



Answering Back: Liberal Responses to Conservative Arguments

David Coates

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An essential toolkit for all progressives- helping them to respond to the current sustained right-wing criticism of US domestic and foreign policy

"The game is begun," Rush Limbaugh said, the day after Barack Obama won the presidency; and he was right. The clash of views on US domestic and foreign policy is, if anything, even more intense now than it was before the change of leadership in Washington. Right-wing media figures and Republican politicians regularly regale us with conservative criticisms of the realignment of policy and politics now underway. Even more than in 2008, now is the time for liberals to *answer back*, to counter those criticisms by both recognizing their content and locating their weaknesses. In the great clash of parties and philosophies that will shape the next American century, an informed citizenry will require more accurate information, ideas, and arguments than right-wing radio characteristically provides, and the market is wide open for a book that engages with both the worst and the best of the Republican case. *Answering Back* is that book.

Answering Back intends to lift the quality of political discourse in the United States by bringing together the best conservative and the best liberal arguments on the eight key policy issues now in contention between the parties: trickledown economics and the role of public spending, the desirability of welfare reform, the future of social security, the establishment of health care for all, the possibility of comprehensive immigration control, religious issues and the social agenda, the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the causes of the financial meltdown.

Each chapter begins with a brief introduction, followed by conservative views and a point-by-point progressive response. Each stage of each argument is labeled for easy memorization, and the language used is deliberately jargon free, to make the material as accessible as possible. The sources of both conservative and progressive arguments (and their supporting evidence) are cited to open the door to further research.

Answering Back is a completely revised and expanded version of *A Liberal Toolkit*, initially published by Praeger in 2007. This new version is a handbook of arguments, data, and sources that present today's key policy debates in an even-handed and accessible manner. This will be an essential tool for anyone interested in policy reform, party politics, and American politics. It is written in a manner that is, at one and the same time, scholarly, useful, accessible, and fun!

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