Strangers in Their Own Land

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF ARLIE RUSSELL HOCHSCHILD

Since 1971, eminent feminist sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild has been on the faculty at the University of California, Berkeley, where she also earned her PhD and is now professor emerita. Hochschild's father was the United States ambassador to Ghana, Tunisia, and New Zealand, and she grew up in a house where, as she puts it in her essay collection *The Commercialization of Intimate Life*, "my mother was the sad caretaker and my father the happy non-caretaker." She writes in the preface to *Strangers in Their Own Land* that traveling with her father made her feel that her role was to "reach out" to people from vastly different cultural backgrounds, and that that experience was an important foundation for this book. Her household's traditional but unsatisfying gender roles drove her research to focus largely on changing family dynamics, and her pioneering approach to the study of those dynamics' emotional consequences has led many to consider her a founder of the "sociology of emotion." In her 1983 book *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*, Hochschild famously developed the concept of "emotional labor," meaning work that revolves around people's expression and regulation of emotions—her examples in the book were flight attendants and bill collectors. But her most influential book, and the one that thrust her into the public spotlight, was her next, *The Second Shift: Working Parents and the Revolution at Home*, in which she argued that working mothers end up caught between "traditional" and "egalitarian" roles, taking on a double burden of labor and doing the majority of domestic work. She has also written *The Time Bind*, which explored working parents' attempts to balance family time and company time; *The Outsourced Self*, which investigated places where one person's love is another person's commodity—surrogate mothers, nannies, and dating coaches, among others; and two books of essays (one edited, one original). Hochschild's work is distinguished by its intensive interview method, emphasis on the emotional effects of changing labor and family structures, and its careful critique of second-wave feminism's unintended consequences. In addition to her academic work, she continues to direct the Center for Working Families in Berkeley.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The rise of the Tea Party since 2009 is the most influential historical development for the people Hochschild meets. The Tea Party's growth was largely a response to disaffection with President Obama, who was seen as threatening Christian morality and trying to expand the federal government to help minorities and recipients of government assistance "cut" white workers in line for the American Dream. Hochschild dedicates Chapter 14 to the Tea Party's historical antecedents: namely, the Southern responses to the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement. Both were seen as unjustified Northern moralistic intervention—the Civil War destroyed the South's economy and poor whites' aspirations to become rich planters, and the Civil Rights Movement in particular (along with other marginalized groups' struggles for equality in the 1960s and 1970s) again painted blue-collar white Southern conservatives as the backwards enemies of progress, destroying the sense of cultural honor that Hochschild says the Tea Party is fighting to restore. In particular, the backlash to 1960s cultural discourse was a central reason Louisiana flipped from a centrist Democratic state to a conservative Republican one over the following half-century. And, of course, the oil industry's growth and alliance with Louisiana's government are key components of the state's increasing environmental desperation.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Strangers in Their Own Land is indebted to earlier academic investigations of populist sentiment and everyday working-class experience in the United States. Thomas Frank's widely popular 2004 book *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* surveyed the factors that turned Kansas from liberal to conservative populism. Barbara Ehrenreich, a friend and sometime coauthor of Hochschild's, is best known for her 1996 book *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*, for which she went "undercover" in low-wage work to demonstrate the human cost of poverty and economic precarity in the United States. Stud Terkel's numerous collections of oral histories—most famously, *Working*—were also an early landmark in this genre, compiling the stories of everyday Americans to offer a rich portrait of what it feels to live their lives. Conversely, Kathleen Stewart's *A Space on the Side of the Road: Cultural Poetics in an "Other" America* offers a much more academic and theoretically complex look at the way people in coal-mining West Virginia think about their environmentally devastated, working-class, conservative place's "otherness" to the American mainstream. J. D. Vance recently published the popular bestseller *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis* about growing up in this same Appalachian region. Furthermore, journalist Bill Bishop's *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing Us Apart* was one of the first books to investigate the increasing political polarization in the 21st century United States as American communities become increasingly homogeneous, and political scientist James Campbell published

Polarized: Making Sense of a Divided America addresses polarization from a more historical and statistical perspective. Peggy Frankland, the East Texas environmental activist Hochschild mentions in Chapter Two, has written a history of *Women Pioneers of the Louisiana Environmental Movement*.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right*
- **When Written:** 2011-2016, 2018 (afterword)
- **Where Written:** Louisiana and Berkeley, CA
- **When Published:** 2016 (1st ed.), 2018 (2nd ed.)
- **Literary Period:** Contemporary Sociology
- **Genre:** American Sociology
- **Setting:** South and Southwest Louisiana (especially Lake Charles).
- **Antagonist:** Empathy Walls
- **Point of View:** First-person

EXTRA CREDIT

I-10 Bridge Repairs. The dangerous I-10 bridge over the Calcasieu River in Lake Charles, which Mike Tritico and Donny McCorquodale argue about in Chapter 12, is finally undergoing repairs. As of March 2018, the state government is deciding whether to build a new bridge or try to repair the existing one, which risks spreading the ethylene dichloride contamination that is threatening the current bridge's foundations.

PLOT SUMMARY

Arlie Russell Hochschild, a renowned progressive sociologist who teaches at the University of California, Berkeley, wrote this book in an attempt to understand the emotional underpinnings of right-wing politics in the United States. As political party affiliation has become the central dividing line in American society, Hochschild noticed that most liberal political analyses focus on people's economic and political self-interest instead of the emotions that she argues fundamentally drive political behavior. Conventional analyses often conclude that conservatives' behavior is contradictory, since red states have worse economic, health, environmental, and educational outcomes than blue states, and yet red state residents nevertheless tend to vote against public programs that would improve their quality of life (Hochschild calls this the Great Paradox).

In contrast, her research focuses on understanding the "deep story" that captures how conservatives feel about themselves, their place in contemporary American society, and their relationships with other groups. She aims both to write a version of this story and to demonstrate how empathy for those from the other party can help heal the American political divide. In order to do this, Hochschild spent five years interviewing predominantly older, white, middle- and working-class, Christian conservatives in an area of southwest Louisiana centered on the city of Lake Charles. She focused on environmental pollution as a "keyhole issue" through which to gain a broader understanding of the Great Paradox and discovered that, while white Louisianans' overwhelming opposition to government regulation seems paradoxical from the standpoint of political self-interest, it is perfectly logical given the "deep story" of how they envision their honor, their dwindling opportunities in contemporary America, and the displacement of the traditional Southern endurance self by the liberal cosmopolitan concept of the self that increasingly dominates American culture.

In the first section of her book, Hochschild seeks to explain the Great Paradox by introducing some Louisianans who exemplify it. She meets Mike Schaff, a former oil industry worker whose entire town had to evacuate after a drilling accident created a huge **sinkhole** in the bayou. Although environmental regulations could have prevented the accident, Schaff opposes them—like many Tea Party voters, he wants to drastically cut the federal Environmental Protection Administration. Hochschild sees Mike's attitude as a prime example of the Great Paradox and finds herself unable to understand why he rejects policies that would have saved his home; she believes that an "empathy wall" stands in the way of their mutual understanding but hopes that, over the course of her research, she can learn to overcome such walls.

In the next chapter, she meets Lee Sherman, who used to fit and repair pipes that transported lethal hydrocarbons for the petrochemical company Pittsburgh Plate Glass (PPG). PPG had little regard for safety and asked Lee to secretly dump toxic waste at night in the bayou before unceremoniously firing him when he got sick. Like Mike, Lee still rejects environmental regulation, which he sees as a dangerous form of governmental overstretch. Hochschild then profiles one of the families affected by PPG's dumping: Harold and Annette Areno, who live on the Bayou d'Inde downstream from the spot where Lee dumped PPG's toxic waste. Harold grew up just across the bayou, where his family had farmed the land and raised livestock for generations. But, after the illegal dumping, everything in the bayou suddenly started dying off and almost everyone in the Areno family got cancer. While they do favor environmental protections, the Arenos do not trust Democrats and instead vote Republican based on their deep faith in the Bible, even though they know that Republicans will probably do nothing to address their predicament.

Hochschild then investigates the political norms that have helped make Louisiana the heart of the Great Paradox. She follows a campaign between two pro-oil Republicans who see

economic growth as incompatible with government regulations before meeting gubernatorial candidate, environmental activist, and Army General Russel Honoré, who suggests that these Republicans help enforce a "psychological program" that encourages Louisianans to see a forced choice between their jobs and their environment. As a result, Hochschild asks Dr. Paul Templet, a local scientist and former regulator, about oil's true role in the Louisiana economy. He argues that the industry has done little to nothing for the state: Governor Bobby Jindal eviscerated Louisiana's public sector in an attempt to cover a tax break for oil companies, but most oil jobs are either automated or filled by out-of-state workers, and a MIT study actually found a correlation between *stronger* regulations and economic growth.

Part Two of Hochschild's book examines the "social terrain" that structures southwest Louisiana's distinctive culture. First, she examines the oil industry's hold over the town of Westlake by interviewing its loyal mayor, Bob Hardey. While Hardey is thrilled that South African petrochemical company Sasol plans to build an enormous complex in his town, Westlake actually does not stand to gain from the construction. Next, Hochschild returns to Mike Schaff's story with an eye to the structure of regulation in Louisiana. Irresponsible practices by a drilling company called Texas Brine led to a sinkhole swallowing much of Bayou Corne. Louisiana's culture of weak regulation contributed to the catastrophe, and Mike justifiably hates the regulators whom he sees as parasitic on hardworking citizens' tax dollars.

Next, Hochschild looks at the church and media's role in Louisianans' political beliefs. Nearly everyone she meets regularly attends church and watches Fox News. Hochschild sees that, in Louisiana, churches perform many of the functions that the public sector fills in blue states, but in the face of hardship they often emphasize endurance and faith over action. Many Louisianans see Fox News as a familiar source of moral guidance, and Hochschild notices how it channels her acquaintances' anxieties and defends their values against a growing liberal consensus that seems to look down on them. Conversely, Louisianans seldom read or watch media that covers environmental pollution, which might contribute to their general silence on the issue. Because social institutions in Louisiana contribute to a culture of inaction about pollution, Hochschild concludes, citizens have little to gain by thinking or talking about it.

The third part of *Strangers in Their Own Land* focuses on Louisianans' deep story and the conflict between Louisianans' "endurance self" and the liberal "cosmopolitan self." Hochschild paints a portrait of this deep story: imagine **waiting patiently in line for the American Dream**, working hard for the promise of upward economic mobility, and discovering that other people—women, black and Latino Americans, immigrants and refugees, LGBT people, and government workers who live off others' tax dollars—are being allowed to cut in line. Tea Party voters feel that affirmative action and welfare programs violate a basic principle of fairness. Hochschild sees the rise of identity politics since the 1960s, media stereotypes that portray African-Americans as either rich celebrities or ungrateful welfare recipients, and white Southerners' declining economic opportunities as important contributors to this deep story. Hochschild argues that they see themselves as "makers" fighting the "takers"—whereas the left sees a class conflict between the ultra-rich 1% and the 99% whose incomes are increasingly precarious, the right sees deserving middle-class whites fighting with undeserving poor minorities over limited resources. As a result, many on the right look up to the ultra-rich as role models.

Hochschild's sees this worldview as grounded in the distinctive "endurance self" that Southern conservatives maintain against the growing power of the liberal "cosmopolitan self" that values diversity and inclusion. She looks at three expressions of the "endurance self": the Team Loyalist, the Worshipper, and the Cowboy. First, she explores the Team Loyalist, exemplified by staunch Republican Janice Areno, who has dedicated her life to supporting her extended family and defends her Party at any cost—including the cost of pollution, which she thinks is worth the economic benefits of oil and petrochemicals. Then, Hochschild looks at the Worshipper, exemplified by Jackie Tabor, who grew up in a poor and abusive family but learned to survive after realizing that she would get what she deserved by renouncing her desires and letting God take over. In adulthood, she has decided to subordinate her wishes to those of her husband, which she believes is necessary in a proper Christian marriage. Finally, Hochschild looks at a recurring dinner party debate between local marine biologist Mike Tritico and his lifelong friend Donny McCorquodale, who is a Cowboy: Donny always chose dangerous jobs and sees a willingness to endure risk as the sign of honor. In fact, he hates environmentalists and regulators because they try to tell people which risks are worth taking. Hochschild then shows how Mike Schaff's combination of Tea Party politics and environmental activism is grounded in an endurance self that mixes the Team Loyalist, Worshipper, and Cowboy.

In her final three chapters, Hochschild looks at the national trends that have contributed to the rise of Tea Party conservatism in the South. She suggests that the history of Northern moral intervention in the South—particularly during the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movements—leads Southern whites to view the rise of the cosmopolitan self as yet another moral intrusion on their way of life. As they lost moral standing in the eyes of the rest of the country, Southern whites tried to reclaim their sense of honor by reinvesting in the endurance selves that they found threatened.

Hochschild then recounts the rise of Donald Trump, who launched his candidacy in her fifth and final year of research

and was widely loved by her subjects. She argues that Trump's persuasive style—which focuses on emotion instead of argument—uniquely appealed to a population of white conservatives who felt left behind and smothered by liberal "politically correct" feeling rules. She demonstrates that Trump appealed to people's emotional self-interest and suggests that this is the true explanation for voting behavior that may seem paradoxical to scholars at first.

Hochschild's concluding chapter returns to the differences between red and blue states; she offers heartfelt letters to the left and right alike that encourage them to see the resonances between liberal and conservative frustrations and values. Hochschild argues that each side is responding differently to the structural squeeze imposed by the changing structure of global capitalism: as opportunity stagnates for the vast majority of Americans, the left blames the concentration of wealth and invests in the public sphere, whereas the right blames competition over jobs and tries to stop government from interfering with the private sphere it trusts to bring prosperity. While empathy between liberals and conservatives may not change these underlying worldviews, Hochschild believes it can foster cooperation on a variety of issues where the key fault lines are not left versus right, but rather establishment versus anti-establishment, or global versus conventional capitalism.

In the Afterword to the Paperback Edition of *Strangers in Their Own Land*, written approximately a year after Donald Trump's unexpected election, Hochschild focuses on Louisianans' early responses to his presidency, as well as their ambivalent relationship to the racism that seemed to many liberals to define Trump's campaign. Under Trump, the EPA has lost much of its funding and environmental problems in Louisiana seem unlikely to improve in the foreseeable future. However, most of Hochschild's friends there were nevertheless thrilled at Trump's election. Many took issue with his abrasive personality, and most were quick to condemn his comments about the 2017 white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. Hochschild argues that, while Louisianans are not racists in the "unitary" sense of explicit hatred for other groups, they nevertheless agree with many racist "subnarratives" about particular issues because they lack historical context and largely receive their images about black Americans from media stereotypes. The "real line cutters," Hochschild concludes, are robots that promise to automate half of current jobs by 2055 (which threatens workers of all parties and races). More fundamentally, then, the United States needs "new ways to get acquainted across our differences"—new frontiers of intermixture—that can allow those who picture themselves on opposing sides to see the interests that they truly have in common.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Arlie Russell Hochschild – The author is a renowned American sociologist and Professor Emerita at the University of California, Berkeley. Hochschild travels to Louisiana over five years in an effort to understand the emotional underpinnings of Tea Party conservatism. Her previous work similarly emphasized the emotions that underlie and surround policies and the changing American lifestyle. In *Strangers in Their Own Land* she deliberately approaches Louisiana conservatives with an attention to the feelings that drive political behavior and gradually comes to understand the conservative deep story. While Hochschild continues to believe that progressive policies are Louisianans' best option, she nevertheless comes to understand how the fiercely individualistic sense of honor that stems from their endurance self combines with their feeling of exclusion from identity politics to create an understandable (if historically decontextualized and ultimately misguided) shift to the right.

Donald Trump – The 45th President of the United States appears in Hochschild's book during his campaign for office, and specifically during his rally in New Orleans just before the Louisiana primary that he won. He was a Tea Party favorite and Hochschild's Chapter 15 explores the affinities between his disregard for liberal feeling rules and the emotional self-interest of the conservative whites she met. Many Southern conservatives felt that, for the first time in a long time, Trump valued the endurance self and promised to give white workers the American Dream back.

President Barack Obama – The 44th President of the United States, who was in office for the duration of Hochschild's fieldwork in Louisiana. Many Tea Partiers saw Obama as both himself a 'cutter' in the **line for the American dream** and a leader who would prioritize the line cutters over themselves. They were variously suspicious of his true religion, his affinity for the EPA and refugees, and how he could have 'risen' from his single parent upbringing to Ivy League universities and the Presidency. Hochschild carefully emphasizes his middle name, *Hussein*, to reflect her acquaintances' distrust for him.

Sharon Galicia – A conservative white Louisiana resident who Hochschild describes as an outgoing insurance saleswoman. Galicia's father abandoned her family when she was young, and Hochschild notes that Galicia could have benefited from paid family leave during that time of her life even though she vehemently opposes it now. Sharon is the first example of the contradictory politics Hochschild later comes to call "The Great Paradox."

Mike Schaff – An oil worker who moves to Bayou Corne for retirement before his new town is swallowed by a giant **sinkhole** caused by a Texas Brine drilling disaster. Schaff grew

up in a two-room house among family on a former plantation and worries that "big government" is destroying Louisiana's tight-knit local communities. After the sinkhole, he became a reluctant environmental activist—he did media interviews, wrote to his representatives, and even spoke at protests with tears in his eyes. He did so because he felt deeply nostalgic for the neighborly love he found, and lost, in Bayou Corne—it was the model of his ideal community, a "nearly wholly private world" where government played little role. He works with General Honoré to found The Green Army and tries unsuccessfully to convince fellow Tea Party supporters to add environmental protections to their policy agenda. Mike exemplifies the Great Paradox (irresponsible drilling destroyed his life, but he still rejects EPA regulations) as well as the endurance self that Hochschild sees underlying the paradox—he maintains a loyalty to the Tea Party, strong religious beliefs, and a disdain for government and its beneficiaries. By the end of the book, Schaff has found a new house on the water, like his place in Bayou Corne, but finds out that fracking wastewater is about to be dumped nearby.

Mike Tritico – An aging, politically independent "marine biologist and environmental activist" who Hochschild interviews and follows to protests. He and Donny McCorquodale like to get into heated discussions about politics and the environment at Brother Cappy's dinner parties. He argues in Chapter 12 that government should follow the precautionary principle and focus on minimizing harm—therefore, he thinks that the I-10 bridge should be closed.

Madonna Massey – A successful, "gifted" gospel singer and "caring mother of two" who grew up in the "poorest town in America" and is widely beloved in Lake Charles, where she now lives. Massey is deeply dedicated to her church, skeptical of regulations and social services, and indebted to Rush Limbaugh and Fox News for telling her what political issues to care about. She credits religion for lifting her out of poverty and thinks it should take over many roles that the government usually fulfills.

Lee Sherman – A former PPG pipe fitter who was ordered to illegally dump toxic waste into the bayou, got sick from the exposure he suffered while doing so, and was ordered to go on medical leave and then summarily fired for not showing up to work. Seven years later, he exposed the source of the pollution, became an environmental activist, and helped Condea Vista workers sue their irresponsible employer—but now, he is resolutely anti-government and active in the Tea Party. He is ambivalent toward PPG—he hates its management but still proudly owns stock in the company and credits it for giving him a livelihood—but truly hates the government, which he thinks is cheating him out of well-deserved social security money. Yet, before moving to Louisiana, he used to be a Democrat—Hochschild sees his exposure of PPG and turn against the government as attempts at revenge on institutions that have wronged him. By the end of the book, he is a fanatic Donald Trump supporter.

Harold Areno – A 77-year-old Cajun man whose family has lived off the land at the Bayou d'Inde for three generations. He is Annette Areno's husband and Janice Areno's uncle. Harold was a pipefitter at PPG and a church deacon; after PPG ordered Lee Sherman to dump toxic waste in the swamp, the Bayou d'Inde became horribly polluted, all its wildlife and trees died, and Harold and his wife Annette got cancer. Harold is deeply religious and would like to see stricter environmental restrictions but has no confidence they ever will be; accordingly, he votes Republican because of his faith. Eventually, the government does take limited steps to clean up the Bayou, but construction starts on a giant chemical plant just on the other side of their house. The Arenos strongly believe that they will be saved in the Rapture (the evangelical Christian belief that Jesus will carry away all Christians to heaven at the end of times).

Derwin Areno – The 46-year-old son of Harold and Annette, and a pipefitter like his father. Derwin cannot remember a time when the bayou was not seriously polluted, and his parents are frightened that he is willing to eat the fish living in it. He suggests that the rapture might be the bayou's only chance at ever getting cleaned up.

PPG Management – The directors of Pittsburgh Plate Glass, which runs a petrochemical plant in DeRidder, have close ties to the local and state governments. At a community meeting in 1987 they pretended not to know how the bayou became polluted, until Lee Sherman—who they ordered to illegally dump the toxic materials and fired when he got sick from them—got on stage and told the crowd the truth.

Russel Honoré – A Lieutenant General in the Army and environmental activist who took Hochschild up the Mississippi river while he was running for Governor of Louisiana. "The General" famously led the rescue effort during Hurricane Katrina and is one of the few politically-minded people Hochschild encounters who recognizes the government's close ties to the oil industry and wants to put stricter environmental regulations into place. He sees Louisianans as victims of a psychological program aimed at convincing them that they have to choose between their jobs and the environment.

Bob Hardey – The mayor of Westlake, Louisiana when his city receives a $21 billion investment by South African petrochemical company Sasol. Hardey is ecstatic about Sasol's investment and even claims to have helped his son move when Sasol bought the land he was building a house on. He felt he had no special talents until he became successful at the petrochemical company Phillips 66 and resents people who he believes gain disproportionate opportunities because of affirmative action. As mayor, he continues to mow lawns around town.

Sasol – A large South African petrochemical company that plans to invest in a massive petrochemical construction project in Westlake. While the local and state governments tout Sasol's investment as a boon to the Louisiana economy, Westlake mayor Bob Hardey admits that it may not actually help his residents find jobs and stands to pollute their air and water.

Janice Areno – Harold and Annette Areno's niece, an accountant who Hochschild profiles in Chapter 10. Janice is so loyal to the Republican Party that she collects **elephant statues**—she exemplifies the Team Loyalist subtype of the endurance self. She is deeply religious, will sacrifice anything for her family, and even "dresses Pentecostal" without makeup or jewelry. Hard work is her cardinal virtue, and she is proud of her ability to endure difficult conditions without needing government assistance. In fact, she has little sympathy for people who refuse to work and thinks the government should "let them starve." She sees government spending as wasteful and "personal morality" as increasingly eroding in the liberal parts of America. She spent years building her dream retirement home by hand and comes to resolutely support Donald Trump.

Jackie Tabor – A 43-year-old homemaker who lives as an "obedient Christian wife" to her husband Heath along with their two children and dogs in a wealthy suburb of Lake Charles. Jackie grew up in a toxic family environment but found her way out through faith in God, and she copes with Louisiana's literally toxic environment through the same renunciation of control that she credits with all her successes. She showed Hochschild the three smaller houses where she previously lived and believes that she was rewarded with the American Dream precisely because she decided not to covet a wealthier lifestyle. She exemplifies the Worshipper subtype of the endurance self.

Donny McCorquodale – A friend of Brother Cappy and Mike Tritico, who rebelled against his strict religious upbringing during his youth but is now loved for his "spontaneous acts of kindness" and daredevil embrace of danger. He argues with Tritico about the government's role in Louisianans' lives and safety—specifically, he argues that it should not shut down the I-10 bridge whose foundations have been threatened by the Condea Vista chemical leak. He exemplifies the Cowboy.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Sally Cappel – The mother-in-law of one of Hochschild's former graduate students. Cappel first introduced Hochschild to Louisiana and housed her in Lake Charles.

Shirley Slack – A close friend of Sally Cappel's since college. The two could not be more different politically: Sally is a "progressive Democrat" and Shirley is "an enthusiast for the Tea Party and Donald Trump."

Annette Areno – Harold's wife, who is also a cancer survivor and works as a janitor at nearby high school.

Paul Ringo – An activist and member of the organization Riverkeepers who lives in a cabin near the Sabine river, tries to sustain the memory of the indigenous peoples who once lived in the area, and hosts groups of "prayer warriors" who assemble to pray for the river.

Louise – A mother and bookkeeper who lives near a petrochemical plant and worries constantly about the possibility of an accident.

Paul Templet – A 73-year-old chemical physicist and former Louisiana State University professor who also headed the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality for four years and oversaw a remarkable decline in pollution. He debunks many of the oil industry's myths for Hochschild in Chapter 5.

Bobby Jindal – Louisiana's Republican Governor from 2008-2016. Jindal drastically educed taxes on the oil industry, cutting 30,000 public sector jobs and taking over $1 billion from schools and hospitals to compensate. He denies—or, more precisely, refuses to talk about—climate change and opposes expanding anti-pollution regulations.

Huey Long – Louisiana's governor from 1928-1932, during the early years of the Great Depression. Long taxed oil companies heavily and spent the revenue on infrastructure and social programs, which Hochschild sees as way to use oil money for good and contrasts with Bobby Jindal's incentive policy.

Brother Cappy Brantley – A former telephone repairman and devout churchgoer who invites friends and family over for dinner parties. He moderates the discussions, which inevitably turn political.

Sister Fay Brantley – Brother Cappy's wife.

TERMS

Empathy Wall – **Hochschild** defines an empathy wall as "an obstacle to the deep understanding of another person, one that can make us feel indifferent or even hostile to those who hold different beliefs or whose childhood is rooted in different circumstances." Her research methodology is carefully oriented toward overcoming the empathy walls that she believes segregate American communities into echo chambers—people lose the ability to empathize with people outside their own political community and polarization accelerates. Hochschild's goal is to understand the Americans whose political beliefs are most radically different from her own, and accordingly her hard-won friendships with the Louisianans she encounters demonstrate the dangers and rewards of building "empathy bridges" to climb empathy walls.

The Great Paradox – **Hochschild's** research is centrally motivated by her desire to explain The Great Paradox: people in red states do worse on almost every quality-of-life indicator

(and accordingly could benefit most from government assistance), but they consistently vote against that assistance. Red states do receive more federal money on average than blue states, but this is largely because their state tax revenues are lower. Hochschild considers various explanations for the Great Paradox but concludes that understanding why people would vote against what appears to be their political self-interest requires understanding the deep stories through which they define their identities, values, and emotional self-interest.

Partyism – The allegiance to political party above all else, which has become a central force in contemporary polarized American political culture. It has grown to such an extent that it "now beats race as the source of divisive prejudice."

Deep Story – **Hochschild**'s research focus is less on what actually happened to the people she meets than their deep stories: their "narrative[s] *as felt*," or the story that they believe to be true about themselves and their society. She believes that learning this deep story can help explain the Great Paradox and the increasing disconnect between the American left and right. Working with deep stories allows people to build empathy by imagining the world from others' perspectives, and Hochschild offers the image of waiting in line for the American Dream as her Tea Party acquaintances' deep story.

Feeling Rules – A set of demands that prescribes how people should feel toward certain others in certain situations. **Hochschild** sees conservative Louisianans as fed up with the feeling rules of liberal American "PC" culture and **Donald Trump** as offering them a way out of the moralizing North's demands that Southerners accept people unlike them into the American mainstream.

Nostalgia – In its most conventional sense, nostalgia means a longing to return home, usually when that return is no longer possible due to the passage of time. In this book, **Hochschild** posits nostalgia as Louisianans' longing for a landscape that industrial pollution has destroyed. Since this involves a memory of (and desire for) something that oil wrecked, nostalgia is an enemy of the structural amnesia that the state and oil industry promote in order to further their interests. Hochschild's two main examples are the Arenos, who remember when the land they live on could still support wildlife, and **Mike Schaff**, who goes to Bayou Corne in order to relive his childhood on the water and stays there after the sinkhole opens because he feels nostalgic for the community that scattered after the accident.

Structural Amnesia — This is early twentieth-century anthropologist E.E. Evans-Pritchard's term for a situation in which a social group selectively forgets certain aspects of their history—usually aspects that threaten group consensus or the interests of the powerful. This convenient forgetting serves as "an indirect expression of power," and it's something that the oil companies and state government encourage.

Keyhole Issue – A single issue through which one can see a broader social pattern. **Hochschild** uses environmental pollution as her keyhole issue for understanding the Great Paradox, since Louisianans live in one of the country's most polluted states and yet they consistently vote against environmental regulation. Understanding Louisianans' attitudes towards the environment, therefore, helps Hochschild explain their voting behavior in general.

Cajun – Refers to the descendants of French settlers who fled Acadia (now northern Maine and Maritime Canada) and moved to Louisiana in the late 1700s. Many Cajuns still speak French and most live in the South and Southwest regions of the state, especially in rural areas.

Creole – Refers to a mixed-race community of Louisianans with deep roots in the area (especially in cities), and often specifically refer to those with ancestors who settled there before the Louisiana Purchase. Historically, the term Creole referred to the descendants of European settlers from France and Spain before expanding to include the Louisiana-born children of white Caribbean settlers who moved there in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Creole culture is indebted to French, African, Spanish, and Native American cultures alike.

Social Terrain – Refers to the assemblage of social institutions that create the backdrop for a particular life or culture. To understand Southern Louisiana's social terrain through its institutional context, in Part Two of her book **Hochschild** focuses on four institutions: the media, the church, the state, and the oil industry.

Fracking – A popular term for hydraulic fracturing, a relatively new technology that involves pumping pressurized water and chemicals into rock thousands of feet under the Earth's surface in order to extract natural gas. While fracking is productive and profitable for oil companies, many believe that its negative environmental effects outweigh its benefits.

The American Dream – The American Dream is a widespread cultural aspiration toward upward economic mobility based on the promise that prosperity follows from hard work. However, while belief in the American dream remains strong among **Hochschild**'s subjects (and explains, to some extent, their deep story), it is increasingly inaccessible for the majority of Americans, as most new wealth now goes to the superrich; since 1950, wage stagnation and downward mobility have actually been the norm, especially for white men without a college degree. The American Dream also imposes certain feeling rules, encouraging people to be "hopeful, energetic, focused, [and] mobilized" in their attempts to make something of themselves.

Racism – Whereas white conservative Louisianans like **Mike Schaff** generally "defined as racist a person who used the 'N' word or who 'hates' blacks," **Hochschild** sticks to a sociological concept of racism as "the belief in a natural hierarchy that

places blacks at the bottom, and the tendency of whites to judge their own worth by distance from that bottom." This difference is crucial to understanding conservative Louisianans' belief that they are not racist, even though many mix their distaste for government welfare with horribly exaggerated and generalized media stereotypes about black Americans. In general, Hochschild says, the white people she met had little to do with or say about black Louisianans, but "spoke freely" about their feelings on Muslims and Mexicans. Many of the people Hochschild met in Louisiana thought of systemic racism as a thing of the past and saw no issue with casting their ballots for **Donald Trump**.

The Structural Squeeze – Results from the contradiction between people's belief in the American Dream and their inability to realize it. Stuck without the opportunities their ancestors had, **Hochschild**'s friends in Louisiana try to explain why the Dream is failing for them by blaming government social spending and labor competition with **line cutters**.

Sympathy Fatigue – Refers to the way that many of **Hochschild**'s subjects see no rewards for sympathizing with marginalized groups and therefore start to think those groups are taking advantage of their charity. They become skeptical of whether their good deeds are actually doing good and revert to an attitude of self-protection rather than openness toward difference.

Ethylene Dichloride (EDC) – The highly-toxic chemical that **Lee Sherman** worked with at **PPG**, which the Condea Vista spill released into the area around Lake Charles. Beyond its horrible health effects on humans, EDC is responsible for weakening the clay under the increasingly perilous I-10 bridge.

Class Conflict – A competition between members of different economic classes over resources, services, money, opportunity, power, and/or cultural influence. Whereas Americans on the left see class conflict between the wealthy capitalist minority and the majority of increasingly precarious workers, those on the right see a conflict between "makers" who work in the private sector and "takers" who work in or gain from the public sector. **Hochschild** sees her blue-collar conservative interviewees as fighting a class conflict with the poor and destitute who receive government assistance.

Precautionary Principle – The notion that one should first "do no harm." **Mike Tritico** argues that the government should act by the precautionary principle and close the dangerous I-10 bridge because it has the potential to hurt people. **Donny** disagrees, arguing that harm is inevitable and the goal should simply be for the benefits of policy to outweigh the harms.

Endurance Self – The conservative ideal of a person who patiently endures hardship, feels connected to their local community, and works hard for the American Dream. **Hochschild** thinks that Louisianans' endurance self is increasingly threatened by the growing power of the liberal cosmopolitan self throughout the rest of the United States, especially since the 1960s. She sees three expressions of this endurance self: the Team Loyalist, the Worshipper, and the Cowboy.

Cosmopolitan self – The liberal ideal of a person who is adaptable across social and cultural contexts, oriented outward toward the world rather than inward toward a local community, and willing to compete intensively to join the global economic elite. **Hochschild**'s interviewees worry that this ideology of the self is displacing their traditional endurance self.

Team Loyalist – A subset of the endurance self, Team Loyalists prioritize their political party (or culture, family, religion, etc.) above all else. **Janice Areno** embodies this type of self-understanding: she supports the Republican Party and the oil industry no matter what harms they cause.

Worshipper – A subtype of the endurance self, Worshippers believe fully in something outside themselves, which determines their priorities. **Jackie Tabor** embodies this type of self-understanding: she renounces her own desires in order to let God's plan play out and defers to her husband because she believes this is the proper way for a Christian wife to behave. She mourns for the harmful effects of pollution but decides to accept it, renouncing her hope that the environment improves.

Cowboy – A subtype of the endurance self, Cowboys see honor and masculine pride in facing dangers, even unnecessary ones. **Donny McCorquodale** embodies this type of self-understanding: he resents the government for trying to eliminate risks he believes people should be free to take. Surveying Louisiana's lax enforcement of environmental regulations and restrictions on dangerous behaviors in general, **Hochschild** concludes that it is a "Cowboy state."

Collective Effervescence – Sociologist Émile Durkheim's term for the way people become excited when they find themselves among their "tribe," whether social, biological, or political. **Hochschild** uses it to describe Tea Partiers' mob-like enthusiasm at **Donald Trump's** rally.

Emotional Self-Interest – The desire to sustain the feelings of empowerment and belonging that result from collective effervescence. When **Donald Trump** speaks to Louisianans' deep story, their identification with him leads them to finally feel like "part of a powerful, like-minded majority, released from politically correct rules of feeling," and **Hochschild** argues that they vote for him—against their own economic self-interest—in order to sustain the emotional high of this recognition.

Least Resistant Personality – A corporate consulting report that Hochschild reads argues that conservative, Christian, white communities with low levels of education and without a "culture of activism" are the least likely to resist toxic waste dumping in the places where they live. **Hochschild** sees Tea Party conservatives as exemplifying the "least resistant personality" and suggests that this might explain why Louisiana

suffers such a high level of pollution.

The Psychological Program – **General Honoré's** term for the oil industry and the Louisiana state government's campaign to make citizens believe that the environment is worth sacrificing because oil is the key to creating jobs and economic growth in the state. In reality, only about 10% of Louisianans work in the oil industry, which **Dr. Paul Templet** argues has provided little measurable economic benefit to the state.

Tea Party – A grassroots right-wing American populist movement that started in 2009 and finds its strongest following in the Southern United States. Two-thirds of the people **Hochschild** interviewed for this book (40 of 60) supported Tea Party candidates and ideas. The movement's main focus is substantially reducing government taxation and regulation of all kinds.

Line Cutters – Refers to the various groups that, according to the conservative deep story, seem to be cutting working-class whites in line for the American dream. This includes government workers, as well as minority groups that gained a cultural voice starting in the 1960s and 1970s, including Americans of color, women, immigrants, refugees, LGBT Americans, and arguably even endangered species like the brown pelican.

Fox News – A conservative cable news channel that most of **Hochschild's** acquaintances watch primarily and trust above all other sources. Whereas liberals tend to see Fox as a propaganda machine for the Republican Party, many Louisiana conservatives see it as defending their moral principles and talking back to the rest of media, which they find too liberal. Hochschild notes that Fox often has the power to dictate what its viewers care about and fear.

The Green Army – An umbrella group started by **General Honoré** and **Mike Schaff** to unite environmental activist organizations in Louisiana.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – A federal agency established by President Nixon in 1970 that is responsible for monitoring pollution, researching various environmental dangers, and enforcing regulations that limit those dangers.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

TRUST, EMPATHY, AND POLITICAL PROGRESS

In *Strangers in Their Own Land*, Arlie Hochschild—a progressive sociologist from Berkeley—attempts to understand American political polarization by studying a community politically opposite from her own: conservative Christian whites in southwestern Louisiana. Although she is initially puzzled by many Louisianans' political beliefs, as she gradually formulates a picture of their worldview, Hochschild learns that conservatives want many of the same things as liberals, such as effective government, a healthy economy, and "an honest day's pay for an honest day's work." Because many Americans lack trust in members of the other party, Hochschild concludes, they fail to empathize across the political aisle and come to see those others as enemies rather than fellow citizens. Ultimately, she argues that political polarization and partyism stem less from liberals and conservatives' differing political goals than from their inability to empathize with one another and communicate about the goals that they actually share. Hochschild aims to build this empathy for conservatives and encourages her readers to follow the same path, because she believes that empathy can heal the American political divide by enabling people to work collaboratively toward their mutual interests.

For Hochschild, *distrust* contributes to American political polarization by blocking empathy. Louisianans distrust the North, which they feel has historically imposed its own morality on them, particularly during the Civil War and Civil Rights Movement. In the 21st century, they do not trust President Obama, because they think he rewards "line cutters" with unfair social and economic advantages like affirmative action, a Northern moral agenda. And this attitude of distrust extends to liberals more generally: Harold and Annette Areno, for instance, live on the polluted Bayou d'Inde and care deeply about cleaning up the water, but they nevertheless vote for anti-regulation Republicans instead of pro-regulation Democrats because they find it hard to trust those who do not share their faith in the Bible and deep connection to a tight-knit local community; like many Louisianans, they find it "very hard to trust those far away." However, Louisianans still trust that their local communities—even locals who passionately disagree about politics, like Mike Tritico and Donny McCorquodale, or Sally Cappel and Shirley Slack, remain friends because of their roots in the same communities and local culture.

Hochschild's approach to research demonstrates how trust creates a path to empathy. By highlighting her subjects' humanity, taking an interest in their lives beyond politics, and building genuine long-term relationships with a select few, Hochschild demonstrates that she can be trusted, which allows her to come to understand and care for people whose politics she once found incomprehensible and abhorrent. The way she recounts these Louisianans' stories in turn encourages her

readers to view Louisianans with the same trust and empathy. For example, when she introduces Louisianans like Sharon Galicia and Lee Sherman, Hochschild focuses on their personalities, life stories, and willingness to open up to "an older, white liberal stranger writing a book." Before even mentioning their political beliefs, Hochschlid tells the reader how Sharon is "unfazed by a deafening buzz saw" at an industrial plant and notes Lee's "welcoming smile" as he greets her on his front porch. By building trust with and telling the stories of the people behind right-wing politics, Hochschild gains access to their "deep story"—the story of how they feel, told from their own perspective. And her ability to capture this deep story by "imagin[ing herself] into their shoes" demonstrates how she learned to empathize with her political opposites.

Hochschild foregrounds empathy because she sees it as the key to political progress; she believes that empathy's failure has turned America's political *differences* into an all-or-nothing political *divide*. In other words, without empathy, opposing sides fail to see themselves as members of the same political community with shared interests. Many of her subjects see politics as an all-out war for survival—white men in Louisiana feel that they must now compete with immigrants, minorities, and women for jobs, so they vote against policies that benefit those groups because they see affirmative action as "violating rules of fairness." But they lack the historical context and personal connections necessary to understand what other groups have experienced. These basic differences in life experience and political orientation lead people to hit empathy walls when they try to relate to those on the other side. For instance, Hochschild suggests one cause behind Louisianans' disdain for minorities on welfare is that they don't interact with African-Americans beyond the images of welfare fraud they see on Fox News. But they see exceptions in people with whom they can relate—Jackie Tabor grew up on welfare but opposes it in most cases because she assumes that welfare recipients do not work as hard to support their families as her mother did.

Hochschild closes her book with two letters she has written, one to liberals and one to conservatives, explaining the other side's deep story. While she could have just as easily defended certain policies or principles through rational argument, Hochschild instead decided to offer an inside view of the human beings across the aisle and their feelings about politics in order to foster understanding and goodwill. She wants liberals and conservatives to see each other as they see themselves: as complex people trying their best to cope with difficult circumstances. At the end of her first letter, she asks liberals to "consider the possibility that in [Louisiana conservatives'] situation, you might end up closer to their perspective," and her second closes by telling conservatives that "ironically, you may have more in common with the left than you imagine." Here, Hochschild demonstrates why she takes trust and empathy as the true sources of political unity: by trusting conservatives' intentions, she learned to empathize with them, understand the values they share with liberals, and consider policy solutions that make sense for each side's deep story. Indeed, Hochschild's radical empathy is itself a form of activism, and she suggests that the empathy she built is a necessary precursor to any progress on policy.

GOVERNMENT REGULATION AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM

Many of the Louisianans Hochschild interviews see government regulations as intended to limit rather than protect their freedom. In their view, a person's freedom to do what they want is more important than ensuring that people are free from the harmful effects of others' actions (for example, for many Louisianans, a chemical company's freedom to dump waste in the river trumps a citizen's right to be free from dangerous toxins). While Hochschild takes pains to understand this conservative viewpoint on freedom, she does not waver in her belief that freedoms cannot be valued for their own sake, without considering their possible negative effects on others. In this way, Hochschild suggests that freedom must be fundamentally predicated on equality.

Conservative Louisianans seem to prioritize the freedom to take risks whereas liberals prioritize their freedom *from* risks. As a result of Louisiana's conservatism, the state has few restrictions on gun ownership, motorcycle helmets, and even alcohol sales in drive-through stores; people value their freedom to own guns, forego safety equipment, and buy alcohol where and when they wish. This surprises Hochschild, who has always seen these kinds of regulations as protecting people's freedom rather than limiting it, ensuring people's freedom from death at the hands of a drunk driver or a stray bullet.

But these two kinds of freedom, *freedom to* and *freedom from*, are mutually exclusive because they often express competing political interests: one person's *freedom to* dump toxic waste in a second person's backyard, for instance, infringes on that second person's *freedom from* undeserved suffering. Furthermore, states that prioritize people's *freedom to* often distribute those freedoms unequally. While white men are largely free to live without government interference in Louisiana, for instance, other groups face greater regulation there than anywhere else in the United States: it is nearly impossible for women to get an abortion in Louisiana, and the state incarcerates a horrifying proportion of its black men in some of the worst conditions in the country. These examples demonstrate that advocating either the freedom to take risks or the freedom from harm, citizens implicitly support some people's freedom at the expense of others'—and, generally, the freedom they support is their own. The important question, it seems, cannot be whether a certain kind of policy supports "freedom," but rather what kinds of freedom it provides for

whom.

If appeals to "freedom" are often veiled appeals to self-interest, then how can people decide which policies to vote for? Hochschild—a liberal—implies that the best way to make these political decisions is to consider *everyone's* freedom equally, which means that a basic commitment to equality must inform all decisions about freedom. Indeed, she argues that "a national vision based on the common good" is necessary for Americans to truly be free. Hochschild shows that conservatives' exaltation of freedom often ends up preserving powerful people's freedom to act while infringing on powerless people's from harm. And these powerless victims are often the same conservatives who vote in freedom's name: Louisianans value certain "freedoms from" that limit *their own* "freedoms to"—Tea Party voters want to be *free from* taxes and government regulation, for example, but they therefore lose the *freedom to* decide whether a petrochemical company can build a factory down the street or pollute their backyards. By allowing powerful actors to take advantage of those without power, this one-sided emphasis on freedom cements social hierarchies rather than freeing people from them. By contrast, a liberal vision of freedom—like the Norwegian model that invests public oil resources to ensure that every citizen can "enjoy freedom from need"—deprives some people of certain freedoms to act exactly as they wish (say, by preventing private companies from managing oil reserves) while promoting a more general freedom from hardship for the entire population.

Ultimately, Hochschild suggests that liberals are willing to sacrifice absolute freedom for the sake of equally distributed freedom across society, whereas conservatives value their freedom to act as they wish and therefore decry regulations that prescribe what kinds of light bulbs or water bottles they should buy, what kind or amount of pollution is acceptable, or whether they should eat toxic fish. Of course, Hochschild's concern that Louisianans' disdain for regulations actually comes back to bite them demonstrates her emphasis on the common good over individual license, the *freedom from harm* over the *freedom to act*. Her own progressivism clearly comes through here, although she has little interest in pushing it on her Louisiana friends.

THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE ECONOMY

Hochschild focuses on environmental policy (and toxic pollution in particular) in order to understand the broader political dynamics of the white working-class Louisiana communities she studies. Most Louisianans reject laws that would limit pollution and guard against oil spills because they believe that environmental protection will hurt the economy. But Hochschild shows that environmental protections and economic growth are, in fact, entirely compatible. She exposes the alliance between corporate and government leaders that has encouraged citizens to falsely believe that pro-oil policies actually benefit society.

Whether they work in the oil industry or not, many Louisianans see oil as their state's only opportunity for economic growth. Jackie Tabor, for instance, sees her family's income as an "indirect" effect of oil because so many of the houses her contractor husband builds are for oil workers. Because of this belief that oil is the key to a good economy, most Conservative Louisianans think environmental protections will destroy the state's economy by hurting oil companies. Louisianans' faith in the oil industry is apparent in the Louisiana state government's approach to economic policy. Governor Bobby Jindal gave oil companies $1.6 billion in tax incentives to come to Louisiana, but he paid for those incentives by cutting social spending. He also consistently opposed environmental protections, believing that it would undermine his attempt to bring new oil jobs to the state. This reflects the deep conservative belief that a freer market—one in which oil companies can act without government restriction—will lead to more jobs and economic growth.

But Hochschild shows that this belief is not based in fact: governments that regulate industry and invest in the public sphere actually tend to create *more* economic growth than governments like Louisiana's. In Appendix C, Hochschild gives statistical evidence that environmental regulations are tied to increased job growth. She sees two causes behind this effect: first, the government has to hire workers to enforce environmental protections, which increases the number of jobs in the public sector. Secondly, regulating the oil industry would help reduce pollution, which would save the fishing jobs that are lost when commercial species are poisoned. While many red states try to redirect corporate investment from other states by giving businesses huge tax incentives, Hochschild shows that blue states—which try to spur new investment through investment in public infrastructure—are often more successful at creating jobs. In the past, Huey Long did this successfully in Louisiana by using oil revenues to build roads and fund antipoverty programs, and Hochschild cites Norway as a contemporary example of an oil-rich society that has thrived through public investment. Ultimately, even oil companies themselves prefer to move to places where the government invests in public services: for instance, Sasol complains that the Louisiana town where they plan to build a large petrochemical plant lacks the public infrastructure necessary to convince scientists and engineers to move there—ultimately, they end up cancelling most of the planned construction.

Despite the evidence Hochschild lays out, Louisianans continue to believe that oil and deregulation are the keys to saving their state's economy, and she suggests that the oil industry and state government have worked together to foster this misconception. Although the Louisiana state government is

supposed to act as a check on industry, in reality, the government and industry are allies. Many members of the state government are former oil executives, and many Louisiana environmental regulators have ties to the oil industry. As a result, the government sees itself as a helping hand to the oil industry, which explains its consistent failure to help the victims of oil-related environmental disasters, as well as the way it funnels public resources like river water to oil companies.

Furthermore, when people affected by environmental disasters (like Mike Schaff and Harold Areno) feel nostalgic for a time when their land was unpolluted, oil companies frame this nostalgia as an obstacle to economic progress. This allows industry to override citizens' concerns by encouraging them to forget oil-related hardships, a process Hochschild calls structural amnesia. This works in part because Louisianans feel a loyalty to the oil industry that Hochschild claims is disproportionate to oil's actual benefits. Louisianans overestimate how many of the state's residents work in the oil industry (the real figure is somewhere under 15 percent), and they look the other way when they hear about environmental disasters because they "can't afford to worry about" them. Gubernatorial candidate and environmental activist General Russel Honoré concludes that this alliance between oil and industry imposes a "psychological program" on unsuspecting Louisianans, causing them to worry about "jobs, jobs, jobs" but forget that oil has harmful environmental effects and that there are other industries besides oil in which they can invest. The oil industry's psychological and political power, more than its economic promise, lead people to defend and deregulate it—the stories Louisianans believe about the economy, it seems, are actually just the stories the oil industry wants them to believe.

CAPITALISM, MEDIA, AND CLASS CONFLICT

Many Louisianans feel left behind by a federal government that has increasingly recognized the pleas of historically marginalized groups. Hochschild argues that, although Louisianans correctly recognize that their economic opportunities are dwindling, their downward mobility is the result of broader trends in global capitalism, rather than direct competition with affirmative action beneficiaries in the labor market. One important reason Louisianans resent minorities is that their understanding of these groups is based largely on media misinformation rather than personal experience. By examining how these media stereotypes help consolidate class identities and pit classes against one another, Hochschild shows how wealthy business owners encourage working-class whites to identify with the rich and protect elite interests, rather than collaborating with other workers to fight the increasing concentration of wealth that 21st century monopoly capitalism has fostered.

Many of the people Hochschild interviews "spoke of their love of capitalism." Bill Beatifo, for instance, believes that his side project selling medical devices will make him a millionaire, and Janice Areno "felt loyal to capitalism" because it taught her the value of work and allowed her to support herself. But wages for the bottom 90% of American workers have not increased since 1980. For white men without a college degree—including many of the workers Hochschild interviewed—wages have actually declined. And Hochschild argues that this is precisely due to certain features of 21st century globalized capitalism. She cites three crucial mechanisms: offshoring, in which companies move labor-intensive work to other countries where they can pay workers less; automation, which makes many forms of work obsolete; and the rise of multinational corporations, which let business leaders more easily dodge taxes and pressure governments into treating them favorably.

Louisianans blame their lack of opportunity not on these causes, but rather on "line cutters," which includes groups that have gained political recognition and civil rights since the 1960s, as well as others who benefit from government programs and work in public sector jobs. Whereas Hochschild sees the dominant American class conflict as that between the working class and the capitalist class of corporate executives, Louisianans see "line cutters" taking their jobs. They tend to view racism as an issue of the past rather than a continuing structural problem, so they see minorities who claim to suffer from discrimination as simply playing "victim" to get special protections that they neither need nor deserve. Ironically, Southern whites have developed a collective identity largely through their feeling of exclusion from identity politics—they see themselves as a distinct social class championing fairness and traditional moral values, in part by fighting off lazy minorities who want special treatment. This is why Hochschild sees the conservative, working- to middle-class whites she met in Louisiana as fighting a hidden class war against impoverished minority groups. In reality, as she explains in the Afterword, "the real line cutters" are actually *robots*, which promise to eliminate many of the manual labor jobs—especially in the oil industry—that Louisianans expect will bring them prosperity.

Hochschild argues that Louisianans' animosity toward "line cutters" stems from images they receive from the media rather than firsthand knowledge about what minorities have experienced. Media representations of African-Americans, in particular, are prejudicial and split: on the one hand, images of wealthy black celebrities and athletes lead working whites to feel that minorities are taking all the wealth; on the other, stereotypes that paint African-Americans as criminals and welfare recipients who refuse to work make whites feel that undeserving, immoral minorities are taking advantage of the system, or even that the system is designed to be taken advantage of by these groups. Together, these two images lead whites to suspect that their tax dollars are being redirected

through welfare to make black Americans rich. In reality, the missing tax dollars are funneled to business owners who get enormous incentives from politicians like Bobby Jindal; indeed, black Americans suffered much more during the financial crisis than whites did, and the majority of welfare recipients' income actually comes from work. These harmful images largely come from Fox News, which has a veritable monopoly on conservative American news media—nearly all of Hochschild's interviewees watch it primarily or exclusively, and one even holds Fox anchors as dear as her family. Perhaps unsurprisingly, corporate-owned Fox also consistently defends the interests of business owners. By turning white workers against "line cutters," it redirects class animosity away from itself and the inflating wealth of corporate executives.

Yet, on some level, Southern whites realize that media traffics in stereotypes: they are dismayed at the way the liberal media portrays them, which leads them to think that the country at large looks down on them as racists and "rednecks" who need to modernize. In other words, their reaction to media images is as influential in their development of a class identity as their belief in Fox News images of the "line cutters." Ultimately, the combination of such images and white identity politics (defined as the opposition to identity politics) leads Louisianans to protect the very transformations in contemporary capitalism that are eviscerating their access to the American Dream of economic progress.

PERSONAL IDENTITY AND EMOTIONAL SELF-INTEREST

Hochschild's research begins with a pattern she calls "The Great Paradox": she wonders why people in red states who need government help the most nevertheless consistently vote against that help. Whereas conventional analyses explain voting behavior through political self-interest (they assume that people will vote for whatever improves their lives), Hochschild argues that this assumption cannot sufficiently explain the Great Paradox. Rather, she sees emotional self-interest as the driving force behind many Louisianans' Republican votes: they want to preserve a sense of honor that corresponds to their ideal of the "endurance self," and they feel a "high" when a candidate like Donald Trump affirms that sense of honor. Hochschild thinks that conventional researchers tend to overlook emotional self-interest's central role in motivating political behavior, largely because it is difficult to quantify, but she believes that this is a huge mistake, since people vote emotionally, not rationally.

Federal data shows that people who live in more polluted counties are less likely to worry about the harmful effects of pollution, which seems to be an example of the Great Paradox, since the trend would be reversed if people voted based on their political self-interest. However, Hochschild argues that this is only paradoxical if one doesn't factor in emotions, and to understand the emotions that underlie conservative voting behavior, she seeks out Louisianans' "deep story." Hochschild discovers that red state citizens *do* vote in their self-interest, but in a more abstract and emotional way than political scientists often assume: they vote to reclaim a dwindling sense of honor and to proclaim their distinctive values. Hochschild names this desire *emotional self-interest*.

Southern conservatives' emotional self-interest revolves around their desire to preserve a particular narrative of selfhood, one that Hochschild calls the "endurance self." Being able to suffer hardship without complaining or taking government assistance is something to be proud of in the South. So is working hard—in Janice Areno's case, for instance, *hard* work matters much more than meaningful or well-paid work. Accordingly, Hochschild argues that Southerners reject government help because it weakens their sense of personal honor. She elaborates three expressions of the endurance self: the Team Loyalist, the Worshipper, and the Cowboy. Team Loyalists, like Janice Areno, prioritize long-term allegiance to the Republican Party; Worshippers, like Jackie Tabor, renounce their own desires in order to support others; and Cowboys, like Donny McCorquodale, place a premium on bravery. Each willingly endures suffering in the name of some larger commitment and thinks that complaining about that suffering would undermine their honor, and they vote for policies that are in line with their values and sense of selfhood—behavior that, in this light, doesn't seem paradoxical at all.

Another essential aspect of understanding the endurance self is the conservative notion that this sense of self is under siege by the liberal "cosmopolitan self," a narrative of self that honors diversity, adaptability, interconnectedness, and status in the global marketplace. The cosmopolitan self gained traction during and after the 1960s, when a variety of groups changed American public discourse forever through their struggles for civil rights. For the first time, women, African-Americans, LGBT people, immigrants, people with disabilities, and environmentalists (among others) were allowed to voice their experiences before a national audience. The government passed civil rights protections and the "culture of victimization" (which endurance-minded conservatives find so distasteful) was born. The cosmopolitan self enforces a certain set of "politically correct" feeling rules that conservatives find distasteful; these feeling rules try to compensate for marginalized groups' discrimination, but the endurance self sees hardship as something that should be tolerated rather than complained about. Louisianans do not want to be told what to feel or whom to be sorry for—indeed, one central reason Donald Trump appealed to them so much was that he offered to throw out political correctness and openly treat white conservative blue-collar culture as the cornerstone of American society. This offered Louisianans "a giddy release from the feeling of being a stranger in one's own land," and so it

was in their emotional self-interest to vote for him.

The endurance self and cosmopolitan self present a clash of opposing values: the former values patience, consistency, and traditional moral authority, but latter values decisive action, originality, and multiculturalism. As the cosmopolitan self has gained more traction in recent decades and Southerners increasingly feel dishonored in the nation's eyes, they worry that their endurance self will be wholly displaced as they fail to keep up with the "shifting moral qualifications for the American Dream." Hochschild realizes that conservatives are not voting against government regulation (and for the Great Paradox) because they want their education system worsened and their backyards polluted, but rather because they see government assistance as an affront to their honor and a threat to their traditional, homogeneous, tight-knit local communities. Her findings demonstrate that conventional political analyses need to take emotional self-interest seriously if they want to accurately explain what people vote for and why.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE BAYOU CORNE SINKHOLE

The sinkhole that destroyed the town where Mike Schaff was set to retire comes to symbolize the way that environmental devastation swallows up people's communities, livelihoods, and memories. Schaff was excited to retire in Bayou Corne because it would finally let him live on the water, like he did in his childhood, among a tight-knit community of neighbors, but the sinkhole ruins his dreams. The sinkhole—caused by irresponsible oil drilling—made his new home so dangerous to live in that he worried that striking a match would cause an explosion, his wife leaves town, and his grandchildren cannot visit. The sinkhole destroyed many of his neighbors' homes, as well, and led them to disperse throughout the region, scattering Schaff's newfound community. And Texas Brine, the oil company responsible for the sinkhole, was incredibly slow to compensate the disaster victims, while the state did nothing to help them relocate. Schaff stays in his new home out of a sense of nostalgia for the ideal community he had briefly found, but oil companies and the state intentionally bury the memory of a similar sinkhole accident at nearby Lake Peigneur by producing a film that shifted the blame and marketing the site as a tourist attraction. Like many of Hochschild's "strangers," Schaff holds onto his memories of the place he lost, despite the structural amnesia imposed by the alliance between Jindal's state and big oil.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the The New Press edition of *Strangers in Their Own Land* published in 2016.

Preface Quotes

As a sociologist I had a keen interest in how life *feels* to people on the right—that is, in the emotion that underlies politics. To understand their emotions, I had to imagine myself into their shoes. Trying this, I came upon their "deep story," a narrative *as felt*.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: xi

Explanation and Analysis

In the preface to *Strangers in Their Own Land*, Arlie Hochschild explains her motivations for focusing on the deep story behind Louisianans' conservatism. Her insistence that people actually vote based on their deep stories contrasts with conventional sociologists' "political perspective," which assumes people always vote in their self-interest. In fact, most scholars' mistaken assumption often stems from their inability to see the distrust that underlies Louisianans' desire to eliminate government from their lives—it makes little sense to ask the government to assist them with problems they face when, in the past, it has always failed to deliver on its promises. Accordingly, Hochschild suggests that the "increasingly hostile split" between the American left and right is not only about differing political beliefs in a rational, abstract sense; it is also about the opposite ways liberals and conservatives relate to government and the contrasting narratives of self that underlie this opposition. Hochschild's focus on emotion is her signature method. In this book, she brings her previous research's "close-up" perspective to the novel domain of politics.

We, on both sides, wrongly imagine that empathy with the "other" side brings an end to clearheaded analysis when, in truth, it's on the other side of the bridge that the most important analysis can begin.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Sharon Galicia

Related Themes:

Page Number: xiii

Explanation and Analysis

At the end of the preface, Hochschild elaborates her motivations for reconsidering empathy's role in politics and preempts her readers' possible concern that using empathy to research politics would mean setting aside rational policy analysis, refusing a dialogue about ideas by giving full credence to people's irrational emotions. Instead, Hochschild suggests that understanding others' deep story can lead her to see how their political beliefs, which may seem puzzling at first, are actually perfectly "clearheaded" given their own experience and worldview. In other words, Hochschild does not study emotion to study irrationality, but rather because she has faith that people outside her "progressive camp" have their own political logic, grounded in their own deep story. Therefore, for Hochschild, empathy is a means to overcoming one's own blindness to others' logic rather than a way to throw logic out the window. Hochschild's relationship with Sharon Galicia demonstrates both the possibility of building empathy bridges across political difference and the power of "reaching out to someone from another world" with a genuine desire to understand (rather than rebut) their perspective.

Chapter 1 Quotes

Looking out the window of the truck, it's clear that Mike and I see different things. Mike sees a busy, beloved, bygone world. I see a field of green.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Mike Schaff

Related Themes:

Page Number: 4

Explanation and Analysis

As Mike Schaff drives Hochschild to the old Armelise Plantation, where he grew up in the former slave quarters, he shows her where his relatives and old friends used to live and work. He knew everyone in the tight-knit community and longs to rediscover another place like it. He blames "big government" for getting in the way and indirectly destroying the sort of close bonds that Armelise Plantation used to foster. Mike's nostalgia for his "busy, beloved, bygone world" reflects Southern whites' distress at their declining socioeconomic status and cultural position in an increasingly globalized American society. His nostalgia also highlights the way unexpected histories are hidden in the Louisiana landscape. Not only does Mike's childhood "in an era of sugar, cotton, and mule-drawn plows" seem obsolete in the current "era of oil," but he was already living amidst the memory of the slavery on which the South was founded. Like the Arenos and Paul Ringo, Mike is a rememberer: his sense of self and belonging is grounded in the past, even as the Louisiana state government erases that past to pave way for the economic progress promised by oil and petrochemical investment.

How can a system both create pain and deflect blame for that pain?

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 10

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Hochschild wonders why Louisianans remain so loyal to capitalism even though it is one of the central factors making their lives worse—otherwise known as the Great Paradox. Specifically, she is curious about conservatives' votes for deregulation even though "reckless and woefully underregulated Wall Street investors" were responsible for the financial crisis that devastated so many Louisianans. Hochschild's desire to understand this Great Paradox was one of her primary motivations for the research that led to this book. Even in the first chapter, she is already beginning to suspect that corporations win Tea Party voters' loyalty by strategically defining the terms of debate about economic regulations. While the real conflict of interests is between big and small businesses, Hochschild suggests, Wall Street manages to convince "the growing small-town right" that all business is allied "under the banner of a 'free market'" against all government. Therefore, despite the pain it has caused, Wall Street manages to "deflect blame for that pain" through rhetoric that appeals to small-town conservatives' distrust of the government and aspirations to greater wealth.

But first, the people.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 16

Explanation and Analysis

Hochschild cuts off her musings about the role conservative feeling rules and deep stories play in the Great Paradox by returning to "the people." This reflects her sustained focus on Louisianans' personal experiences and narratives, above and beyond their political beliefs. Although Hochschild always keeps the broader political problem of the Great Paradox in the back of her mind, her primary focus is getting to know Louisianans "up close" through empathetic listening. She believes that "the people" underlie the politics, and she worries that liberal scholars often forget people's complexity by reducing them to their political beliefs or treating them as nameless citizens "duped" by powerful conservative donors. In her first chapter, Hochschild mirrors this methodological strategy of explaining politics by capturing deep stories and getting "up close" to the people she's studying.

Chapter 2 Quotes

In the life of one man, Lee Sherman, I saw reflected both sides of the paradox—the need for help and a principled refusal of it.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), PPG Management, Lee Sherman

Related Themes:

Page Number: 35

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild talks with Lee Sherman, an ex-employee of PPG. He suffers the consequences of unregulated industrial pollution—he got sick when PPG asked him to dump toxic waste in the bayou, and then the company fired him because it did not want to pay his disability benefits—yet he votes for candidates who want to further deregulate polluters. In this way, Lee is an environmentalist who opposes environmental protection policies. This embodies the Great Paradox as viewed through Hochschild's "keyhole issue" of industrial pollution: people who could benefit the most from government intervention—and whose problems arise precisely because the government has not done its job—actually end up rejecting proposed interventions because of principles that are more important to them than fixing the particular harms they suffer. Lee even recognizes that the government failed him in failing to stop PPG, but this is actually one of the main reasons he distrusts it in the first place. Another is that he believes his tax dollars are being wasted on "the wrong people." Ultimately, then, the principles that stem from Lee's deep story overwhelm his concrete interest in keeping the environment clean. He manages to hate industry and the government at once, even though he votes for the Tea Party candidates that sustain the alliance between the Louisiana state government and the oil industry.

Chapter 3 Quotes

The Arenos didn't simply remember the good old days of a clean Bayou d'Inde. They remembered *against* the great forgetting of industry and state government. This institutional forgetting altered the private act of mourning. And not just that. It altered the Arenos' very identity. They had not left Bayou d'Inde. They were stayers. They didn't want to leave, and even if they had wanted to, they couldn't afford to. The polluting companies had given them no money to enable them to move. And the value of their house had now fallen, for who would want to live on Bayou d'Inde Pass Road, even in a home as beautifully kept up as theirs? The Arenos had become stay-at-home migrants. They had stayed. The environment had left.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Derwin Areno, Annette Areno, Harold Areno

Related Themes:

Page Number: 49

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild shows how the Arenos' remembering is a distinctly political act. They do not merely reminisce about the "good old days," back when they could live by eating animals and farming in the Bayou d'Inde. Instead, they rather insistently sustain the otherwise-forgotten memory of their roots and their land as it used to be. Their remembering is a form of resistance to the government's structural amnesia—whereas oil companies and the state government encourage Louisianans to selectively forget pollution but recognize oil's economic benefits, the Arenos' remembering keeps an alternative possibility alive, even if only in the minds of a relatively powerless few.

In addition, the Arenos' nostalgia for the "good old days" demonstrates the way Louisianans' attachment to their heritage makes them vulnerable to companies that insist on economic development through industry while destroying

the self-sufficient communities that used to survive on natural resources rather than the formal capitalist market. This happened under the 19th century plantation system, when wealthy planters destroyed forests and left poor whites without a means to live off the land, and it repeats when PPG's illegal dumping kills everything in the Bayou d'Inde and leaves the Arenos eating fried chicken for dinner instead of the fish they used to catch.

Chapter 7 Quotes

❝ At least the authors of the protocol were honest in what was a terrible answer to the Great Paradox. "You got a problem? Get used to it."

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Mike Schaff

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 111

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild demonstrates how openly the Louisiana state government fails to even try and protect its citizens: in a report on seafood contamination, the Louisiana State Department of Health and Human Science encourages citizens to simply eat the least toxic parts of fish rather than proposing any sort of measure to limit or solve pollution in Louisiana's widespread wetlands. The report acknowledges that no contaminated fish is safe to eat, but Hochschild sees "a certain grim sense" in its logic. Neither citizens like Mike Schaff nor state government agencies have any illusions that pollution will stop or companies will be held responsible, so the burden of a toxic environment falls on everyday Louisiana residents, who are powerless to clean it up. The government accommodates corporations by whatever means necessary, including eliminating regulations, and citizens are expected to regulate themselves in order to deal with the effects of underregulated polluters.

Chapter 8 Quotes

❝ Churches typically ask parishioners to tithe—to give 10 percent of their income. For many this is a large sum, but it is considered an honor to give it. They *pay* taxes, but they *give* at church.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Madonna Massey

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 121

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild highlights how Louisianans approach taxes and tithes differently. Conservative Christian Louisianans feel like they willingly consent to financially supporting the church but are forced against their will to pay taxes, which reflects their feeling that the government is imposing arbitrary rules on them and oppressively taking their tax dollars.

This recalls Hochschild's argument that private churches in Louisiana fulfill many of the roles that public infrastructure fulfills in liberal states, from community programming and addiction counseling to the redistribution of wealth through charity. The contrast between Louisiana churches and liberal city governments demonstrates the way that the social terrain of institutions in a particular place can structure its people's feelings about politics.

❝ As a powerful influence over the views of the people I came to know, Fox News stands next to industry, state government, church, and the regular media as an extra pillar of political culture all its own.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 126

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild considers the impact Fox News has on the people she meets in Louisiana. Some watch Fox News as much as 14 hours a day, and many see the channel as a much-needed antidote to the liberal media that decries Southerners as prejudiced, uneducated, and backwards. Numerous people Hochschild interviews cite Fox as evidence for their political beliefs—for instance, Janice Areno remembers obscure examples of wasteful government spending she saw on Fox. But Fox's disproportionate focus on quantitatively minor or entirely speculative issues like welfare fraud and terrorist refugees skews Louisianans toward caring about those same issues despite their relatively small scale or improbability. Part of

Fox's appeal is that it reflects and validates Southern moral values, and particularly the endurance self that leads conservatives to agree with the idea that the government is robbing them of tax money and sending it to undeserving minorities.

> The Tea Party listener felt Christiane Amanpour was implicitly scolding her. The woman didn't want to be told she should feel sorry for, or responsible for, the fate of the [sick or starving] child. Amanpour was overstepping her role as a commentator by suggesting how to feel. The woman had her feeling guard up.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 128

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Hochschild explains one woman's response to watching CNN. This anonymous woman's disdain for Christian Amanpour's appeal to viewers' empathy demonstrates the way that conflicts over feeling rules play out through the media and generate empathy walls that prevent dialogue between the left and right. To conservatives, Amanpour's concern for a sick child and call for Americans to take action reflect her insistence that they care about the right problems and feel sympathetic for faraway, non-American victims of issues that do not seem to be Americans' fault. The Tea Party activist sees the liberal insistence that conservatives respond to every humanitarian crisis as a claim to moral superiority that reflects the triumph of the globally-oriented cosmopolitan self over the rooted, inward-focused endurance self.

Conversely, news outlets like Fox advocate conservative feeling rules by reflecting the Christian moral values that Southerners cherish. But, ultimately, Fox acts more as a defense mechanism than a role model: Hochschild notes that her interviewees feel that Fox puts the liberal media in its rightful place by exposing its attempts to control the way conservatives feel.

Chapter 9 Quotes

> As an ideal, the American Dream proposed a right way of feeling. You should feel hopeful, energetic, focused, mobilized. Progress—its core idea—didn't go with feeling confused or mournful.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 140-141

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild highlights the conflict between the American Dream and the lack of economic opportunity that Louisianans face. By explicating the contradiction between the feeling rules the American Dream sets and the sense of desperation her Louisiana friends actually feel, Hochschild demonstrates why conservatives so often blame the government and the line cutters it subsidizes for their inability to find stable, fulfilling, well-paying jobs. Whereas the American Dream asks people to hope for upward mobility and work tirelessly to achieve it, that mobility is increasingly scarce for Southern whites in the 21st century. The fact that the American Dream prescribes a "right way of feeling" also helps explain why conservatives are so reluctant to view themselves as victims—if they are supposed to be focused on making a place for themselves in the world, they are responsible for their own fate and blaming others for one's lack of success seems disrespectful and dishonorable.

> You are a stranger in your own land. You do not recognize yourself in how others see you. It is a struggle to feel seen and honored. And to feel honored you have to feel—and feel seen as—moving forward. But through no fault of your own, and in ways that are hidden, you are moving backward.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:   

Page Number: 144

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Hochschild explains the Tea Party deep story by addressing the reader directly, encouraging them to imagine themselves into Louisianans' shoes much as she strove to do throughout her research. Conservatives feel like they are "moving backward" in the world while groups that previously lacked opportunity—women, minorities, immigrants, and environmentalists, among others—continue to make progress. Then, these "line cutters" have the gall to turn around and tell conservatives who have been patiently waiting all their lives for upward

mobility that their own backwardness and moral rigidity are the real problems holding them back. Not only are people cutting in line, but those same people are succeeding through different moral rules to which conservatives have committed for generations. The endurance self appears to be losing out to the cosmopolitan self embodied by the diverse group of line cutters, and the real cause behind the structural squeeze—the changing structure of global capitalism that has nearly shut the American Dream down—remains hidden.

❝ Missing from the image of blacks in most of the minds of those I came to know was a man or woman standing patiently in line next to them waiting for a well-deserved reward.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 148

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild explores racial underpinnings of the "line cutter" concept. Hochschild suggests that, consciously or otherwise, Louisiana conservatives tend to assimilate all African-Americans to their mental image of the "line cutter." Because so few white Louisianans have personal relationships with black people, Hochschild explains, most of their racial understanding comes from the "disparate images" presented in television and news. These images are bifurcated between representations of "rich mega-stars" and representations that associate black Americans with criminality and welfare, but few of the people Hochschild met in Louisiana could imagine a black experience analogous to their own feeling of working tirelessly but failing to get ahead in an economy that seemed to be discriminating against them. Ironically, of course, America has a storied history of anti-black discrimination in employment, housing, education, and the criminal justice system, but many Louisianans do not think of systemic discrimination as racism—rather, for them, racism simply means explicit hatred for another group, and so despite their prejudice, they do not consider themselves racists. Louisianans' inability to imagine the experiences of black Americans demonstrates the way that media helps erect and enforce empathy walls. It also highlights how the resentment underlying Tea Party voters' deep story leads them toward their own form of white identity politics, whether they acknowledge it or not.

Chapter 10 Quotes

❝ "I don't mind somebody being gay if they want to be gay. Just be a regular person, go to work, mow the lawn, fish. You don't have to be shouting it from the mountaintops. Don't make *me* change and don't call *me* a bigot if I don't."

Related Characters: Janice Areno (speaker), Arlie Russell Hochschild

Related Themes:

Page Number: 162

Explanation and Analysis

Janice Areno explains her feeling that the line cutters are not merely finding a place in American society but rather actively forcing hardworking conservatives to change their own values in order to accommodate diversity and lashing out at them if they refuse to change. However, Janice's concept of a "regular person"—as one who works, takes care of their property, and perhaps goes fishing for fun—also reflects her specific Southern conservative concept of honor. Whereas LGBT Americans like Chaz Bono (to whom Janice is specifically referring here) probably see themselves as asking for acceptance, Janice sees them as "shouting it from the mountaintops" by proclaiming their identity in a public political sphere. Here, the empathy wall between the left and right feels insurmountable: liberals and conservatives both feel threatened by the other side, which seems to be imposing its own feeling rules by speaking its values publicly. However, neither side can see their parallel with the other.

❝ Sometimes Team Players had to suck it up and just cope.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Janice Areno

Related Themes:

Page Number: 163

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Hochschild explains that Janice Areno feels a deep loyalty to the oil industry, even though she knows that it dumps chemicals in her community. Hochschild offers this pithy statement to explain how and why "Team Players" like Janice value endurance. The Team Player exemplifies the endurance self because they are willing to accommodate problems like pollution for the sake of a higher loyalty to

their team. Team Players "just cope" with the emotions that such problems bring by managing their anxiety and constantly reminding themselves of their loyalty to their team. Just as Janice feels proud to take on the emotional labor of caring for her extended family and endure endless years of hard work, she is also proud to tamper her negative emotions for the sake of the Republican Party she loves and tells herself that the "plastic soda bottles, rubber-soled shoes, toothpaste" and other products that petrochemical plants make are worth the downside of pollution. Of course, she does not consider the possibility that people could have all those products without letting companies dump toxic waste in their backyards.

Chapter 11 Quotes

Jackie's lesson ran counter to the deep story; one shouldn't wish too much for what seems like the next step toward the American Dream. That was grabbing. On the other hand, she had struggled hard emotionally not to grab for it.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Jackie Tabor

Related Themes:

Page Number: 175

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild explores Jackie Tabor's ironic understanding of the American Dream. Jackie Tabor exemplifies the Worshipper subtype of the endurance self because she puts faith above her own immediate desires. She both trusts that God will reward her with what she deserves and believes that she must prioritize her husband's decisions and desires above her own in order to reap those rewards. Hochschild notes that this attitude "ran counter to the deep story" because it required her to set aside rather than directly pursue upward mobility. Nevertheless, her faith in God includes a faith in progress, and she sees her family's move through a series of larger houses as proof that she is achieving the American Dream. She is willing to accommodate the imperfect world around her and deeply grateful for everything she has; she feels genuinely blessed each time her family can afford a larger house but realizes that "this could all vanish tomorrow!"

Chapter 13 Quotes

"We need Mikes." Don't be a Cowboy in enduring pollution, he seemed to say. Be a Cowboy fighting it.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild , Russel Honoré (speaker), Donny McCorquodale , Mike Schaff

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 195

Explanation and Analysis

Here, General Honoré explains why Mike Schaff is such an asset to the Green Army. Mike gives environmentalism the credibility of the endurance self, which it seems to need in Louisiana because many conservatives see it as "a soft, feminine issue" that is at odds with the masculine oil and petrochemical industry industries to which they are loyal. Cowboys express their investment in endurance by seeing a willingness to take risk as honorable, and this generally translates into an indifference toward preventing the risky health effects of industrial pollution. For instance, Hochschild's exemplary Cowboy, Donny, believes that people are responsible for their own decision to drive across the I-10 bridge, which is structurally unsound because of the Condea Vista ethylene dichloride leak. However, Hochschild and General Honoré see activism as a different kind of Cowboy bravery, namely the bravery to take social risks and stand up to a community and political party one loves for the sake of an environment one loves just as much.

Again, Hochschild is demonstrating how the endurance self is compatible with different attitudes toward pollution than the ones her friends in Louisiana choose to adopt—it seems that Mike's activism for environmental causes extends from his endurance self just as much as Donny's resistance to environmentalism. Mike's Cowboy honor lies in the pro-regulation political stand he takes for the first time in his life, and Donny's is in the pollution he is willing to face for the sake of companies' freedom.

Without a national vision based on the common good, none of us could leave a natural heritage to our children, or, as the General said, be "free." A free market didn't make us a free people, I thought. But I had slipped way over to my side of the empathy wall again.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Russel Honoré

Related Themes:

Page Number: 201-202

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild "slips" by revealing her own perspective on the relationship between regulations and freedom: without prioritizing the common good, one person's (or chemical company's) freedom will inevitably get in the way of other people's freedom. Because the free market operates on self-interest, economic actors need not consider the negative consequences of their actions so long as they are not impacted themselves. For Hochschild, this is where the government should step in, but many Louisianans seem to think it has no place even when such conflicts of interest arise. While she recognizes that she is regressing "over to my side of the empathy wall," she notably chooses to couch her argument in the language of "heritage" and "freedom" that is rhetorically salient for Louisianans. Nevertheless, she quickly ceases editorializing in order to sincerely consider Mike Schaff's proposal that this "natural heritage" can be preserved without the EPA, which reinforces her dedication to capturing conservative viewpoints even when she cannot bring herself to understand them at first.

"The "federal government" filled a mental space in Mike's mind—and the minds of all those on the right I came to know—associated with a financial sinkhole.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Mike Schaff

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 202

Explanation and Analysis

Hochschild draws a parallel between the government and the Bayou Corne sinkhole: both have sucked important resources down into a bottomless pit. Mike even feels that, in addition to unnecessarily eating up resources, the government also destroys small-scale communities just like the sinkhole destroyed his town. More broadly, this comment reflects Louisianans' sense that government money is wasted money, usually redirected to line-cutting welfare recipients or public sector workers. The picture of the government as a "financial sinkhole" particularly describes the Louisiana state government, which horribly neglected public services during Bobby Jindal's governorship and does little to help its constituents unless they happen to be oil executives. Hochschild suggests that people extrapolate this image to the federal government but also argues that, to an extent, it is true: in 2009, in a "strange new expression of social conflict," the government also bailed out bankrupt companies, homeowners, and even banks. In the conservative deep story, the government looks like a redistribution system that shuttles wealth away from hardworking white men, although Hochschild is careful to portray this identification as an association that "filled a mental space" rather than a conclusion based on any concrete evidence.

Chapter 14 Quotes

"How do you join the identity politics parade and also bring it to a halt?

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 212

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild is describing the predicament white men faced in the 1970s. Frustrated that others began to "cut in line" by proclaiming special status based on their identities, white men felt uniquely left behind because they found themselves without any grounds for claiming cultural capital. Their work opportunities were getting worse, their church and region were disparaged in the national eye, and they faced no unique oppression as white men—except in their exclusion from identity politics. Minorities understandably blamed white men for their oppression, so middle-class white men with stagnant economic opportunities in the South felt they could not openly voice pride in their identities. These conservative Southern white men felt like victims precisely because they could not access the greater recognition and special opportunities afforded to minorities who could claim victimhood. This leads Hochschild to conceptualize conservative populism as a unique response to the cultural politics born in the 1960s and reinforced during President Obama's term: the Tea Party is just identity politics for white men.

❝ For the Tea Party around the country, the shifting moral qualifications for the American Dream had turned them into strangers in their own land, afraid, resentful, displaced, and dismissed by the very people who were, they felt, cutting in line. The undeclared class war transpiring on a different stage, with different actors, and evoking a different notion of fairness was leading those engaged in it to blame the "supplier" of the impostors—the federal government.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 218

Explanation and Analysis

Hochschild explains how the cosmopolitan self began to displace the endurance self as an American ideal. During the 1960s and 1970s, for the first time, a laundry list of minorities were demanding their diverse experiences and perspectives incorporated into the national narrative. This made flexibility and diversity seem far more important than grit and endurance in national cultural discourse, which led conservatives to feel that the rules for upward mobility had unfairly shifted.

This created a class conflict between middle-class whites and a wide variety of generally worse-off minorities that persists to the present day. Conservatives based their position around an endurance self concept of fairness: the American Dream should be a reward from hard work, and Southern whites were working tirelessly, so why were they seeing little progress? Instead of faulting the economic conditions imposed by globalized capitalism and automation, Tea Party voters take out their frustration at the structural squeeze by blaming the degradation of traditional morality. This allows them to reinvest in their existing concepts of honor and the endurance self—by allying with the capitalist industry that promises them rewards for hard work and setting up an empathy wall to block out the complaints of the "impostors" and the federal government that rewards them, conservatives find a narrative that works in their emotional self-interest.

Chapter 15 Quotes

❝ While economic self-interest is never entirely absent, what I discovered was the profound importance of emotional self-interest—a giddy release from the feeling of being a stranger in one's own land.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Donald Trump

Related Themes:

Page Number: 228

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild highlights the enthusiastic energy at Donald Trump's rally and how it works in his supporters' emotional self-interest. As they gather around to affirm him and one another, Trump's supporters experience a powerful feeling of collective effervescence and consequently see voting for Trump as a way to "hold on" to their elation.

This phenomenon allows Hochschild to finally return to her original concern with political scholars' analytical methods: while most focus on seeing the economic interests people have in voting for particular candidates, Hochschild thinks they tend to forget that people often ultimately vote on their feelings. Tea Party voters' deep story leads them to identify with Trump's narrative, and he shares their disdain for liberal "politically correct" feeling rules that demand that they respect "line cutters." They feel that their voices are finally being heard, perhaps for the first time, and this alignment of values and feeling rules creates a community with a vested interest in protecting its own and a deep distrust for outsiders.

Chapter 16 Quotes

❝ Louisianans are sacrificial lambs to the entire American industrial system. Left or right, we all happily use plastic combs, toothbrushes, cell phones, and cars, but we don't all pay for it with high pollution. As research for this book shows, red states pay for it more—partly through their own votes for easier regulation and partly through their exposure to a social terrain of politics, industry, television channels, and a pulpit that invites them to do so. In one way, people in blue states have their cake and cat it too, while many in red states have neither. Paradoxically, politicians on the right appeal to this sense of victimhood, even when policies such as those of former governor Jindal exacerbate the problem.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker), Bobby Jindal

Related Themes:

Page Number: 232

Explanation and Analysis

Hochschild declares that, in one particular sense, the people she studied in this book are absolutely victims. Because Louisianans are willing to accept minimal regulations, companies flock to their state and dump the waste that other states would fight against. These companies gain social power in the state, work to elect politicians favorable to their interests, build the "psychological program" that ensures citizens value their industry, and further cut regulations so they can pollute even more. In addition, so many Louisianans end up working in the chemical industry, that they feel loyal to it and favor social institutions that echo those feelings.

Hochschild is careful not to blame conservatives for this cycle of expanding pollution and expanding resistance to the regulations that prevent it because she realizes the way everyday life is steeped in an admiration for oil and willingness to endure pollution. She sees powerful institutions masterfully manipulating Louisianans—who already believe the government is trying to get in the way of their freedom and pride themselves on their ability to endure hardship—into further cutting government across the board, which leads her back from her keyhole issue into the Great Paradox as a whole.

Afterword Quotes

❝ Disaggregated, such smaller narratives hung free, maybe to gather in some new way downstream. And to all this was the background presence of a powerful truth—life had been hard for them and it could get a lot worse.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 256

Explanation and Analysis

In this passage, Hochschild illustrates the "smaller narratives" of racism that resound in Louisianan's lives. Hochschild sees such narratives as "disaggregated" because they do not match up to form a "unitary" whole. Many of her interviewees have a deep-set belief in racial hierarchy even though they would never consider themselves bigots or explicit racists. Most recognize the horrors of plantation slavery but do not see the ways that system endures in the present and actually label black Americans "line cutters" when they point out ongoing discrimination. They condemn the white supremacist demonstration in Charlottesville and even Donald Trump's reaction to it, but defend the Confederate flag as a matter of regional pride and argue it has no connection to slavery. Their "smaller narratives" appeal to principles that have little to do with race but lack the historical context necessary to make their racial implications clear. The ultimate irony, Hochschild suggests, may be that many of the economic issues blue-collar whites now face are closer to the struggles of black Americans than to those of affluent whites. Again, it seems that a lack of contact, communication, and understanding across the racial and political divides in America are more fundamental to these attitudes than actual conditions on the ground.

❝ The history of the United States has been the history of whites cutting ahead of blacks, first of all through slavery, and later through Jim Crow laws and then through New Deal legislation and the post-World War II GI Bill, which offered help to millions of Americans with the exception of those in farm and domestic work, occupations in which blacks were overrepresented. And racial discrimination continues today.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 260-1

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Hochschild analyzes her Louisiana acquaintances' ambivalent racism. None of the people that she meets deny the horrors of any of these particular racist policies, but most do not see systematic racial discrimination as a continuing problem in the United States. Accordingly, whites who feel that blacks are unfairly cutting ahead of them do not see the way the "the history of whites cutting ahead of blacks" remains embedded in the United States' demographic structure and continues to write itself in the present. Hochschild's Louisiana friends do not consider themselves racist because they see racism as explicit hatred for another group, even though most nevertheless implicitly hold racist assumptions about American minorities and ultimately supported Donald Trump's racist immigration rhetoric during his campaign.

❝ For the most part, the real line cutters are not people one can blame or politicians [one] can thunder against. That's because they're not people. They're robots. Nothing is changing the face of American industry faster than automation, and nowhere is that change more stark than in the cornerstone of Louisiana's industrial wealth, oil.

Related Characters: Arlie Russell Hochschild (speaker)

Related Themes:  

Page Number: 261

Explanation and Analysis

Here, Hochschild offers an evidence-based sociological explanation for the structural squeeze. She asserts that women, immigrants, and minorities are not taking white men's jobs; robots are. Automation is incredibly attractive to industry because it cuts labor costs to zero, and this threatens white Louisianans disproportionately because so many of these disappearing jobs are in oil and manufacturing. But, just as the government, the media, churches and eventually white working people themselves come to laud oil and petrochemical companies for the "economic progress" they bring to Louisiana, people find it hard to blame automation because robots are dazzlingly futuristic. Nothing says "progress" better than robots. It is much easier for Louisianans to scapegoat "line cutters," especially when the same spate of social institutions encourages them to double down on the endurance self that leads them to accept pollution. In a particularly dystopian version of this future, robots may run Louisiana's oil rigs while a select few executives continue to get wealthier, and everyday people with fewer job opportunities than ever before continue to see toxic pollution dumped in their backyards.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

PREFACE

Alarmed at the increasing political hostility between the American left and right, liberal sociologist Arlie Hochschild started researching this book in an attempt to understand conservatives. While most researchers approach polarization from a "political perspective," Hochschild sought to capture "how life *feels* to people on the right—that is, the emotion that underlies politics." To truly understand how contemporary conservatives feel, she had to "imagine [herself] into their shoes."

Although Hochschild has been a firsthand observer to most of the last half-century's major political events and transformations, she finds America's current degree of political polarization uniquely alarming because it has started to break down the relationships between people on the left and right. Each side of the political spectrum tells a different story about a different United States, and Hochschild recognizes that understanding the current divide requires not merely studying conservatives from her outside perspective but rather learning how they see the world by empathizing with their perspective.

This is Hochschild's first book about politics, but she has used the same "close-up approach" in the past. Her previous research focused on how changing gender roles and family dynamics *feel* to Americans, and Hochschild spent decades interviewing working parents who struggle to make time for family life and the people to whom they increasingly outsource parental duties like childcare and pregnancy. This research led Hochschild to strongly support paid parental leave, a policy that the United States (unlike the rest of the world's major industrialized nations) does not offer. Paid parental leave would benefit Americans across the political spectrum, but many conservatives continue to oppose it. Wanting to understand the Americans "who see government more as problem than solution," she set out on a "journey to the heart of the American right."

Like this book, Hochschild's past work also highlighted the way that a free market indifferent to people's feelings created miserable lose-lose situations for working people of all income levels. Hochschild sees government intervention as the right way to fix such a mutually-detrimental situation, but she wonders why so many American conservatives would rather deal with such problems than have the government address them. She later explains this through a concept that she calls the "endurance self."

One of the people Hochschild followed on her journey was Sharon Galicia, a boisterous single mother who sold medical insurance to industrial laborers as she traveled around southern Louisiana. Galicia was "unfazed" by the tough workmen and their heavy machinery; she chatted with them about hunting and football while they signed up for insurance. She told Hochschild about her troubled upbringing, which inspired many questions—including why Sharon, "an enthusiastic member" of the Tea Party, found paid parental leave "unthinkable," even though she would benefit from it.

Hochschild is careful to introduce Sharon's personality and life story before discussing her politics, which reflects Hochschild's strategy of empathizing with conservatives despite her profound disagreements with them. Sharon's story also introduces some distinctive features of Louisiana life that will resonate throughout the book, like hunting, industrial labor, and an emphasis on inward toughness but outward hospitality. Sharon's opposition to paid parental leave, even though she would benefit greatly from it, makes her Hochschild's first example of the Great Paradox, a concept that will be introduced in chapter one.

Hochschild thanked Sharon as much for the window into her life as for her precious "gift of trust and outreach." Whereas most Americans worry that building an "empathy bridge" with someone from the opposing side means giving up on "clearheaded analysis," Hochschild argues that "it's on the other side of that bridge that the most important analysis can begin." Hochschild sees "reaching out to someone from another world" and "*having that interest welcomed*" as a "gift" in a time when polarization "makes it too easy to settle for dislike and contempt."

Hochschild explicitly introduces her argument that empathy is the key to political understanding. By emphasizing that her relationship with Sharon is precious, Hochschild demonstrates that political differences do not need to get in the way of valuable personal relationships. She mentions her lifelong interest in and respect for diversity, which suggests that she may express a "cosmopolitan self," which is another concept that will be introduced later in the book.

CHAPTER 1 – TRAVELING TO THE HEART

Louisiana native Mike Schaff drives Hochschild around the old plantation where he grew up, showing her where his family and community members used to live. Schaff tells Hochschild about Louisiana's shift from "an era of sugar, cotton, and mule-drawn plows" to an economy dominated by oil. In the past, he explains, his community was tight-knit; even though they were often needy, nobody needed government help to survive because everyone could rely on one another. But now, Schaff feels like "big government" has gotten in the way.

Again, Hochschild puts people before their politics: she introduces Mike's sense of loss and nostalgia in order to show why he disdains government. Mike believes that the public sphere has destroyed the private sphere by replacing the close, empathetic, trusting bonds of local communities with the expectation that the state will provide for people in need. However, Hochschild also highlights that the economic opportunities available to Louisianans have completely changed since Mike's childhood, which foreshadows her argument that economic transformations are the real cause behind the disappearance of Louisianans' old ways of life.

Mike Schaff proclaims his loyalty to the Tea Party. Hochschild first met him at an environmental rally where he was speaking. A few years before, a huge **sinkhole** "robbed" him of his new home, and a "lightly regulated drilling company" caused the catastrophe. Despite this, Mike still favors "drastic cuts" in environmental protection spending, and Hochschild is "puzzled" by his beliefs.

Hochschild's "puzzled" reaction shows that she considers Mike's Tea Party politics and environmentalist activism as a contradiction, and perhaps an example of the Great Paradox: he appears to be fighting against solutions to a problem that he cares deeply about. Hochschild's reaction also demonstrates that she cannot yet see past her own biases and assumptions about what government can and should do.

Hochschild suggests that her confusion might stem from an "empathy wall" between her and Mike. (An empathy wall is "an obstacle to deep understanding of another person" that prevents people from challenging their existing beliefs and relating meaningfully with the other side.) They come from opposite political bubbles: Hochschild is a liberal professor from Berkeley and, when she told Schaff about her background, he responded that people from Berkeley "must be *communist*!" But Mike's welcoming, "soulful" demeanor made conversation easy, even though neither of them had ever really known people from the other party.

Hochschild and Mike each come from one of America's two disconnected political bubbles, and his joke that her town is full of communists reflects the colossal empathy wall between the two sides. Despite this, Hochschild notes that their political differences do not get in the way of a genuine personal connection—Mike's soulfulness reflects his sincere desire for dialogue, and the two discover that they have more in common than either of them previously expected.

Hochschild notes that "partyism" (prejudice based on political party) is now the greatest dividing line in American society. Americans from each side increasingly move to the same places and follow separate news media; even belief in climate change is now determined by politics more than anything else.

Hochschild illustrates how "partyism" prevents each side of the political spectrum from interacting with one another as anything expect for political enemies. Hochschild's explanation of partyism seems to align it with groupthink—a term in social psychology that refers to the way that groups tend to (unknowingly) make ill-informed decisions for the sake of preserving homogeneity.

But Hochschild argues that "this split has widened because the right has moved right, not because the left has moved left." She cites historical examples of previous Republican administrations that favored more infrastructure spending, higher tax rates, and closer relationships with labor unions than today's Republicans would ever accept. Now, Republicans want to cut entire federal agencies because they no longer trust the government to help improve their lives. Hochschild wants to connect with members of this "more rapidly shifting and ever stronger right."

Here, as throughout her book, Hochschild is careful to center the historical context behind her subjects' beliefs in order to demonstrate how they are representative of larger trends and are influenced by forces beyond their control on a national scale. The Republican Party's accelerating rightward shift particularly demonstrates its increasing reluctance to involve the government in the free market.

Hochschild sees Louisiana as an "extreme example" of the phenomenon she calls the Great Paradox: although conservative "red states" have "more teen mothers, more divorce, worse health, more obesity, more trauma-related deaths, more low-birth-weight babies, and lower school enrollment" than liberal blue states, conservative states tend to reject government programs to address those issues. Louisiana is one of the worst offenders—it ranks second-to-last in health and child well-being, and quality of life is lower there than elsewhere in the country for black and white Americans alike.

Louisianans' behavior appears to be contradictory because they reject solutions to their social problems, even as those problems continue to get worse. This "Great Paradox" is the central phenomenon Hochschild's book seeks to explain—so far, Sharon Galicia and Mike Schaff's rejection of government help suggests that they exemplify this paradox in their individual lives, just as Louisiana exemplifies it on a statewide level.

Red (Republican) states like Louisiana also receive more money from the federal government than blue (Democratic) states, but many Louisianans Hochschild meets—including Mike Schaff—want to keep that federal money away. Like Schaff, many Louisianans deny climate change science even as their state loses coastline and defend the Wall Street-backed corporate monopolies that are increasingly outcompeting their own small businesses.

It also seems paradoxical that Louisianans do not want federal money but get so much of it. Both Mike's climate change denial and his pro-business stance are rooted more in anti-government principles than an attention to policies' practical effects.

Hochschild considers Alec MacGillis's popular explanation for the Great Paradox: MacGillis thinks that everyone votes in their political self-interest, but poor conservatives who need social programs vote less often than wealthier ones who truly benefit from shrinking the government. Hochschild wants to disprove this thesis by showing that affluent whites in red states still vote against their political interests. She wants to "pick out a problem that affluent voters in poor red states *do* have, and to show they don't want government help for that either." She chooses environmental pollution as this "keyhole issue"—a lens through which she can come to understand the Great Paradox from the viewpoint of conservatives.

MacGillis's explanation suggests that some poorer conservatives really do want government help. Hochschild is suspicious of this because she thinks that people actually vote based on deeper principles and feelings rather than self-interest. Her approach to studying pollution seeks to show that conservatives of all income levels exhibit the Great Paradox by rejecting government help, consequently proving that there is a more complex game of identity at work than MacGillis thinks.

Hochschild explains how the growth of Southern conservatism since the 1970s has made the region "the geographic heart of the right." The rightward trend has been especially strong among white Southerners; in Louisiana, only 14% of whites voted for Obama and more congressional representatives have joined the Tea Party Caucus than any other state.

Hochschild, who was born in 1940, sees that the Republican Party's new form of conservatism is a relatively recent historical phenomenon, and Louisiana displays an extreme version of it. Hochschild's book focuses on white Southerners because they have undergone the strongest rightward shift—she later attributes this change to whites' reaction to liberal identity politics.

Hochschild was lucky to find a contact in the southwest Louisiana town of Lake Charles: Sally Cappel, a Democrat whose lifelong friend Shirley Slack is a Tea Party supporter. Sally and Shirley keep keys to each other's houses, but they watch different news channels, married "like-minded" men, and seem to have little interest in changing each other's minds. To Hochschild, their friendship "models what our country itself needs to forge: the capacity to connect across difference."

Hochschild is careful to build her contacts in Louisiana through a network of personal relationships, which she believes will offer her a more complete and in-depth picture of the actual lives, values, and cultural practices of Louisiana residents. Sally and Shirley's relationship, like those Hochschild develops with the people she profiles in this book, demonstrates how polarized contemporary American life can be, but that deep, trusting personal relationships are possible despite that polarization.

Hochschild examines common theories about "the rise of the right." Liberal scholars suspect that corporate donors are orchestrating grassroots Tea Party activism, and while Hochschild agrees that "purchased political influence is real," she believes that it is too convenient an explanation for the political beliefs of individuals like Mike.

Unlike liberal scholars who blame national political conspiracies for all Tea Party activism, Hochschild insists on getting up close to actual Tea Party activists and hearing them out—these liberal scholars start from suspicion, whereas Hochschild starts from empathy.

Other scholars believe that the Tea Party emerged from specific Southern regional traditions and cultural values. Hochschild agrees that the South prides itself on resistance to the federal government and that its voters worry about the country moving away from traditional Christian morality, but she finds these theories insufficient to explain the Tea Party's rise without "a full understanding of emotion in politics."

These cultural explanations are closer to what Hochschild is looking for, but they simply link current political behavior to historical beliefs without explaining how or why people continue to believe them. Instead of painting a whole region with such a broad brush, Hochschild wants to learn why individual Southerners choose to resist the government and what emotions underpin that stance.

More fundamental than geography or culture are liberals' and conservatives' competing "feeling rules." Liberals think people should feel "happy for the gay newlywed, sad at the plight of the Syrian refugee, unresentful about paying taxes," but conservatives resent these expectations, which seem to attack their own notions of how they should feel about other groups. By seeking the "deep stories" behind people's political beliefs—the "story that *feels as if* it were true" on each side of the aisle—Hochschild believes she can understand "the shoulds and shouldn'ts of feeling," as well as Republican politicians' powerful appeals to conservatives' feeling rules.

Hochschild first started writing about "feeling rules" in the 1970s, and the concept has been deeply influential in sociology ever since. She highlights that people in differing cultural contexts are conditioned to respond to events and information by expressing different emotions in different ways. She suggests that a conflict in these feeling rules might be the real underlying cause of political polarization in the United States. The deep story narrates how people feel about themselves amidst a broader political context and helps explain why people follow different sets of feeling rules.

Hochschild's research started with focus groups in Sally Cappel's kitchen, which built into a broader network of relationships with Louisianans from every walk of life who invited her to come visit their churches, homes, and community gatherings. Ultimately, her five years of research resulted in "4,690 pages of transcripts based on interviews with a core of forty Tea Party advocates and twenty others from various walks of life," some of whom Hochschild chose to follow more closely.

Hochschild spent an extraordinary amount of time and emotional energy getting up close to the sixty people she studied. Fittingly, her research was more about building deep relationships and trust with Louisianans than simply asking them what they believe and why they believe it. If she merely conducted traditional surveys, she probably would have failed to overcome the empathy wall separating her from the conservatives she wanted to study.

Hochschild's subjects varied widely in areas like their commitment to church, adherence to mainline Tea Party views, and suspicion of the poor and President Obama. But Louisiana was still a world apart from Berkeley, from the aisles of Bibles in its bookstores to its lack of foreign films and recycling bins to its residents' prayers before dinner. She came to see the Tea Party as a culture: "a way of seeing and feeling about a place and its people."

While Louisiana conservatives have many unifying cultural features, like Berkeley liberals, they are still fundamentally diverse in their views. Hochschild points out this diversity in order to warn against treating conservatives as a monolith, which is a mistake that many of the other scholars she examines in this chapter seem to make.

Hochschild compares the list of registered student organizations at Louisiana State University—which focus on religion, agriculture, the military, and conservative politics—to the left-wing activist groups at the University of California, Berkeley, where she teaches. She notes that conservative iconography is everywhere in Lake Charles—most striking are the numerous memorials to the Confederacy. Race pops up "everywhere in the physical surroundings, but almost nowhere in spontaneous direct talk."

Hochschild looks at student life, a slice of culture that she is intimately familiar with as a professor, to demonstrate how people in Louisiana and California tend to care about different kinds of political issues altogether. In the South, locals' silence about race suggests that Louisiana's distinctive cultural features also include what its people chose not *to do and talk about.*

Before setting off for Louisiana, Hochschild re-read the "Tea Party bible," Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged*. Rand argued that "greed is good" and helping the poor is morally wrong. From her reading, Hochschild expected Tea Party conservatives to have a "selfish, tough, cold" worldview like Rand's—instead, she discovered "warm, open people who were deeply charitable to those around them, including an older, white liberal stranger writing a book."

Hochschild reveals her own prejudices before setting off for Louisiana. The expectations she derived about Tea Party voters from reading Atlas Shrugged *were just as far from reality as many conservatives' distorted views of liberals and minorities.*

Hochschild remembers meeting gospel singer Madonna Massey at a Republican Women of Southwest Louisiana meeting. Madonna proclaimed her love for conservative talk radio host Rush Limbaugh (who is best known for his fiery rants against the left) because he criticizes "femi-nazis" and other liberal groups that tend to look down on the South. Hochschild realized that Madonna, who is "a gifted singer, beloved by a large congregation, a graduate of a two-year Bible college, and a caring mother of two," saw Limbaugh more as a "firewall against liberal insults" than a role model. While Hochschild had found "good people at the center of this Great Paradox," she still could not understand how they would vote for a harsher government and more pollution in their own backyards.

Again, Hochschild discovers a wide gulf between political discourse and personal reality. She realizes that she was projecting the political tone of Ayn Rand and Rush Limbaugh onto the "good people" she met, which suggests that liberals and conservatives might misconstrue one another in this way because they learn about each other secondhand rather than through firsthand experience and personal relationships. Limbaugh's function for conservatives is primarily emotional: he validates Madonna Massey's feeling of being attacked by liberals and defends her own feeling rules against this perceived assault from the other side.

CHAPTER 2 – "ONE THING GOOD"

82-year-old Lee Sherman waits for Hochschild on his front porch and greets her with "a welcoming smile." In his youth, Sherman was a professional football player and NASCAR driver, but now "he is happy to be alive" after working at the Pittsburgh Plate Glass factory for years—in fact, all of his old co-workers have died.

Once again, liberal readers meet the person before the politics: Hochschild highlights Lee's gracious hospitality and recounts his proudest achievements to portray his sense of self before even mentioning his environmentalism or politics.

Sherman became an environmentalist in the 1980s after leaving PPG, but now he is an activist for the Tea Party. Hochschild wonders how Sherman squares his opposition to regulation with his past environmentalism and suggests that his story might help "unlock the door to the Great Paradox."

Like Mike Schaff, Sherman somehow manages to defend both the Republican Party and Louisiana's environment, which puzzles Hochschild—but she sees her bewilderment as an invitation to further understanding rather than evidence of Sherman's paradoxical beliefs.

In fact, Lee Sherman's politics shifted throughout his life: his mother was a liberal labor activist and Lee was a Democrat for years, but he "turned Republican" when he moved to the South. After moving to Louisiana in 1965, his "fearless and careful" temperament was the perfect match for a job "fitting and repairing pipes carrying lethal chemicals" at PPG.

Lee's political shift to the right over the last fifty years echoes the broader pattern in the South as a whole. It also suggests that there may be something about Southern culture that matched his daring temperament and turned him conservative.

Sherman tells the story of an explosion at the plant—upon noticing a chlorine leak, his boss told him to leave because the company had too little safety equipment; a half hour later, "the plant blew up" and five people died. At PPG, this lack of safety equipment was standard—for years, Sherman repaired pipes with his bare hands and no protective mask. His only safety training was advice from coworkers. When PPG gave employees badges to measure their chemical exposure, Lee hit safety limits so fast that his supervisor laughed it off and sent him back to work. Another time, after an accidental spill burned all the clothes off Lee's body, the same supervisor refused to reimburse the full cost of new clothes.

PPG's indifference to safety procedures killed many of its workers and slowly poisoned the rest; it failed to enforce basic regulations and forced workers to deal with the consequences of the company's own negligence. Without government supervision, PPG did anything it could get away with. Even though Sherman continued to work at PPG, it was clearly hard for him to trust the company, and this initial distrust was what eventually allowed him to separate his own perspective from that of the company.

The day after that spill, PPG management ordered Sherman to "take on another ominous job." He would sneak out with a waste tank at night, "make sure no one saw [him]," and illegally dump toxic tar waste just upstream from the Bayou d'Inde. The chemicals made him so sick that he had to go on medical leave for eight months, but PPG's management did not want to pay his disability benefits, so they fired him for absenteeism instead.

Despite Lee's distrust in PPG, he was still proud to have a job that was both steady and well-suited to his daring temperament, so he did what he was told. However, PPG was only looking out for its own profit and felt no parallel loyalty to Lee; he was forced to endure the consequences of PPG's irresponsible behavior, in terms of both health and employment, which is a pattern in everyday Louisianans' encounters with industry.

Seven years after PPG fired Lee, fish started dying en masse in the Bayou d'Inde. A government task force instructed locals to stay out of the water and avoid eating fish from the bayou more than twice a month. This infuriated Lee's community, many of whom were fishermen suddenly out of a job. These fishermen were furious at the federal government, which they blamed for destroying their livelihoods.

Even though private industry's focus on profit above community safety is clearly what caused the fish to die, Louisianans still blamed the government. This suggests that Louisiana residents trust the industry next door but distrust the government that issues environmental decrees from Washington.

Lee Sherman tells Hochschild about a public meeting organized to address the contamination. PPG and state officials sat together on stage, telling "about a thousand angry fishermen" that their catch was too contaminated to eat or sell. As the PPG executives "feigned ignorance" about how it all happened, Sherman came onstage holding a cardboard sign that read, "I'M THE ONE WHO DUMPED IT IN THE BAYOU." The fisherman let Sherman tell his story, which ultimately enabled them to file a lawsuit. But they only won $12,000 each.

Sherman's decision to speak out expresses the triumph of his conscience over his loyalty: his stubborn desire to clear his conscience, avenge his mistreatment, and preserve his pride leads him to seek justice against the powerful alliance between the government and PPG. This alliance was clearly already strong in the 1980s and served to push the consequences of industrial capitalism onto workers and consumers; regulators were actually trying to prevent *regulation and supervision.*

Lee feels that PPG made him do their "moral dirty work" and then "discarded" him like "a form of waste." As payback for PPG's betrayal, Lee's explosive public admission was "the most heroic act of [his] life." But, in the following years, he became much more conservative. He still thought that PPG acted wrongly and could not be trusted to regulate itself, but he came to reject federal regulation as a solution for pollution. Hochschild sees "both sides of the Great Paradox" in Sherman: "the need for help and a principled refusal of it."

PPG has no qualms about endangering the safety and infringing on the freedoms of its loyal workers, the people who live near its operations, and the Louisiana environment. However, Lee rejects environmental protections because he distrusts the government even more than he hates PPG. After all, the company pursued its own self-interest (which is what companies are supposed to do), but the government failed to do its job of ensuring public safety.

Hochschild sees three main reasons Tea Party voters reject government intervention: religion, taxes, and honor. Lee's main complaint is taxes—he thinks that his tax dollars fund welfare programs that reward laziness, and he rejects liberal "PC rules telling him who to feel sorry for." Instead, he shows his sympathy for the poor by donating Christmas presents to needy children every year.

Lee feels that the government is a giant scheme to defraud him and other hardworking middle-class white people and give his tax dollars to undeserving minorities. This theory combines his distrust of government and minorities into a narrative that sees an alliance between government and the poor rather than between government and industry.

But Lee and his wife can barely afford to give out these gifts because they are living off federal money themselves. He receives Social Security and is furious at the government for twice denying him what he believed were his fair share of benefits. He calls himself "a stubborn man" and claims to be seeking vindication against the government, just like he did against PPG. Both wronged him, Hochschild suggests, but at least PPG gave him a good paycheck and a place to show off "his great skill, his bravery, his endurance, his manhood."

Lee realizes that he truly needs federal money, so he makes an exception for himself but fails to realize that other recipients of that money need it too—he is incapable of empathizing with other people who need government help and, to some extent, views that need as reflecting a moral failure. This may be why he stays on the offensive against the government instead of feeling grateful for the way it now helps him.

CHAPTER 3 – THE REMEMBERERS

Hochschild sits in the living room of 77-year-old Harold Areno, "a gentle Cajun pipefitter" who takes her through his old photo albums. He finds a photo of himself standing beside the Bayou d'Inde with his parents and nine siblings in 1950. He remembers how his mother used to pull fish straight out of the bayou and he shows Hochschild more photos of the family amidst the bayou's bald cypress trees and lush moss.

Like Mike Schaff and Lee Sherman, Harold Areno defines himself through a way of life that is no longer available. He particularly defines this identity through a nostalgia for his family's close ties to their land, which allowed them to live self-sufficiently instead of needing to work for wages.

Now, all the bayou's trees and most of its animals are dead. Harold and Annette live just downstream from the spot where Lee Sherman dumped PPG's toxic waste and just across the Bayou d'Inde from the place where three generations of Harold's ancestors cultivated the land, ate the bayou's wildlife, and even drank its water from time to time. The Arenos were Cajuns—descendants of French settlers that the British expelled from Canada in 1765—and few of them finished school because speaking French was discouraged there.

PPG's toxic pollution destroyed this way of life and made their land valueless and unlivable: the Arenos were no longer able to live off the Bayou d'Inde. Just as their Cajun ancestors lost their language because of pressure from the government, Harold's generation lost their distinct lifestyle because of reckless industry.

The Arenos' son Derwin stops by with fried chicken from Popeyes. He cannot remember a time before the bayou was dangerously polluted; now, he has learned to "*smell* whether the water and air are good or bad" anywhere he goes. Together, the family catalogues all the animals that have died out from the pollution: bullfrogs, fish, turtles, cows, chickens, goats, sheep, and even hogs (which Harold notes "can stand almost everything"). Hochschild compares the Arenos' land to "the scene of a slow-motion crime" and she sees "both resignation and defiance" in their stories.

It is easy to imagine that, some thirty years ago, the Arenos would be eating fish from the bayou rather than fried chicken; whereas Harold retains the memory of this earlier way of life, Derwin never got to experience it, and now detecting pollution is second nature for him. The Arenos' "resignation and defiance" demonstrates how Louisianans can endure hardship without actually accepting it.

Not only did most of the bayou's animals die, but nearly everyone in the Areno family also developed cancer. Harold lists 11 cancer cases in his immediate family—he and Annette were the only ones to survive. Hochschild is "at a loss for words." The family debates what, if anything, is safe to eat from the bayou. Harold refuses to eat anything that lives there, but Derwin trusts his instincts and eats anything that looks, smells, and tastes normal. Annette takes issue with her son's fearlessness and agrees with her husband that nothing from the bayou is safe to eat. But Harold adds that, at the least, "he'd eat the safe *part* of the fish"—not the fat and the "dark part," where the toxins are more concentrated.

Hochschild's deep capacity to empathize with the Arenos is apparent through her shock at the news of their family's cancer; she is clearly relating to them on an emotional level because she loses track of her train of thought. The Arenos' debate over whether to eat the fish suggests both an enduring desire to preserve their previous lifestyle and a utilitarian mindset toward the problems they are forced to endure—this is the same mindset that the government's report on how to eat contaminated fish enforces later on in the book.

Harold explains that the bayou is still getting worse—the Army Corps of Engineers dredged the toxic sludge from the bottom and dumped it on the riverbanks. Seeing that the government had failed the Arenos in this regard, Hochschild them whether they want stricter pollution regulations, and Harold says yes. He and Annette recognize that most Republican candidates "stand for big business" rather than families like theirs, but they still vote Republican because of their Christian faith.

The government's cosmetic attempts to fix pollution actually made it worse for residents, which leads the Arenos to distrust the government as much as the companies who pollute the bayou. The Arenos have little trust that politicians on either side care about their personal interests, although unlike many Louisianans, they do not necessarily distrust regulations on principle—just the government's willingness and effectiveness in enforcing them

The Arenos' primary guidance in life has come from faith: "politics hadn't helped, they felt, and the Bible surely had." Based on "faith and family values," they even voted for Louisiana's Republican governor Bobby Jindal, who accused President Obama of "holding our economy hostage" with environmental protection standards and who cut $1.6 billion from education and social services to give tax breaks to oil companies.

Religion is the only thing that gives the Arenos hope for a better future, so it is unsurprising that they rely on it—doing so is in their emotional self-interest. Meanwhile, their belief that no politician will protect their political self-interest by cleaning up the bayou emphasizes that pollution is an invisible and forgotten problem in Louisiana—except by the people who suffer the direct effects.

Still, the Arenos vote Republican in order "to place themselves in spiritually-guided hands." *Trust* is central to politics for them, especially since the government had so often broken their trust in the past. They feel forced to choose between trustworthy Republicans who will ignore the environment and suspicious Democrats who promise to save it. While "no one they voted for thought [climate change] was real," the Arenos decided by studying the Bible that global warming "was, indeed, a man-made disaster-in-waiting that called for strong countermeasures."

Hochschild explicitly demonstrates how distrust lies at the heart of the Great Paradox: people reject government help not because they do not want a better life but rather because they do not trust the government to provide them with one. The Arenos have essentially given up on the environment but still deeply wish they could bring themselves to trust the government as much as they trust the Bible. Interestingly, the Arenos' belief in climate change—which breaks with the Republican Party's mainstream view—actually stems from their loyalty to religion.

Derwin Areno notes that warning signs on the bayou have been taken down and he suggests that the oil industry's advertising is "trying to make us forget." Hochschild argues that the Arenos "remembered *against*" a "larger institutional forgetting" that prevented them from leaving the area, even if they had wanted to. She recalls the etymology behind the word "nostalgia"—the longing to return to a faraway home. The Arenos, conversely, "live at home in an environment no longer there."

Memory is an important site of political conflict in Louisiana: Republicans convince locals to accept pollution by helping them forget it and focus on oil companies' economic contributions to the region, rather than by admitting their problem. Indeed, this injunction to forget takes the form of a feeling rule, which means feeling nostalgic for a better life in the past—even though Louisiana did not have oil at the time—is itself a form of resistance.

Hochschild also met other "rememberers," like the nameless Forest Service worker who set up plaques memorializing long-lost cypress forests and activist Paul Ringo, who worked for the nonprofit Riverkeepers and brought crowds to pray for the polluted Sabine river. But most people in southwest Louisiana want the economic progress that oil promises and find it hard to trust secular, liberal outsiders from the government who claim to be saving their environment. Many petrochemical workers see a forced choice between their jobs that pollute and the "magnificent wilderness" they love.

These other "rememberers" also sustain the memory of pollution against a government that encourages Louisianans to forget. By making workers feel as though they are forced to choose between oil and the environment, the government stages a conflict between emotions and industry, which suggests that saving the environment is just about sentimentality—not human health and welfare.

News media reinforces the "basic feeling around town" that nostalgia is a barrier to economic progress. Hochschild sees this as a kind of structural amnesia, a term coined by anthropologist E.E. Evans-Pritchard when he noted that the Sudanese Nuer would forget their female ancestors because they were a patriarchal society. Similarly, in Louisiana, powerful institutions—the government, the media and the oil industry—work together to incentivize systematic collective forgetting of pollution.

The government, media, and oil industry are in a sense trying to set up an empathy wall between Louisianans and their environment: the structural amnesia they enforce encourages people to prioritize showing pride in their work over their nostalgia for the environment. This encourages a kind of self that sees emotion as weakness and enduring suffering as a source of honor.

Harold suggests that the government tends to "*overregulate* the *bottom* because it's *harder* to regulate the *top*"; the government does not merely help people forget past rules violations, but it also enforces those rules unevenly. Oil companies get off easy, but "the little guy" gets punished.

Harold understands how corporations get around the law in Louisiana—the government takes advantage of its constituents' pride in endurance by forcing them to deal with the problems created by industry.

But the Arenos believe that God "remembers how it was" before the pollution and understands what they have endured. They think that the "End Times" are approaching fast—Derwin suggests that God's cleansing fire is probably the bayou's best chance of getting cleaned up. While Derwin's parents hope that humankind will act first, "they've already waited long enough and nearly despair of politics."

The Arenos' Christian faith encourages them to accept their suffering for the sake of a later reward and refrain from taking political action to address the bayou's pollution. The total lack of accountability for polluters has led them to resignation, which allows the government to continue letting oil destroy its citizens' wellbeing without consequence.

On her way out, Hochschild asks the Arenos about a lawsuit they have filed against 22 polluting companies. They have no news about the lawsuit, but it is their only chance at getting enough money to move. Their lawyer suggests that the companies and government are working together to "string these lawsuits out for so long that plaintiffs die before money is due," and Hochschild is "astonished to learn" that one of the Arenos' co-plaintiffs is none other than Lee Sherman. As Harold walks Hochschild back to her car, he tells her that "the most important thing" is to think "*long-term*" and focus on getting into Heaven.

Despite their resignation, the Arenos are still trying to do whatever they can to recover damages, but they have little expectation that they will ever beat the oil industry that is in the government's back pocket. Hochschild is surprised that Lee Sherman was Harold's coworker and is helping with the legal case because, first, this means that the Arenos are friendly with the man who destroyed their bayou, and secondly, Harold actually worked for the company that did so. While Lee and the Arenos can sustain a trusting relationship despite this history, PPG took advantage of both of their loyalty.

CHAPTER 4 – THE CANDIDATES

Hochschild attends campaign event thrown by Republican representative Charles Boustany, who is running against Tea Party favorite Jeff Landry. Hochschild wonders whether the candidates would remember disasters like the pollution in the Bayou d'Inde and notes that political campaigns have "a central place in the cultural life of a people" because they demonstrate "what issues powerful people think are worth hearing about."

The Arenos' story showed Hochschild how politicians use silence and structural amnesia to protect the Louisiana oil industry, so now she wants to see how this works up close. She sees how politics determine and reinforce people's feeling rules while also appealing to people's preexisting cultural values.

Hochschild feels that she is "backing into the deep story" by noticing what that story excludes. She is clearly not yet "over the empathy wall," even though the Tea Party members she met surprised her with their warmth and generosity. To these voters, "there was something else" more important than community, church, and (for some) the environment, although Hochschild does not yet say what that "something else" is. Louisiana conservatives seem to want a representative who can represent them in Washington but is not a member of the Washington elite.

Louisianans' distrust for the federal government leads them to want candidates who appear trustworthy because of shared values and backgrounds. However, this enables politicians to play up their affinities with their constituents and potentially cover up their true political interests until after they are elected.

Boustany gives a speech emphasizing oil's economic benefits. Soon thereafter, at a different event, Landry "makes a remarkably similar speech," suggesting that the oil industry can give Louisianans "better money than most people make anywhere else in this country" and decrying the idea that people should ask the federal government for help. When older constituents ask him about improving their Social Security and Medicare, "Landry has no answers."

Boustany and Landry seem to have virtually the same platform—Republican voters have no choice but to support oil and reject social programs if they want to remain loyal to their team. Landry's silence about Social Security speaks to his interests—whereas Louisianans might reject such programs because they distrust the government, Landry is the government and has trouble finding a justification for its inability to protect seniors' freedom from poverty.

Hochschild is "struck by what both candidates avoid saying." They fail to mention the state's widespread poverty and dependence on federal money, then turn around and "both express and promote a culture that has produced the Great Paradox." Boustany and Landry are campaigning to represent "one of the most polluted counties in the nation," but neither mentions pollution during the campaign. During their previous terms, both voted against a variety of environmental protections and even supported a measure "to redefine 'healthy air,' basing the definition of it on the *feasibility* and *cost* to polluting industries, and not on human health." Even the Democrat in the race is "pro-life, pro-marriage, pro-gun, and pro-oil."

The Great Paradox seems to stem more from conservatives' unwillingness to admit that they take and need government help than a genuine willingness to sacrifice their environment—it is about their values and feeling rules rather than their political self-interest. The candidates' votes to change the definition of "healthy air" reflects their point of view, which (in the context of Janice Areno's loyalty to industry) Hochschild later labels a "company perspective."

Hochschild interviews "three dozen retired plant workers" who remember when Louisiana used to consistently vote for Democrats before 1970. They echo Lee Sherman's concern that the government is "giving away" their tax dollars to a class of "non-working, non-deserving people." Hochschild suggests that, beyond taxes, their votes are also a matter of honor.

These plant workers vote based on their loyalty to industry and feeling that they are being taken advantage of by poorer Americans rather than on their concrete political self-interest.

Hochschild meets gubernatorial candidate Russel Honoré, an Army general who led the Hurricane Katrina rescue effort and who is one of the few Louisiana politicians to openly discuss the environment on the campaign trail. Hochschild describes Honoré (who is black Creole but popularly known as the "Ragin' Cajun") as an "empathy wall leaper." When Hochschild asks him why Louisianans do not "ask politicians to clean up their environment," he responds that he thinks of them as "captives of a psychological program" that touts oil's potential to create jobs without considering its downsides. To help create awareness about pollution in Louisiana, Honoré started "The Green Army," an umbrella group for smaller environmentalist organizations.

Honoré's willingness to speak honestly and passionately about the environment is unique among Louisiana politicians and relates to his firsthand experience of how environmental catastrophe devastates citizens while the state government remains silent. He has significant cultural capital in Louisiana—his nickname emphasizes his local roots, and the name of his Green Army emphasizes his military background, which marks a masculine strength and resilience. By expressing these shared values, Honoré can talk about the environment without alienating Louisianans.

Hochschild and Honoré travel to the town of Gonzales, which lies within "one of the most polluted industrial strips in the world." Not only is the area dotted with petrochemical plants, but Honoré tells Hochschild that Louisiana actually imports toxic waste from other states and dumps it here. He takes her to the campus of Southern University and points to "Free Nigger Point" across the Mississippi. It was so called "because if a man could swim across the river to it, he could reach the Underground Railroad and he was free." Many drowned trying to cross, but now, Honoré says, they would just "get sick and die gradually of pollution."

The Louisiana government's resistance to environmental regulations is so strong that it chooses to burden its citizens with other states' toxic waste in order to offer corporations an incentive to invest in their state. Honoré's remarks about "Free Nigger Point" suggest that pollution is a covert attack on people's freedom and draws a disturbing parallel to Louisiana's history of defending white citizens' economic interests by failing to protect the freedom of enslaved African-Americans.

Hochschild realizes how easy it is to "forget or ignore the problems with Louisiana's environment." But she wonders how Louisiana would respond to a disaster "so spectacular" that people *had* to look. The massive 2010 Deepwater Horizon spill created exactly this sort of spectacle: it threatened 98% of commercial seafood in the Gulf of Mexico and put 90,000 fishermen out of work. President Obama imposed a moratorium on drilling after the accident, since BP was using unproven technology, and "no one knew for sure why the accident had occurred."

If the Louisiana government and oil industry facilitate pollution by promoting silence about it, then Hochschild wonders whether citizens would defend themselves against pollution when silence is not an option. The Deepwater Horizon spill shows how corporations' freedom to pollute infringes on Louisianans' livelihoods and destroys other industries—this only expands oil's dominance.

A Louisiana State University survey found that more coastal residents opposed than favored the drilling moratorium and most did not think differently about global warming or pollution after the spill. Hochschild finds the same attitudes near Lake Charles: many Louisianans believe government regulation is unnecessary because "it's not in the company's *own interest* to have a spill or an accident"—one person even blamed the spill on regulators "looking over BP's shoulder." Hochschild wonders whether Louisianans were "expressing loyalty to the oil industry," or perhaps trying to cope with "strong feelings of anxiety, fear, and anger about what they already knew." Returning to the Great Paradox, Hochschild notes that in Louisiana "pollution hit better-off people" as much as the poor, but all "seemed braced to tough it out" instead of fighting it with regulations.

When they are forced to address pollution head-on, Louisianans still do not blame petrochemical companies. Whereas Hochschild sees the government and oil industry suppressing citizens' voices, those citizens believe the oil industry is on their side, fighting with them against government overregulation. Hochschild suggests that citizens may truly be trying to deal with negative emotions by supporting a narrative that is in their emotional self-interest. Blaming a government that they already distrust allows them to sustain their loyalty to the oil industry instead of admitting that it actually prioritizes profit and does not care about them.

Hochschild considers the possibility that Louisianans' frustration with the drilling moratorium might simply be an extension of their general aversion to government regulation. She looks at the state's lax alcohol and gun regulations—people can buy alcohol in drive-through stores as long as "the plastic lid is pressed on and the straw is not yet inserted," it is legal to bring loaded guns into bars and churches, and gun vendors can legally sell to domestic abusers and suspected terrorists without conducting background checks or keeping any records. Louisiana's gun death rate is the highest in the United States, "nearly double the national average," and many of the people Hochschild meets keep firearms.

Louisiana's broader attitude toward regulation reflects a strong stance in favor of individuals' freedom to take risks that may harm others, such as carrying loaded weapons. This demonstrates how the Great Paradox far exceeds the problem of pollution, but rather reflects a more general set of beliefs about the government. This suggests that Louisianans' sense of self and feeling rules prescribe a preference for individual license over the common good.

Hochschild contrasts these light regulations on drinking and shooting with the severe restrictions Louisiana places on particular social groups, like women seeking abortions and black men who can be fined for wearing their pants too low. In fact, Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate in the United States, which has the world's second-highest incarceration rate, and blacks disproportionately make up its prison population. Despite this selective overregulation, the regulations Hochschild's conservative acquaintances actually care about involve "what the government was telling them to buy," like energy-efficient light bulbs, salads, and seatbelts.

However, the individual license Louisiana protects only applies to some people—white men in particular. There seems to be a trade-off between white men's freedom and everyone else's: the government (which is overwhelmingly composed of white men) is willing to sacrifice the latter for the sake of the former. These white Louisianans focus on the way government impacts them individually and are unable to see the forms of overregulation that, in Hochschild's mind, are truly violent. This reflects the empathy wall that divides blacks from whites in the state.

Louise, a Louisiana mother who lives near petrochemical plants, told Hochschild how she anxiously watches for signs of another accident. Another man suggested that "they don't tell us the truth about what's going on because they don't want to alarm us," and Hochschild gives the example of a 2013 explosion at the old PPG plant, after which regulators claimed to detect nothing out of the ordinary.

The Louisiana government's failure to warn citizens about likely disasters reflects its close alliance with oil and makes people distrust it even more deeply. The government is more worried about people's reactions than their safety because it wants to protect their feelings and ease their anxiety—the government's strategic forgetting works in Louisianans' emotional self-interest.

Hochschild returns to her drive with Honoré. She asked him to answer one of the most common objections she hears from Louisianans: why have the government if companies "want to avoid accidents themselves?" He answers that "regulation works" but the Louisiana state Department of Environmental Quality asks companies to regulate themselves, which clearly does not work.

Although all empirical evidence suggests that regulation is effective, regulators themselves believe that the free market will self-correct—since many regulators worked for the oil industry, this belief seems to fulfill their desire to justify their loyalty to and trust in it.

Reflecting on the meetings she had attended during the campaign, Hochschild notes that Louisianans worry "a great deal about freedom in the sense of *freedom to*" but have little interest in protecting their "*freedom from* such things as gun violence, car accidents, or toxic pollution." She wonders whether the "psychological program" Honoré sees at work is the true explanation for Louisianans' politics—perhaps people don't hate the government so much as simply love oil. She declares that, in order to understand Louisiana's economic reliance on oil, she "had to understand the private sector."

Hochschild is beginning to formulate a coherent picture of Louisianans' deep story by considering the way that the rhetoric of "freedom to" and "freedom from" helps them turn away from government help. Honoré has shown her how the psychological program keeps Louisianans in the oil industry's back pocket and lets it continue to hoard power in the region.

CHAPTER 5 – THE "LEAST RESISTANT PERSONALITY"

Over coffee in Baton Rouge, Hochschild meets Dr. Paul Templet, a chemical physicist from the area who used to teach at Louisiana State University and run the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality. Hochschild wants to understand Louisianan conservatives' faith in the logic of "the more oil, the more jobs." Presumably, these jobs would boost people's income and make government aid unnecessary, but Hochschild has visited Dr. Templet to ask if the logic really works. When he tells her that "less than 10 percent" of Louisiana jobs are in the oil industry, she is shocked. Oil jobs, it turns out, are increasingly automated; the ones that remain are mostly temporary construction jobs filled by out-of-state workers.

Hochschild expects that Louisianans' loyalty to oil has some basis in fact, which explains her shock when Templet tells her that their jobs largely do not depend on the oil industry. It is becoming more and more apparent to Hochschild that this loyalty is based on feeling rather than facts. Their faith that the free market will bring them economic success is one main reason they reject government regulations on oil companies.

Hochschild wonders whether lawmakers might prioritize oil because it brings in so much tax revenue. While "it was the largest single source of revenue," oil money only made up 14% of the state's budget, and Governor Bobby Jindal—who received half a million dollars in campaign contributions from oil executives—slashed taxes on oil companies between 2008 and 2012 and paid for these tax breaks by cutting 30,000 public sector jobs. Furthermore, the agency responsible for making sure that oil companies pay their taxes "has close ties with the industry" and "performed no audits at all" between 2010 and 2013.

Hochschild again seeks an empirical explanation for the Louisiana government's behavior but finds that the facts fall short: under Jindal, the government actually prioritized the redistribution of wealth—to oil companies rather than to the needy. As governor, Jindal fulfilled Louisianans' desire to rid themselves of regulation by letting his state government crumble, hurting citizens in the process.

Hochschild and Dr. Templet start on "a second round of coffee and a second layer of revelations." Templet explains that oil also displaces jobs in other industries, like fishing and tourism, which were "severely hurt" after the Deepwater Horizon spill. Contrary to popular belief, Hochschild explains that "oil wages don't trickle down; they leak out." Dr. Templet explains that most of the profits go to executives who live nowhere near Louisiana, and most of the temporary construction workers that build the oil infrastructure send their incomes back home, out of the state. In fact, he says, oil has done nothing to benefit Louisiana's economy in the short or long term.

Although Louisianans see oil as their state's economic savior, the evidence contradicts this belief. The opportunities oil creates are not accessible to the majority of working Louisianans, and the way oil wealth flows to the top reflects the broader trends Hochschild sees in contemporary capitalism, which lead workers to see declining wages and increasingly fall behind in their progress toward the American Dream.

Hochschild calls Louisiana's strategy for economic growth the "low road" approach: by creating conditions that make it cheaper to do business, Louisiana hopes "to get industry that *exists somewhere else*" to move. In contrast, a "high road" strategy would try "to *stimulate new jobs* by creating an attractive public sector." Hochschild argues that the Tea Party chooses the "low road" but progressive states like California choose the "high road."

By putting the market before the government, "low road" approaches help multinational corporations use cheap foreign labor to maximize their profits and pressure governments into letting companies use their resources with the promise of economic progress. Ultimately, these companies fail to deliver the progress they promised but fund political campaigns to sustain their economic dominance.

Hochschild and Templet order yet another round of coffee, and she asks him about the idea that "you must *choose between* jobs or a clean environment." He tells her about a 1992 MIT study showing that stricter environmental regulations actually correlate with *faster* economic growth in the United States and a 2016 study that proved the same thing across the globe. She wonders why her conservative friends have not heard about this new "growing consensus" among economists.

Hochschild again notes that the facts do not seem to make their way into Louisiana; rather, they are strategically silenced. This also harkens back to Louisianans' widespread climate change denial: in both cases, citizens defend industry from science by painting the latter as an instrument of an overbearing, interventionist government. This basic denial of scientific fact, which is based on people's underlying faith that unregulated capitalism will eventually bring them the American Dream, serves to retroactively justify their often fruitless hard work and protect corporations.

Hochschild hypothesizes that conservatives might not know about this consensus due to the "growing dominance of oil and its show of generous company largesse." This creates a cycle in which "companies squeeze favors out of the state," which pays for those favors by redirecting money from public services. As public services crumble, opportunities dwindle for poor Louisianans and sectors of the economy besides oil start to fall behind, which "further concentrates power in the hands of oil." Oil companies often donate a small portion of their tax incentive money to environmental groups as a gesture of goodwill, which makes Louisianans think they are helping preserve the environment.

Oil uses its political and cultural power to protect citizens from the truth. Because oil companies already have so much influence and governmental support, they can easily control the way the public perceives them. By spending the money the government gives them on advertisements, oil companies are able to hide drilling's negative effects and validate citizens' belief that they care about the common good. Ironically, the oil companies donate to environmental groups to make themselves look good, even though the oil companies are responsible for many of the problems that the environmental groups are fighting to resolve.

Wondering if Louisiana is an "oddball oil state" rather than the true "heart of the right," Hochschild reads a "startling" study demonstrating that red states are more polluted than blue states; her own follow-up shows the same effect on a county level. People who live in more polluted counties "are *more* likely to believe that Americans 'worry too much' about the environment" and identify as "strong Republican."

The county-wide evidence shows that the people voting against environmental protections are actually the ones suffering from pollution, rather than—as MacGillis might have it—wealthier residents of the same states living further from toxic waste. In addition, the evidence also illustrates that Louisiana is truly representative of conservative America with respect to Hochschild's keyhole issue of pollution.

Hochschild wonders why companies like PPG would specifically choose to build plants in Louisiana. She discovers the answer in a consultant's report for the California Waste Management Board. Powell, the consultant, tries to figure out how to get neighbors to deal with the downsides of "locally undesirable" industrial projects like waste-to-energy plants. He suggests that, instead of trying to convince residents who resist "locally undesirable" construction, companies should simply go to the kinds of communities that would be unlikely to resist in the first place.

This report demonstrates how waste companies and state governments—even in Hochschild's liberal home state of California—collude to silence resistance rather than minimizing harm. They take advantage of conservatives' unwillingness to protest—a trait that Hochschild later identifies as part of the "endurance self."

Some of Powell's key "least resistant personality" traits are being conservative, pro-free market, and Republican; having low educational attainment and lacking a "culture of activism;" and working in "nature exploitative occupations." Hochschild realizes that these all the Louisiana residents she has been studying fit the description. She wonders whether people with the "least resistant personality" are more easily influenced by the "psychological program" Honoré described, but then considers that this may be "too easy an idea," one that does not give Louisianans enough credit for what they *do* believe. Hochschild suggests that "the empathy wall was higher than I'd imagined" and resolves to explore the cultural institutions that her subjects rely on in order to better understand their way of life.

Hochschild is apprehensive about outright declaring that Louisianans' "least resistant personality" makes them susceptible to the "psychological program." She recognizes that this explanation still views Louisianans as being deceived by outsiders rather than being active participants in their own defense of oil. Hochschild realizes that she has focused so much on Louisianans' silence about her keyhole issue, that she has lost track of the positive values they do proclaim.

CHAPTER 6 – INDUSTRY: "THE BUCKLE IN AMERICA'S ENERGY BELT"

Hochschild sits in the office of Westlake, Louisiana mayor Bob Hardey, who shows her the video of a ceremony marking the beginning of the "single largest foreign direct-investment manufacturing project in U.S. history," a giant petrochemical complex for the South African company Sasol. Hardey improvises his speech at the ceremony, telling the Sasol executives that four generations of his family have lived in Westlake, but he encouraged his son to sell the land where he was building his dream house to Sasol.

By telling his son to sell his land, Hardey makes a spectacle out of his loyalty to industry above even his own family. More than any other figure in this book, Hardey's attitude and policies toward the petrochemical industry demonstrate the close emotional ties between big business and local government.

Hochschild describes Westlake as "a sprawling gray expanse of smokestacks rising from immense steel-girded fortresses" that is often inundated with the smell of chemicals—in his speech, Hardey says it "*smells like rice and gravy*." Hochschild is meeting Hardey to begin "exploring the institutional context conducive to the worldview" that her friends on the right hold.

Westlake already seems dominated by industry, both visually and culturally. By equating the smell of toxic chemicals with that of rice and gravy (a Southern staple), Hardey suggests that chemical production is truly a cornerstone of Southern culture.

Hardey drives Hochschild around town, showing her the restaurants, churches, shops, and schools that sustain everyday life in Westlake. He also points out "which buildings will come down, and which others will go up"—Sasol bought out churches for millions, but landowners that held out can still have their land sized by the state (and specifically, by Hardey) through eminent domain. Hardey still mows the lawns in town, which keeps him "connected to the place he deeply loves."

While Louisianans like Mike Schaff and Harold Areno see the past embedded in the present landscape, Hardey sees the future: Westlake looks to him like one enormous chemical plant to come. Even though he loves the town, has roots there, and even mows its lawns, he is delighted at the prospect of everything he knows being destroyed to pave the way for new industry. And, because Hardey has the power to coerce people into selling their property to Sasol, many people have no choice in the matter, though Hardey does not seem to see this as a conflict of interest.

Hardey envisions a 25-30% growth in population—but many of the new residents will be temporary construction workers living in a Sasol "man camp." The local Economic Development Alliance is encouraging locals to train themselves for the construction jobs, but those locals face difficulties competing with more experienced Irish and Filipino workers and worry that those new workers might be "rapists or burglars." Hardey notes that Sasol's investment will do nothing to fix his city's budget deficit. He is even holding a small piece of land in the way of the construction zone, which he plans to sell to boost the city's budget.

Despite Hardey's enthusiasm for chemical investment, he actually knows that the benefits to his town will be slim. He embodies a version of the Great Paradox from the government's perspective: he chooses to prioritize industry based on his personal loyalties and feelings even though he knows that doing so may not help him fulfill his job, which is to do whatever is in the citizens' best interest.

Hochschild summarizes the century-long history of expanding oil extraction in the region. New fracking technology promises to release enormous underground deposits of natural gas and bring well-paying jobs to the region, as well as turning the United States from a net importer to a net exporter of energy. Fracking also brings incredible environmental risks—although journalists and locals have voiced concerns about the pollution, the state government has already okayed Sasol's predicted pollution and now other companies are using the precedent this set to demand higher pollution limits.

With fracking, as throughout the history of energy production in Louisiana, promised economic benefits are attractive enough to the state government that environmental concerns fall by the wayside. The government weighs the thrill of promised wealth against the anxiety of pollution, which it can choose not to see. In other words, even government decisions are made on instinctual feeling rules and not through an analysis of material costs and benefits.

The Westlake city government is trying to teach residents how to deal with air pollution—drive less, mow the lawn more, and watch out for red flags that mean "today's not a good day to be outside" for people with respiratory problems. Hochschild wonders whether any of this is really necessary—in a "strange cycle," Sasol is making plastic water bottles, which more and more Louisianans will need precisely because companies like Sasol are polluting their water.

Just as the Arenos suffered the downsides of PPG's spill, Hardey expects Westlake residents to quietly suffer from Sasol's pollution rather than hold the company accountable. In fact, through the "strange cycle" Hochschild observes, Westlake also stands to make residents start paying a private company for what used to be a public resource: clean water. As in Bobby Jindal's state-level administration, public resources flow into private hands.

Hochschild summarizes the oil policies of Huey Long, Louisiana's governor during the Great Depression, who taxed oil companies to fund schools, hospitals, and infrastructure. She compares these policies with those of Bobby Jindal, who instead defunded public services and paid oil companies to invest in Louisiana. Hochschild asks Hardey about his politics, and he says he has "had enough of *poor me*." He criticizes welfare and affirmative action policies that he believes give an unfair advantage to minorities.

Long's policies demonstrate that the "high road" strategy often used in blue states has been successfully applied in Louisiana and can harness oil money for the public good. But Hardey rejects this strategy precisely because he does not believe that the government should be in the business of uplifting the needy—rather, he thinks that the poor should make a living through their own private interest.

Hardey explains that he himself had difficulties in school but "discovered [he] could do things" while working at the Phillips 66 petrochemical plant. Hochschild suggests that he wonders, "why couldn't blacks and legal immigrants do the same?" Other locals Hochschild interviewed "felt the same, only more strongly"—the family was already "a chancy redistribution system all its own" and they "didn't want the government playing favorites *on top of that*." Hardey favors Jindal's oil incentives because this seemed like the only way "to get companies to come to Louisiana *instead of* Texas." He sees pollution as a "problem from the past," already resolved by EPA restrictions, and he sees cancer as genetic, unrelated to the region's toxic pollution.

Hardey reveals the origins of his loyalty to industry: working at the Phillips 66 plant helped him develop a sense of self and pride in his abilities. Like many other conservative Louisianans, he sees economic success as directly reflecting personal ability and hard work, but he fails to see how other groups lack the same opportunities to find well-paying work. Just like Mike Schaff with climate science, Hardey's devotion to the chemical industry determines the way he interprets science.

Hochschild examines a "Regional Impact Study" Sasol conducted during the construction, which suggested that the scientists they need will only want to move to Westlake if it can "improve the quality of life" there. Hochschild reminds the reader that public infrastructure took an enormous hit under Governor Jindal, while Sasol's report suggested that Westlake "needed a thriving public sector" to attract talented workers to the oil industry. In other domains, too, Sasol is a "tough bargainer." It demands that the state, parish, and town governments pay for the majority of certain infrastructure projects—like new wells and roads—that Sasol alone will use.

Even Sasol, the company investing billions of dollars in Westlake, would prefer a "high road" strategy like those implemented in California and Louisiana in the 1930s under Huey Long. This is paradoxical since Sasol claims that it chose to invest in Louisiana because of government incentives following a "low road" approach. Its infrastructural demands mean that Westlake might actually suffer economically from its investment.

Hochschild notes that nobody at the groundbreaking ceremony mentioned the Condea Vista ethylene dichloride leak in Westlake, the largest chemical leak in the history of the United States, which had been going for decades by the time it was discovered in 1994. Condea Vista hired workers to clean up the chemicals but never provided them with the necessary safety information or equipment. Ultimately, only about 10% of the spilled chemicals were cleaned up, and many of the cleanup workers developed mysterious health issues and sued the plant.

Again, Hochschild points the reader to a history of pollution and industrial mistreatment of workers that has been erased from the Louisiana landscape through structural amnesia. Regulators again failed to do their jobs, and Condea Vista poisoned workers without consequence just as PPG did to Lee Sherman and his coworkers. Disasters due to government's alliance with the oil industry are apparent in the Louisiana landscape but missing from citizens' memories or public political discourse.

Environmental activists—including Lee Sherman, Harold and Annette Areno, and Mike Tritico—helped out with the case against Sasol. But, before long, a new plaintiff joined the case and created so much strife among the workers that they dropped the lawsuit. In the years after the spill, "the tarnished memory of Condea Vista had faded"—and Sasol took over the same plant that Condea Vista used to run.

Condea Vista went to extreme lengths to shut down their workers' class action suit—it again prioritized profit over creating safe conditions for its workers or compensating them reasonably for their suffering. Despite this, Louisianans continue to praise oil jobs and forget how the industry has violated its workers' rights.

Hochschild starts to think that Bob Hardey, one very powerful person with the "least resistant personality" type that chemical companies seek out, might have been Sasol's key to forever transforming Westlake. Hardey admits that, after four generations, much of his family is now forced to leave the town due to the construction. He still wants to be buried in his family's cemetery—which is now surrounded on all sides by land zoned as "heavy industrial."

Hochschild sees that all Sasol needs to push through their investment is a single powerful politicians who prioritizes corporations' private interest over the citizens' public interest. People like Hardey help transform the Great Paradox from a principle of resistance to government into a principle of government itself.

CHAPTER 7 – THE STATE: GOVERNING THE MARKET 4,000 FEET BELOW

Hochschild meets Mike Schaff in his 350-person town of Bayou Corne. Like him, Schaff's neighbors enjoy fishing in the bayou and are mostly "Cajun, Catholic, and conservative, predisposed to the Tea Party." Schaff, the most politically active among them, "wished to feel himself in a nearly wholly private world, one as far as he could get from government taxes and regulation." Hochschild wonders how such a world would respond to "a sudden catastrophe" that government could have prevented and then reveals that this is precisely what happened when the **Bayou Corne Sinkhole** opened in the town.

Mike's search for a life free from government intervention was ironically undermined by a lack of government regulation. Mike's desire for a private world reflects his belief in the primacy of personal relationships among neighbors over contractual ones with the government—in a sense, he thinks government gets in the way of empathy. Although Mike believes in the power of small communities to govern and care for themselves, Hochschild doubts whether this is still possible now that private corporations own rights to the land on which such communities are built.

In 2012, Bayou Corne residents noticed bubbles in the swamp and started smelling oil—the gas company said everything was fine, but soon thereafter the town's first-ever earthquake hit, and a gas-sputtering **sinkhole** opened up in the middle of the bayou. "As if a plug was pulled in a bathtub," the sinkhole sucked trees and even a boat down under the water; oil bubbled up to the surface and the sinkhole expanded gradually.

The gas company's failure to predict the sinkhole suggests that companies really do not "self-regulate," as many pro-free market Louisianans believe. The fully private community Mike had so deeply longed for was literally sucked away by private industry's mistakes and the absence of government regulation.

The **sinkhole** was caused by Texas Brine, a salt drilling company operating in Bayou Corne against the advice of their own engineers. Their risky drilling violated environmental restrictions that a government official agreed to waive. Then, Texas Brine accidentally drilled a hole in a cavern surrounded by the Napoleonville Dome salt formation. The cavern, which was used to store chemicals deep underground, started to collapse and suck down the 4,000 feet of earth above it. Hochschild wonders "how a free-market economy in a highly regulation-averse culture" can deal with private corporations that store toxic chemicals offshore and underground.

Regulators' willingness to let Texas Brine break their rules demonstrates that regulations mean nothing when officials with close ties to industry refuse to enforce them. Hochschild believes that, once private companies can own mineral and chemical deposits deep underground, their actions are necessarily a matter of the public interest because they affect the land on which citizens live.

Seven months after the **sinkhole** first opened, Governor Bobby Jindal visited Bayou Corne's displaced residents, many of whom were still homeless and frustrated. Jindal speeds through his remarks, which Hochschild says "conveys mastery, urgency, busyness, and, perhaps, avoidance." He promises to appoint a commission to investigate the accident and opens himself for questions. The residents ask why he only announced his visit five hours earlier that morning, why it took him seven months to visit, and why he chose to speak while most people were at work. Their houses have become an official "sacrifice zone," but the government has no answers for them—just the promise that an independent Blue Ribbon Commission will investigate.

Jindal's visit to Bayou Corne offers the town's residents a salient image of a big government that pretends to care but is really more interested in facilitating structural amnesia by covering up their issues. Bayou Corne residents find it difficult to trust the Republican governor for whom so many of them voted, but who is quite literally willing to sacrifice their houses without promising any compensation or resettlement assistance.

Hochschild meets Mike Schaff at his home on Crawfish Street. He apologizes for his lawn's poor condition and admits that he has become depressed since the **sinkhole** opened. He has lived in Bayou Corne for the last five years, but now he lives in constant fear: with all the gas coming up from the ground, his wife has moved back home and his grandchildren cannot visit because it is too dangerous to even light a match. But Mike chose to stay even after Jindal ordered the town evacuated. He shows Hochschild where he would host crawfish boils in his backyard and lists the neighbors who used to attend but have since left Bayou Corne for good. Instead, "it's Texas Brine, Texas Brine, Texas Brine, and Texas Brine." There are only three others who also decided to stay.

Like the Arenos, Mike Schaff stays in a dilapidated environment because he cannot bring himself to leave; in telling Hochschild about his old crawfish boils and neighborly connections, Mike shows a deep nostalgia for the community and way of life that he has lost. He, too, is a "stayer" who insists on remembering the past as a way to resist the imposition of structural amnesia in his now-dispersed town. Only this time, the government did not destroy his community—Mike's beloved free market did.

Mike talks nostalgically about Bayou Corne's tight-knit community as he shows Hochschild around the abandoned town. Other residents she interviewed felt the same way: their community was destroyed. Hochschild gets in Mike's boat; they go out on the bayou and Mike shows her where he used to catch all kinds of fish. Now, all they can see are methane bubbles rising to the surface.

The scene on Mike's boat eerily follows the scene behind the Arenos' house in the Bayou d'Inde: fish are replaced with chemicals, fishing trips with mourning. Nature has yet again turned from a public resource into a private dumping ground.

After the accident, Texas Brine started figuring out who they could blame. They argued that earthquakes are common in the area (they are not) and sued the drilling company from which they had rented underground storage, as well as the insurance company that decided not to pay them. A third drilling company sued Texas Brine, so Texas Brine in turn blamed and sued a fourth company that had drilled nearby more than 25 years earlier.

Like PPG and Condea Vista, Texas Brine focuses on recuperating its losses rather than addressing the harm it has done to nearby residents. The law steps in to adjudicate Texas Brine's claims against other companies but never on behalf of Bayou Corne's residents. Despite the ideology of personal responsibility and private self-regulation that pervades Louisiana politics and industry, Texas Brine is quick to turn the blame elsewhere.

The whole time, the "shell-shocked refugees" of Bayou Corne worried that their town would catch fire or explode. But they blamed the government more than Texas Brine for the accident. Scott Angelle, the secretary of the state Department of Natural Resources, approved Texas Brine's project even though he knew they were drilling near a weak cavern wall that could lead to a **sinkhole**. Hochschild remarks that the problem was "that the state government had barely been present at all," not that it was getting in industry's way. Residents are frustrated that Texas Brine simply pays them to leave without visiting or personally reaching out, but they are even angrier at the government that failed to protect them.

To a significant degree, the sinkhole is the government's fault—and Bayou Corne residents rightly blame Angelle's department for failing to do its job. Here, for the first time in this book, Louisianans clearly see the alliance between government and industry, which is opposed to their public interests as private citizens. Residents' frustration with Texas Brine's impersonal response and suspicious aloofness echoes the way many Louisianans feel about the federal government.

Hochschild cites an EPA report that named Louisiana the worst implementer of federal environmental protection laws in its region. Databases about pollution were full of errors, impact reports were missing, inspections were skipped, and the agency never collected fines from law-breaking companies that owed them. The inspector general blamed "natural disasters, low funds, and 'a culture in which the state agency is expected to protect industry'" for Louisiana's lackluster enforcement of environmental standards. The state had cut funding, "accidentally 'given back' about $13 million to oil and gas companies," and since 1967 only blocked 60 projects that would impact the environment—out of 89,787 applications.

Louisiana regulators appear to be almost comically terrible at their jobs, which confirms citizens' distrust in regulators (albeit in an inverted way). For Hochschild, regulators harm citizens when they fail to regulate. For Louisiana locals, regulators harm companies—and, by extension, workers—when they do regulate. Hochschild's argument for regulation is based on the premise that Americans can trust their government to actually enforce its regulations, but Louisiana's failure to do so suggests that its citizens' hatred for government might be well-placed at the local level, even if they interpret it differently.

Hochschild notes that official environmental reports were "nearly unreadable" and often contradictory. As an example of how "sometimes the state simply lowered standards of protection," Hochschild cites one report that instructed residents on how to best prepare contaminated fish to minimize their chances of cancer. Hochschild admits that this "made a certain grim sense." Companies pollute, the government refuses to stop them, and people need to eat. So "at least the authors of the protocol were honest."

This flyer horrifies Hochschild because it illustrates how government and industry take advantage of the endurance self, meaning Louisianans' pride in their ability to survive hardship. The government is unwilling to clean up the bayou, feed its citizens another way, or prevent future accidents. Instead, it leaves to citizens deal with the effects of private industry's indifference to public interest.

When Hochschild mentions this report to Mike, he is unsurprised: "there it is again, more bad government." He suggests that, instead of raising their own salaries, government employees should conceive themselves as devoted servants, like the nuns who taught him in grade school. But he realizes that this would make it "hard to attract the best people."

On some fundamental level, Hochschild realizes here, Mike actually wants good government, too—this is an interest they share, but Mike has lived his whole life in a place where government actively impedes citizens' efforts at success, whereas in Hochschild's home state of California, social programs generally do prioritize the public interest.

Hochschild still cannot wrap her head around how Mike thinks "a total free-market world and local community" can coexist. After all, she notes, the "near pure free market" that Jindal put in place failed to protect Bayou Corne's community. Hochschild sees the government's ineffective disaster response as "an open-and-shut case for *good* government," but Schaff simply sees it as a case for *less* government. Even Hochschild agrees that the government does bad things, but she notes that these "criticisms were based on a faith in the idea of good government." Mike, on the other hand, distrusts all government whatsoever—he thinks that he and Hochschild "would be millionaires by now" if they had only been able to invest their money instead of paying taxes for Social Security and Medicare.

Because of Hochschild's basic trust in government and Mike's basic suspicion of it, Hochschild calls for more good *government while Mike wants less* bad *government. In fact, Mike's trust in the free market that he expects to make him millions closely resembles Hochschild's trust in the government that she expects to take care of needy citizens. If the Louisiana government is actually a cartel organized to protect oil companies, then it makes sense to reject its so-called "help." In realizing the basis of her disagreement with Mike, Hochschild affirms that liberals and conservatives' opposite feelings toward the government are one major root of their mutual distrust—but those feelings about government do not need to change for dialogue and empathy to become possible.*

Hochschild asks Mike whether he is grateful for anything federal government has done for him—he cites hurricane relief and the I-10 highway. Hochschild offers some additional suggestions: FDA inspections, the post office, and the military, among others. When she mentions the fact that 44% of Louisiana's state budget comes from the federal government, Mike responds that this is wasteful because "at least half" of Medicaid recipients decide not to work. But he understands why they would choose to simply accept government money because, "if the programs are there, why not use them?" He remembers that the Coast Guard once saved him, his wife, and his two daughters from a near boating accident during a storm.

Mike instinctively distrusts anything he associates with the government, unless he has personally benefitted from it. The intentions he assumes come to define his entire perspective about government programs, like his declaration that Medicaid recipients must not work (which Hochschild disproves in Appendix C). Even though the government (via the Coast Guard) nearly saved his life once, he still does not view himself as dependent on it.

Hochschild wonders "what image of the government was at play" in Mike's mind, and she compares his disdain for government services he nevertheless uses to "Berkeley hippies of the 1960s" who lived off their parents' dime even while they "felt proud to be 'above consumerism.'" She suggests that Tea Party advocates claim to be "'above the government and all its services' to show the world their higher ideals," even while they use those services. In Louisiana, "the less you depend on [government], the higher your status." Mike seems to view the federal government as "a more powerful, distant, untrustworthy version of the *state* government" that fails to protect him and does not mesh with his "local culture of endurance and adaptation."

Because Mike and other Tea Party voters see relying on the government as a shameful refusal to endure and take control of one's situation, Hochschild suggests that they repress or ignore the realization that they actually do rely on the government in various ways. Their political views are determined by their feeling rules rather than their real relationship to government. By pointing out that liberal Berkeley anti-consumerists are just as hypocritical, Hochschild shows her willingness to criticize her own "team" and suggests that feeling rules are powerful determiners of political behavior on both sides.

But Hochschild sees another, deeper cause behind Mike's feelings about government. This is the idea that "the federal government was taking money from the workers and giving it to the idle. It was taking from people of good character and giving to people of bad character," which implicitly meant poor minorities. She wonders whether "the malaise I was seeing" might come from a disguised class conflict between the working-class and the poor. The right, it seems, resents the government for choosing "the wrong—betraying—side." Mike hands Hochschild a jar of peaches as she leaves, and she drives away wondering what Mike's church and Fox News were telling him about his community, his government, and the people that government helps.

Hochschild introduces an idea that looms large over the remainder of her book: the hidden class conflict between blue-collar whites and lower-class Americans of color. Like many Louisianans, Mike believes there is a trade-off between his own interests and those of liberal urban minorities—he does not view them as members of a unified American political community with unified interests, but rather as a competing force trying to take away his hard-earned wealth.

CHAPTER 8 – THE PULPIT AND THE PRESS: "THE TOPIC DOESN'T COME UP"

Upon meeting Madonna Massey at Starbucks in Lake Charles, Hochschild immediately notes "how many people seem happy to see her." They complement Madonna's clothes and her singing; her friendliness "seems to cast a circle of warmth around her." After first meeting Madonna at a Republican Women of Southwest Louisiana meeting, Hochschild explains, she followed up to meet for coffee.

Madonna's central role in the Lake Charles community is immediately obvious to Hochschild simply from the way others greet her. The tight-knit, trusting, familial bonds Mike Schaff longs for seem alive and well here.

Hochschild has "explored industry and the state" as key institutions in the "social terrain" of Louisiana, but she still has to look at the church and the press. She wonders whether people feel the same way about the church as Mike Schaff does about his community, where the government seems to be unnecessarily interfering. "Nearly everyone" Hochschild meets attends church more or less regularly, and they take pride in their children "being *churched*." Churches are a "pillar of social life" in Lake Charles, which has twice as many churches per capita as Hochschild's hometown of Berkeley. People pray before meals and meetings, recall the churches of their childhoods fondly, and even credit God with their successes in business.

Church seems to permeate every aspect of everyday life in Lake Charles, and locals' pride in "churching" their children demonstrates that church is viewed as a site for them to develop proper moral values and senses of self.

Hochschild visits the Masseys' Living Way Pentecostal Church, where Madonna's husband, Glenn, is the pastor. She sits next to Madonna in the front row as the 700 congregants trickle inside. Glenn gives a sermon, closing his eyes and raising his arms before speaking in tongues, and then the congregants bring their anxieties to his assistant pastors, who bless and weep for them. The parishioners lay their hands on one another, "forming a momentary still life of human connection," before Pastor Glenn calls "everyone who needs to forgive or be forgiven" to the front. More than half the worshippers come to the front and "there is sighing, sometimes weeping, pats, and release." The service ends; the congregants mingle and head home.

The congregation's web of connections serves as a concrete expression of their solidarity as a community. Indeed, it seems as though the assistant pastors are feeling and playing out others' displaced emotions through a sort of magical, intense empathy, and the uniquely expressive environment that Pastor Glenn fosters both releases people from the feeling rules to which they are subject outside church and imposes a different set of feeling rules: the passionate, unbridled expression of emotions.


The Masseys' church "focuses on human healing," a role Hochschild suggests that "psychotherapy and meditation, as well as family and friendship" fill in other cultures. Other churches focus on different programming, from charity nearby to missionary work in the Global South. These churches "meet needs beyond the spiritual," providing recreation facilities, sports leagues, summer camps, and addiction counseling. This is all funded by the parishioners themselves, who give 10% of their income to their churches. While Louisianans "*pay* taxes," Hochschild notes, "they *give* at church." Thinking about similar government-funded programs in San Francisco, Hochschild explains that she usually sees public services "filling the same cultural space" that church programs fill in Lake Charles. She notes that the services Silicon Valley companies provide for their workers are a different kind of private alternative to these public services.

Louisiana and California seem to invert the roles of public and private institutions: in Louisiana, private institutions like churches and corporations are seen as public benefactors, and in California, the state fulfills that same role. The Louisiana government's failure to protect the public interest allows other institutions to step in. While Louisianans feel forced to participate in government by paying taxes, they willingly participate in church by giving financial donations—paying taxes is a regrettable obligation to a greedy government, but giving to church is an honorable act of selflessness.



Madonna Massey moved to Lake Charles recently, so she has not heard about many of the environmental catastrophes that people like the Arenos and Mike Schaff are facing. Massey tells Hochschild that she is "so for capitalism and free enterprise" but hates regulations that decide "the size of my Coke bottle or type of lightbulb." Yet she trusts "our system" to ensure her water and air are clean. She sees a forced choice between the American Dream and environmental protections, the same "either-or scenario" in which Hochschild's other friends also feel trapped.

Madonna worries about government regulations that interfere with her choices as a consumer, but she trusts environmental regulations on blind faith. She is worried about the freedom to buy what she wants but does not consider her freedom from toxic pollution, perhaps because it is so invisible. Even though Dr. Templet disproved the "either-or" logic, it is still convenient for Louisianans like Madonna to assume that the conflict between oil and environmentalism must be a necessary one—that there is no world with oil jobs and without pollution.

Massey grew up in "the poorest town in America" but "has since prospered beyond her wildest dreams," releasing albums of her music and living a comfortable, affluent life. She credits the church with her success, and many others in her congregation feel the same way. But Hochschild notes that "there were rich churches and poor churches," as well as white churches and black churches, in Lake Charles. The white churches tend to be the rich ones, and the black churches the poor ones, which leads Hochschild to worry that, if church could truly take government's place, "the churched world [would] remain a highly unequal one." But Madonna thinks that "with God's help, […] everyone can rise as she has."

Madonna Massey's personal identity is deeply intertwined with her religious faith and practices of worship. Hochschild worries that private institutions like Louisiana churches would not truly serve the public interest because they represent segregated constituencies, but Louisianans have much the same worry about the government. Hochschild sees a church-based society as reinforcing whites' disproportionate wealth, but white Louisianans worry that government is redistributing their wealth to people of color.

Hochschild learns that Louisiana's "religious community appreciates the outdoors" but notes that she cannot find information about pollution on the website of any major Lake Charles church. She explains how the National Association of Evangelicals and Christian Coalition have contributed to the rise of the "religious right" and recalls a PBS interview series where those organizations' leaders referred Bill Moyers to Dr. Calvin Beisner, their media spokesperson. Dr. Beisner argues that extractive practices like coal mining and oil drilling are sanctioned by the Book of Genesis, and Hochschild notices that oil and mining companies fund Beisner's Action Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. She also identifies smaller environmentalist factions within the growing Evangelical movement, although they seemed absent in Lake Charles.

Even though churches claim to value nature, they do little about the pollution that threatens Lake Charles. On a national scale, too, nature-loving evangelicals seem willing to destroy nature for the sake of profit. Beisner's convenient Biblical interpretation helps conservative Christians differentiate between human problems that are worthy of moral concern and environmental ones that are not. It also demonstrates how corporations buy off religious figures in order to integrate conservatives' economic dependence on extractive industries with their social and emotional dependence on church. Crucially, Beisner uses mass media to disseminate his ideas, which foreshadows Hochschild's examination of Fox News.

The churches Hochschild visited emphasized "a person's moral strength to endure" above "the will to change the circumstances that called on that strength." Like therapy, she suggests, church offers the emotional safety and support people need to endure hardship. Madonna Massey believes that the Second Coming is imminent and will bring believers like her to Heaven. This makes her ambivalent about environmental concerns because "the earth may just not be here." While she confesses that she is "not well educated," Massey asserts that "mine is a true belief." And 41% of Americans share that belief, expecting the rapture by 2050.

Churches foster a particular version of the endurance self by elevating perseverance over action; they almost seem to tell Louisianans that it is morally better to live with problems than to solve them. This feeling rule foreshadows Hochschild's description of Jackie Tabor as someone who renounces her desire for change in order to prove her capacity for endurance. Massey's faith in the Second Coming (or Rapture) also dovetails nicely with these endurance-centric feeling rules because it encourages her to ignore environmental problems—which are under God's jurisdiction, not the government's—rather than acting for change.

Internet depictions of the rapture, Hochschild realizes, show a minority of "svelte, well-dressed adults" rising up to Heaven. She suggests such depictions might be responding to "shared and understandable anxieties about an earthly economy." This makes sense, since American men with high-school educations have seen a 40% drop in income since 1970. Older white men who have experienced this decline over the last half-century have declining lifespans, so Hochschild understands why "life may well feel like 'end times.'" But she also sees that church encourages Louisianans to "turn concern away from social problems," government help, and the Great Paradox.

Hochschild sees the particularities of Louisiana's religious doctrine as a well-formed response to people's particular, concrete economic circumstances: believing in the Rapture is emotionally compelling when life is getting worse because it gives people something to live for. But it also encourages them to turn their sights to a higher world and neglect the problems they face on Earth.


Over tea, Madonna Massey shows Hochschild the conservative pundits, politicians, church leaders, and news sources she follows on Twitter. Fox News, Hochschild explains, is "an extra pillar of political culture all its own" among Louisiana conservatives. Nearly all the people she interviews prefer Fox, considering it a source of moral guidance. One woman even says that "Fox is like family to me." Fox "stokes fear" about issues "with little direct bearing on politics." Mike Schaff told Hochschild that "a lot of liberal commentators look down on people like me" and wondered why those commentators can call Southerners "rednecks" even though Southerners realize that they "can't say the 'N' word" because it's "demeaning."

Hochschild probably paired Fox News and church in this chapter because both institutions offer Louisianans moral and emotional guidance in a world where they are accelerating toward poverty but have no safety net. Like church, Fox presents itself as a trustworthy "family," and its anchors appear to understand everyday conservatives' perspectives. In fact, this empathy game goes both ways: Fox personalities act out empathy with regular people, and then viewers start to trust Fox and empathize with its personalities' perspectives and fears.



Yet Hochschild notes that "none of the people I talked to" echoed the "extreme language" of Fox, which used words like "*tyranny*, *apparat*, *terrorist*, and *strangler*" to decry liberal policies. One Louisiana woman watches other news channels but sees them as opinion; she says she can distinguish opinion from fact "by their *tone of voice*." For instance, she feels scolded when CNN journalist Christiane Amanpour interviews a sick or starving child, as though Amanpour is "imposing liberal feeling rules" on her, telling her to "feel sorry for, or responsible for, the fate of the child." Hochschild notes that "the social terrain" of southern Louisiana encourages people to refocus away from the needs of people like the sick child; she suggests that she has begun "backing into" the woman's deep story.

Although Fox is full of passionate right-wing anger, Hochschild suggests that it serves less to prescribe *feeling rules than to* defend *conservatives against liberal ones. The notion that people can tell truth from lies based on "tone of voice" exemplifies Louisianans' pattern of prioritizing feeling over evidence, especially with politically controversial topics like climate science. Amanpour demonstrates and encourages concern for faraway people's suffering, which conservatives interpret as the moralizing imposition of liberal feeling rules. Their distrust in Amanpour blocks them from thinking the child's suffering makes any moral claim on them.*


After Lee Sherman exposed PPG's illegal dumping, he joined the environmental activist organization RESTORE. In 1997, he helped sick Condea Vista cleanup workers successfully sue the company, but soon thereafter "a schoolteacher and his wife" joined their group and began to sabotage their efforts. When Lee Sherman's wife found the teacher suspiciously using her computer, she confronted him, the group fought, and it fell apart forever. Ten years later, it was revealed that Condea Vista paid spies $250,000 "to infiltrate RESTORE." Condea Vista's supply-chain manager, Peter Markey, admitted in a deposition that "it was a surveillance operation" approved by the company's president. Mother Jones magazine—a progressive publication that none of Hochschild's interviewees had ever encountered—broke the story in 2008, but Louisiana newspapers barely mentioned it, and nobody Hochschild interviewed could remember the story.

While national stories on Fox dominate the Louisiana media diet, the local story of Condea Vista's spy operation never truly got picked up. This contributes to the silence about pollution in Louisiana: nobody reports it, so nobody learns about it, and few act to stop it. Because Mother Jones *is a progressive magazine, none of Hochschild's friends in Louisiana would ever think to pick it up.*

Hochschild reflects on a general trend she has discovered in Louisiana environmental politics: everyone suffers from pollution, but nobody publicly acknowledges it. She declares that Louisianans are "victims without a language of victimhood" and believes that she is "working slowly backward toward an answer to the Great Paradox": admitting that they have a pollution problem would force Louisianans to address it. Institutions are not doing so, and Louisianans balk at the idea of government regulation, even though they realize that the federal government is the only entity that could fix pollution.

Hochschild has shown that all four major social institutions she has studied in southwest Louisiana—industry, government, church, and media—intentionally divert attention away from pollution. These trusted institutions' silence leads Louisianans to only think about the environment when they see a forced choice between their oil jobs and environmental risks.

Hochschild returns to the idea of structural amnesia, suggesting that Louisianans focus on problems like people who "cheat the government" in order to forget the more severe environmental problems they face. To understand how an occasional case of welfare fraud makes Louisianans hate the whole federal government, Hochschild argues that she has to delve into people's deep stories.

Hochschild sees that the relatively small scale of welfare fraud cannot compare to the environmental problems Louisiana faces—as a rational calculation, conservatives' emphasis on the former makes little sense, but as a calculation of feeling, it likely reflects a deeper sense of feeling cheated by self-proclaimed "victims." Naturally, Hochschild seeks to understand this feeling by trying to empathize with conservatives' deep story.

CHAPTER 9 – THE DEEP STORY

Behind the stories she is hearing, Hochschild sees a deep story. A deep story is a "*feels-as-if* story" rather than a story about facts or judgments. Hochschild argues that only a deep story can offer a picture of how "the party on the other side sees the world." Deep stories come in many varieties and they matter in many contexts: for instance, lovers seek to understand each other's perspectives on the world and diplomats try to understand how other leaders imagine their national stories. Hochschild's version of the Tea Party's deep story "focuses on relationships between social groups within our national borders."

Deep stories are particularly powerful political tools for Hochschild because, as tales of feeling, they open the door to understanding through empathy. This story forms the core of Hochschild's explanation for the Great Paradox because it describes the theory of self that underlies conservatives' votes against government intervention.

Hochschild likens this deep story to waiting in line for the American Dream that lies just over a hill on the horizon. For older white Christian men, the line seems to be barely moving or even moving backwards. Many of the people behind them in line are "people of color—poor, young and old, mainly without college degrees." The American Dream is about progress—economic progress as well as social status and security—but it is "so hard to see" from where white conservatives stand. This community has seen its economic opportunities dwindle, and although Louisianans refuse to complain about their fate, they are "beginning to feel stuck." Much of the country has abandoned their Christian moral values, and hard work no longer seems to guarantee success.

The setup of a line for the American Dream reflects conservatives' belief that patience and hard work pave a road to upward economic mobility. This is a fundamentally individualistic and meritocratic worldview because it suggests that all people should have access to the American Dream, regardless of identity, so long as they follow the rules. This view is also decreasingly realistic because, for Hochschild, American capitalism no longer provides many people with significant opportunities to advance—endurance no longer automatically translates into success.

The line is not necessarily fair—in fact, people seem to be cutting in line, breaking the rules, and taking advantage of affirmative action. It seems to Louisiana conservatives that even Barack and Michelle Obama rose up the ranks unfairly, overtaking the whites who were "supposed to be so much more privileged." Some even think that the Obamas "must have" gotten federal money but show no gratitude for their success and have "no right to feel mad" about minorities' disadvantages in America.

Conservatives feel that minorities have changed the rules of the American Dream: the line is no longer meritocratic because people can now advance based solely on identities that they did not choose or earn. The deep story's assumption that the Obamas must have cheated illustrates how the fact that some minorities benefit from affirmative action leads conservatives to see all minorities' achievements as fraudulent—they seem to believe that, in a race-blind meritocracy, minorities would naturally do worse than whites.

It feels like women are "demanding the right to the men's jobs" and "overpaid public sector employees" get better job security, pay, and pensions for their easy, unnecessary work in the government. Immigrants cut ahead, too, whether they got a "special visa" to enter the country or "snuck in" illegally, and their cheap labor lowers American wages. Obama is letting refugees in, but most are young men—maybe even terrorists—who are "poised to get in line ahead of you and get their hands on your tax money." And the government even protects animals like the brown pelican, the Louisiana state bird that nearly went extinct because of pollution—even this bird is "in line ahead of you." While these groups are unfairly cutting in line, it feels like "it's people like *you* who have made this country great." Despite the line cutters' complaints of discrimination and oppression, white Christian men resent them and eventually "close the borders to human sympathy."

By refusing to sympathize (let alone empathize) with "line cutters," conservatives draw a sharp, identity-based line around their community of political interests: hard work under capitalism and investment in Christian morality—key features of the Southern endurance self—are figured as the neutral, natural, or truly "fair" rules of the game. In contrast, people from diverse groups who value different traits are considered distorted and undeserving in relation to this ideal. Line cutters' unfamiliar cultural values and emphasis on identity lead white Christian men to set up an empathy wall and indulge their suspicions about other groups.

How are these groups getting ahead? It appears that "President Barack Hussein Obama" is on the line cutters' side, waving to them and "telling you that these line cutters *deserve* special treatment," something "the real story" on Fox News disproves. Obama "is their president, not your president"—he "seems 'fishy,'" as though "secret strings were pulled" by the government to help him succeed. Perhaps he is even a Muslim. Can white Southerners feel pride in America if its president is against them, if they feel like "strangers in their own land"?

Tea Party voters' cannot imagine how an African-American would rise to the presidency on his own merits. Their initial suspicion of Obama leads them to see him not only as an example of line cutting, but also as the architect of an elaborate, expanding line-cutting conspiracy designed to overtake white men.

Hochschild sees this deep story as a "response to a real squeeze," namely the tension between the ideal of progress and that progress's increasing difficulty. On the one hand, the American Dream encourages people to feel "hopeful, energetic, focused, mobilized" about their chance at progress. But, on the other, "the Dream Machine" has ground to a halt for the bottom 90 percent because of "automation, off-shoring, and the growing power of multinationals." White men born before 1950 are "the first generation in American history" to see "lifetime downward mobility," and many even give up and stop looking for work. Aging Southern conservatives start to realize their American Dream may not come true—and they can only blame themselves, even though they also face discrimination due to their age.

Crucially, the deep story is an indirect *response to the structural squeeze: it is not a response to the bare fact of lower wages but rather an* emotional *response to the* emotional *contradiction between the feeling rules prescribed by the ideal of the American Dream and the despair conservatives actually see. Conservatives' desire to return to a time when white men had abundant job opportunities reflects a nostalgia similar to how Mike Schaff and Harold Areno (among others) feel about the social, cultural, and natural worlds that have disappeared in their lifetimes.*

Hochschild met a 63-year-old man with a "cherubic smile" whom she calls Bill Beatifo. Beatifo was a successful salesman for 16 years, but got then fired because, as a long term employee, he was making more than his company would have to pay a new hire. He found that other sales firms refused to hire him at his age and turned to other options, ultimately going on unemployment for the maximum 99 week period before finding a job that paid $10 an hour—the same wage he made as a college student 40 years before. He is still looking for other part-time jobs and has tried side projects from "non-FDA-approved magnetic shoe inserts" to investing in "a company that was 'about to produce' a medical device he hoped to sell to hospitals." But Beatifo remains convinced that his investment in the medical devices will eventually make him a millionaire.

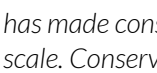
Beatifo exemplifies downward mobility despite hard work. Like many conservatives, as he grows increasingly desperate for a decent job, he develops a blind faith that his American Dream will suddenly materialize, much like Mike Schaff believes he would be a millionaire if he invested the money he instead had to put into social security or Madonna Massey's faith that the rapture will save her community of believers. Instead of giving up on the ideal of the American Dream as it begins to crumble for him, Beatifo redoubles his emotional investment in it.

Beyond economic opportunities, "cultural honor" is also in short supply for older white Louisiana men: "cultural doors" started opening for line-cutting minorities during the 1960s and 1970s, even while those minorities seemed to be taking whites' jobs. Since the Recession, it looks like the government is giving minorities even more undeserved opportunities. In response, conservatives moved right.

These transformations of the 1960s and 1970s (which Hochschild's later discusses in more depth) introduced competing concepts of fairness and identity narratives that dislodged white Protestant culture from its position as the American norm.

Southern white conservatives also find themselves disparaged in the national media, called names like "'Crazy redneck.' 'White trash.' 'Ignorant Southern Bible-thumper.'" Movie and television characters represent them "in unflattering ways," recycling many of the same stereotypes used against blacks in the early 1900s. Where can white Southerners find a sense of honor to hang their hat on? Work is paying less and less; they get no "points" for their race, gender, or sexuality; Southern "regional honor" is disparaged in the national eye, which also looks down on church, and the aging are neglected as "attention is trained on the young" in America. Southern Christian conservative whites feel like a minority group, too, but "dread at joining the parade of 'poor me's" who proclaim their victimhood.

Just as Fox News selectively portrays government policies and liberal beliefs to conservatives, liberal media tends to recycle harmful stereotypes against conservatives, which makes them feel like all *liberals are launching an assault on their collective character and values. The new dominant narrative centers cosmopolitan and liberal values—media discourse is so powerful that a its abrupt shift has made conservatives feel suddenly disparaged on a national scale. Conservatives' traditional values are displaced by a value system that not only differs from theirs but is in fact the* opposite: *faith, patience, and respect for authority seem to now signify closed-mindedness instead of conferring honor.*



Hochschild sends her story to the people she has met, and they strongly affirm her picture of their predicament. Mike Schaff says, "I live your analogy," and Lee Sherman tells Hochschild that she has "read my mind." Some add to the picture: minorities are cutting because of whites' tax dollars; perhaps whites should band together and form their own line. Other academics who interviewed Tea Party voters also found similar attitudes.

Louisianans' consensus that the deep story truly describes their predicament reveals that Hochschild has successfully used empathy to illustrate an inside perspective on conservatives' feelings about politics.

Many of Hochschild's Louisiana acquaintances feel sympathy fatigue. At first, they are sympathetic to marginalized groups, but they soon begin to think they are "being had." They give charitably, but the needy do not appreciate them and are not even "trying to better themselves."

When conservatives try to be charitable on their own terms, they rediscover the cultural differences between minorities and themselves: they expect people to treat their charity as an opportunity to advance and display virtues (of the traditional Christian sort). But, when their expectations are not met, the empathy wall goes back up, and these Louisianans give up on the whole lot of "line cutters."

Hochschild sees race as a critical undertone to the Tea Party's resentment. Many of her acquaintances explicitly talked about Muslims and Mexicans but refused to discuss the black communities that make up 26% of Louisiana's population. They feel they are accused of being racists even though, "by their own definition, they clearly were not." They think of racism as explicit hatred for blacks—Mike Schaff even admits to being a "former bigot" who "used to use the 'N' word" but stopped in 1968.

Hochschild stops short of calling her Tea Party friends racists here because it would likely contribute to the misunderstanding that already puts them on the defensive. However, Southerners seem to lack the historical and cultural context necessary to see the systematic elements of racism—rather, they assume that racism (much like merit) is a wholly individual matter.

Hochschild offers a different, sociological definition of racism as "the belief in a natural hierarchy that places blacks at the bottom, and the tendency of whites to judge their own worth by distance from that bottom." This means racism is not just about "personal attitudes," but it also lies in "structural arrangements—as when polluting industries move closer to black neighborhoods than to white."

From Hochschild's professional standpoint, it is clear how people can be racist in practice without holding explicitly racist beliefs. For instance, conservatives take pride in not needing help from government programs and also associate such programs with black Americans—they express their pride in part by distancing themselves from blackness.

Hochschild explains that many of her older white Tea Party interviewees only encountered black people through media representations that hide the complexity of black life. They see the "rich mega-stars of music, film, and sports" but also the image of blacks as "a disproportionate part of the criminal class" and the image that "blacks were living on welfare." But they never see black people "standing patiently in line next to them waiting for a well-deserved reward."

As Hochschild has held since the beginning, without forming empathetic personal relationships across dividing lines like race, class, and political affiliation, it is very difficult for people to develop accurate pictures of the people on the other side. Here, media representations only focus on African-Americans who are at the top and the bottom of the income ladder. Of course, media could link the same extreme stereotypes to any group, whites included, by selectively portraying a few group members who exemplify those stereotypes.

Gender also plays a key role in the Tea Party's deep story—every woman Hochschild interviewed had needed to work at some point in their lives, but most would have preferred to become homemakers and they base their political beliefs on their desire to do so. While they form a minority of the Tea Party movement, the women Hochschild interviewed were much more likely than the men to see the benefits of government social programs. They "seemed to sense that if we chop away large parts of the government, women stand to lose far more than men" and they were less likely to think welfare recipients were "gaming the system."

While Tea Party men see work as a source of pride, Tea Party women seem to see it as a source of shame: it signifies that their household needs two income earners because their husbands have not yet achieved the American Dream. In the Tea Party, women seem to be more sympathetic to outside groups and "line cutters" than men, which may reflect their investment in traditional Christian narratives of femininity as emotional and caring—they view themselves as workers second, wives and mothers first.

Although Hochschild recognizes that the right seldom uses the term, she conceives the feeling of being cut in line as "an expression of class conflict." In the past, she notes, such conflicts were usually between management and workers—both black and white—who would strike together for better wages and working conditions. Today, while the American left sees the 99% fighting the 1% over wages and tax policy, the right sees a fight between "'makers' and 'takers'" over social services.

The political left and the right both see class conflicts over economic opportunities in the United States, but their pictures are inverted: for the left, the wealthy are the undeserving beneficiaries of inequality, while for the right, the poor are the undeserving beneficiaries of welfare. For Hochschild, the conflict the right sees is actually between two groups that both *lack economic opportunities.*

Tea Party members "thought about the government and the market in the same way others think of separate nations," seeing the free market as holding the promise of the American Dream and the government as interfering with that promise. But, in reality, they miss the way corporations are gaining more power and paying workers less. Hochschild thinks this explains why conservative small business owners support policies like new bankruptcy and contract laws that actually help big corporations outcompete small ones. But the people Hochschild met believe they are siding with big businesses against the government—even Lee Sherman still holds stock in PPG. Finally, Hochschild wonders what kind of "deep story self" sustains the Tea Party's "extraordinary determination" to fight the government on the market's behalf.

Conservatives' view that government competes with the free market for resources and power seems to forget that the free market is actually about competition. For Hochschild, the largest multinational corporations' disproportionate power allows them to crush small businesses, which means the government should actually facilitate *more effective markets by ensuring fair competition and protecting citizens against market externalities like pollution. One reason the Tea Party defends big businesses that outcompete their own is that conservatives look up to wealthy businesspeople as exemplars of the American Dream. The assumption that the wealthy deserve and have worked for their wealth eventually informs Louisianans' support for Donald Trump.*

CHAPTER 10 – THE TEAM PLAYER: LOYALTY ABOVE ALL

Hochschild visits Janice Areno, who is clearly a Republican, as her office is filled with elephant statues of all colors, shapes and sizes. Janice is an accountant at a land management company and also Harold and Annette Areno's niece. She "dresses Pentecostal," without jewelry or makeup, and has a "direct, forceful, usually good-humored" personality. Janice's desk is covered in her friends' taxes—she explains to Hochschild that she does them as a courtesy—and the pair jokes about football teams before Hochschild declares that Janice's real "home team" is the Republican Party and "her loyalty to it defines her world." Janice is 61 and unmarried but focuses her energy on caring for her enormous extended family and her job, where she "is usually the last to leave the office at night."

Again, Hochschild introduces a person by exploring the spaces he or she cherishes the most—while Mike Schaff and Harold Areno cherish their childhood homes and Madonna Massey cherishes church, Janice Areno cherishes work. Unlike the normative Tea Party women Hochschild profiled at the end of the last chapter, Janice Areno is proud of her hard work and has no desire to become a housewife. Janice surrounds herself with material reminders of her values and affiliations, like her modest dress and the elephant statues. Unlike people like Lee Sherman and her uncle Harold, Janice puts party before belief—while others often reluctantly voted Republican because that party was closer to their own conservative beliefs (but still far from perfect on issues like oil and the environment), Janice is loyal to the party itself, above and beyond any particular policy it advocates.

Janice drives Hochschild from her office to her old school in Sulphur, Louisiana. She talks about her "poor but happy" childhood and almost 100 first cousins. Janice explains that she has worked continuously since age eight and is deeply proud of her endurance. Hochschild sees this endurance as a practice, a sort of emotional labor that is "a tacit form of heroism" for Janice.

While Janice never married, she still feels a sense of pride in the emotional labor of caring for her family, which remains the core community unit in her life. Her endurance is a way of demonstrating her commitment to that family.

Hochschild describes "three distinct expressions of this endurance self." She calls these three varieties the Worshipper, the Cowboy, and the Team Loyalist. Each has their own kind of heroism, but they converge in their emphasis on endurance. Team Loyalists support the goals of their "team," the Republican Party; a Worshipper "sacrifices a strong wish"; and a Cowboy "affirms a fearless self." Janice exemplifies the Team Loyalist.

The endurance self is the core of conservative cultural ideology, the same concept of self that was pushed out of the national mainstream during and after the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 1970s. In the following chapters Hochschild will explore the Worshipper and the Cowboy. Team Loyalists like Janice endure hardship for the sake of a larger collective; her group memberships define her identity.

Janice and Hochschild go to Janice's church, where they drop off plates and cups for a fundraising dinner to benefit members of the military fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan. Unlike her father, who left school at age ten to work, Janice has a BA. Her father managed to work his way up in the oil company Citgo despite his lack of education. Janice is proud that he never needed government help.

Despite Janice's disdain for government, there is one national institution she actually goes out of her way to support: the military. Her father's trajectory exemplifies the ideal of the American Dream, in which hard work can even make up for a lack of education.

Next, they go to Janice's childhood church, and she explains that this is where she learned about the "honor of work" by cleaning out the entire building twice a week. In college, she worked 40 hours a week on top of school. She is proud to have never taken money from the federal government, which Hochschild explains was a common "source of honor" in Louisiana. She complains about all the people she knows who have taken advantage of welfare, disability, and unemployment benefits. But her sense of honor is not about having money, ability, or meaningful work—rather, it is about working *hard*. Janice thinks that liberals underappreciate "*personal morality*"—they forget the value of hard work, are not "churched," support abortion and same-sex marriage, and make her feel like "a stranger in her own land."

Again, church appears as a cornerstone of cultural life in Louisiana—it transmits moral values and cultural honor, and Janice despises the left precisely because it rejects these values and interprets cultural honor differently. She values work for its own sake, which means that people who choose to take government money instead of working are not only shamefully failing to support themselves and cheating hardworking citizens out of their tax money, but also depriving themselves of a valuable opportunity for personal growth.

Janice thinks that people should take risky work in stride and she complains that her brothers' coworkers refused to work when their company failed to give them milk, which supposedly helped protect against the health dangers of aluminum fumes. Hochschild suggests that she has "a company perspective."

Janice thinks that her brothers' coworkers are trying to get out of work rather than being genuinely concerned about their safety—she seems to assume that people are lazy until they prove themselves otherwise.

Janice sees even hard but meaningless work as honorable because it disciplines people—if there are no jobs, she says, people should start "working on the highways" and tiring themselves out so they "wouldn't be out drinking or doing drugs" at night, and she thinks the United States should create jobs by relocating World War II veterans' graves back home from France. She sees "a positive side to the war" in the manufacturing jobs it creates at home.

Janice's praise for meaningless work takes a faith in capitalism to the extreme: she actually wants to create *new needs in order to force people to work to resolve them. In fact, her proposals actually exemplify the kind of massive government "high road" spending that her beloved Republican Party tends to reject as an economic solution.*

She says she understands that welfare makes it "not worth it to get a real job" but complains that she has seen people "driving up in Lexus cars" to bring their kids to a government-funded Head Start program. Janice acknowledges that "some people think I'm too *hard-nosed*," but she declares that, "if people refuse to work, we should let them starve. Let them be homeless."

Actually, Hochschild shows that the majority of welfare recipients' money comes from work (Appendix C). Janice puts such an emphasis on work that she thinks it should be a condition for survival—people who do not work, for her, deserve nothing. Janice refuses to show empathy for people who do not work.

Hochschild asks whether she thinks there should be welfare for children in poverty, but Janice proposes that it's the children's responsibility to get themselves educated, "churched," and out of poverty. She also suggests sterilizing poor women "after one or two children" and fundamentally opposes redistribution because she thinks inequality reflects destiny—the rich are rich, in Janice's mind, because they work harder.

Janice believes so strongly in the capitalist idea that people are self-sufficient, independent economic actors—the same idea that underlies the picture of waiting in line for the American dream—that she thinks even children do not deserve government help. Her sterilization proposal is an example of how conservatives' desire to preserve their own economic freedom leads them to discount others' personal freedom, especially when those others (probably) do not look like them.

Janice feels that the government also "does too much and owns too much." She thinks it should run the military, manage roads and waterways, and keep only a few national parks as public lands. It restricts guns too much, she says—"if everyone had a gun and ammunition" in the Middle East, Janice argues, people would "solve their own differences" and create democracies. Hochschild notes that many Louisianans panicked after Obama's election, when they started to suspect that "he would take away people's guns," and stores started selling out of ammunition.

Janice effectively wants to export Louisiana culture globally: she thinks that minimal government and permissive gun laws are the keys to an effective democracy (even though Louisiana's own democracy is crumbling and it is unclear how starting wars constitutes starting democracies). Louisianans' immediate distrust of Obama leads them to take extreme action even though he never actually claimed or tried to take away people's guns.

Janice also thinks there are too many federal workers—many of the people Hochschild interviewed estimated that around 40% of Americans work for the government, but the real number is 1.9%. Janice recalls examples of wasteful government spending she saw on Fox News, like a half-billion dollars invested in solar company, an EPA employee who watched pornography on his shift, and an artist who got government funding to paint the Virgin Mary with cow dung. Janice says that "we're a free country [...] but not *that* free" and suggests that an artist should be allowed to paint such a picture—but not given government funding to do it.

Again, Hochschild does not say it outright, but Janice's feelings get in the way of facts—she begins with suspicion of the government, finds a few extreme examples that can justify her stance, and uses those examples to argue for doing away with virtually all government. Janice's statement that "we're a free country [...] but not that *free" demonstrates how the concept of freedom is mutable to different political contexts—she believes that her offense at the artwork is enough to justify throwing it out, too.*

Janice is concerned not only about "the moral laxity of the Democrats," but more crucially about "the imposition of such laxity *on her*." For instance, she sees Chaz Bono as "forcing his way of living *on me*" by suggesting that his childhood would have been easier if he had not suffered from prejudice. Janice does not mind if people "go be gay if you want to," but she does not want people "shouting it from the mountaintops." She sees hatred for the Tea Party as the "consensus in liberal Hollywood."

It is unclear why, exactly, Chaz Bono is "forcing" his lifestyle on Janice by explaining that he would have rather not suffered discrimination—unless, that is, Janice sees anti-gay discrimination as part of her own "way of living." However, her disdain for Bono probably more fundamentally relates to the fact that he calls for discrimination to end instead of enduring it. She sees discrimination and pain as things to be honorably endured, whereas he sees them as problems to solve.

Hochschild asks about industrial pollution; Janice mentions the devastated Bayou d'Inde and how it saddens her. But she thinks the petrochemical plants across Louisiana and even the toxic waste landfill a block from her home are worth it because "they make what we need." Hochschild explains that a Team Player like Janice chooses to "suck it up and just cope" with problems, like toxic waste landfills, that are not of their own making.

Janice does not deny the reality of pollution but rather endures it for a higher good—her loyalty to party, industry, and family. While the plants do make useful things, there is no reason they need to be in her backyard. Her response follows from her emotional self-interest in enduring hardship, which she sees as honorable, rather than avoiding it, which she considers cowardly.

She tells Hochschild a "shocking" story about her nephew Dicky, who came face-to-face with pollution, and Hochschild insists on meeting him. When they meet at Janice's aunt's house, Dicky tells Hochschild about one day he was riding his horse, Ted, in the 1950s. Ted fell into a ditch he could have usually jumped over and started sinking into the water. When Dicky's uncle finally pulled Ted out of the water, "he was coated all over with a strange film" that was "like rubber." Ted died a couple days later—and it turned out that there was a polymer plant upstream from the ditch. But Janice "doesn't allow her sadness to interfere with her loyalty to industry," in the case of Ted's accident or even the Citgo explosion she saw as a child. She insists that today's industry is complying with regulations.

Yet again, Hochschild realizes that the current debates and silences about pollution in Louisiana actually have much longer and more shocking histories than she first expects. As most other Louisianans, Janice sees a forced choice between industry and the environment, and she chooses to side squarely with the former, even falsely claiming that current industry is compliance to retroactively justify her loyalty. Ted's death is a shocking, graphic example of how unregulated industry infringes on people's (and their animals') freedom from harm.

Janice drives Hochschild to her "barn," the dream retirement home she has been building from scratch. She has stocked ponds with catfish, and her sisters built a rock garden with elephant statues out front. Janice has made space for plenty of relatives in case they ever need to move in with her. The estate has spaces for animals to live and even a "rodeo arena."

Janice's insistence on building her own retirement home is unsurprising—after all, she has always refused to take help, even if she is willing to give her family the help they need. As Bayou Corne was for Mike Schaff, Janice seems to see the "barn" as a kind of idealized private universe.

Hochschild notices "how the deep story makes sense" for Janice, as someone who has "made it out of the structural squeeze" and reached economic security through hard work and endurance. But this endurance required Janice to cope with "anxiety that now felt like second nature" and focus disproportionately on the positives of capitalism, to which she felt so loyal for offering her a livelihood. Yet she feels as though she must defend her loyalty against the liberal coastal culture that advances "false notions of the good and the true." She also needs to defend her "rooted" endurance self, which is "based in a busy, dense, stable community of relatives, co-parishioners, and friends" against the liberal "cosmopolitan self" that was "uprooted, loosely attached to an immediate community," focused on living diversely rather than in the proper moral fashion. Hochschild suggests that this is "frightening" for Janice.

Although the American Dream is stalling for many Louisianans, Janice has indubitably found her own through endurance. It is therefore unsurprising that she clings so closely to an endurance-centric concept of personal honor and remains so loyal to capitalism. But this kind of self also stunts her emotionally, rendering her unable to fully accept the downsides of industry and leaving her with the near-constant anxiety of someone who is accustomed to silently enduring suffering for the sake of a team goal. Perhaps this baseline anxiety informs her interpretation of the cosmopolitan self's call for diversity as a call to destroy her way of life.

After a couple of years, Janice's sister—who started suffering "a debilitating autoimmune disease" as the result of toxic exposure at the Olin Chemical plant where she worked—moves into the "barn." Janice is developing a pollution-related disease, too. She invites the whole family over for monthly cookouts—once, Janice notes with pride, 67 relatives showed up. She recognizes that the nearby Sasol plant might affect her town but does not worry too much: "things happen." And "an object of great loyalty" still punctuates her front lawn: an elephant statue, "pudgy, white foot midair, tusks and trunk aloft."

Tragically, pollution finally catches up with Janice and her sister, as it did with other generations of Arenos before them. She continues to take pride in her rooted commitment to her family and her commitment to the Republican Party. As for the chemical industry that made her sick, it seems that Janice's loyalty has endured despite the Sasol expansion.

CHAPTER 11 – THE WORSHIPPER: INVISIBLE RENUNCIATION

Jackie Tabor, an exuberant stay-at-home mother, guides Hochschild through her home. In the living room, she mentions that her husband Heath built the walls and shot the bucks whose heads are mounted on it. To Hochschild, she looks like "it seems a miracle to her that this could truly be hers."

From the beginning, Jackie adopts a stance of gratitude and reverence toward her life and world. Whereas Janice attributes all her accomplishments to her own hard work, Jackie does not seem to take credit for anything—rather, she feels lucky to have the life she does.

They say prayer and eat dinner, which is a fish Heath caught himself in the Gulf of Mexico. He saw the Deepwater Horizon fire burning in 2010 but never worried about its effects on his food, and Jackie shows Hochschild a picture of her ten-year-old son featured in a children's fishing magazine.

Jackie and her family disconnect their preferred pastime (fishing) from the environment that sustains it.

Jackie credits Jesus for "all she treasures": she lives in a beautiful suburban house outside Lake Charles with her husband and the children she cares for full-time. She declares that she "came from *nothing*!" and Hochschild explains that her childhood taught her to sometimes "give up wanting something very badly." Jackie feels she has achieved the American Dream but recognizes that "this could all vanish tomorrow!"

Like the Tea Party women Hochschild mentioned earlier, Jackie sees the fact that she does not have to work as indicating that she has achieved the American Dream. Her path through life seems defined by trust: she trusts other people or agents to take care of her, so she need not take action on her own.

Jackie told Hochschild about her love for nature—unlike Janice, who "quickly moved on" when Hochschild mentioned environmental pollution, Jackie brings it up herself: she saw a boy swimming in Lake Charles and fears he might get sick. She worries about their local air and soil and even wishes she could move, but she also loves the oil industry.

Whereas Janice did not let herself worry about pollution to protect her loyalty to the oil industry, Jackie manages to simultaneously grasp oil's environmental impacts and recognize the industry's benefits—she does not feel obligated to defend it.

Hochschild explains that Jackie's childhood might explain her loyalty to oil. Once, she was "nineteen, jobless, homeless" and moved in with her sister, and every day she wrote up a list of rules—"I will not lie. I will save my money. I will stop drinking"—that she promptly broke each afternoon. She grew up in Kansas City, where her alcoholic father abandoned the family and her mother worked three jobs on top of welfare to pay their bills. Her stepfather was "a 'dirty-talking' sexual predator" and Jackie left home, never to return, at age 19.

Jackie's childhood is the polar opposite of her adulthood—she found it difficult to trust the people around her and had little sense of spiritual guidance. Notably, she relied on welfare throughout her childhood—contrary to most Louisianans' picture of a welfare recipient, her mother needed the money in addition to work rather than taking it in place of work.

One day, lying on her sister's floor, she had a religious epiphany and realized that Jesus would grant her all her wishes "when everything's right." She looked in the mirror and saw a completely different person: "*who I am to Him.*" She credits all her successes in life to that single moment of realization. Jackie contrasts great figures like President Lincoln, who are hidden in the past, with Jesus, who "is always there." He taught her "to trust to Him that good things would happen" if she waits, instead of trying to "*make* things happen." Nevertheless, she "greatly admires her mother, who *did* make things happen."

Jackie's comparison between Jesus and Lincoln becomes the model for her elevation of religion above politics—she sees the world as naturally developing toward a divine perfection and learns that she can ensure her own progress in life by simply letting God's will take its course. From a secular liberal perspective, this looks like a resigned refusal to take positive action in the world.

Jackie asks whether she can take Hochschild "on an adventure," and the two drive around to Jackie's three previous houses. The first was a one-floor townhome in a working-class neighborhood where she lived for eight years but never got to know the neighbors. Then they built their second home, "an attractive red brick ranch house" in the slightly wealthier Pine Mist Estates. The third house was in Autumn Run, a neighborhood that Jackie "used to *dream about* when she lived in Pine Mist." This third house, "the house she didn't dare want," was bigger than the previous two but smaller than the house where she lives now.

Jackie's series of previous houses shows the gradual rise in socioeconomic class that confirms her religious faith in natural progress. Her attitude of resignation does not preclude her from coveting better things—but she realizes that she can refrain from interfering with fate by enduring the tension between her desire for more and her knowledge that she should not act on that desire.

Hochschild explains how Jackie became "an obedient Christian wife" who puts her husband's desires before her own. Like Adam and Eve, Jackie wanted to "be as a 'rib' to Heath, a helpmate." This is why she "never breathed a word about wanting this [third] house to Heath." Now that this third house is past its prime, her kids have taken to calling it "Autumn Run-down." She emphasizes how much she wanted the Autumn Run house, even though her current one is much nicer.

Jackie sees her husband as an agent of God's plan for her—if only she subjugates herself to him and bottles up her desire to change things in her life, she thinks, she will be rewarded for her endurance. Her family's dissatisfaction with the house they used to covet demonstrates how capitalism demands constant economic progress—the same promise that is no longer available for many white conservatives in Louisiana.

Hochschild sees each different house as "a step on a ladder to the American Dream," but Jackie realized that "on one rung she had yearned too much for the next: that was the lesson." Although she knows the even wealthier neighborhood where she wants to move next, she has intentionally refused to drive over and look at the houses. She remembers living on the poor side of Elliott Road in Chicago and envying the rich girls on the other side, but she sees her current house as God's reward for her ability to give up on wanting everything those rich girls had.

Like Janice, Jackie sees economic success as reflecting and rewarding moral virtue. For Janice, these virtues center around hard work, but for Jackie, they are based on resignation: paradoxically, she sees a promise of progress in the refusal to pursue progress.

Similarly, when Heath insisted on tithing 10 percent of their income to church, Jackie worried that they could not afford to both tithe and pay off their debt. But, as a "dutiful Christian wife," she gave up on paying the debt. Hurricane Rita struck shortly thereafter; Heath, a contractor, suddenly began making a fortune, and the couple paid off all their loans.

Jackie's family is wealthy because of Louisiana's accelerating economic disasters: as a contractor, Heath when others' homes are destroyed, so he actually has a financial interest in the region's worsening environmental conditions (particularly due to climate change). She feels she was rewarded for giving up on her own financial prudence for the sake of faith in her husband and religion.

Even though she knew she was a natural and strong leader, Jackie believes she was created to be a "helpmate to her husband" and she values the chance to stay home and raise her kids. Jackie considers herself a "dutiful Christian wife" who was "created to be a helper" for her husband. This meant renouncing her own desire for control in family and professional life.

Jackie sees a tension between her natural instincts and her religious calling; again, she must resign herself to what she has and give up on a career. This kind of attitude reflects the broader trend in Tea Party women that Hochschild noted earlier: their identities are based on their domestic roles, while their husbands' identities are individualistic and grounded in work. In the book's afterword, curiously, the reader discovers that Jackie has opened up a fitness center, which again suggests that she got exactly what she wanted by choosing resignation over will.

Jackie mentions Louisiana's "terribly polluted environment" and remarks that her son's nine-year-old best friend recently died from a brain tumor that might have been linked to pollution. Since all the area's wealth is tied to oil jobs, however, Jackie thinks it better not to mention oil's environmental consequences. She "could be talking to two moms whose husbands work in the plants" and worries she might "*remind* them of dangers" or look like she is "*blaming them* for the work they do."

Jackie recognizes and has deeply suffered from her state's polluted environment, but again she resigns herself to silence. Here, she fears the social consequences of speaking out, which demonstrates how the structural amnesia and institutionally enforced silence that Hochschild outlined in earlier creates immense pressure on the level of individual feeling.

Hochschild sees Jackie as a Worshipper who had "developed a worshipful attitude and a capacity for meaningful renunciation." Just as "Team Loyalists like Janice Areno," Jackie is able to "do without what [she] wanted" by accommodating pollution for the sake of her income. Whereas Janice Areno avoided feeling anxious about pollution's effects, Jackie "allowed herself to feel sad about these things" but "renounced the desire to remediate" environmental damage because "that would call for more dreaded government."

The Worshipper is another expression of the endurance self: a Worshipper endures emotional pain, like Jackie's pain at empathizing with the suffering that surrounds her. If Janice Areno endures pain to support her team, Jackie does so because she does not believe she is the right agent to address that pain and does not want to risk upending her life's march of upward progress.

To Hochschild's surprise, Jackie says she is named after Jacqueline Kennedy. She still admires her namesake but thinks today's government "has gone rogue, corrupt, malicious, and ugly." She thinks Obama is neither "a real Christian" nor "a true American" and has come to distrust the government at all levels, including in its capacity as environmental regulator. She finds it ridiculous that anyone would feel grateful for government and makes fun of Warren Buffett for wanting to pay higher taxes (although Hochschild notes that he actually said that "he didn't think it fair that his secretary paid higher taxes than he did). Jackie wonders "why aren't you [Buffett] writing a check?" and Hochschild sees her disdain for him as expressing a conflict of feeling rules.

Jackie is unique among Hochschild's Louisiana friends because she actually grew up as a "line cutter," surviving on government welfare. But she does not believe that the government is genuinely helping people now, and like many other Louisianans she sees a clean break between the past (when, in fact, the welfare state was far more robust) and the present, when Obama symbolizes a government that has become thoroughly rotten on all levels. Her basic distrust in government prevents her from empathizing with liberals who want redistribution, although she does not seem to hate or blame the poor in the same way as Janice Areno or Lee Sherman.

Jackie wishes polluters could be regulated but trusts neither the government, which she thinks uses pollution "as an excuse to expand," nor the environmentalists who encourage this expansion and she thinks "have their own financial interest in solar and wind too."

Jackie renounces her desire to minimize pollution because she does not trust the agent tasked with doing so (the government), just as she renounces her own desires because she does not think she is the agent who should realize them. Unlike Janice, Jackie does not feel particularly loyal to industry—rather, she is suspicious of polluters and would want regulation if she could trust the government.

Despite her malaise about the government, Jackie remains loyal to the Constitution and the American flag. At a school function, Hochschild recalls Jackie's son reading from a Bible passage before "America the Beautiful" played over a video of the American flag; Jackie insisted on taking a picture. She thinks "the American government is a betrayer" but feels that "the American flag stays true." On the car ride home, Jackie expresses her concern that the liberal media will corrupt her children into rejecting Fox News and believing in global warming. She explains that she used to be more politically active but now thinks "a lot of activists are self-serving" and unwilling to "put up with things the way they are." "Pollution," she concludes, "is the sacrifice we make for capitalism."

Jackie disconnects her loyalty to abstract symbols of American governance from the concrete institutions that do the governing. Ironically, she feels that on some original, constitutional level, the government was designed to preserve capitalism, yet today's government wants to quash it—even though Hochschild thinks precisely the opposite, meaning that the government's job should be regulating markets, and Louisiana's fails because it bends over backwards to please industry. Jackie wants to police the media her children consume because she worries they will catch the wrong kind of feeling rules, on which she knows loyalty to media is based.

CHAPTER 12 – THE COWBOY: STOICISM

There are ten guests around the table and a Vidalia onion in the middle of it at Brother Cappy and Sister Fay Brantley's Sunday dinner in Longville, just north of Lake Charles. Mike Tritico has invited Hochschild to the dinner, and the onion is Cappy's "half joke and half serious" way of keeping arguments civil.

The onion demonstrates the delicate balance between community and politics—it serves to remind the guests that their disagreements about the public sphere should not infringe on their meaningful private relationships.

Cappy and Fay, an aging couple active in the local Longville Pentecostal church, live on a compound with much of their extended family. Mike Tritico, a longtime friend of Cappy and Fay's, even jokes that they "have adopted *us*!" This is because Cappy and Fay frequently invite their friends over on Sundays for polite arguments about politics, religion, and the environment, held at gender-segregated tables. But Hochschild is permitted to sit at the men's table, so she can hear Mike argue with Donny, "the man [she is] eager to meet."

As conveners of community, Cappy and Fay take on a role that Hochschild's liberal instincts generally associate with the public sphere. The gender segregation at their dinner and the fact Hochschild needs to ask if she can sit with the men might horrify cosmopolitans who value tolerance and equality across diversity, just as those cosmopolitans' looseness toward traditional moral authority horrifies conservative Louisianans.

Hochschild first describes Donny as "a retired telephone company worker who hates regulators." He grew up with a strictly religious mother, but he has been known all his life for his generosity, pranks, and fearlessness. He used to be a Democrat, but he thought Al Gore's belief in climate change made him "too stupid to be president" and, since then, he has ended up "right of the Republican Party." One piece of local lore involves Cappy, who also worked at the phone company, driving his repair truck down the highway to notice "Donny driving his truck alongside him, as legend has it, also sixty miles an hour—in reverse." Donny has worked a series of dangerous jobs and "hates environmentalists." If Janice is a Team Loyalist and Jackie is a Worshipper, Hochschild explains, then Donny is a Cowboy: he "came to endurance [...] through a celebration of daring."

Curiously, unlike with the rest of the people she introduces, Hochschild introduces Donny through a political attitude—but then, as usual, she delves straight into his life story and shifting political affiliations. These provide a base of personal understanding that, in particular, demonstrates the mutability of political orientation over time and suggests how inadequate a picture political affiliation can offer of another. Donny's macho, Cowboy values portray risk as a means to demonstrate strength.

The guests serve the food and say their prayers. Donny and Mike Tritico sit across from one another; they are both "white, churchgoing residents of Longville" who "value honor and integrity," even though Mike's family has more education. They start discussing the Condea Vista leak and the I-10 bridge, which carries 50,000 vehicles a day in Lake Charles and has gotten "strange" ever since the ethylene dichloride from the leak has started to weaken its foundations.

The I-10 bridge shows how private pollution threatens public freedom, and the fact that the dinner guests know it is compromised through personal experience rather than any official report demonstrates how government genuinely fails at preventative environmental measures in Louisiana.

Mike agrees with the government's calls to close the bridge, adhering to the "precautionary principle" that government should first and foremost "do no harm." Donny says that Condea Vista could not have predicted the effects of their leak, but Tritico cites company studies demonstrating that they knew the environmental risks of ethylene dichloride. Donny questions whether Condea Vista would choose to believe scientific experts over the money they knew they could make, but Mike sees this as evidence of how "companies contrive innocence." Donny suggests that "experts can be wrong," like when regulators decided that lap belts were not safe enough and forced everyone to switch to seatbelts.

This conversation returns to the conflict between negative and positive freedom, or freedom from *and freedom* to. *Mike prioritizes the public's freedom from harm and Donny prioritizes private actors' freedom to act without restraint. Again, trust and suspicion become the basis for people's differing degrees of belief in empirical science—for Donny, facts can be rejected if they don't fit feelings, particularly if they are not in a company's economic self-interest, which he sees as a self-justifying and honorable force.*

Mike says that Condea Vista should "have to pay" if they are found responsible for weakening the bridge; Donny replies that "you can't always be ready to blame the company" but Mike asks, "what if it is *their* fault and it's *your* bridge?" Donny thinks Mike is overly cautious, focused on "avoiding bad instead of maximizing good." To Donny, innovation fundamentally requires taking risks ("we wouldn't have built this country if we were all as risk-averse as you are"), but regulation, for Donny, creates a permanent obstacle to taking the necessary risks. It also creates more regulation, "a little at a time," until "*everything* is regulated" and "we're all stuck in cement." As on a playground, Donny says, conflict "only stops when one guy is afraid his lip is going to get busted." But "regulation breaks that up" and gets in the way of competition.

While Mike simply points out that Condea Vista's private actions had public effects, Donny thinks the company should be able to reap the benefits of their work without worrying about the public interest because he sees competitive capitalism as a good thing in itself. Throughout the book, Hochschild has argued that economic regulations are generally intended to make competition more *efficient by breaking up monopolies, although the Louisiana government instead* supports *corporate oil monopolies. Donny sees these regulations, as well as environmental ones, as petrifying economic actors: if companies cannot act with absolute freedom, for Donny, it is as though they cannot act at all.*

Mike explains that he does not want to regulate everything or avoid any risk at all; rather, he thinks the government should prevent an accident "if there's a known way to prevent it." Donny thinks this gets in the way of people's "independent decisions" and says that, if someone gets hurt driving on the I-10, "a lot of it" is their own fault for choosing to drive there. Mike accuses Donny of having the mindset that has caused the region's health issues; Hochschild sees that the room is focused on their conversation and "the two are approaching a real showdown."

Mike shows how regulation better fulfills Donny's logic of taking actions whose benefits outweigh their risks, but Donny fundamentally does not think such cost-benefit analyses can be undertaken by a centralized institution on behalf of all people. While he thinks people are responsible for their own decisions, he exempts polluters from that same responsibility.

Mike wonders, "how could it be my own fault that I got hurt or killed?" Donny explains that "*real people—not the government*" should be in charge of deciding "what is or isn't too risky." Mike asks how citizens without expertise "about very complicated things" could make these decisions, and the pair continues to go back and forth. As the guests switch to dessert, Mike accuses Donny of parroting the chemical companies' ideology. In Hochschild's words, Mike thinks that Donny "embraces *their* right to take risks with *our* lives." And, in turn, Donny accuses Mike of siding with regulators. Hochschild notes that their debate continues elsewhere—Mike has even suggested that Donny left anonymous comments on an internet news article about a talk that he helped organize.

Donny's rejection of scientific expertise recalls his climate denial and demonstrates his view of people as self-sufficient decision makers who need answer to nobody. He is comfortable rejecting evidence that conflicts with his emotional self-interest because he considers changing his beliefs a violation of his self-sufficiency, a sign of weakness, and therefore a source of dishonor. His desire for a world of independent decision-makers recalls Mike Schaff's search for an entirely private universe—both do not want institutions that force people to act against their will, but Donny does not see how this kind of license might adversely affect others (Mike does realize this, as the reader discovers in the next chapter).

The women have joined the men's table and change the conversation topic to "government welfare, out-of-wedlock births, addiction, and the reluctance to work for your living." The group agrees that, after the first out-of-wedlock child, the government should cut off support because "the woman in question should have learned her lesson."

When the tables combine, the topic shifts from the masculine domains of industry and infrastructure to concerns with which Tea Party women are generally more sympathetic, as Hochschild noted earlier. Their willingness to have the government dictate how many children poor mothers should have reflects the kind of centralized decision-making for other people that Donny demonstrated just paragraphs before. This illustrates how political appeals to freedom often tacitly value some people's freedom (here, white men's) while devaluing others' (here, poor women's).

Hochschild notes that Donny and Mike's debate reflects a broader trend about Louisianans' fears of pollution. She notes a 1997 study demonstrating that managers and clerical workers in chemical plants worried more about chemical exposure than the laborers who were actually exposed to chemicals. Women and minorities paid more attention to warnings, and overall "white males stood out from all other groups as being less likely to see risk." She compares Donny to the crafts workers and Mike to the managers.

The Cowboy mentality is strongest of all amongst the white men who have historically had near absolute freedom, often at other groups' expense, in the United States and the Western world. The study about chemical exposure demonstrates how the Cowboy mentality leads Donny and many other blue-collar workers to devalue scientific data because they prize daring, strength, and honor.

They also have differing perspectives on honor. Donny sees honor as a function of bravery, but Mike "wanted to reduce the need for bravery." Hochschild argues that Mike's environmental activism—which once led to construction workers driving him off the highway—is actually another form of bravery altogether. She recalls stories of regulators who ended up on the receiving end of corporate wrath—one who pointed out leaky pipes started to get bullied off the premises because he was creating more work for plant operators; another was seen as a "corporate sissy" for wearing a gas mask and laughed down by an army of workers whose teeth were visibly damaged by sulfuric acid exposure.

Hochschild's argument that Mike's activism constitutes bravery in its own right suggests that Cowboys like Donny only value certain kinds of bravery: namely, a masculine, socially conformist willingness to take bodily risks. Mike's willingness to take social risks and challenge conformity does not count in the Cowboy conception of bravery. When it comes to long-term risks like the workers' toxic exposure, Cowboys' bravery can backfire. The Cowboy brand of bravery awards honor in the short term, far before the negative repercussions of bodily risks are apparent.

Hochschild suggests that, in terms of regulation, "Louisiana is a Cowboy kind of state" that carries Donny's attitude toward risk: enduring risk, even when the risk is unnecessary, proves one's strength and honor. Hochschild suggests that, despite all the Tea Partiers' disdain for self-proclaimed "victims," Louisianans are themselves the victims of unregulated industry. Back at Brother Cappy and Sister Fay's dinner, the guests continue to argue "issue by issue," but Brother Cappy never has to reach for the onion. As they finish up dessert, Mike asks Donny how he would "feel about crossing the I-10 bridge." Donny's reply: "If my kids weren't with me […] I'd drive *fast*."

The Cowboy attitude, which embraces danger as an opportunity, seems responsible for some part of Louisiana's rampant social issues. Just as Team Players endure the abuses that their teams levy on them, and Worshippers refrain from solving problems because of their faith, Cowboys willingly become victims because surviving hardship is a source of pride. It is unclear whether Donny's statement that he would "drive fast" means that he recognizes the bridge's risk and would drive fast to avoid the possibility of a collapse or, more likely, that he simply enjoys the risk-taking involved in speeding.

CHAPTER 13 – THE REBEL: A TEAM LOYALIST WITH A NEW CAUSE

Hochschild sees a variety of handmade signs in the crowd of 150 protestors at the state capitol building in Baton Rouge. This is where she first met Mike Schaff, who wore a yellow "**Bayou Corne Sinkhole**" T-shirt and introduced a fellow sinkhole victim "with tears in his voice." He said that he was a "water baby" who grew up and wanted to retire right on the bayou. But the sinkhole ruined his dream and he began writing to his state representatives.

When Hochschild first met Mike Schaff, he was fighting government overregulation. Now, Mike is calling for government regulation. His transformation shows how personal experience can generate political transformations, just as political differences can block personal relationships across the divide.

The protest was for Senate Bill 209, which would require drilling companies to reimburse residents who lost housing due to drilling-related accidents within 180 days; the state legislature, largely run by current and former oil industry leaders, tabled the bill. Mike also protested on a number of related issues, such as Texas Brine's later request to use the **sinkhole** they created as a toxic dumping site. He wrote 50 letters to officials and did 40 media interviews, joking that he was nearly becoming "a tree-hugger."

The legislature, which clearly works with the oil industry rather than against it, once again forces the public to deal with the consequences of private irresponsibility. Although many other Louisianans worry that government regulations will deprive them of their livelihoods, the state government's lack of regulation is what has deprived Mike.

After the **sinkhole** first opened, Mike organized a group of residents and got in touch with General Honoré. Honoré worked with them to start the Green Army, an umbrella group for smaller environmental organizations, and hoped that people would stop thinking that "the environment is a soft, feminine issue." But Mike was disappointed that he so often cried while speaking about the disaster and hoped that he would learn to "speak with no tears, just anger."

Mike shares Donny's emphasis on the masculine ability to endure danger, and a person's emotional reaction to hardship seems to determine whether one has truly endured it. Similarly, many conservatives see the environment as "soft" and "feminine" because people usually relate to it emotionally—through nostalgic memories of their childhood or their affinity for fishing on the weekends—rather than as the ecological foundation on which human life is built, and fundamentally a matter of human health.

Mike dedicated himself to the oil industry all his life but saw his income stagnate while others nearby made millions, including an Exxon engineer's wife who complained about the "substandard" housing on Mike's side of the highway, the star of the TV series Duck Dynasty, and a fellow **sinkhole** victim who proclaimed himself "'a poor' man" in front of a crowd that knew better. Mike loves fishing and spending time on the bayou, but he had little time to do so since his childhood—he had not "seen a month's vacation since [he] was twenty-two." His job was to estimate the properties and cost of materials used in oil storage and drilling construction, and even after ten years of loyal work he only got three weeks off per year—including sick days.

Even though government and industry declare oil jobs the solution to Louisiana's economic woes, Mike's oil job brought him no economic advancement and undermined his American Dream. After a lifetime of hard work, capitalism gave Mike little by way of reward, while people around him got rich suddenly and seemingly at random before turning around and calling him *an eyesore. His disdain for the rich is a response to his structural squeeze, and it is a response he shares with the progressive left rather than his fellow Tea Party voters.*

After a lifetime of hard work, Mike was thrilled to finally retire and find "time with his new wife, time fishing and hunting, time with his grandchildren" at his new house in Bayou Corne. But, before long, the **sinkhole** opened and Bayou Corne became "a ghost town encroached on by thirty-two acres of toxic sludge." Three years after the town's residents fled, scattering all over the region, Mike still thinks that "Bayou Corne will always be home."

Mike sees Bayou Corne as home in part because he spent his life working towards membership in an ideal small, self-sufficient community like the one where he grew up. Bayou Corne represents this nostalgic ideal for him, even if it the town no longer exists.

Mike finds that his past in the oil industry makes him a dangerous foe to it in the present. He knows the science and the economics behind it, he knows which chemicals are dangerous and why, and he knows that many Louisianans are not aware of these dangers. But he struggles to square his Tea Party politics "on matters of government and tax" with his newfound environmental advocacy, in which (to his chagrin) he is surrounded by liberals. He wondered what it would take to "add the environment to the agenda of the Tea Party."

Mike's scientific literacy is an enormous political asset. However, he senses that his newly-hybrid political views threaten his membership in the Louisiana ideological community to which he feels attached; he realizes that trust and politics often go hand-in-hand in contemporary America and fears that his changing politics will affect people's ability to trust him.

Hochschild talks about the 1980 drilling disaster at Lake Peigneur, just a few miles from Bayou Corne. It was remarkably similar: a drilling company, Texaco, punctured a salt dome and created a whirlpool that "sucked down two drilling platforms, eleven barges, four flatbed trucks, a tugboat, acres of soil, trees, trucks, a parking lot, and an entire sixty-five-acre botanical garden." A "memory-softening" documentary released years after the accident focused on the drill bit that caused the accident (rather than blaming Texaco) and marketed the disaster site as a tourist attraction. Then, in 2013, eight months after the Bayou Corne disaster, the Louisiana state government authorized toxic waste dumping and further drilling in Lake Peigneur, backing the drilling company that was "forgetting—or overriding—both disasters." Activist groups sued the state government and managed to delay the drilling.

Once again, new environmental disasters are layered on top of old, forgotten ones. The new disaster at Bayou Corne repeats the old one at Lake Peigneur almost exactly. In response, the government and industry supported a structural amnesia that erased this disaster's memory from the landscape—here, represented by the documentary. Once that memory was forgotten, the cycle of disaster and cover-up was repeated.

Mike wants to bring the Louisiana Tea Party to his side. His state has 40% of the United States' wetlands, provides more than a quarter of its seafood, and is losing a land area of "an average football field every hour" to sea level rise and oil extraction. The federal government had to de-list 31 communities that have been swallowed by the sea and formally recognize the country's first "climate refugees." In 2014, after oil companies failed to keep their promises to fund flooding protection measures, the Southeast Flood Control Commission tried to sue the companies. But Governor Jindal and the state legislature blocked the effort and tried to take the repair money out of the state budget instead. Mike jumped at the scandal: he wrote to fellow Tea Party members and set up a meeting.

Mike sees an opportunity to win the Tea Party over to environmentalism when the governor tries to spend government money on something the government should not be funding. He hopes he can win the Tea Party's trust by getting them to empathize with environmentalists' distrust of government. Of course, this will be difficult because, although the Tea Party hates unnecessary government spending, they tend to side with the oil companies that the governor is protecting from the rest of the government.

But both groups of Tea Party activists were confused by Mike's environmentalism—the environment "was a liberal cause." Mike suggests that environmental advocacy is compatible with Tea Party proposals—they could abolish the EPA and make insurance companies, rather than the government, take charge of drilling regulations. But Hochschild worries that this was exactly the arrangement at Bayou Corne—in fact, the insurance company sued Texas Brine and did not pay out damages. In an aside, Hochschild argues that it is impossible to truly have personal freedom "without a national vision based on the common good."

Mike turns to capitalism to save the environment—even though, in Bayou Corne's case, capitalism destroyed it and insurance companies tried to skimp on their obligations by suing Texas Brine even though government regulators approved their activities. (To Mike, this is a reason to have insurance companies do the regulating.) For the first time, Hochschild openly declares that political decisions have to prioritize public over private interest, which she offers as an argument against deregulation.

To some degree, Mike agrees: perhaps they need "a skeleton crew at the EPA." But he thinks that global warming does not exist and believes that the EPA uses it as an excuse to hoard money and power. He blames government expansion for the erosion of small-scale communities like his own and bases his image of the federal government on what he knows about the Louisiana state government, which he sees as a kind of "financial **sinkhole**." To an extent, this makes sense: after the 2009 bank bailout, the government seems allied with Wall Street against the people.

Mike might be the only environmentalist who denies global warming. To Mike, the state government is a sinkhole in the sense that it swallows resources as well as the promise of small, independent communities. Mike clearly does not believe that private companies will "self-regulate," but unlike liberals, he also does not believe that the government *will regulate effectively. Louisiana's catastrophic government gives him solid evidence for this belief.*

Another one of Mike's complaints against the federal government is that it "wasn't on the side of men being manly." With women able to financially support themselves, people increasingly able to live as openly transgender, and same-sex marriage gaining national acceptance, Mike sees traditional masculinity as threatened and male-dominated institutions like the police and military suffering from the "cultural erosion of manhood." Whereas he accepts the federal government insofar as it fights biological, environmental pollution, he fears it is simultaneously causing a different kind of cultural pollution.

Mike's investment in masculinity recalls the last chapter, when Donny extolled the virtues of daring while the men and women dined at separate tables. Mike's worry about manhood's decline reflects the cosmopolitan self's increasing displacement of the traditional endurance self. In a world where men and women can be whatever they want, there is no longer a clear-cut formula for male honor.

Mike has a part of each type of endurance self: he is "a fighter but not a Cowboy, a man of religion but not a Worshipper, and a Team Loyalist but critical, in one big way, of his team." He sees the need for certain protections from the government but fears that it will grow too large.

Mike's blended expression of the endurance self points to the broader variety of endurance selves Hochschild encountered in Louisiana.

Once, at night, Mike noticed that all the houses in Bayou Corne were dark. One of the few other residents who stayed was Nick, who did not want to move because his wife was suffering from breast cancer. His house was gone, too, and even his dog was dying. One evening, Mike crossed the street to see Nick because it looked like he was suffering from "something new." Nick told Mike that his son had just gotten pancreatic cancer, and the men "wept together for a long time."

Like the landscape, Nick's family has endured layer after layer of catastrophe because of pollution. Again, Mike cannot help but cry, and Hochschild implicitly challenges his assumption that tears imply weakness by portraying his empathy and solidarity with Nick as a form of strength and resilience—a microcosm of the tight-knit community that Mike so deeply values.

CHAPTER 14 – THE FIRES OF HISTORY: THE 1860S AND THE 1960S

Hochschild wonders about the historical influences that have led to the Tea Party's rise. Clearly, it takes from a long tradition of American populism, but it is unique in advocating "reversing progressive reform and dismantling the federal government." Hochschild sees these unique threads in the Tea Party's political program as a distinct response to the conservative deep story and argues that understanding them requires examining the South in the 1860s and the 1960s. She is interested in how these periods left "emotional grooves, as we might call them, carved into the minds and hearts" of middle-class Southerners. In particular, the class distinctions formed during these periods of conflict continue to influence contemporary Southern whites' class identities.

In an attempt to show the deeper context behind Louisiana's issues and test political solutions, Hochschild has repeatedly looked back to history where Louisiana's government and people choose to systematically forget it through structural amnesia. Here, she argues that emotions are historically influenced in the same way—feeling rules, models of the self, and political affiliations can be passed down generationally just like wealth and property.

By the early 1860s, the South was defined by the plantation system, which left whites who ran small farms—in the words of seminal Southern historian W.J. Cash—"locked into a marginal life." They were caught economically and psychologically between the ostentatiously rich plantation owners they could theoretically become, who conceived themselves "not as wicked oppressors but as generous benefactors" of poor whites, and the violently oppressed slaves whose trauma they were lucky not to suffer. This gave poor whites "a picture of the best and worst fates in life" and "suggested its own metaphoric line waiting for the American Dream," which was equated with getting one's own plantation.

As in today's structural squeeze, poor whites in the 1860s were promised a kind of economic progress that very few of them ever actually achieved. As today, working whites' desire for wealth created an emotional self-interest in identifying with the wealthy, which led them to empathize with and trust the wealthy class while turning against people much more oppressed than themselves.

As the plantation system expanded, poorer farmers were crowded out of the best farmland and forced into what Cash called "all the marginal lands of the South." Cash argued that, by destroying the forest ecosystems that supported diverse wildlife and plants, plantation owners destroyed "the old abundant variety" poor white farmers were used to living on. This class had a long way to go toward the American Dream and faced little interference by government of any sort—until the Civil War.

Just as oil destroys the environment and forces Louisianans like the Areno family to stop living off the land and work for the industry instead, the plantation system deliberately created economic precarity in order to tighten its grasp on the South.

The Civil War devastated the region's economy, black Southerners suddenly started competing with poor whites economically, and the moralizing North condemned poor whites at the same time as its "carpetbaggers" moved South to profit from Reconstruction. The Civil Rights Movement and Obama's presidency seemed like new iterations of the same pattern of domination by the North.

When government did enter the picture for Southern whites, it figured as a distant enemy force that descended on the region to destroy communities and livelihoods. This intervention crushed poor whites' unlikely faith that they would advance economically in the existing system. Similarly, the present government's promise of economic assistance conflicts with Louisianans' absolute faith that the free market will lead them to the American Dream.

Hochschild sees oil as "the new cotton." Oil barons have even bought old cotton plantations, and they also crowd out other industries and require enormous investment to bring their business to scale. Oil also promises to restore the wealth that the South lost after the plantation system collapsed. In fact, while the plantation system left 19th-century working whites poor, oil now promises their descendants honorable jobs that pay decent wages.

Oil dominates the Southern economy (if in perception more than in reality), as much as cotton used to. Like cotton, the oil industry has created a wealthy minority with disproportionate power in Louisiana. Oil has also created a convergent system of values in which the route to success is clear, but opportunities for that success are competitive.

Hochschild meets a period actor who plays a Confederate soldier at the Oak Alley Plantation, which has been restored as a tourist attraction; he agrees with her characterization of oil as "the new cotton" and explains that an oil company built a huge storage facility a few hundred yards from his house, which he can no longer sell because the property value has declined so severely ever since. He explains that, while Confederates like the soldier he portrays wanted to secede from federal control, "you can't secede from oil. And you can't secede from a mentality."

Even though the actor appears to empathize with Confederate secessionism, even he cannot defend oil. Secession from a political body involves laying claim to a distinct public interest that the national government does not represent, but the oil industry only represents its own private interest. It gains power by recruiting people to the oil "mindset," making them believe they will strike it rich. That mindset comes to determine how people feel and vote, but those who do not share it can do little to tamper oil's political domination.

Hochschild next argues that, amid the cultural changes in the 1960s and 1970s, "a long parade of the underprivileged came forward to talk of their mistreatment"—including minorities, immigrants, women seeking equal work, LGBT Americans, and environmentalists. As personal identity increasingly became an important rallying cry for politics, old white men felt left out and blamed. Indeed, they felt like victims, but their complaint was precisely that everyone else was claiming to victimhood and the special status it accorded.

By vocalizing their own deep story of cultural marginalization during the 1960s and 1970s, minorities began shifting the terms of national discourse and pushing a cosmopolitan attitude as the solution systematic oppression. To fix the system, Americans had to first find empathy for the oppressed and trust in the veracity of their lived experience. These demands made acceptance and intercultural fluency key values of the cosmopolitan self. But Louisianans felt that the system wasn't broken—indeed, it promised them the American Dream—and so declarations of "victimhood" started to look like a refusal to follow the established, ostensibly fair rules.

"The defining moment" of this period was the 1964 Freedom Summer, when students and civil rights workers—including Hochschild and her husband—traveled South to register voters, teach informal classes, and otherwise help advance black Americans' struggle for civil rights. This was a dangerous mission—three voter registration workers were murdered by the KKK, and various black churches, businesses, and homes were bombed. This made the "white, blue-collar Southern men" who were "the most visible resisters to civil rights" dramatically lose their sense of honor in the national eye. Many Tea Party members were teenagers at the time and felt that the moralizing North was intervening again and making "Southern whites [bear] the mark of shame," even when they did not directly participate in violence.

Hochschild's personal memory of the Freedom Summer reminds the reader that she, like many of the Tea Partiers she interviews, observed these historical transformations in public discourse firsthand. Working-class Southern whites became the face of racism because they saw an economic trade-off between their own interests and those of minorities. Again, media exported this image to a national stage and decided which narratives of self were politically salient.

From 1948 through the 1960s, the federal government gradually passed a series of protections for African-Americans, most notably President Johnson's Civil Rights Act of 1964. The feminist and gay rights movements took a similar course in the 1960s and 1970s, and other groups continued to join suit through the present day. Ultimately, the 1960s and 1970s saw the birth of the "culture of victimization" that Tea Partiers continue to decry as getting in the way of fairness.

As politicians began systematically protecting certain rights and establishing anti-discrimination protections for certain marginalized groups, conservatives saw the "line cutters" winning special privileges by claiming a victimhood that white men could never experience. To conservatives, the left's call to break down empathy walls for minorities was actually setting up an empathy wall between minorities and women on one side and white men on the other.

Hochschild's friends in the Tea Party adopted parts of this 1960s and 1970s culture while rejecting others. One appreciated "feminist" Sarah Palin and another admired Martin Luther King Jr.'s leadership style, but others thought people should not benefit from affirmative action if, say, they have one Native American ancestor. Pride in their whiteness, maleness, or age would have made them seem chauvinistic. But they felt they had "lived through one long deep story of being shoved back in line," even as their economic opportunities dwindle. They "were beginning to *feel* like victims," even as they hated when people flaunted their victimhood.

Conservatives dismissed such progressive policies outright, without looking at their overall costs and benefits or even the principles behind them. However, if conservatives did look at the principles behind identity-sensitive progressive reforms, they would perhaps find that they empathize with marginalized groups' sense of desperation and lack of opportunities.

Hochschild asks where this population of Southern whites could find another source of pride. Their work was insecure as wages fell; they felt like the rest of the country saw their region as backwards. Family values became one consistent source of pride, and so a commitment to heterosexual monogamous marriages became a cornerstone of Southern politics. This led Southern conservatives to oppose same-sex marriage, favor practices like covenant marriages that carry extra legal requirements, and reject abortion as dishonorable. Church and the moral codes that accompanied faith were another source of honor; even though much of liberal America saw religious doctrines like the idea that the earth was created in seven days as "signs of a poor education," Christians could trust that other Christians would be morally upstanding people.

Pride in Christian morality allows conservatives to rally around church as a site of community, reject the left's arguments when they are based in empirical scientific evidence that conflicts with religious teachings, and enforce a code of behavior that tells them who to trust. Just as Janice Areno claimed to feel no sympathy for anyone who does not work (she wanted to "let them starve"), Southern Christians also set up sympathy conditions that implicitly exclude those who don't share their same values.

The core of this newfound honor "was pride in the *self* of the deep story," the self that had made enormous sacrifices to survive and care for large Southern families and local communities. Southerners idolize rather than demonize the rich through a "gaze forward" that liberals see as a denial of their own class status. But this kind of endurance self is threatened by the less rooted, more liberal "upper-middle-class cosmopolitan self" that is "directed to the task of cracking into the global elite." People with cosmopolitan selves are more willing to move far away and fight for liberal causes like human rights, but think of emphasis on local community as signifying "insularity and closed-mindedness rather than as a source of belonging and honor." The cosmopolitan self's threat to the endurance self led many Southerners to blame the federal government that was increasingly rewarding the former.

The endurance self underlies all these various expressions of conservative pride. This self sees community as a bounded entity: one's town, family, company, and church, which must be defended from assaults by outsiders. Conversely, the cosmopolitan self sees community as open-ended, willing to adopt new members and cultures so long as they share the values of tolerance and equality, but this community is imagined and abstract rather than concrete and localized. Because conservatives experience the federal government as an abstract, faraway, often amorphous entity that can nevertheless show up at their doorsteps to knock down their hard-won communities, conservatives unsurprisingly tend to associate it with the cosmopolitan self.

Many of Hochschild's friends in Louisiana worried about Syrian refugees coming to the United States after 2015. Lee Sherman suggested incarcerating them in Guantánamo Bay, Mike Schaff thinks they should have stayed and fought in their own country (as he says the South did during the Civil War), and Jackie Tabor felt that Islam was a threat to American culture. The Tea Party allowed its members to forget the pleas of other downtrodden groups, shed liberal feeling rules and instead focus on "aspiring high." Hochschild sees this attitude as continuing the legacy of Southern secession, and specifically hoping to become the rich who would secede from the poor by eliminating taxation and social services. Now, even Northern conservatives are following suit, hoping that "the richer around the nation will become free of the poorer."

Louisianans are so suspicious of religious outsiders that they conflate a few thousand refugees with criminals and cultural invaders who threaten hundreds of millions of Americans' ways of life. Tea Partiers' aspiration to wealth, or "gaze forward," leads them to think of themselves like wealthy people even if they are not. This is why so many Louisianans, like Bill Beatifo and Mike Schaff, believe that they would or should be millionaires, if only the government had not gotten in the way. Ultimately, Tea Partiers believe the rich deserve their wealth and should have no obligations to the poor, but they forget that profit for the rich requires labor from the poor. The rich need the freedom to employ the poor but want the freedom from caring for the poor. They want to treat the poor as laborers, but not as people.

CHAPTER 15 – STRANGERS NO LONGER: THE POWER OF PROMISE

During the last years of Hochschild's research in Louisiana, something monumental happened. On one of these later trips, she went to a Republican presidential campaign rally and then asked her local friends what they thought of Donald Trump.

Usually, during sociological fieldwork, the field does not radically change from one visit to another. But, in the case of this book, Donald Trump's meteoric rise to national political promise suddenly sent the minority views of Tea Party Louisianans into the national, public spotlight.

Hochschild sees that "the scene had been set for Trump's rise" for three reasons: white conservatives feared redistribution because their own economic situation was already so precarious, they felt culturally marginalized, and they suffered a "demographic decline" relative to the rest of the country. The deep story also set the stage for Trump's rising popularity: Louisiana conservatives felt like "a besieged minority," united against the "line cutters" and their patron, President Obama.

In Louisiana and beyond, conservatives' sense of economic, cultural, and demographic marginalization transformed them into a unified voting bloc with a unified self-interest in reasserting dominance.

It is the day before the Louisiana Republican primary, and Hochschild attends Donald Trump's rally in New Orleans. Supporters bus in from around the state and flood into an enormous airplane hangar. "Two or three thousand fans" wave pro-Trump signs and proudly display their Trump merchandise. Nearly all are white, and many carry enormous American flags—Hochschild wonders whether their patriotic style is "ironic or earnest? Or both?"

Although Hochschild has been meeting conservatives one-on-one and in small groups for years, she now finds herself amidst an anonymous crowd full of them. These conservatives fit the demographic she has been studying, but instead of displaying their politics through their words and opinions, they are outwardly signaling their enthusiasm by displaying patriotic iconography.

Trump steps up to the podium and the audience starts a chant. He cites his rising poll numbers and then starts listing what "we" will do: protect domestic industries, make the country "great again," build a wall on the Mexican border, etc. The audience cheers after each proposal. One man lifts a sign proclaiming the KKK's support for Trump, and Black Lives Matter activists lead a larger group of protesters through the door. Eyeing one demonstrator in particular, Trump tells guards to "get that guy out" and wonders "why is this taking so long?" The crowd chants "U.S.A.!" over and over to drown out the protestors. At later events, Trump starts the chant himself, suggesting that "dissent is one thing [...] but being American is another."

Trump rhetorically appeals to the audience's identification as the rightful in-group of true Americans. He positions himself as leading a popular movement more than running for a party's nomination and emphasizes his desire to keep outsiders away, from his call to build a border wall to his insistence that a protestor be escorted out. This individual demonstrator is representative of all Trump's opponents, and Trump draws a clear partisan line by proclaiming that he empathizes with his audience's disillusionment while refusing to listen to those from the other side.

After the speech, people flock to Trump for autographs and photos. One approaches with raised arms, "as in the rapture." And the day after the rally, Trump wins the primary with 41% of the Republican primary vote. Over the rest of the campaign, "Trump tells his fans what he offers them"—including his greed and the triumph of white Christian culture over minority cultures (and especially Islam). Trump calls protestors "bad, bad people" and promises to cover his supporters' legal fees if they "knock the crap out of" one. When another tries to rush the podium, Trump shows the audience how he would have attacked the man had he made it onstage. And Trump wants to abolish the EPA "in almost every form."

This scene recalls the passionate, emotional activity at Madonna and Glenn Massey's church. Trump becomes a role model for American pride just like the pastors are role models for forgiveness. His image of pride and honor reinforces many of the conservative beliefs that Hochschild has noted thus far: a reverence for wealthy capitalists like himself; a desire to make Christian morality a national mandate; and a tendency to stereotype his opponents in order to exclude them from the community he defends and cares about.

Hochschild calls Trump an "emotions candidate" because he focuses on provoking emotional responses from supporters rather than proposing policy changes. He acts out the "emotional transformation" he promises his white Christian supporters, chastises his opponents because they fail to "inspire enthusiasm," and presents his fans' emotional response as "a sign of collective success." He promises to convert his supporters' discouragement into hope and their shame into pride, making them "*no longer strangers in their own land*" as if through magic.

Trump's emotional appeals dovetail neatly with Hochschild's argument that politics is fundamentally grounded in emotional rather than factual narratives. He performs the hopeful energy that, to Hochschild, the American Dream prescribes as a feeling rule. This performance models the transformation he promises his audience.

Renowned French sociologist Émile Durkheim used the term "collective effervescence" to describe the "emotional excitation felt by those who join with others they take to be fellow members of a moral or biological tribe." A group organizes around a powerful shared symbol, or totem, which in this case is Trump himself. That totem unifies the crowd—Trump begins to consider his followers a "movement" and promises that they will be uplifted. "Emotionally speaking," the crowd gets an "ecstatic high." People signal their solidarity with Trump and one another by wearing merchandise and agreeing to expel outsiders: the Muslims and Mexicans that Trump wants to keep out of the United States and the protestors he wants out of his rallies.

Durkheim's concept of collective effervescence helps explain how latent political beliefs transform into fervent political activity through the experience of community. Crucially for Hochschild, trust in one's community and empathy with fellow members' concerns are foundations for this kind of political mobilization. Earlier in the book, most of Hochschild's interviewees felt powerless and forgotten, but the availability of a totem allows them to become a powerful and active political force.

Another important dimension of Trump's emotional appeal is that he rejects "politically correct" standards of speech for the public sphere. In doing so, he also rejects the liberal feeling rules that so frustrated his supporters. Ultimately, far-right conservatives felt both that "the deep story was true" and that liberals denied the deep story, telling them that their resentment was misplaced. They felt as though the left was using a "false PC cover-up" to silence their deep story, but Donald Trump finally lifted the constraints of that cover-up by stereotyping and mocking marginalized groups. This allowed conservatives "both to feel like a good moral American and to feel superior to those they considered 'other' or beneath them."

Trump wants to roll back the 1960s and 1970s shift in national feeling rules: he promises to replace the cosmopolitan self of the "line cutters" with the endurance self of white Christian conservatives. In addition, his mere presence as a totem rolls back those feeling rules on a limited scale, allowing conservatives to openly express racist, sexist, and xenophobic attitudes that they previously had to conceal. Trump allows his supporters to chalk their hate up to class conflict and continue feeling like morally upstanding Christians.

Hochschild argues that this release from the rules of political correctness created a "high" that conservatives wanted to hold onto. Sticking with Trump became a matter of "emotional self-interest," a factor that many analyses tend to ignore in favor of economic self-interest. Hochschild sees that her initial questions about the Great Paradox were framed in the language of economic self-interest, which "is never entirely absent," but is nevertheless often overwhelmed by "the profound importance of emotional self-interest." People will protect Trump to "protect [their] elation," like a woman who talked about him continuously for six hours and fended off possible liberal concerns with a "shield of talk."

Hochschild finally introduces her concept of emotional self-interest, which has driven much of her argument behind the scenes up to this point. The woman's "shield of talk" shows how maintaining a coherent sense of identity (even when that identity is defined by outside narratives from Trump) can be more important than voting for what improves one's standard of living.

On her last visit, about half of Hochschild's friends in Louisiana backed Trump. Janice Areno and Donny McCorquodale were ardent supporters; Mike Schaff preferred Ted Cruz. Jackie Tabor, Harold and Annette Areno, Sharon Galicia and others Hochschild encountered were worried about Trump's antagonizing personality but still willing to vote for him if he won the Republican nomination.

Unsurprisingly, Hochschild's more unapologetic friends are the most enthusiastic about Trump, while her more diplomatic friends feel uncomfortable with the sharp lines he draws between his in-group of supporters and the out-groups that seem to be launching an assault on them.

Many Louisianans appreciate Trump's business success, exhibiting a faith in capitalism that Hochschild contrasts with the turn to socialism during the Great Depression. They also appreciate his outward hypermasculinity—he promises to vindicate "both fist-pounding, gun-toting guy-guys and high-flying entrepreneurs." He was, Hochschild declares, "the identity politics candidate for white men." And, as multinational corporations gain more power than many governments around the globe, right-wing political ideologies "focused on national sentiment, strong central rule, and intolerance for minorities or dissent" have spread like wildfire. Russia, India, Hungary, and Poland are now run by such right-wing parties, and similar groups are gaining traction even in France, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

Trump displays the facets of identity in which white men after 1970 realized they could still invest their senses of pride and honor: traditional morality (especially Trump's daring, protective, and sexist form of masculinity) and capitalism (in which wealth indicates hard work, which indicates merit and grit). This gives conservative white men the politics of victimization they want. Trump tells them they have been left behind, while letting them continue to harp on people who admit they feel like victims and want justice. By identifying a pattern of right-wing strongman rulers around the globe, Hochschild points to the parallel conditions that working people increasingly suffer as corporations decreasingly have to answer to government of any sort.

CHAPTER 16 – "THEY SAY THERE ARE BEAUTIFUL TREES"

As governor, Bobby Jindal cut over 30,000 state government jobs, and social services crumbled in Louisiana. Social workers could not keep up with child abuse cases, universities could not afford to keep many campus offices open more than three days a week, and waiting lists for public defenders were thousands of names long. But the state still ended up $1.6 billion over budget, which is the same amount Jindal gave to oil companies in tax exemptions. He cut corporate taxes, transferred state-owned property and hospitals into private hands, and ultimately put "the entire state of Louisiana […] into a **sinkhole**."

Hochschild's indictment of Bobby Jindal's governorship demonstrates the concrete effects of conservatives' desire to slash government budgets (and particularly social spending), but also the way his policies' benefits disproportionately flowed to the top while failing to actually help working Louisianans. This sets up the first half of the Great Paradox: conservative policies make working people's lives worse and freedoms dwindle.

But Hochschild's acquaintances in the Louisiana Tea Party still voted for him and opposed his successor, Democrat John Bel Edwards, who raised taxes to cover the budget shortfall. This is while Louisiana ranks second to last among the 50 states in "general well-being" and receives 44% of its state funding from the federal government. Hochschild knows that Louisianans do not want to be "victims," but they clearly are; in fact, they are "sacrificial lambs to the entire American industrial system" that makes plastic products for the whole country yet disproportionally burdens red states with the resulting pollution. And this happens largely because Southerners vote against government regulation and live in a "social terrain of politics, industry, television channels, and a pulpit that invites them to do so."

Jindal's policy failures did nothing to influence conservatives' votes, which are expressions of their deep stories rather than rational choices among competing policy agendas. This reflects the second half of the Great Paradox: working people vote for conservatives, and therefore against their interests, because they vote based on emotional (more than political) self-interest. In terms of environmental pollution, Louisiana's social terrain reinforces its people's deep stories. They vote to accept industry, which fits their deep story, rather than reject pollution, which their endurance selves are ready to deal with.

Hochschild sees the left and right, as well as urban blue areas and rural red ones, as fundamentally interdependent on one another. Red states produce the energy that blue states need to run, and blue states have the technology and labor markets that red state industries need to grow.

Hochschild wants readers to see the interconnection rather than the polarization in contemporary American life: although partyism leads people to disconnect from the other side's bubble beyond the empathy wall, in reality both sides need one another to sustain their way of life.

Despite this interdependence, Hochschild remarks that she "was humbled by the complexity and height of the empathy wall" throughout her research. However, she notes that Louisianans' "teasing, good-hearted acceptance of a stranger from Berkeley" showed her how easy it can be to overcome that empathy wall. Opposing sides can also easily cooperate on particular issues—Mike Schaff, for instance, recently adopted a conventionally liberal disdain for "big money" in politics.

Although political disagreements and visible cultural differences set up the empathy wall, everyday personal interactions can swiftly knock it down. Instead of seeing others through political affiliations and disagreements, Hochschild suggests that healing the American political divide requires setting politics aside, viewing others as people first and political actors second, and focusing on the resonances, however minor, between otherwise discordant views.

Back in California, Hochschild looks out on the San Francisco Bay and remembers that there are environmental problems in blue states, too—like the 1969 Union Oil spill near Santa Barbara. She sees the "keyhole issue" of environmental pollution as demonstrating the ultimate human stakes and effects of politics. She includes two letters she has written, one explaining the Tea Party's viewpoint to her own progressive community and the other explaining progressives' viewpoint to her Louisiana friends.

While blue state oil spills are rarer and get more attention from media and activists, they still tend to recede into history in people's minds while their concrete effects can continue for decades. Broadly, then, Hochschild's keyhole issue demonstrates private interests' long-lasting, often invisible effects on public freedoms. Her letters are a pithy attempt to help each side overcome the empathy wall and experience the other's viewpoint, however partially and momentarily.

The first letter encourages liberals to see the strength and resilience in conservative communities that sustain their values and work patiently for a better future, even as they have been left behind. She suggests that the conservative donors who largely fund right-wing grassroots activism are appealing to people's deeply-held values rather than the "*bad angels* of their nature," as liberals might expect. Hochschild concludes the short letter by asking liberals to "consider the possibility that in their situation, you might end up closer to their perspective."

Hochschild wants liberals to move past their surface-level image of conservatives by recognizing the animating values behind their decisions. She wants coastal liberals to see principled but downwardly mobile people trying desperately to save their communities and ways of life, rather than the spiteful, prejudiced people like Rush Limbaugh they see in the media. Hochschild's book is essentially an extended version of this call for liberal empathy, so she keeps this particular letter rather short.

In her letter to right-wing Louisianans, Hochschild explains that many progressives are just as disgruntled with American government as they are, and progressives also share their basic values of freedom, economic security, and fairness. But she notes that, as hard as it may be for conservatives to hear, "historically the Democrats have done better" at creating jobs, raising the middle classes, and defending workers. And, in the past, the line between Democrats and Republicans has not been as defined as it is today: for instance, President Clinton "ushered in an era of deregulation," and President Nixon passed many environmental regulations.

Hochschild first wants conservatives to understand that left versus right does not mean and has never necessarily meant government versus private sector. In fact, government regulation can facilitate rather than stymie an effective private sector, and especially improve the lives of workers like them. She hopes the right-wing Louisianans can come to see the public sector as defending workers and their communities rather than attacking businesses and the free market.

In the same letter, Hochschild compares Louisiana to Norway, which has a similar population and also runs on an oil-based economy, but guarantees nearly all its citizens comfortable lives, in part through its sovereign wealth fund. She explains that progressives "have their own deep story, one parallel to yours, one they feel you may misunderstand." Liberals are "fiercely proud" of their robust public infrastructure and value the "incorporation and acceptance of difference" symbolized by the Statue of Liberty. But progressives fear that private industry is trying to "recklessly dismantle" their "hard-won public sphere." Conservatives and progressives might share more than they think, Hochschild explains, "for *many on the left feel like strangers in their own land too*."

Liberals and conservatives are both mired in fear that the government will dismantle the world they have built by regulating too little and too much, respectively. By showing how public infrastructure can create rather than fragment community, Hochschild encourages conservatives to look beyond states like Louisiana, where government often does little beside collect taxes and green-light pollution (and so citizens appropriately dislike it). Instead, she wants them to see places where the government actually carries out its goals of facilitating opportunity and meeting basic needs for all without *preventing the wealthy from enjoying the fruits of their success.*

Hochschild explains that the left and right focus on different class conflicts that follow from their different deep stories. For the left, the conflict is the 1% versus the 99%, and for the right it is the "makers" versus the "takers." But Hochschild agrees with economist Robert Reich that the new conflicts in the 21st century are actually "between main street capitalism and global capitalism" and "anti-establishment versus establishment" politicians. In fact, both sides are responding to the global capitalism from which 90% of citizens do not stand to profit. The right reinvests in family and church while giving businesses incentives to relocate; the left invests in public infrastructure to spur the growth of new industry. And these are both calls for an "activist government."

The populist wings of the left and right both want better wages for American workers, but neither has fully come to terms with the way that corporations now often have more *power than governments because they transcend national borders, decreasingly rely on American labor, and buy government loyalty when they can (as much in the United States as anywhere). Hochschild thinks that businesses will never consistently put their workers' wellbeing over profit unless they are forced to answer to the public good, which means that governments need to find ways to bring businesses' profit motive in line with that public good. This is why, notably, the left's "high road" proposal is not actually about regulating away options and opportunities, as the right seems to think; rather, it is about giving people and businesses the resources to innovate.*

Hochschild walks around Berkeley, wondering what her Louisiana friends would think of her liberal enclave. Would Janice Areno see a vegan restaurant with a monthly pay-what-you-want day as "hippy-dippy or as a business with a touch of church?" Are recycling bins wasteful regulation? What would Sharon Galicia's left-leaning son think of Berkeley? Hochschild realizes that "our deep stories differ, of course, anchored as they are in biography, class, culture, and region" but she still admires the conservatives she met and emphasizes that "I wish them well."

In trying to view Berkeley from Louisianans' eyes, Hochschild wonders whether they would focus on the differences that confirm their stereotypes or see the city's similarities with their own communities. Would they see the progressive Berkeley city government as a caring institution that looks out for its citizens like a church does or a nightmarishly authoritarian regime forcing people to be "green?"

Harold and Annette Areno open their front door in October 2014: Mike Tritico stands on their porch and explains that their class-action lawsuit was thrown out after eighteen years due to a "lack of evidence" that the pollution in the Bayou d'Inde could harm humans. A cleanup crew finally came to the bayou in early 2015, but they relocated the toxic waste to a pool that was in danger of overflowing, and they did not completely seal the waste they left behind. Plus, Axiall—the newest iteration of PPG—is building a new factory on the other side of the Arenos' house. The noise has kept them up at night and they sometimes have to stay inside due to the smell.

Although the Arenos feel they are living evidence of the pollution's health impacts (they both survived cancer, and many of their relatives died), they are not surprised when the government sides with polluters yet again. The same untrustworthy government managed to botch the cleanup effort, and even if the lawsuit had succeeded, there is nothing the Arenos can do about the private chemical industry's continual expansion around them.

Lee Sherman continues to maintain his old racecars and campaign for anti-EPA Tea Party candidates. Mike Tritico and Donny McCorquodale continue their lively discussions over dinner at Brother Cappy and Sister Fay's—now, they are arguing about Trump, whom Donny supports and Mike opposes. And Madonna Massey throws a fit when her daughter watches Nicki Minaj's "Anaconda" video, frightened about "the culture we've got to protect our kids from."

Life goes on for the other Louisianans—Hochschild emphasizes that they are more than just characters in a story, but people living only half a world away from her readers.

Jackie Tabor took a trip to Israel and opened a stationary bicycle gym in Lake Charles. On Hochschild's last visit, Janice Areno joked that she was "a *green* person" when her air conditioner clicked off. The last Republican Women of Southwest Louisiana meeting was a shotgun raffle to benefit the troops, but the group saw some tension "between those who would vote for Donald Trump gleefully and those who would do so reluctantly." Sally Cappel and Shirley Slack are still close friends but no longer live in the same town and avoid talking about the presidential election. And the I-10 bridge is still "spooky," even though most residents don't blame the Condea Vista leak.

By giving these updates at the end of her book, Hochschild also shows that her relationships with the people she met in Louisiana endure, exceeding their original premise of research. In a sense, she also challenges the traditional academic image of an impartial scholarly observer who treats their subjects as part of a bounded "field" separate from their own everyday life; rather, the field of American politics is part of *Hochschild's everyday life, as well as the lives of most of her readers.*

Bayou Corne's community dispersed—some former residents still live nearby, others moved to larger Louisiana cities, and many are still nostalgic for their old town. Mike Schaff's old house there fell into disrepair, but he recently bought a beautiful new one. It is on the water, near his childhood home and the enormous Atchafalaya Basin National Wildlife Refuge, where he took Hochschild out fishing. But he has "gone from the frying pan to the fire"—a fracking company was about to start dumping imported wastewater nearby. While Mike's preferred presidential candidate was Ted Cruz—who got $15 million in campaign money from "fracking billionaires," wants to slash environmental protections, and rejects climate change—Mike was willing to vote for Donald Trump if he were to win the Republican nomination.

No matter how hard Mike Schaff fights for his ideal retirement home on the water, pollution seems to keep catching up with him. No matter how much he cares about the environment, his political party seem to offer him no choice but a vote against regulation. The Great Paradox continues—not because Mike doesn't care about pollution or even want some sort of regulations, but because the only candidates who match the rest of his views have financial interests in extractive industries.

The last time Hochschild visited the Arenos, Harold told her that the water may be getting clearer. He gazed out over the Bayou d'Inde, and Hochschild thought of the photographs he had shown her. He tells her that he knows they will meet once again "up there. And they say there are beautiful trees in Heaven."

The poignant image that closes Strangers in Their Own Land *shows Harold Areno gesturing to a past he treasures and a future he earnestly anticipates. He continues to remember and hope for a clean environment, even if he is denied one in the present. Meanwhile, his confidence that he will meet Hochschild in heaven demonstrates that her quest to build empathetic, trusting, meaningful, and enduring relationships with people like Harold, whom she has little in common with, has been a resounding success.*

AFTERWORD TO THE PAPERBACK EDITION

The first edition of Strangers in Their Own Land was published in September 2016, just months before Donald Trump's election. In the following year, Hochschild returned to Louisiana three times to check in on her friends and acquaintances there. Hochschild describes them as "ecstatic"; after all, everyone whose story she told ended up voting for Trump.

This book was much timelier than Hochschild ever could have anticipated—not only did Donald Trump launch his campaign many years into her research on the demographic that elected him, but (contrary to the vast majority of liberals' expectations) he became President Trump just a few months after this book was published.

In September 2017, Trump stopped in Lake Charles during a trip to visit flooding victims in Houston. Although he was not planning a public appearance, a large crowd turned up, hoping he would decide to speak anyway. Berkeley, on the other hand, "was gloomy" after Trump's election. Californians wondered how conservatives could support Trump despite Russian meddling in the election and his infidelity.

Berkeley and Lake Charles remain opposite universes within the same land, divided—perhaps more than ever and probably more than they were during Hochschild's research—by a monumental empathy wall.

Hochschild wonders whether Trump's policy agenda intentionally takes after Louisiana's. Ultimately, Governor Jindal left the state devastated socially and economically—even Sasol, the South African petrochemical company, cancelled most of its enormous investment in Lake Charles. As director of the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement, Trump chose Scott Angelle, the official who okayed the drilling that led to the **Bayou Corne Sinkhole**. His pick to lead the EPA, Scott Pruitt, has started slashing its budget. Louisiana polluters still go unpunished—for instance, a plant in Westlake exploded twice and 18 people ended up in the emergency room, but the company was never penalized.

Sasol's worries about the "low road" strategy and preference to invest in areas with substantial government infrastructure played out in the worst possible way, but the people who piloted that strategy in Louisiana and refused to enforce environmental regulations are now the federal government's model. Despite Lake Charles's enthusiasm for Trump, the Westlake accident shows that the Great Paradox is stronger than ever.

Most of the mail Hochschild received after publishing *Strangers in Their Own Land* came from worried liberals who "despaired of developing empathy for the right" or wondered why conservatives do not reach out to them. The majority of conservatives who wrote to Hochschild "felt the book was a fair portrait" and particularly agreed with her picture of the deep story. Others outlined "postelection impasses with loved ones" and felt estranged from their former families and communities because of their political differences. Indeed, Hochschild feels that polarization has gotten noticeably worse since she started her research in 2011.

The letters from liberals show how hard overcoming empathy walls can be even for those who pride themselves on their acceptance and understanding of people with diverse backgrounds and experiences. The mail from conservatives testifies to the accuracy of Hochschild's research and suggests that the conservative deep story is likely the same outside Louisiana. Hochschild confirms that her method is more needed now than ever, as politics increasingly divides the few communities, like families, that generally used to transcend it.

After the election, Hochschild repeatedly visited Sharon Galicia, who initially favored Ted Cruz but warmed up to Donald Trump during the campaign when he called for keeping jobs in the United States and keeping illegal immigrants out. Hochschild explains that Sharon's feeling of being a "stranger in her own land" was a significant predictor of Trump support in postelection polls. Whereas Sharon used to obsess over the national debt, now her primary worry is that mainstream American media is unfairly biased against the president, which Hochschild explains was also a common shift in concern. Galicia's eighteen-year-old son supported Bernie Sanders, and the whole family came to Berkeley for a college visit. Hochschild even set up a "right-meets-left 'Living Room Conversation'" between the Galicia family and Berkeley liberals.

Sharon switched her vote, like many others, out of a hope that her national community would be defended against outsiders who wanted to erode its values and economy. But now, she sees a media assault on the president from inside the country—because his attitude and open disdain for certain citizens are so unprecedented, many news outlets have felt that covering him neutrally would mean condoning his bigotry. While Hochschild does not elaborate Sharon's son's views at length, their familial love clearly supersedes their political differences. Bernie Sanders also appealed to a similar sense of disillusionment as Donald Trump, although it is not clear if Sharon's son felt like a stranger in his own land, too.

Mike Schaff was busy working on his new house, but he still visited his old one in Bayou Corne. He was also busy caring for his stepdaughter's children, which gave him plenty of time to follow the news—but "mainly Fox." He continued to lampoon the "donut-bloated overpaid useless ass bureaucrats" at the EPA for their tendency to side with polluters. Instead, Mike has his own master plan for fixing the environment: use digital environmental toxin monitors rather than bureaucracy to enforce environmental regulations and simply abolish state regulatory agencies. Hochschild sees this plan as "advocating for an honest, well-functioning federal government."

Mike continues to sustain the memory of his dream house, and as a conservative, he continues to hate the EPA for the opposite reason as everyone else on his side: not only does the agency eat up too many resources, but they waste those resources because they fail to do their job and stop polluters. At the end of the day, Hochschild realizes, she and Mike both honestly want the same thing; many liberals could easily get on board with Mike's plan if they agree that state regulators help industry rather than actually regulating it.

Hochschild brings her son David to meet Mike—the men "were polar opposites in nearly every way," from their political beliefs to their regional heritage and family structures to their jobs: David oversees renewable energy for the California State Energy Commission. She asks the two to discuss environmental policy on tape. They agree that investors should prioritize renewable energy, but Mike recoils when David argues that California oil drilling is cleaner because of state regulations. Hochschild sees that "big differences remained, but palpable common moral ground had grown larger." Despite this, when David brings up climate change, Mike tells him not to mention it if he wants "to sell solar panels to guys like me."

After Mike's latest rant against regulators, he actually gets to meet one. For Hochschild, Mike's conversation with David is an experiment in finding common ground between people who seem to be polar opposites. Although the conversation goes awry when they get to climate change, Hochschild sees the experiment as an undeniable success.

Lee Sherman has stayed in touch with Hochschild by phone. Lee adores Donald Trump, watches 14 hours of Fox News a day, and defends the president's "right to his own opinion." Hochschild brings him a reader's poem about the bird Lee had saved after dumping toxic waste in the bayou; Lee plans to frame it and hang it in his living room.

Lee's delight when Hochschild brings the poem and insistence on staying in touch with her illustrates the power of the relationships she built across the political divide over her time in Louisiana.

A "lean, friendly man in his sixties" visits Annette Areno at her house and asks if she the is "the Annette Areno in that book." She is; he asks her to sign it. The man was Ray Bowman, a former plant worker and union president who told Hochschild he was tasked with collecting dead fish when he worked for Citgo decades before. He explained that "they didn't tell us why but I knew."

Again, the book itself plays an important role in the afterword—it has taken on a cultural life of its own in Louisiana, it seems. Bowman empathized with what he read about the Arenos because he also had firsthand experience of pollution and felt deceived by the corporations responsible.

The Arenos now live between the polluted bayou and a huge Westlake Chemical processing plant under construction. Sometimes visitors cannot get to their house because "a company flagman could halt traffic for hours." Hochschild followed them to church one Sunday, where the minister warned the congregation about communists and other "outside influences" before celebrating their aid to Houston hurricane victims, even across racial lines. The Arenos favor Trump's policies and specifically worry about their town's influx of Mexican construction workers, whom they accuse of taking locals' jobs. They see world events —"talk of moving the capital [sic] of Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, then the floods, and maybe nuclear war with North Korea"—as possible signs that the rapture is coming.

With the new plant, private interests are once again diverting public resources (here, the road) away from citizens. The minister's sermon positions white Louisianans as potential saviors to people of other backgrounds outside their community while also accusing such outsiders of threatening them. Namely, they fear that jobs will go to Mexicans, which is a worry that Donald Trump echoed on a national stage. The Arenos' interpretation of world events again gives them the capacity to endure the unjust burdens placed on them by pollution, the government, and the "line cutters" by giving them hope for a better life in the future, even if it not at the Bayou d'Inde.

Janice Areno wears a jersey reading "ADORABLE DEPLORABLES" to a dinner Hochschild hosts in Lake Charles and later mails one to her in Berkeley. (The line is a response to Hillary Clinton calling Trump supporters "a basket of deplorables" during the campaign.) Janice is "the staunchest of Trump fans," alongside Lee Sherman, and she applauds his antagonism toward "line cutters." She jokes that the Mexico border wall should extend to cut off California, too.

Janice's provocative but friendly sense of humor shows her recognition that she and Hochschild are in one another's good graces despite their extreme political differences. Her team loyalty to the Republican Party extends quite naturally to Donald Trump, whose unapologetic tone and willingness to antagonize the left resemble Janice's own.

A year after Hochschild first published this book, white nationalists and neo-Nazis assembled for a "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia; one of them drove his car into a liberal crowd and killed a woman. Some of these demonstrators belonged to "old-guard groups like the Aryan Nation and the Ku Klux Klan" while others saw themselves as "alt-right." Trump openly equated the white nationalists with the liberals who protested them by suggesting that each side was partially to blame for the violence and had "very fine people." Besides Fox News, national media responded with an appropriate scrutiny of his "reluctance to condemn" the demonstration; public opinion polls showed that the vast majority of Americans—but not most Republicans—disapproved of his comments.

One of liberals' earliest significant worries about Donald Trump was that he would open the floodgates to explicit racism and especially white nationalism, and this has since come true. Hochschild knows that, accordingly, her subjects' ambivalent racism takes on an entirely new set of connotations after the Charlottesville demonstrations and white nationalist domestic terrorist attack, so she carefully addresses her Louisiana friends' race politics in the afterword.

Hochschild explains that the events in Charlottesville were "rekindling a nationwide racism that had never disappeared." Racist movements have waxed and waned with the times, in the North as well as the South. After asking whether "white racism [is] the overriding source of support for Donald Trump" and the Tea Party, Hochschild suggests that many (but not all) of the people she interviewed in Louisiana "tacitly agreed" with a belief in natural racial hierarchy. The majority of those Hochschild asked about Charlottesville were disgusted by the violence and eager to condemn Nazis and the KKK. Ray Bowman shows her a dagger with a Nazi symbol on his wall, explaining that his uncle took it off a dead Nazi soldier during World War II.

Again, while Louisianans are racist in Hochschild's sociological sense, they clearly do not believe they are racists—they do not hate any group like the white nationalists do, even if they stereotype others freely and seem to believe that other people are somehow naturally inferior to whites. When Hochschild asks whether racism accounts for people supporting Trump, this is as much in the sociological sense as the explicit one.

But Hochschild's interviewees "also had feelings for which they found no place in the liberal world." They do not believe they have systematic privileges because of their whiteness—a view Hochschild finds understandable, given their declining economic opportunities. Bowman simultaneously condemns the "*idiots*" who flew "the American, Confederate and Nazi flags all together" but also feels that the first two of those represent the honor of his Southern "homeland."

Hochschild's subjects cannot translate their feelings into language digestible for the left because they see only half the side of each issue: they certainly face severe economic struggles, so they cannot imagine that people of color might have it worse in America. Bowman feels attached to the heritage that the Confederate flag represents for him but thinks this can be separated from its racist connotations for other groups.

Hochschild concludes that Louisianans' hostility to "unitary," explicit racism is undermined by the racist "subnarratives" they still believe. They will condemn the KKK but hold onto "smaller stories" about Confederate pride, whites' victimization by affirmative action, the black athletes who decide not to stand for the national anthem, and black Americans' laziness or criminality. The underlying problem with these subnarratives is "the absence of historical context," and while those who believe them disavow explicitly racist beliefs, these smaller stories may still "gather in some new way downstream." This reflects what Hochschild calls "a powerful truth—life had been hard for them and it could get a lot worse."In other words, Louisianans' "economic anxieties exacerbated—and sometimes ran deeper than—purely racial ones." And these racial anxieties aren't just about Louisiana's large black population—Hochschild's acquaintances also worry as Muslims and Mexicans start moving into town.

Hochschild sees her subjects' sociological (but not explicit) racism as a result of their limited perspectives, of the sort Bowman demonstrates in his comments about the Confederate flag. They cannot see how the Confederate flag, being silenced during protests against police brutality, and the accusation of laziness and criminality all carry the historical weight of slavery for black Americans and perpetuate white supremacy. In a sense, it is in conservatives' emotional self-interest to reject this context: their worldview is so organized around their "gaze forward" that it is easier for them to avoid thinking about the millions of Americans who have had and continue to have it worse than them. At base, they hit an empathy wall and cannot understand minorities' and liberals' views on these issues, so they tacitly perpetuate white supremacy.

These Louisianans believe that liberal Americans' "race consciousness was itself a form of racism" and feel that liberals define them by their whiteness. Ray Bowman worries that his son will have difficulty finding a job at Citgo due to affirmative action, which "doesn't make Ray Bowman a 'racist'" but still misrepresents the bigger picture that economic opportunities are dwindling for *everyone* besides the wealthiest Americans. Back in a wealthy residential section of Berkeley, Hochschild notes that property values have risen so sharply that "it would be impossible to afford a place nowadays" without a high-paying job, and so upper-middle class white and Asian liberals who wanted racial integration actually ended up self-segregating by income. This class status, Hochschild argues, blocks them from understanding Southern whites' deep story. She concludes that class "loom[s] large" over political polarization in America today.

While they do not necessarily hate Americans of color, Louisianans see themselves on the receiving end of a different kind of racial discrimination because they lack the empathy for minorities and historical context to see that liberal race-consciousness is an attempt to address ongoing racial violence, hierarchy, and discrimination in the United States. Conversely, wealthy, race-conscious coastal liberals often cannot empathize with Louisianans because they miss the degree of economic desperation that leads Louisianans to see themselves as competing with minorities for scarce jobs. Both sides are blind to the other's view on race because of empathy walls.

Hochschild's interviewees also disagree about the Robert E. Lee statue that the Charlottesville protestors wanted to protect; some thought it should go in a museum, others agree with Hochschild that a statue of Frederick Douglass should be erected alongside it, and others—like Janice Areno—worry that taking down one statue would cause a slippery slope whereby liberals can "go for the next and the next." While race "goes deep and looms large," Hochschild argues that "economic anxieties" and moral values compound its effects, even though both are problems black Southerners also tend to face.

The debate over the statue recalls Hochschild's realization at the beginning of the book that Confederate iconography is embedded throughout the Louisiana landscape, but it continues to mean different things to white and black Louisianans. Many of Hochschild's friends now understand what the statue means to people who are not white Southerners. However, the pivotal question of what to do with identifiably racist monuments—whether they should become reminders of the dangerous way people previously extolled racist figures, for instance, or just one half of a visual conflict with Fredrick Douglass—is still a complex and contested one.

Louisiana conservatives also see women as "line cutters"—men tend to place them in the "separate mental categories" of daughters, wives, or competitors at work. And they worry about Mexican immigrant workers and "Muslims building local mosques that would teach sharia law." But Hochschild notes that Mitt Romney and Donald Trump won the same proportion of the white vote and she concludes that "Trump's election did not hinge on a new appeal to extreme racist groups."

Beyond the pivotal question of Southern anti-black racism, these further anxieties about gender and race show how stereotypes define the parameters of white Southerners' racial politics: they cannot imagine someone who is Mexican, Muslim, or a woman but otherwise just like them.

Hochschild mentions a few other letters she received: a man from rural Virginia who stumbled on a Confederate grave while hunting wondered whether he was really any different from the soldier "except for the time in which fate placed us," and a Kansas woman noted the declining number of dairy jobs in her area. A student who was the first in her family to attend college wrote Hochschild that she felt "strong differences" from her family that grew up "seared by a fear of poverty." To Hochschild, all these stories reflect the belief that "a precious way of life, like the nation itself, was being left behind." And this is not just in the United States—around the world, right-wing movements blame outsiders for their "feeling of being strangers in their own land."

For Hochschild, it is undeniable that small-scale, rural life grounded in local, homogeneous communities is decreasingly common around the globe, and that this shift creates emotional conflicts for the people undergoing it. Their deep stories are parallel, although locally inflected, and all struggle with the question of how to assert their values and identities before a world that increasingly views them as backward. For Hochschild, it seems, the options are a populist backlash to these shifts or an attempt to preserve their memory and values within the new mode of life, which requires a receptive audience that is empathetic to people's stories rather than the often antagonistic ones they so often face.

Hochschild asks why, according to her interviewees' deep story, the line for the American Dream has "stalled or moved back." Whereas Louisianans who increasingly see black celebrities and athletes in the public eye may conclude that "blacks have enjoyed spectacular success, leaving whites behind," these public images are misleading. Hochschild explains that "*average* blacks have not gained relative to average whites in education, jobs, or wealth." Black representation at universities has actually declined, the black-white income gap has not changed, and black families suffered significantly more than whites during the Great Recession. And it is important to remember that "the history of the United States has been the history of whites cutting ahead of blacks" through slavery, Jim Crow laws, the New Deal and even the GI Bill, which disproportionately excluded African Americans. Today, systematic hiring discrimination continues—a 2003 study found that whites with prison records were more likely to get a callback than blacks without them.

Louisianans' belief that black Americans are catching up to (or even surpassing) them in the market is based less on fact than on selective media selective coverage—and, more fundamentally, the fact that most conservative Louisianans have few black friends or acquaintances to counteract stereotypes or offer a basis for them to relate to black people. Even though black Americans still have it far tougher than whites economically, Southern white conservatives never see, read, or hear much of anything from black perspectives and accordingly never learn about the systematic discrimination that their own lack of knowledge helps perpetuate.

Women *have* seen measurable gains in education and income over the last 35 years, but they continue to make far less than men for the same work. And, despite Louisianans' fears, "between 2009 and 2014 more Mexicans left the United States than entered it."

Louisianans seem to be prejudiced against working women because of their increased visibility rather than wage parity, and their alarm at Mexican immigration is almost certainly a response to the alarmism in media and politics (especially from Trump), rather than the product of firsthand experience or fact.

Who, Hochschild asks, are "the real line cutters"? She concludes that they are *robots*. Automation disproportionately threatens the unskilled oil jobs on which Louisianans largely rely, and a McKinsey study suggests that "half of today's work activities could be automated by 2055." Automation is the leading job killer in manufacturing, and men who get displaced from that industry can often only find new work in lower-paid service jobs traditionally held by women and black Americans. Robots eliminate ongoing labor costs, increase productivity, and never sue their employers—so businesses increasingly turn to them, but their negative effect on American livelihoods is largely overshadowed by their status "as a sign of progress, growth, greatness."

Automation poses a severe threat to the kinds of middle-class jobs that many white Louisiana men work, but it is a largely invisible threat because the public tends to associate robots with technological progress rather than economic competition. It is a much less satisfying and politically actionable answer to the question "who are the real line cutters?" In other words, it is not in Southern whites' emotional self-interest to antagonize robots because they cannot really be fought or stopped, whereas other humans can.

The year after *Strangers in Their Own Land* was published, all the incoming students at Louisiana State University's Honor College were assigned the book as summer reading. Hochschild spoke to the students at the beginning of their first semester and knew that many grew up in the conservative communities she had researched, with parents who worked in petrochemical industries. She wondered what she could say to them and decided to tell them what she would do in their shoes.

Hochschild earned the opportunity to offer her message to her dream audience: the college students who will likely shape Louisiana's social terrain for years to come. She recognizes that they come from the communities she studied but also have the opportunity to change those communities and address many of their state's issues through education, so she tells them from experience how to navigate between those two worlds.

As a student interested in the government, Hochschild said, she would try to understand Americans' distrust in government and compare the American government's failures with other countries' successes in the same realms. As a student interested in business, she would ask whether there is truly a trade-off between cleaning up the environment and continuing to expand industry. As a student interested in protecting the environment, she would study the current EPA cuts; as a student interested in psychology, she would investigate why oil workers reject climate science while their CEOs acknowledge it; and, as a student interested in law, she would try to work with the judge who blocked further drilling in Lake Peigneur after 2016.

Hochschild suggests that the students try to build connections between their existing academic interests and the issues their local Louisiana communities are facing. This would allow them to gain the historical context and abstract theoretical knowledge necessary to understand how politics, oil, and the environment interact to shape Louisiana's social terrain but also the practical, on-the-ground knowledge necessary to meaningfully act as change agents in the long term.

In her speeches to other audiences, Hochschild emphasizes the "four pillars of activism" that liberals can use to help heal the current political divide: fighting to preserve the institutional checks and balances in American government; encouraging Democrats to address "people like those in this book" as well as those already on the left; making an effort to build relationships with people from other regional, religious or class backgrounds, who are so often disparaged in liberal circles; and talking with Republicans "about race, robots, government and more." In fact, Democrats' "political bubbles" are actually more insular than Republican ones: more Trump supporters have friends who supported Clinton than vice-versa.

These "pillars" call liberal readers to action. Hochschild thinks, and has clearly demonstrated through her research, that reaching out with empathy and the desire for understanding can be a powerful way to address political polarization. Democrats' tendency to passive-aggressively judge conservative viewpoints does little to help them empathize with those conservatives.

One complication is that some liberals, like pundit Frank Rich, have tried to shut down this kind of dialogue since the election. Hochschild argues that "Rich confuses talk with surrender and empathy with weakness." In fact, many voters went for Obama and then Trump; many Trump supporters—a quarter—felt positively about Bernie Sanders and some initial Sanders supporters even switched to Trump. Hochschild sees a handful of "potential crossover topics," including "getting money out of politics, rebuilding our infrastructure, avoiding nuclear war," that could form the basis of relationships across partisan lines. There are many grassroots cross-partisan groups, and Hochschild has worked with one in particular: Living Room Conversations.

Frank Rich underestimates the amount of fluidity and overlap between what are conventionally labeled the political left and right. By recognizing their mutual interests, people who disagree on most everything can nevertheless make valuable political progress and, more importantly, learn to better relate to those from different backgrounds in the future. The notion that liberals have nothing to learn from conservatives (and vice versa) leads to fragmentation and extremism—a little curiosity and humility can go a long way and cultivate unlikely friendships like the ones that make up this book.

Hochschild sees a recent decline in intermixture among "Americans who differ by class, race, and region." Whereas the draft, labor unions, and public schools offered this mixture in the past, she argues that "today we need to find new ways to get acquainted across our differences," perhaps through national service or domestic high school exchange programs. She admits that this may be an unlikely dream, but by putting those from differing backgrounds into touch, Hochschild thinks America can confront "the questions that so bitterly divide us" in order to "begin to slowly rebuild a nation in which no American—right or left—need ever feel like a stranger in our own land."

The kind of intermixture Hochschild seeks is crucial to making relationships possible across political difference; paradoxically, the digital nature of much contemporary political discourse tends to exacerbate partyism rather than fostering middle ground. Hochschild thinks institutions are uniquely able to provide such intermixture, since it requires mobilizing people from different social terrains who would likely never meet otherwise.


APPENDIX A – THE RESEARCH

Hochschild explain that sociologists describe research methods like the one used for this book as "'exploratory' and 'hypothesis-generating.'" This kind of research does not try "to see how common or rare something is, or where one does and doesn't find it, or to study how the something comes and goes through time" but rather "to discover what something actually is." Her "something" is the "emotional draw of right-wing politics," and figuring out what it is required "getting close" to her subjects.

In short, Hochschild's goal in this book was to answer the question, "what is the emotional draw of right-wing politics?"

Hochschild used this method for much of her previous research, adapting it to each particular topic. In her research for this book, Hochschild started with focus groups, followed up with the members, met their families, and "snowballed" out through their social networks to build a larger sample of Louisiana Republicans. She also met various conservatives through campaign events, tapped into Mike Tritico's network of anti-environmentalist friends, and encountered activists like Mike Schaff and General Honoré at public environmentalist rallies.

Hochschild's research was qualitative and ethnographic: she was interested in building genuine human connections with people in southwest Louisiana rather than simply surveying or observing them from afar. This allowed her to embed herself in people's real social networks and study the personal and political dimensions of their lives at once. Her "snowballing" method allows her to more easily build trust with new acquaintances, since she can demonstrate that she already knows people in their networks.

All in all, Hochschild interviewed 40 Tea Party members and 20 other community members for context. Interviewees signed consent forms and could ask Hochschild to stop recording whenever they liked; many of Hochschild's stories come from these off-the-record conversations. She picked six main interviewees to profile in depth through participant observation—she followed them about their lives and visited places that were meaningful to them. Her "core group" of 40 was roughly equally split between men and women. All these subjects were white, between working and middle class, and over 40. About a third worked for the oil industry.

While Hochschild followed the formal consent and documentation procedures of traditional academic research, the material that made its way into the book largely emerged from more informal, off-the-record conversations and participant observation. While consent and documentation are ethical necessities in social science research, this pattern confirms Hochschild's belief that empathy and trust give her an unparalleled access to the complexity and depth of other's experience.

Along with her research assistants, Hochschild also studied national opinion polls and compared them to her interviewees' beliefs. Soon, she became curious about the relationship between political identification and exposure to pollution, which she summarizes in Appendix B.

Although the vast majority of Hochschild's research was qualitative, she also did quantitative analysis where it was appropriate for her purposes—namely, in pinning down contested facts and finding tangible evidence for the Great Paradox as it relates to pollution.

Hochschild also "explored Louisiana" through visits to various institutions and events. She went to Angola Prison, the United States' largest maximum-security facility, as well as Civil War reenactments and the restored Oak Alley Plantation, and paid attention to way different groups inhabited public space in Lake Charles. She notes that she was lucky to be "white, female, gray-haired, and writing a book about a divide that also troubled those I came to know." She became "deeply grateful" for Southerners' hospitality.

Although most of these other episodes did not make it into this book, they demonstrate that Hochschild was as interested in forming a complete picture of the Louisiana social landscape as she was in getting "up close" to a few individuals. She recognizes that her own resemblance to her subjects, at least on the surface, probably influenced their willingness to trust and work with her—had she gone around southwest Louisiana as a young black man, for instance, she probably would have met much more opposition from white conservative locals.

APPENDIX B – POLITICS AND POLLUTION: NATIONAL DISCOVERIES FROM TOXMAP

Hochschild initially expected that people who live in more polluted places would be more worried about pollution and concerned with cleaning it up. But Louisiana seemed the opposite: it was highly polluted, and its residents opposed environmental regulations. More polluted states are more Republican, but Hochschild wonders whether Alex MacGillis's argument—that people facing social problems in red states choose not to vote, while well-off conservatives do vote—is sufficient to explain this trend. If this argument is true, then poorer people who live near pollution should be less conservative (but less likely to vote) and wealthier people who live further from pollution should be more conservative (but more likely to vote).

Although the body of Hochschild's book focuses on the feelings behind conservatism, she also wants to know whether the Great Paradox is actually true beyond Louisiana. MacGillis's explanation is based on the concept of political self-interest, so he thinks that living near pollution should correlate with wanting environmental restrictions. Logically, this would make plenty of sense—the people who suffer pollution should be more attuned to its dangers.

The "more puzzling" alternative is that the same people who had to deal with pollution were actually the ones voting against regulations. Hochschild and her research assistant compared the University of Chicago's General Social Survey, "widely regarded by social scientists as one of the best datasets on social trends in the country," with the EPA's Toxics Release Inventory, which measures the amount of toxic pollution in an area.

The other possibility is that people do not vote on political self-interest, as MacGillis expects—rather, some feeling or belief gets in the way of them rejecting the pollution that harms them. If this is the case, then conservative attitudes from the Social Survey should correlate with higher scores on the Toxics Release Inventory.

They found that, "the higher the exposure to environmental pollution, the less worried the individual was about it." Those identifying as "strong Republican," male, Christian, and high income were also less likely to worry about pollution. Hochschild describes these findings as "a paradox, but not one born of ignorance" because those more exposed to pollution were still more likely to understand its dangers and think humans can stop it. She concludes that Louisiana is "an extreme example of the politics-and-environment paradox seen across the nation."

Strikingly, Hochschild found precisely a correlation between conservatism and pollution. In the body of the book, she suggests a number of possible, interlocking causes behind this correlation, including the possibility that companies deliberately locate in areas where people are conservative and have the "least resistant personality," and the possibility that these people work for and feel loyal to the polluting companies in their areas. Regardless, this is sufficient to refute MacGillis's claim that people near pollution simply do not vote: rather, they actually are more conservative.

APPENDIX C – FACT-CHECKING COMMON IMPRESSIONS

Suggesting that "often I felt that my new friends and I lived not only in different regions but in different truths," Hochschild decides to have her research assistant fact-check the most popular ones.

Hochschild noticed how Louisianans tended to selectively interpret data and select egregious examples to fit their existing political orientation.

Contrary to many Louisianans' assumptions, welfare only makes up about eight percent of the federal budget and its funding is declining fast. Among the "poorest 20 percent of Americans," 37% of income comes from the government and the rest from work. The poor also cannot universally access welfare, especially in places like Louisiana, where only four in a hundred poor people get TANF benefits (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families). Black and white fertility rates are nearly equal.

Louisianans tended to assume that welfare recipients collect federal money instead *of working, but this evidence suggests otherwise. While they believed that welfare was expanding rapidly under Obama (and it did briefly after the Recession), it was actually declining for the most part. And many subscribed to the racist stereotype that black people end up on welfare because they have too many children, but there is no evidence for this either.*

Fewer than 17% of Americans work for any level of government, and they make less than people in the private sector, not more.

Hochschild's interviewees often saw the federal government as a bloated excuse for lazy public servants to collect a paycheck and guessed that around 40% of Americans worked for the federal government alone.

Hochschild cites five studies suggesting that environmental protection laws seem to have little or no impact on jobs—one study found that regulations create more jobs, and about twice as many people are laid off for "disaster or safety" reasons as are laid off because of government regulations. Companies flock to areas with high levels of municipal spending rather than those who provide tax incentives, and there is little evidence that the tax exemptions Louisiana gave oil companies affected investment or jobs numbers at all. And between 20-35% of the oil industry's revenue "leaks" out of Louisiana into other states and countries.

Louisianans adamantly believed that they had to choose between saving their jobs and saving their environment through regulation. However, virtually nobody loses a job due to government regulations, and "high road" public sector spending strategies are better at spurring long-term investment than Bobby Jindal's austerity measures. Ultimately, the notion of a trade-off between jobs and the environment is a convenient belief for oil companies whose riskier projects regulation would stop.

Finally, the economy does not do better under Republican presidents. Compared to Democrats, they have overseen accelerated inequality, slower growth in the stock market and the economy as a whole, higher unemployment, and larger increases in the national debt.

Republicans tend to think an unregulated free market is the best for them as well as the economy as a whole, but every indicator actually points to the opposite.

HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

MLA

Jennings, Rohan. "*Strangers in Their Own Land*." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 20 Jun 2018. Web. 21 Apr 2020.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Jennings, Rohan. "*Strangers in Their Own Land*." LitCharts LLC, June 20, 2018. Retrieved April 21, 2020. https://www.litcharts.com/lit/strangers-in-their-own-land.

To cite any of the quotes from *Strangers in Their Own Land* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

MLA

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. Strangers in Their Own Land. The New Press. 2016.

CHICAGO MANUAL

Hochschild, Arlie Russell. Strangers in Their Own Land. New York: The New Press. 2016.