

walter cronkite political views

Walter Cronkite Political Views: Understanding the Man Behind the Eyewitness News

walter cronkite political views have long intrigued historians, journalists, and media enthusiasts alike. As one of the most trusted and influential broadcast journalists of the 20th century, Cronkite's opinions and perspectives carried immense weight during pivotal moments in American history. But what exactly were Walter Cronkite's political views, and how did they shape his reporting and public perception? Delving into his career, public statements, and the context of the times offers a nuanced picture of the legendary newsman's stance on politics.

The Trusted Voice of American Journalism

Before diving into Walter Cronkite's political views, it's essential to appreciate the unique role he played in American media. Known affectionately as "the most trusted man in America," Cronkite anchored the CBS Evening News from 1962 to 1981, a period marked by tumultuous events such as the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Watergate scandal. His calm, authoritative delivery and commitment to factual reporting earned him widespread respect across the political spectrum.

Objective Journalism and Political Neutrality

Despite often being perceived as a liberal icon, Cronkite was a staunch advocate for journalistic objectivity. He believed that the news should be presented fairly and without bias, allowing viewers to form their own opinions. This commitment to neutrality was a cornerstone of his reporting style, especially during the Cold War and other highly charged political moments.

However, being objective did not mean he was apolitical. Walter Cronkite's political views were reflected subtly in how he framed stories, the questions he asked, and occasionally, in his editorial decisions. The delicate balance between maintaining trust and expressing personal convictions is a hallmark of his legacy.

Walter Cronkite's Political Views in the Context of the Vietnam War

One of the most defining moments regarding Walter Cronkite's political views came during the Vietnam War. Known for his famously candid assessment of the conflict, Cronkite's 1968 broadcast following the Tet Offensive marked a turning point in public opinion.

The “Most Trusted Man in America” Speaks Out

In February 1968, after visiting Vietnam, Cronkite delivered a special report concluding that the war was “mired in stalemate” and that negotiations should be pursued. This was a departure from the prevailing government narrative of imminent victory. His statement is often credited with influencing President Lyndon B. Johnson’s decision not to seek re-election.

This moment highlights how Walter Cronkite’s political views, while not overtly partisan, were deeply informed by his sense of responsibility to truth and the public interest. His willingness to question authority publicly demonstrated a rare intersection of journalism and political influence.

Views on Civil Rights and Social Change

Beyond foreign policy, Walter Cronkite’s political views also encompassed domestic issues, particularly the Civil Rights Movement and social justice.

Support for Equality and Justice

Throughout the 1960s, Cronkite’s coverage of the Civil Rights Movement was marked by empathy and a clear understanding of the movement’s significance. While he refrained from explicitly endorsing political candidates or parties, his reporting often underscored the moral imperative of racial equality.

His broadcasts helped bring the struggles of African Americans into the living rooms of millions of Americans, fostering greater awareness and support for change. This empathetic approach aligned with a broader progressive outlook, though Cronkite maintained a professional distance from activist rhetoric.

Political Independence and Personal Beliefs

Walter Cronkite was known for his political independence, often resisting being pigeonholed into traditional partisan categories. His personal beliefs reflected a pragmatic approach to governance and policy.

Moderate and Principled

Cronkite identified as a moderate Democrat, but his views were often shaped by pragmatism rather than strict ideology. He valued honesty, transparency, and accountability above party loyalty. This principled stance sometimes led him to criticize figures from both political parties when their actions conflicted with these values.

Advocacy for Responsible Leadership

Throughout his career, Cronkite emphasized the need for responsible leadership and informed citizenry. He believed that democracy thrived when the electorate was well-informed by accurate and balanced news coverage. His criticism of misinformation and propaganda underscored his commitment to the integrity of both journalism and governance.

Walter Cronkite's Legacy and Impact on Political Journalism

Understanding Walter Cronkite's political views also means appreciating how those views shaped the evolution of political journalism in America.

The Role of the Journalist as a Public Trustee

Cronkite viewed journalism as a public trust, a means of holding power accountable and illuminating truth. His political views were inseparable from this mission. He showed that journalists could influence public discourse without abandoning objectivity, a model that continues to inspire reporters today.

Influence on Future Generations

Many contemporary journalists cite Cronkite as a benchmark for integrity and balanced reporting. His willingness to speak candidly on issues like the Vietnam War set a precedent for journalistic courage. In this way, Walter Cronkite's political views transcended personal opinion to shape the broader media landscape.

Exploring Walter Cronkite's Political Opinions: Key Takeaways

To summarize the complexity of Walter Cronkite's political views, here are some key insights:

- **Commitment to Objectivity:** Despite personal opinions, Cronkite prioritized unbiased reporting.
- **Pragmatic Moderation:** He favored moderate political views grounded in practicality and principle.
- **Empathy for Social Justice:** His coverage reflected support for civil rights and social change.

- **Influential Voice in Politics:** His public statements, especially on Vietnam, held significant sway.
- **Advocate for Credible Journalism:** Cronkite stressed the importance of truthful, responsible news.

Walter Cronkite's political views cannot be distilled into simple labels. They were reflective of a man deeply committed to truth, fairness, and the democratic process. His legacy reminds us that journalism and politics are intertwined, but with the right approach, reporters can maintain trust while fostering informed public discourse.

Frequently Asked Questions

What were Walter Cronkite's political views?

Walter Cronkite was known for his moderate and balanced political views, often emphasizing journalistic objectivity and factual reporting rather than partisan perspectives.

Did Walter Cronkite support any political party?

Walter Cronkite generally avoided openly supporting any political party, striving to maintain his credibility as a trusted and impartial news anchor.

How did Walter Cronkite's political views influence his journalism?

Cronkite's commitment to fairness and accuracy shaped his journalism, earning him the reputation of 'the most trusted man in America' and influencing public trust in news media.

Did Walter Cronkite express political opinions publicly?

While Cronkite mostly refrained from expressing personal political opinions on air, he did occasionally share his views in documentaries and interviews, especially on issues like the Vietnam War.

What was Walter Cronkite's stance on the Vietnam War?

Walter Cronkite famously expressed skepticism about the Vietnam War after the Tet Offensive in 1968, declaring that the war was a stalemate, which influenced public opinion and political discourse.

How did Walter Cronkite's political views evolve over his career?

Over his career, Cronkite's views evolved from cautious optimism about government policies to a more critical stance, especially regarding the Vietnam War and civil rights, reflecting his commitment to truthful reporting.

Additional Resources

Walter Cronkite Political Views: An In-Depth Exploration of the Trusted Newsman's Perspectives

walter cronkite political views have long fascinated historians, media analysts, and political commentators alike. Known as "the most trusted man in America," Cronkite's career as a broadcast journalist spanned critical decades of the 20th century, during which he covered pivotal events such as the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, and the Apollo moon landings. While his role demanded impartiality, his political views occasionally surfaced, influencing public discourse and, at times, shaping national sentiment. Understanding Walter Cronkite's political stance provides insight not only into his journalistic legacy but also into the broader dynamics of American media and politics during the Cold War era.

Walter Cronkite's Journalistic Philosophy and Political Neutrality

Walter Cronkite's reputation was built on a foundation of credibility and objectivity, traits essential to a news anchor on a national scale. His commitment to factual reporting and balanced coverage contributed significantly to the evolution of broadcast journalism. However, beneath this veneer of neutrality, Cronkite held personal political views that, while not overtly partisan, reflected a nuanced understanding of American political realities.

Cronkite's approach was rooted in the belief that journalists should serve as watchdogs of democracy. He famously declared that the press's responsibility was to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable," a phrase that underscored his dedication to holding power accountable. This ethos often placed him in complex positions, especially during contentious political moments when reporting facts intersected with moral judgments.

The Vietnam War and a Shift in Perspective

One of the most defining moments in Walter Cronkite's political engagement came with his coverage of the Vietnam War. Initially, like many Americans, Cronkite supported U.S. involvement as a countermeasure against communism. However, as the war dragged on and evidence of its futility mounted, his reporting began to reflect growing skepticism.

In 1968, after the Tet Offensive—a large-scale attack by North Vietnamese forces—Cronkite famously delivered a special broadcast in which he expressed doubt about the war's success. He stated that the conflict was a "stalemate" and suggested that negotiations might be the only viable resolution. This broadcast marked a pivotal shift, as Cronkite's authority lent significant weight to public skepticism about the war, influencing President Lyndon B. Johnson's own perception of the conflict.

This episode highlights the intersection of Cronkite's political views with his journalistic role: while maintaining factual integrity, he did not shy away from candid assessments that carried political implications. His stance was neither blindly pro-war nor strictly anti-war but reflected a pragmatic evaluation of the situation on the ground.

Views on Civil Rights and Social Change

Walter Cronkite's political views also encompassed social issues, particularly the Civil Rights Movement. Throughout the 1960s, Cronkite's news coverage gave considerable attention to the struggle for racial equality, reflecting both journalistic responsibility and personal conviction. He recognized the moral imperative of civil rights and often highlighted the injustices faced by African Americans.

Though not an activist in the traditional sense, Cronkite's platform helped bring civil rights issues into American living rooms, fostering greater awareness and empathy. His balanced yet empathetic reporting contributed to shifting public attitudes and underscored his belief in the media's role as a catalyst for social progress.

Walter Cronkite's Political Ideology: Moderate and Pragmatic

Analyzing Walter Cronkite's political views reveals a moderate, pragmatic ideology rather than rigid partisanship. He was often characterized as a centrist who valued democratic principles, transparency, and accountability over ideological purity. Cronkite's political stance was informed by a deep respect for American institutions and a cautious skepticism of unchecked governmental power.

Relationship with Presidents and Political Figures

Throughout his career, Cronkite maintained professional relationships with multiple U.S. presidents, including John F. Kennedy, Lyndon B. Johnson, and Richard Nixon. These interactions were marked by mutual respect but not uncritical support. Cronkite's political views allowed him to critique administrations when warranted, as seen with his reporting on the Vietnam War and the Watergate scandal.

His balanced approach earned him both praise and criticism. Some conservatives viewed him as too liberal or critical, while some on the left occasionally perceived him as establishment-friendly. Yet, his enduring credibility stemmed from his ability to transcend partisan divides and prioritize journalistic integrity.

Public Statements and Post-Retirement Reflections

After retiring from CBS Evening News in 1981, Walter Cronkite became more vocal about his political opinions. He expressed support for issues such as environmental protection and arms control, reflecting a progressive outlook on certain policy matters. Nonetheless, he remained wary of ideological extremism and emphasized the importance of informed public discourse.

Cronkite's reflections also included critiques of media sensationalism and the erosion of journalistic standards in later decades. He lamented the shift from rigorous investigative reporting toward entertainment-driven news, underscoring his lifelong commitment to substantive journalism.

Impact of Walter Cronkite's Political Views on Media and Society

The influence of Walter Cronkite's political views extended beyond his own broadcasts. His balanced yet candid approach set a benchmark for journalistic responsibility during politically charged times. Cronkite demonstrated how a trusted news anchor could navigate complex political landscapes without sacrificing integrity or succumbing to bias.

His reporting during the Vietnam War, for example, is often cited as a turning point in public opinion, illustrating the media's power to shape political discourse. This episode also sparked debates about the role of journalists: whether they should merely report facts or interpret events with moral clarity. Cronkite's example provided a nuanced middle ground, emphasizing honesty and transparency.

- **Pros of Cronkite's Approach:** Enhanced public trust, elevated journalistic standards, and informed citizenry.
- **Cons:** Occasional accusations of bias, challenges in maintaining complete neutrality, and the burden of influence on political outcomes.

Walter Cronkite's political views also influenced subsequent generations of journalists who sought to emulate his balance of professionalism and moral insight. His legacy continues to inform contemporary discussions on media ethics and the responsibilities of news organizations in democratic societies.

Comparisons with Contemporary Journalists

Compared to modern media figures, Walter Cronkite's political views and reporting style appear measured and restrained. Today's media landscape often features overt partisanship and sensationalism, contrasting sharply with Cronkite's calm, authoritative delivery and commitment to factual accuracy.

This comparison highlights changes in political communication and media consumption. While Cronkite operated in an era dominated by a few major networks with collective gatekeeping responsibilities, the proliferation of digital platforms has fragmented audiences and amplified polarized viewpoints. Understanding Cronkite's political views within this historical context underscores the challenges and opportunities facing journalism today.

Walter Cronkite's political views were inseparable from his identity as a journalist dedicated to truth and fairness. His moderate, pragmatic approach, combined with a willingness to confront uncomfortable realities, helped shape American political consciousness during pivotal moments. While he maintained a commitment to neutrality, his perspectives occasionally influenced public opinion and political decision-making, cementing his place as a central figure in 20th-century media and political history.

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walter cronkite political views: *Shocking Story* Rebecca A. Russell, David K. Carl, 2011-08-19 This story is true, with very minimal alterations. Some of the names have been changed for lack of permissive authority. Any names not changed by the author are either deceased or a party to the motivating factor of this writing. For many ill-spent years we've contemplated on gathering enough information along with the discipline necessary to put together the proper words and feelings into action. The following pages are not meant for the sole purpose of complacency. However, we do hope it will be both helpful and pleasurable for reading. The story has a span of 57 years, from 1954 to 2011. It gradually rolls the years by showing the worst of life to its earthly best. We have a desire to share our story with others in hopes that it might be a reference of rectifiable use in one's own life. Our heart goes out to all who are experiencing Life at its worst. But now, we know that things can always get better, We're living proof.

walter cronkite political views: *How American Politics Works* Richard J. Gelm, 2009-03-26 American politics is criticized and belittled by media critics and the public, yet the system is held out as a model for the world. The paradox of this simultaneous cynicism and adulation is rooted in the conflict between the human motives that drive politics. Crisply and clearly written with numerous historical examples, *How American Politics Works* explains the complex and sometimes confusing American political system in a vibrant and accessible light. Documented with recent and historical scholarship presented clearly in laymen's terms, *How American Politics Works* explores the multiple dimensions of politics and the source of Americans' disillusionment with their government through the "four Ps": Philosophy, Pragmatism, Personality and Profit. Philosophical and moral principles underpin the key political institutions in America, but values are challenged in the quest to achieve workable political solutions. Policy is rarely made to conform to lofty principles alone. It often results from short-term incremental compromise, driven by people in pursuit of the public good and their own personal self-interest and profit. *How American Politics Works* explains the inner workings of the American political system, including the power of ideas, political compromise, powerful personalities and the preeminent position of money. While Americans' high ideals are often illusive in the rough and tumble of political battles, and the public's trust is bruised with every political scandal, balancing idealism and individual virtue with ambition and self-interest is the dynamic and safeguard of American politics. *How American Politics Works* offers a comprehensive presentation of the realities, challenges and possibilities of the American political system to bring an understanding, fascination and dedication to the wider public.

walter cronkite political views: *Freedom Under Fire* Michael Linfield, 1990 The great wars we have fought for the sake of liberty have been accompanied, without exception, by the most draconian assaults on individual rights. This is the theme of Michael Linfield's *Freedom Under Fire*, and he

documents it with examples from every war since the American Revolution.--The Progressive Linfield demonstrates conclusively, starting with the American Revolution and coming right up to the invasion of Panama, that the Bill of Rights is set aside by the government again and again, for reasons of 'national security.' He performs an important service, reminding us that liberty cannot be entrusted to the Bill of Rights or to the three branches of government, but only can be safeguarded by our own vigilance.--Howard Zinn

walter cronkite political views: The Dynamics of Political Communication Richard M. Perloff, 2025-07-17 This fully updated fourth edition continues to provide comprehensive coverage of communication and politics, again focusing on the way politics and media impact democracy. The book explores the intersection between politics and communication, drawing from leading scholarship in communication, political science, and political psychology. It describes the nature of today's political media; political socialization; key media effects, such as agenda-setting and framing; myths, biases and facts in political news; political advertising and presidential debates. This edition includes new and expanded discussions of free speech and misinformation on social media, presidential rhetoric, the 2022 and 2024 election campaigns and the January 6th investigation narrative. It also examines international examples such as the Ukraine War, populism in Hungary and Turkey, Russian propaganda, and TikTok. The book is ideally suited for upper-level undergraduate and graduate political communication courses in communication, journalism, and political science programs. This edition again features online resources with links to relevant news articles, videos, or other online materials. For instructors, an instructor's manual, including sample syllabi, chapter outlines, sample discussion questions, sample test questions, and lecture slides are also provided. Access the support materials at www.routledge.com/9781032613130.

walter cronkite political views: Fixing Congress Michael S. Johnson, Jerome F. Climer, 2024-03-19 A preponderance of evidence indicates the public is very unhappy with the US Congress. Fixing Congress is a behind-the-scenes look at how Congress really functions and why it doesn't. This powerful resource educates and empowers engaged citizens who want to participate more fully in the process of self-government and regain more control over it. Beginning with a closer look at members of Congress and their staff, as well as the structure, procedures, and culture, this groundwork gives citizens a greater understanding of Congress and the tools they need to make it better. It recounts the history of the institution, the intent of the Founding Fathers and the historical currents that have driven the country to its state of gridlocked government and suffocating polarization. With the context set, Fixing Congress delves into special interest clout, questionable campaign financing, campaign abuses, partisan congressional district maps, ideological and partisan extremism, the role of parties, the overwhelming influence of the media, and the multitude of forces that make the average voter feel like a tiny cog in the gigantic wheel of governance. This prolific resource provides numerous solutions that citizens can advocate in their communities and with their members of Congress. The final chapters propose reforms, strategies, and tactics to restore Congress to its intended purpose as a representative body. These proposals include redefining the distinctions between the Senate and House, reducing the size of congressional districts, limiting outside campaign financing, and urging the media to report objectively and with balance. Is it possible to make Congress more productive, more accessible, and more answerable to the people? Yes. Fixing Congress is an essential part of the solution.

walter cronkite political views: The Feeling Economy Roland T. Rust, Ming-Hui Huang, 2021-01-19 As machines are trained to "think," many tasks that previously required human intelligence are becoming automated through artificial intelligence. However, it is more difficult to automate emotional intelligence, and this is where the human worker's competitive advantage over machines currently lies. This book explores the impact of AI on everyday life, looking into workers' adaptation to these changes, the ways in which managers can change the nature of jobs in light of AI developments, and the potential for humans and AI to continue working together. The book argues that AI is rapidly assuming a larger share of thinking tasks, leaving human intelligence to focus on feeling. The result is the "Feeling Economy," in which both employees and consumers emphasize

feeling to an unprecedented extent, with thinking tasks largely delegated to AI. The book shows both theoretical and empirical evidence that this shift is well underway. Further, it explores the effect of the Feeling Economy on our everyday lives in the areas such as shopping, politics, and education. Specifically, it argues that in this new economy, through empathy and people skills, women may gain an unprecedented degree of power and influence. This book will appeal to readers across disciplines interested in understanding the impact of AI on business and our daily lives. It represents a bold, potentially controversial attempt to gauge the direction in which society is heading.

walter cronkite political views: Making Sense of Media and Politics Gadi Wolfsfeld, 2011-06-23 Politics is above all a contest, and the news media are the central arena for viewing that competition. One of the central concerns of political communication has to do with the myriad ways in which politics has an impact on the news media and the equally diverse ways in which the media influences politics. Both of these aspects in turn weigh heavily on the effects such political communication has on mass citizens. In *Making Sense of Media and Politics*, Gadi Wolfsfeld introduces readers to the most important concepts that serve as a framework for examining the interrelationship of media and politics: political power can usually be translated into power over the news media when authorities lose control over the political environment they also lose control over the news there is no such thing as objective journalism (nor can there be) the media are dedicated more than anything else to telling a good story the most important effects of the news media on citizens tend to be unintentional and unnoticed. By identifying these five key principles of political communication, the author examines those who package and send political messages, those who transform political messages into news, and the effect all this has on citizens. The result is a brief, engaging guide to help make sense of the wider world of media and politics and an essential companion to more in-depths studies of the field.

walter cronkite political views: *The Main Enterprise of the World* Philip Kitcher, 2022 Introduction -- Part 1. Overload -- Individuality -- Fulfillment -- Citizens -- Moral Development -- A Role for Religion? -- Part 2. The Natural Sciences -- The Arts -- Understanding Ourselves -- Part 3. Social Change -- Utopia?

walter cronkite political views: *Political Communication* Richard M. Perloff, 2013-10-18 In this political communication text, Richard M. Perloff examines the various ways in which messages are constructed and communicated from public officials and politicians through the mass media to the ultimate receivers-the people. With a focus on the history of political communication, he provides an overview of the most significant issues in the study of politics and the media. In addition to synthesizing facts and theories, and highlighting the scholarly contributions made to the understanding of political communication effects, *Political Communication* addresses such factors as the rhetorical accomplishments of American presidents, the ongoing tangles between the press and the presidency, and the historical roots of politics as it is practiced and studied today. It also addresses major issues about the press and politics that continually resurface, such as question of press bias and the use and manipulation of media by politicians to accomplish national goals. As a comprehensive and engaging introduction to contemporary political communication, this volume provides all readers with a historical perspective on American politics and press and offers a unique appreciation of the strengths and virtues of political communication in America.

walter cronkite political views: *Billy Graham and the Rise of the Republican South* Steven P. Miller, 2011-08-23 While spreading the gospel around the world through his signature crusades, internationally renowned evangelist Billy Graham maintained a visible and controversial presence in his native South, a region that underwent substantial political and economic change in the latter half of the twentieth century. In this period Graham was alternately a desegregating crusader in Alabama, Sunbelt booster in Atlanta, regional apologist in the national press, and southern strategist in the Nixon administration. *Billy Graham and the Rise of the Republican South* considers the critical but underappreciated role of the noted evangelist in the creation of the modern American South. The region experienced two significant related shifts away from its status as what observers and critics called the Solid South: the end of legalized Jim Crow and the end of Democratic Party dominance.

Author Steven P. Miller treats Graham as a serious actor and a powerful symbol in this transition—an evangelist first and foremost, but also a profoundly political figure. In his roles as the nation's most visible evangelist, adviser to political leaders, and a regional spokesperson, Graham influenced many of the developments that drove celebrants and detractors alike to place the South at the vanguard of political, religious, and cultural trends. He forged a path on which white southern moderates could retreat from Jim Crow, while his evangelical critique of white supremacy portended the emergence of color blind rhetoric within mainstream conservatism. Through his involvement in the Eisenhower and Nixon administrations, as well as his deep social ties in the South, the evangelist influenced the decades-long process of political realignment. Graham's public life sheds new light on recent southern history in all of its ambiguities, and his social and political ethics complicate conventional understandings of evangelical Christianity in postwar America. Miller's book seeks to reintroduce a familiar figure to the narrative of southern history and, in the process, examine the political and social transitions constitutive of the modern South.

walter cronkite political views: *Against the Corporate Media* Michael Walsh, 2024-09-10 The citizens of Western democracies have been relentlessly propagandized, lied to, and fed a steady diet of distortions and untruths by their media for decades. Editor Michael Walsh brings together a stellar collection of critical thinkers and writers to explain how and why this is happening, its negative effects on our democracies, and what we can do to reverse it. An informed electorate is a prerequisite for free and fair elections. But rather than striving for accuracy and objectivity, today's journalists openly celebrate the death of objectivity, arguing that they have a "higher duty" to reject the conservatism, police speech, and suppress news that contradicts the liberal narrative. Now, on the heels of his magisterial volume *Against the Great Reset*, editor Michael Walsh presents *Against the Corporate Media*, a collection of more than forty essays on the decline and fall of the American and international news media. The book's list of distinguished contributors includes Lance Morrow, Andrew Klavan, John O'Sullivan, Elizabeth Nickson, Monica Crowley, Charlie Kirk, Glenn Reynolds, Steven F. Hayward, John Fund, Armond White, Michael Ramirez, Walsh, and others. Readers around the world deserve to know how badly their media has been corrupted, how eagerly they have embraced the role of official propagandists, and what a threat to democracy they have become. This book marks an important strike against the corporate media, and its unholy alliance with the enemies of freedom everywhere.

walter cronkite political views: *Civility in Politics and Education* Deborah Mower, Wade L. Robison, 2013-03-01 This book examines the concept of civility and the conditions of civil disagreement in politics and education. Although many assume that civility is merely polite behavior, it functions to aid rational discourse. Building on this basic assumption, the book offers multiple accounts of civility and its contribution to citizenship, deliberative democracy, and education from Eastern and Western as well as classic and modern perspectives. Given that civility is essential to all aspects of public life, it is important to address how civility may be taught. While much of the book is theoretical, contributors also apply theory to practice, offering concrete methods for teaching civility at the high school and collegiate levels.

walter cronkite political views: *Beyond Polarized American Democracy* Michael Haas, 2023-08-11 Civil war in the United States is now a mainstream topic due to apparent signs of ongoing planning. This book reveals why in several ways. First, four major ideological drivers of possible conflict are identified. Next, ten arenas of ongoing nonviolent civil war are traced as increasingly for micro-level violence. Then several dozen alternative scenarios are traced to explain how civil war could break out very soon. Finally, measures are delineated about how the country might prevent calamity. Anarchists, Christian Nationalists, Libertarians, and Triumphalists are determined to impose their views on the diverse nation and reduce opponents to second-class status. They demonstrate their blatant determination through nonviolent political contests involving conspiracy theories, cultural differences, verbal contestation, anti-elitism, racism, well-armed groups with nationwide membership, political demonization, media disinformation, Congressional hyperpartisanship, reducing constitutional rights, and legal fights by some states against others. But

often they go beyond and commit violence out of sheer enjoyment in making opponents suffer. *Beyond Polarized American Democracy: From Mass Society to Coups and Civil War* suggests remedies for each of ten types of nonviolent civil war, but most are long-term solutions that cannot deal with an imminent threat. Accordingly, the book reviews governmental and military resources as well as efforts to counteract the ideological contest through political innovations. The analysis flows from the sociological Mass Society Paradigm, which argues that democracy's survival depends upon the ability of civil society to relay the needs of the people to institutions of government and provide effective pressure for corrective action. As developed to explain the rise of Nazism in Germany, the analysis applies lessons from studies of coups and civil wars to identify how to prevent the loss of democracy in the United States.

walter cronkite political views: Why Americans Hate the Media and How It Matters

Jonathan M. Ladd, 2011-12-05 As recently as the early 1970s, the news media was one of the most respected institutions in the United States. Yet by the 1990s, this trust had all but evaporated. Why has confidence in the press declined so dramatically over the past 40 years? And has this change shaped the public's political behavior? This book examines waning public trust in the institutional news media within the context of the American political system and looks at how this lack of confidence has altered the ways people acquire political information and form electoral preferences. Jonathan Ladd argues that in the 1950s, '60s, and early '70s, competition in American party politics and the media industry reached historic lows. When competition later intensified in both of these realms, the public's distrust of the institutional media grew, leading the public to resist the mainstream press's information about policy outcomes and turn toward alternative partisan media outlets. As a result, public beliefs and voting behavior are now increasingly shaped by partisan predispositions. Ladd contends that it is not realistic or desirable to suppress party and media competition to the levels of the mid-twentieth century; rather, in the contemporary media environment, new ways to augment the public's knowledgeability and responsiveness must be explored. Drawing on historical evidence, experiments, and public opinion surveys, this book shows that in a world of endless news sources, citizens' trust in institutional media is more important than ever before.

walter cronkite political views: The Unwinding George Packer, 2013-06-10 America is in crisis. In the space of a generation, it has become more than ever a country of winners and losers, as industries have failed, institutions have disappeared and the country's focus has shifted to idolise celebrity and wealth. George Packer narrates the story of America over the past three decades, bringing to the task his empathy with people facing difficult challenges, his sharp eye for detail and a gift for weaving together engaging narratives. *The Unwinding* moves deftly back and forth through the lives of its people, including Dean Price, the son of tobacco farmers who becomes an evangelist for a new economy in the rural South; Tammy Thomas, a factory worker in the industrial Midwest attempting to survive the collapse of her city; Jeff Connaughton, a political careerist in Washington; and Peter Thiel, a Silicon Valley billionaire. Their stories are interspersed with biographical sketches of the era's leading public figures, from Oprah Winfrey to Steve Jobs, to create a rich, wise and very human portrait of the USA in these hard times. *The Unwinding* portrays a superpower coming apart at the seams, its elites and institutions no longer working, leaving ordinary people to improvise their own schemes for salvation. George Packer is also the author of *The Assassin's Gate*, which was named one of the ten best books of 2005 by the New York Times and won the Helen Bernstein Book Award. 'A tour de force . . . A fascinating journey through an America that has largely remained hidden from view. There are echoes of Don DeLillo's *Underworld* in the scope of Packer's vision and his deft eye for language and detail.' Sunday Business Post

walter cronkite political views: Two Suns of the Southwest Nancy Beck Young, 2022-11-15 Over time the presidential election of 1964 has come to be seen as a generational shift, a defining moment in which Americans deliberated between two distinctly different visions for the future. In its juxtaposition of these divergent visions, *Two Suns of the Southwest* is the first full account of this critical election and its legacy for US politics. The 1964 election, in Nancy Beck Young's telling, was

a contest between two men of the Southwest, each with a very different idea of what the Southwest was and what America should be. Barry Goldwater, the Republican senator from Arizona, came to represent a nostalgic, idealized past, a preservation of traditional order, while Lyndon B. Johnson, the Democratic incumbent from Texas, looked boldly and hopefully toward an expansive, liberal future of increased opportunity. Thus, as we see in *Two Suns of the Southwest*, the election was also a showdown between liberalism and conservatism, an election whose outcome would echo throughout the rest of the century. Young explores how demographics, namely the rise of the Sunbelt, factored into the framing and reception of these competing ideas. Her work situates Johnson's Sunbelt liberalism as universalist, designed to create space for all Americans; Goldwater's Sunbelt conservatism was far more restrictive, at least with regard to what the federal government should do. In this respect the election became a debate about individual rights versus legislated equality as priorities of the federal government. Young explores all the cultural and political elements and events that figured in this narrative, allowing Johnson to unite disaffected Republicans with independents and Democrats in a winning coalition. On a final note Young connects the 1964 election to the current state of our democracy, explaining the irony whereby the winning candidate's vision has grown stale while the losing candidate's has become much more central to American politics.

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