

Post-liberalism: The Death Of A Dream - Melvyn L. Fein

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Liberalism is dying—despite its superficial appearance of vigor. Most of its adherents still believe it is the wave of the future, but they are clinging to a sinking dream. So says Melvyn L. Fein, who argues that liberalism has made countless promises, almost none of which have come true. Under its auspices, poverty was not eliminated, crime did not diminish, the family was not strengthened, education was not improved, nor was universal peace established. These failures were not accidental; they flow directly from liberal contradictions. In *Post-Liberalism*, Fein demonstrates why this is the case. Fein contends that an "inverse force rule" dictates that small communities are united by strong forces, such as personal relationships and face-to-face hierarchies, while large-scale societies are integrated by weak forces, such as technology and social roles. As we become a more complex techno-commercial society, the weak forces become more dominant. This necessitates greater decentralization, in direct opposition to the centralization that liberals celebrate. Paradoxically, this suggests that liberalism, as an ideology, is regressive rather than progressive. If so, it must fail. Liberals assume that some day, under their tutelage, these trends will be reversed, but this contradicts human nature and history's lessons. According to Fein, we as a species are incapable of eliminating hierarchy or of loving all other humans with equal intensity. Neither, as per Emile Durkheim, are we able to live in harmony without appropriate forms of social cohesion.

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