

*Political Polarization and our “Current Civil War”:  
What Drives It? What Can Be Done About It?*

Jay McCann  
Professor of Political Science  
2216-G Beering Hall  
mccannj@purdue.edu

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It's a bright, sunny day, perfect for  
the beach.

```

*****  ****  *****
**      ***  ****  *****  ***
**      ***  ****  *****  ***
*****  *****  *****  *****
*****  *****  *****  ***

```

People


~~~~~

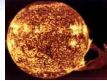
[Water]

LAKE MICHIGAN

2

Your job this past summer: mobile hotdog vendor.






You → 



\*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\* \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\* \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

People → \*


~~~~~  
 [Water]

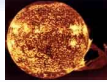







LAKE MICHIGAN

3

There is another vendor; you have a *friendly rivalry*

You → 








Rival → 

\*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\* \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\* \*\*\* \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 \*\*\*\*\*

People → \*

~~~~~  
 [Water]

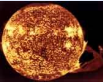


LAKE MICHIGAN

4

[illegible]

5






# What do you do?!



```
*****      *
**          **   ****   *****   *****   **
**         ***   *****   *****   **   *****
***** ***** ***** ***** *****
***** ** ***** ****   *****   *****   **
```

People

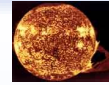
[Water]



LAKE MICHIGAN

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“That’ll show ‘em!”



A diagram illustrating the flow of people into a system. It consists of a horizontal line of asterisks (\*) representing a queue or a sequence of events. Two blue arrows point from the right towards the asterisks, with the word "People" written next to them, indicating that people are entering the system over time.

[Water]

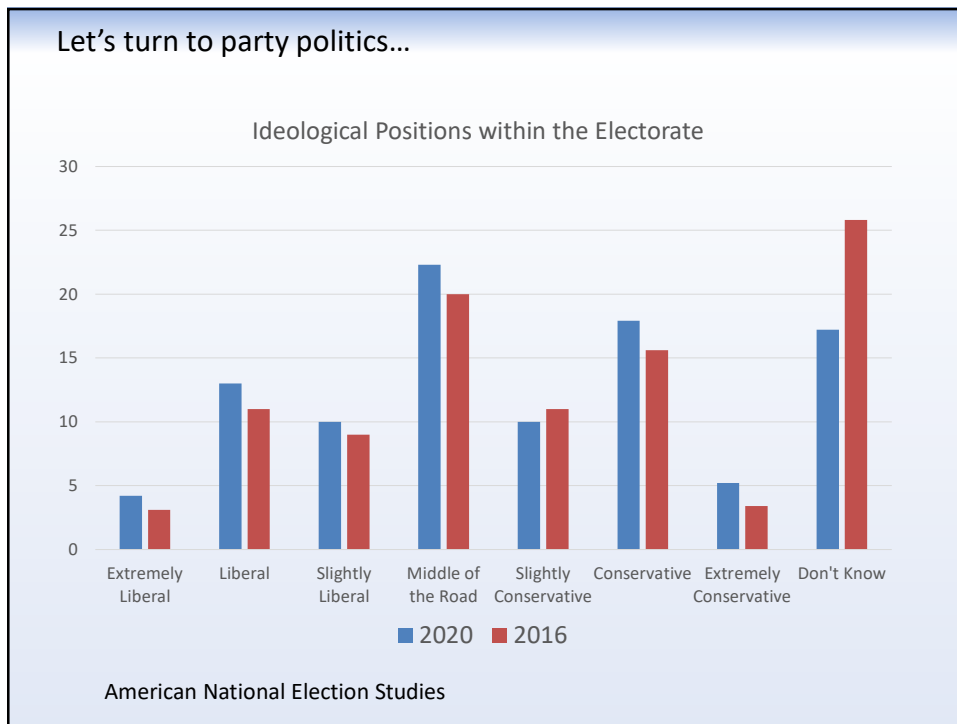


## LAKE MICHIGAN

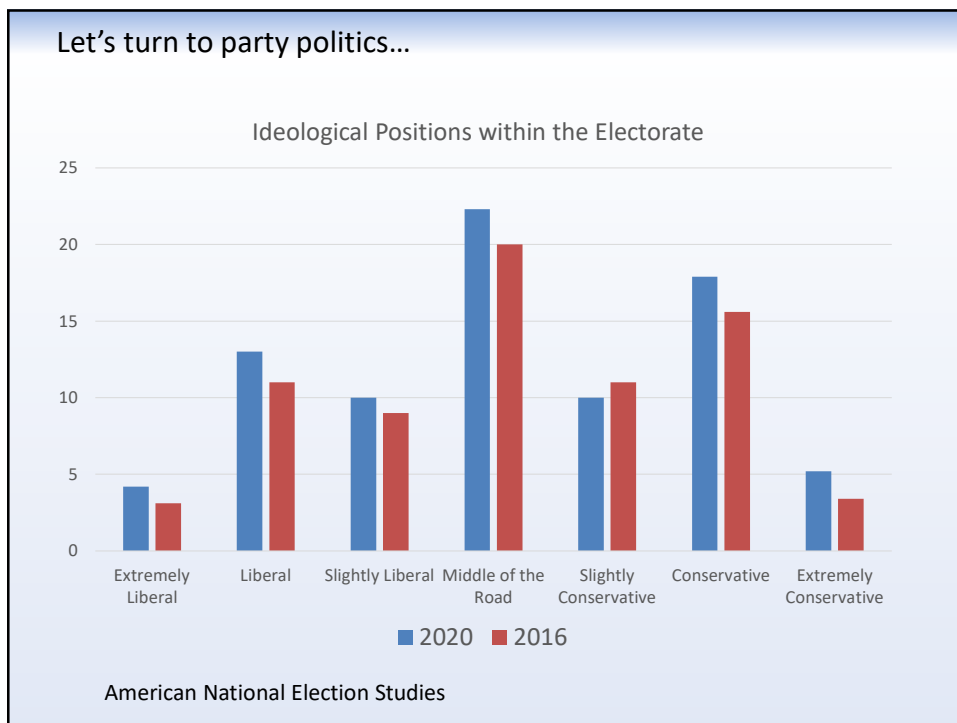
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Let's turn to party politics...

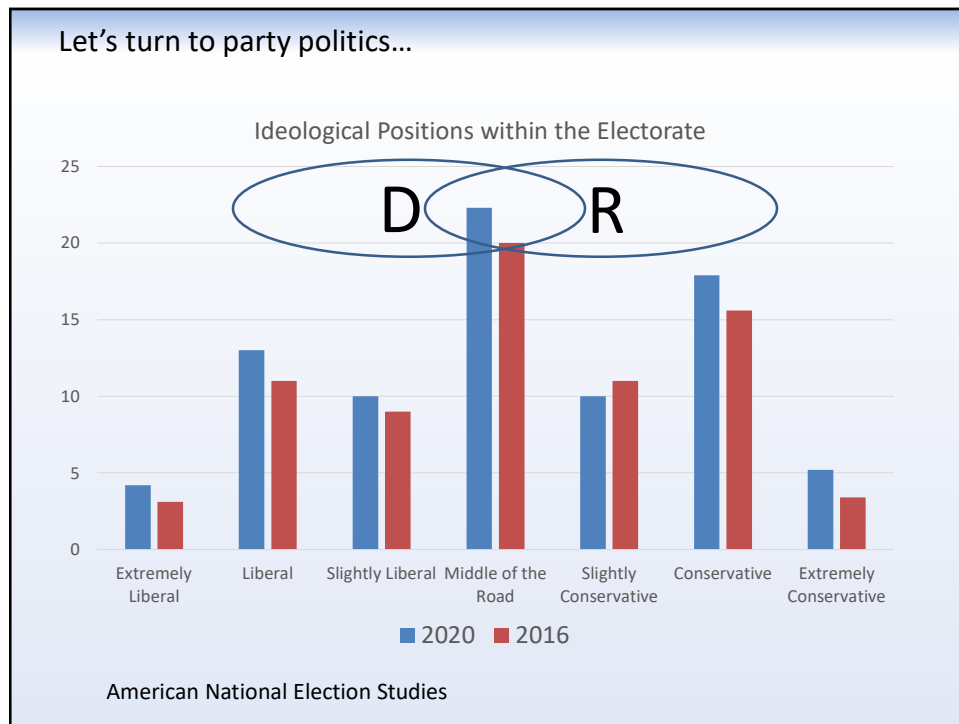
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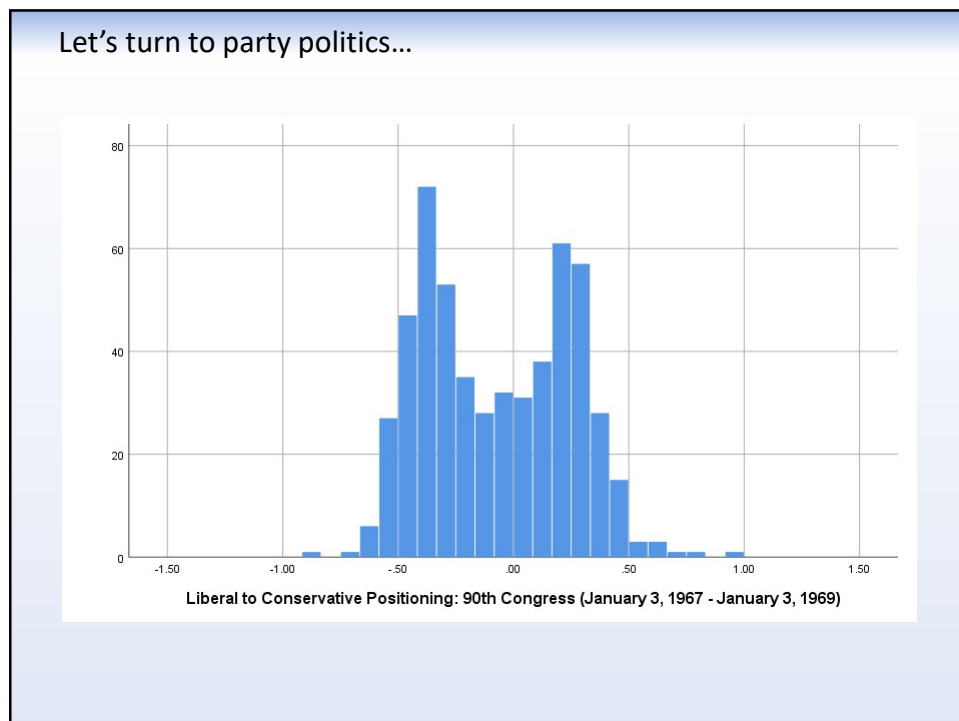
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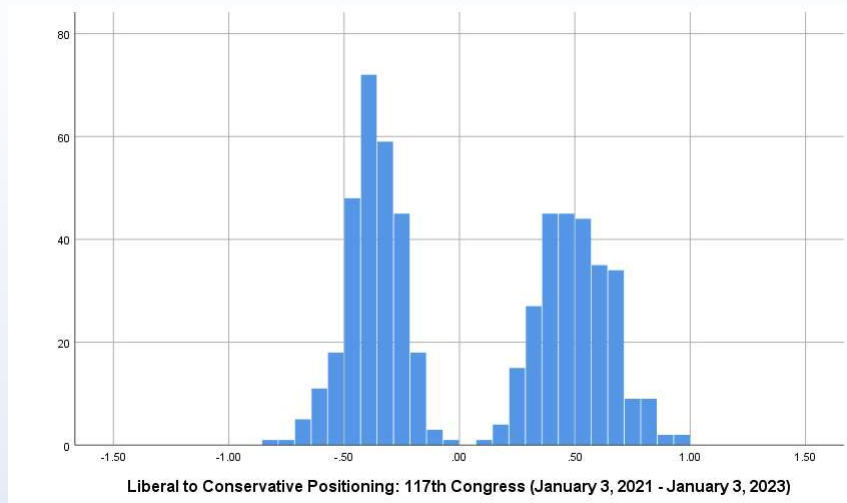


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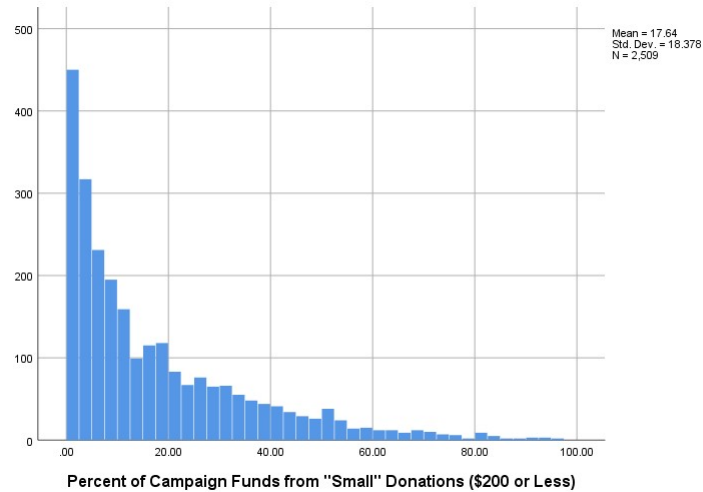
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*Why are the parties more polarized, and less internally diverse?*

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Reliance on fewer bigger donors...



Source: Open Secrets

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*Why are the parties more polarized, and less internally diverse?*

Gerrymandering...



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Gerrymandering...



*When there is less competition between the parties in a congressional district, the “real action” takes place during the primaries!*

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Rival third parties face major hurdles...



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*Why are the parties more polarized, and less internally diverse?*

Meaning of “political ideology” has changed to cover a wider range of *polarizing* cultural values and beliefs ...

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*Why are the parties more polarized, and less internally diverse?*

Meaning of “political ideology” has changed to cover a wider range of *polarizing* cultural values and beliefs ...

Which statement do you agree with more?

**America is a melting pot of cultures -- we should celebrate the contributions that immigrants have made!**

OR

**We must protect our common American cultural heritage!**

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Which statement do you agree with more?

**Minorities who can't get ahead are mostly responsible for their condition!**

OR

**Racial discrimination is the main reason why many minorities can't get ahead these days!**

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Which statement do you agree with more?

**Homosexuality should be discouraged by society!**

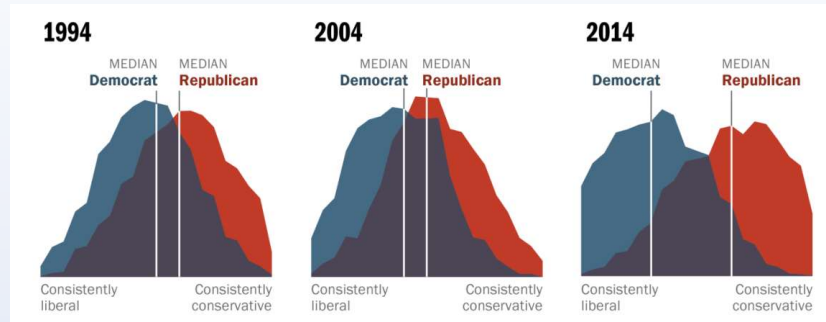
OR

**Homosexuality should be accepted by society!**

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### *Why are the parties more polarized, and less internally diverse?*

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Pew Research Center

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### *How might we reduce polarization?*

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Political reforms?

- Roll back voting registration requirements? Compulsory voting?

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- Roll back voting registration requirements? Compulsory voting?
- Independent commissions to draw congressional districts?
- Greater public financing of election campaigns?
- Change how Electoral Votes are allocated?
- Allow voters to rank preferences?

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*How might we reduce polarization?*Media reforms?

- Loosen liability protections for large social media firms?

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### *How might we reduce polarization?*

#### Media reforms?

- Loosen liability protections for large social media firms?
- Automated “fact-checking” systems?

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### *How might we reduce polarization?*

#### What about reforming *ourselves*?

- Consider not only what a candidate says, but how he or she says it...
- Pause before forwarding postings...
- Turn off the more inflammatory news programs, read more newspapers...
- Get out of our “bubbles” ....

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**YOUR THOUGHTS?**