conceptual underpinnings of this phrase, exploring its relevance in political theory, historiography, and cultural discourse, while analyzing how it challenges prevailing structures of knowledge and authority.

Understanding the Dual Opposition: History and

Leviathan

The phrase "against history against leviathan" captures a critical stance toward two intertwined forces: the historical narratives that shape collective memory and the Leviathan, a term popularized by Thomas Hobbes to describe the sovereign state as an all-powerful entity. This dual opposition questions both the way history is constructed and utilized, and the nature of political power as embodied in state institutions.

Historiography, as a discipline, often reflects the power dynamics of its time. Dominant groups historically have controlled the writing of history, often marginalizing alternative perspectives. To be "against history" in this context is to challenge these dominant narratives, advocating for a more inclusive, critical, and pluralistic approach that recognizes silenced voices and forgotten events.

Simultaneously, opposing the Leviathan involves a critique of centralized authority and the mechanisms by which power is exercised and legitimized. This resistance aligns with libertarian, anarchist, and certain democratic theories that warn against the dangers of unchecked state power and advocate for decentralization and individual autonomy.

The Historical Narrative as an Instrument of Power

History is not merely a record of past events but a constructed narrative shaped by those who hold power. This instrumentalization of history serves to legitimize existing social orders and political regimes. For example, colonial histories have often been written from the perspective of colonizers, justifying imperial domination while erasing indigenous experiences.

Being "against history" thus implies a critical interrogation of these narratives. It involves uncovering biases, questioning the sources, and re-evaluating accepted truths. This approach seeks to democratize history, making it a tool for empowerment rather than control.

Leviathan: The Symbol and Reality of State Power

Thomas Hobbes' Leviathan, as presented in his 1651 work, symbolizes an omnipotent sovereign created to prevent the chaos of the state of nature. While Hobbes argued that such power is necessary for social order, critics highlight how this concentration of authority can suppress freedoms, foster surveillance, and perpetuate inequality.

"Against leviathan" is thus a rallying cry for those who resist authoritarianism and advocate for political systems that prioritize

accountability, transparency, and individual rights. This opposition can be seen in contemporary movements challenging governmental overreach, from debates on surveillance and privacy to protests against authoritarian regimes.

Contemporary Relevance and Applications

In the 21st century, the tension encapsulated by "against history against leviathan" remains profoundly relevant. The digital age has transformed how history is recorded and disseminated, offering new opportunities for alternative narratives but also posing risks of misinformation and manipulation.

Digital History and the Challenge to Traditional Narratives

The internet democratizes access to information, enabling marginalized groups to share their stories and challenge official histories. Platforms like social media, blogs, and digital archives facilitate a multiplicity of perspectives, disrupting the monopoly of traditional institutions over historical discourse.

However, this democratization also raises questions about authenticity, authority, and the potential for revisionist histories that may distort facts for political ends. Thus, the struggle "against history" in the digital era involves navigating between empowerment and the need for rigorous, evidence-based historiography.

State Power and Surveillance in Modern Societies

The metaphor of the Leviathan is increasingly invoked in discussions about the surveillance state, mass data collection, and the erosion of privacy. Governments justify expansive powers in the name of security, but critics warn of the creeping authoritarianism that such measures entail.

Movements for civil liberties and digital rights frequently embody the spirit of resistance "against leviathan," advocating for legal reforms, checks and balances, and citizen engagement to prevent abuses of power.

Philosophical and Theoretical Perspectives

The dual opposition inherent in "against history against leviathan"

intersects with numerous philosophical debates concerning power, knowledge, and freedom.

Foucault's Power/Knowledge Nexus

Michel Foucault's theories offer valuable insights into how knowledge and power are intertwined. He argued that what is accepted as "truth" is closely linked to power structures, and that institutions use knowledge to control populations.

From this perspective, challenging dominant historical narratives ("against history") is simultaneously challenging power itself. Similarly, resisting the Leviathan aligns with Foucault's call to dismantle oppressive power relations and promote forms of resistance.

Hobbesian Social Contract Versus Anarchist Critique

While Hobbes posited the Leviathan as necessary to avoid chaos, anarchist theorists argue that such authority inevitably leads to domination and suppression. The tension between order and freedom is central to debates "against leviathan," where the quest for security is weighed against the cost to individual liberty.

This discourse informs contemporary policy debates on governance, civil rights, and the role of the state in a globalized world.

Practical Implications and Challenges

Engaging with the ideas encapsulated in "against history against leviathan" has practical consequences for education, policymaking, and activism.

- **Educational Reforms:** Incorporating multiple perspectives in history curricula to foster critical thinking and inclusivity.
- **Policy Oversight:** Establishing legal frameworks to limit governmental overreach and protect civil liberties.
- **Activism:** Supporting grassroots movements that challenge dominant narratives and authoritarian practices.

Yet, these efforts face obstacles such as political resistance, misinformation, and the complexity of balancing competing interests.

Exploring Alternatives: Decentralization and Pluralism

One approach "against leviathan" is advocating for decentralized political structures that reduce the concentration of power. Federalism, community governance, and participatory democracy models exemplify this trend.

Similarly, challenging history involves embracing pluralism, recognizing that multiple histories coexist and that no single narrative should dominate. This pluralistic approach enriches collective understanding and fosters social cohesion by acknowledging diversity.

The ongoing dialogues around "against history against leviathan" reflect a broader struggle to reconcile authority with freedom, order with justice, and memory with truth. As societies evolve, this tension will likely remain a pivotal axis of intellectual and political engagement.

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against history against leviathan: Against His-story, Against Leviathan! Fredy Perlman, 2016

against history against leviathan: Anarcho-primitivism ,

against history against leviathan: Murmuring Against Moses: The Contentious History and Contested Future of Pentateuchal Studies Jeffrey L. Morrow, John Bergsma, 2023-01-26 For much of the history of both Judaism and Christianity, the Pentateuch—first five books of the Bible—was understood to be the unified work of a single inspired author: Moses. Yet the standard view in modern biblical scholarship contends that the Pentateuch is a composite text made up of fragments from diverse and even discrepant sources that originated centuries after the events it purports to describe. In *Murmuring against Moses*, John Bergsma and Jeffrey Morrow provide a critical narrative of the emergence of modern Pentateuchal studies and challenge the scholarly consensus by highlighting the weaknesses of the modern paradigms and mustering an array of new evidence for the Pentateuch's antiquity. By shedding light on the past history of research and the present developments in the field, Bergsma and Morrow give fresh voice to a growing scholarly dissatisfaction with standard critical approaches and make an important contribution toward charting a more promising future for Pentateuchal studies.

against history against leviathan: Historians Against History David W. Noble, 1965 *Historians Against History* was first published in 1967. Minnesota Archive Editions uses digital technology to make long-unavailable books once again accessible, and are published unaltered from the original University of Minnesota Press editions. Professor Noble examines the basic philosophy and writing of six American historians, George Bancroft, Frederick Jackson, Charles A. Beard, Carl Becker, Vernon Louis Parrington, and Daniel J. Boorstin, and finds in them a common tradition which he calls anti-historical. He argues that this viewpoint is founded in the frontier interpretation of American history, that American historians have served as the chief political theorists and theologians of this country since 1830, and that their writings can be interpreted as Jeremiads designed to preserve a national covenant with nature.

against history against leviathan: The Ballerina and the Bull Johanna Isaacson, 2016-06-07

Our moment has seen the resurgence of an anarchist sensibility, from the uprisings in Seattle in 1999 to the Occupy movement of 2011. Against the vacuity and drift of financialized capitalism, proclaiming there is no alternative, these insurgent movements have insisted that an alternative is possible. In *The Ballerina and the Bull* Johanna Isaacson explores the occult history of US punk, hardcore, queercore, and riot grrrl, DIY culture, and alternative subcultures to trace a new politics of expressive negation that both contests the present order and gives us a sense of the impasses of politics in an age of depoliticization. Expressive negation registers the contradictory politics at the heart of these projects: the desire for negation that must be positively expressed. Drawing on first-hand experience, interviews, and discussion of the ludic, spatial, and sexual politics of anarchist subcultures, Isaacson maps an underground utopian politics of style and develops a radically new history of the present moment.

against history against leviathan: *Notable Czech and Slovak Americans* Miloslav Rechcigl Jr., 2021-12-14 The contribution to the development and culture of America by the immigrants from the territory of former Czechoslovakia, be they Czechs or Slovaks, or Bohemians, as they used to be called, has been enormous. Yet little has been written about the subject. This compendium is part of an effort to correct this glaring deficiency. In this compendium, the focus is on religion, law and jurisprudence, business and entrepreneurship and the notable people in the government, with the narration and assessment about the Czechoslovak American explorers, adventurers and pioneers who paved the way for the colonists and settlers who followed them. An important role among them played the social movement activists. some of whose ideas won the respect and ultimately acceptance by general population, to which subject an entire section has been devoted. Among other, you will find among them abolitionists, freethinkers. suffragists, civil & human rights activists, environmentalists and conservationists, climate change activists, philanthropists, inventors and even futurists or futurologists. Their innovative ideas, inevitably, led to the rise of the plethora of Czech and Slovak American leaders, encompassing, practically, every aspect of human endeavor. As stated in the Foreword, this reference will serve as a powerful research tool for many years to come for scholars and all Czechs and Slovaks on both sides of the Atlantic.

against history against leviathan: *Future Primitive Revisited* John Zerzan, 2012-05-15 *Future Primitive* is Zerzan's iconic and long out-of-print work. The new version has many new articles.

against history against leviathan: *Black Flags and Windmills* scott crow, 2014-08-01 When both levees and governments failed in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, the anarchist-inspired Common Ground Collective was created to fill the void. With the motto of "Solidarity Not Charity," they worked to create power from below—building autonomous projects, programs, and spaces of self-sufficiency like health clinics and neighborhood assemblies, while also supporting communities defending themselves from white militias and police brutality, illegal home demolitions, and evictions. *Black Flags and Windmills*—equal parts memoir, history, and organizing philosophy—vividly intertwines Common Ground cofounder scott crow's experiences and ideas with Katrina's reality, illustrating how people can build local grassroots power for collective liberation. It is a story of resisting indifference, rebuilding hope amid collapse, and struggling against the grain to create better worlds. The expanded second edition includes up-to-date interviews and discussions between crow and some of today's most articulate and influential activists and organizers on topics ranging from grassroots disaster relief efforts (both economic and environmental); dealing with infiltration, interrogation, and surveillance from the State; and a new photo section that vividly portrays scott's experiences as an anarchist, activist, and movement organizer in today's world.

against history against leviathan: *A People's History of Civilization* John Zerzan, 2018-04-10 The American anarchist, primitivist philosopher, and author John Zerzan critiques agriculture-based civilization as inherently oppressive and advocates drawing upon the life of hunter-gatherers as an inspiration for what free society should look like. Subjects of his criticism include domestication, language, symbolic thought, and the concept of time. This book includes sixteen essays ranging from the beginning of civilization to today's general crisis. Zerzan provides a critical perspective about civilization. *A People's History of Civilization* includes chapters about: Patriarchy The City and its

Inmates War Enters the Picture The Bronze Age The Axial Age The Crisis of Late Antiquity Revolt and Heresy Modernity Takes Charge Who Killed Ned Ludd Cultural Luddism Industrialism and Resistance Decadence WWI Civilization's Pathological Endgame In recent years, John Zerzan, co-editor of Black and Green Review, has successfully toured Europe to speak from his primitivist perspective regarding contemporary civilization. Zerzan calls Eugene, Oregon

against history against leviathan: A Critical History of Modern English Jurisprudence

George Hugh Smith, 1893

against history against leviathan: Against the Imperial Judiciary Matthew J. Franck, 1996

Franck's reexamination of the place of natural law in the early Supreme Court is fresh, illuminating, and long overdue. His scholarship is incisive and profound; and the exegeses of early Supreme Court opinions are often brilliant. -- Robert L. Clinton, author of *Marbury v. Madison* and *Judicial Review*.

against history against leviathan: Cartographic Fictions Karen Lynnea Piper, 2002

Maps are stories as much about us as about the landscape. They reveal changing perceptions of the natural world, as well as conflicts over the acquisition of territories. *Cartographic Fictions* looks at maps in relation to journals, correspondence, advertisements, and novels by authors such as Joseph Conrad and Michael Ondaatje. In her innovative study, Karen Piper follows the history of cartography through three stages: the establishment of the prime meridian, the development of aerial photography, and the emergence of satellite and computer mapping. Piper follows the cartographer's impulse to leave the ground as the desire to escape the racialized or gendered subject. With the distance that the aerial view provided, maps could then be produced objectively, that is, devoid of problematic native interference. Piper attempts to bring back the dialogue of the native informant, demonstrating how maps have historically constructed or betrayed anxieties about race. The book also attempts to bring back key areas of contact to the map between explorer/native and masculine/feminine definitions of space.

against history against leviathan: History of the Jews: From the revolt against the Zendik,

511 C.E., to the capture of St. Jean d'Acre by the Mahometans, 1291 C.E Heinrich Graetz, 1894

against history against leviathan: Sino-Theology and the Philosophy of History Liu

Xiaofeng, 2015-03-20 Since his controversial *Delivering and Dallying* (published in 1988), Liu Xiaofeng has been considered the most influential among contemporary Chinese intellectuals interested in Christianity. Now for the first time this collection of Liu's essays, translated and commented by Prof. Leopold Leeb, enables the non-Chinese reader to get a comprehensive understanding of the ideas of this inspiring and erudite scholar. Liu Xiaofeng's *Sino-Theology and the Philosophy of History*, together with the other essays in this collection, provide a panoramic view of the situation of Christian studies in the Chinese context today. In his introduction, Leopold Leeb also presents several other scholars who have been of crucial importance in the dialogue between Chinese culture and Christianity in the last three decades.

against history against leviathan: *Elusive Margins* William Anselmi, Kosta Gouliamos, 1998

As the modern state enters the stage of its liquidation, it is apparent that public discussion regarding ethnoracial diversity dominates the social sphere. Diversity has become a myth ready for consumption in various cultural spaces: politics, literature, mass media, advertising, leisure activities. This book deals with the patterns of exclusion, falsehood, and disorder constructed systematically by power elites in order to obscure diversity and quash the autonomy of subordinated communities. William Anselmi and Kosta Gouliamos go beyond critical analysis by proposing a nomadic-transcultural federation to replace the existing model of a multicultural Leviathan; such a proposal and plan for action can stop citizens from becoming consumers of elusive margins.

against history against leviathan: Red Army Faction. Red Brigades, Angry Brigade. The

Spectacle of Terror in Post War Europe Gianfranco Sanguinetti, John Barker, Charity Scribner, Tom Wise, 2015-07-13 This collection brings together a spread of writers, revolutionaries and reprobates to offer up a variety of critical perspectives on key European armed struggle groups from the 1970's . Gianfranco Sanguinetti, founding member of the Italian Section of the Situationist International, writes in 'On Terrorism and the State', 1978 : Italian terrorism is the last enigma of

the society of the spectacle and only those who reason dialectically can solve it.... Today, all those who speak of social revolution without denouncing and combating the terrorist counter-revolution have a corpse in their mouths. Dave and Stuart Wise, (King Mob) look into the relationship between the Italian Communist Party, workers struggles post 68' and the roots of the Red Brigades, concluding of the latter: they added to the substitutionism of Lenin, who replaced the proletariat by the Party, by replacing the Party with the armed struggle. Prof. Charity Scribner (MIT), contributes *Buildings on Fire: The Situationist International and the Red Army Faction*, exploring how and why the SI and the RAF's differing definitions of autonomy produced divergent modes of resistance : Both the RAF and the Situationists drew from the arsenals of anarchism and Marxism. But whereas Debord critiqued the society of the spectacle...the leaders of the RAF became fodder for the media machine, leaving a legacy heavy on style, but light on political analysis. Tom Vague contributes fast paced, potted histories of the RAF and Angry Brigade, both strong on time line energy, both useful entry level introductions to the respective narratives. John Barker was sentenced to ten years at the Old Bailey in 1972 for his Angry Brigade activities (they framed a guilty man), and here he laments Tom Vague's fetishisation of the Angry Brigade and how comfortable he is with 'the situationist angle' while saying nothing about the analysis and theory that came out of the Italian movement from Potere Operaio onwards, which was more important to us. Barker's piece, dated from the late 1990's, goes on to give a brief, but uniquely frank first person perspective on the AB's activities, viewed through the prism of realism, maturity, and continued belief in the revolutionary potential of mass working class action over the clandestine, substitutionist activities of the few - a fitting end to this book.

against history against leviathan: An Intellectual History of Liberalism Pierre Manent, 2019-12-31 Highlighting the social tensions that confront the liberal tradition, Pierre Manent draws a portrait of what we, citizens of modern liberal democracies, have become. For Manent, a discussion of liberalism encompasses the foundations of modern society, its secularism, its individualism, and its conception of rights. The frequent incapacity of the morally neutral, democratic state to further social causes, he argues, derives from the liberal stance that political life does not serve a higher purpose. Through quick-moving, highly synthetic essays, he explores the development of liberal thinking in terms of a single theme: the decline of theological politics. The author traces the liberal stance to Machiavelli, who, in seeking to divorce everyday life from the pervasive influence of the Catholic church, separated politics from all notions of a cosmological order. What followed, as Manent demonstrates in his analyses of Locke, Hobbes, Rousseau, Guizot, and Constant, was the evolving concept of an individual with no goals outside the confines of the self and a state with no purpose but to prevent individuals from dominating one another. Weighing both the positive and negative effects of such a political arrangement, Manent raises important questions about the fundamental political issues of the day, among them the possibility of individual rights being reconciled with the necessary demands of political organization, and the desirability of a government system neutral about religion but not about public morals.

against history against leviathan: *The Sympathetic State* Michele Landis Dauber, 2013 Drawing on a variety of materials, including newspapers, legal briefs, political speeches, the art and literature of the time, and letters from thousands of ordinary Americans, Dauber shows that while this long history of government disaster relief has faded from our memory today, it was extremely well known to advocates for an expanded role for the national government in the 1930s, including the Social Security Act. Making this connection required framing the Great Depression as a disaster afflicting citizens though no fault of their own. Dauber argues that the disaster paradigm, though successful in defending the New Deal, would ultimately come back to haunt advocates for social welfare. By not making a more radical case for relief, proponents of the New Deal helped create the weak, uniquely American welfare state we have today - one torn between the desire to come to the aid of those suffering and the deeply rooted suspicion that those in need are responsible for their own deprivation.

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William Whewell, 1852

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