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Radical Middle: The Politics We Need Now

Mark Satin

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Many books that purport to describe a new political philosophy seem only to provide small variations on liberalism, conservatism, socialism, or libertarianism. Mark Satin's *Radical Middle* is different. It argues that, in order to get beyond our present stalemate, we need to have the imagination (and moral courage) to listen to and learn from *everyone*. It shows how we might do that in 12 policy areas, from jobs to schooling to globalization. And it throws a spotlight on people and groups that have burst the bounds of dogmatic thinking to work for "win-win" solutions today.

Many seeds for *Radical Middle*'s overall perspective were planted by Satin's award-winning Washington, D.C.-based international political newsletter, *New Options* (1984-1992), which was often referred to as "post-liberal" or "post-socialist" in orientation. Many of *Radical Middle*'s specific policy ideas were floated in Satin's later Washington-based political newsletter (also called *Radical Middle*) - and were refined though dialogue with readers from every walk of life. The result of this 20-year journey is a book that brings special strengths to the attempt to create an inclusive political perspective as an alternative to ideological single-vision:

- It is a popularization. It should be accessible, even enjoyable, to any caring person;
- It is the first truly comprehensive introduction to the radical middle political persoective, showing how domestic, economic, human-potential, and global concerns can all be addressed under the rubric of four "Key Values";
- It is the first introduction to the radical middle political *movement*, covering everything from doing "good work" in the professins, to collaborative approaches to community organizng, to radical middle approaches to national political reform. Over 50 organizastions are mentioned;
- It is often quite personal in content and tone - as it should be, since radical middle politics comes from the heart as well as the head.

Although Washington, D.C. seems awash in partisan bickering, most Americans are pragmatic, imaginative, and incredibly resourceful - and often, in their communities and organizastions, are working out the lineaments of an innovative, genuinely American, post-ideological political philosophy. Benjamin Franklin saw it coming. Afer reading *Radical Middle*, so will you.

Radical Middle *received the "Best Book Award" fot 2004 from the Section on Ecological and Transformational Politics (Section #26) of the American Political Science Asociation*.

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