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Rethinking the Progressive Agenda: The Reform of the American Regulatory State. Susan Rose-Ackerman.

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Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright (Eds). *Contemporary Political Ideologies*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993. \$48.50 hardcover, \$16.95.

This is not the first book to attempt an encyclopedic classification of the major ideologies of Western political thought but it is probably the best. The editors not only offer a comprehensive overview of key Western ideologies such as liberalism, conservatism, democratic socialism and Marxism but discussed ideologies that are usually neglected in the literature. These include three ideologies that are particularly topical today, namely feminism, nationalism and ecologism.

One of the editors, Roger Eatwell has written an excellent introductory chapter that summarizes the definition and theory of ideology. This chapter is informative, well written and particularly helpful to those who require an introductory exposition rather than intricate analysis of this complex field. The chapters on the various ideologies follow a standard pattern and are all highly readable and enlightening. This book is highly recommended for anyone interested in knowing more about the role of ideology in shaping attitudes and events in modern societies.

Susan Rose-Ackerman. *Rethinking the Progressive Agenda: The Reform of the American Regulatory State*. New York: Free Press, 1993. \$24.95 hardcover.

From the end of the nineteenth century, the progressive movement has advocated a positive role for government in regulating capitalism, intervening to meet human needs through the provision of public social services, and protecting the population against the negative effects of industrialization. State interventionism became increasingly common during the 20th century, and was only significantly challenged during the 1980s when the doctrines of the Chicago School of law and economics were embraced by the Reagan administration. The Chicago School advocated a massive withdrawal of the state from civil society and believed that the market, if permitted to operate independently of statutory constraint, would of itself promote the general welfare.

Rose-Ackerman points out that while the Reagan era did not result in the abolition of state interventionism, it severely undermined confidence in progressivism. Progressives were thrown into disarray by the Reagan offensive, and have not been able to offer a credible alternative. There is an urgent need for a new progressive agenda which abandons old, unpopular doctrines and boldly advocates new forms of intervention that protect society and enhance people's welfare.

Rose-Ackerman attempts to provide guidelines for a progressive agenda of this kind. Her book is an important one and like other works in this genre, such as *Reinventing Government* and *Reconstructing the American Welfare State*, her prescriptions are highly compatible with the Clinton administration's conservative centrism. A devotee of the methodology of public choice, she believes that the radical regulation of political and bureaucratic decisions offers helpful prospects for the future. The chapters on 'proxy shopping' in the social services should be read by all who want to know how the advocacy of social service vouchers may evolve in the future. While traditional progressives will not be enthralled by Rose-Ackerman's prescriptions, her book is essential reading for those who want to understand the new 'progressivism' and follow its potential adoption in the circles of power.