

BRING IT TO THE TABLE



THE TOOLKIT



HOST A SCREENING

It's not just a movie, it's a movement.

BRINGIT2THETABLE.ORG



A MESSAGE FROM THE FILMMAKER

Dear Viewer,

Are you tired of partisan politics? If you are ready to find common ground, let's *Bring It* to your table.

In 2012, my 17-year-old son called me "the most intolerant person" he knew when it came to politics. What started as a challenge from my son, morphed into a documentary film. Since then it has transformed into an interactive experience that engages citizens in reclaiming civil discourse. The goal of *Bring It to The Table* is not to change anyone's political affiliation or belief system but to empower participants to take an active role in breaking down hyper-partisanship at the ground level, citizen-to-citizen.

The 40-minute film provides an exciting event for campus organizers to convene your community in a dynamic, innovative format. The film should be followed by live Table Talks where audience members engage in civil discourse about everything from immigration to abortion to taxation. The reality in America today is that people who have different points of view simply don't talk to each other about politics. This event provides an opportunity to change that.

This toolkit offers a roadmap on how to implement and adapt what we've found to be successful.



Bring It to The Table encourages respect, tolerance, and genuine dialogue, because when you humanize you can't demonize. While politicians and pundits clog the airways with bipartisan discourse, let us help you *Bring It* to your table and bridge the political divide in your community.

Sincerely,

Julie Winokur
Director/Producer

 **TALKING EYES**

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ABOUT THE FILM

Somewhere along the line, politics replaced sex as the one thing we can't discuss in mixed company. *Bring It to The Table* breaks that taboo.

When Julie Winokur's 17-year-old son called her the most politically intolerant person he had ever met, she knew she had to prove him wrong. In this humorous, thought-provoking film, Winokur hits the road with a small star-spangled table, traveling across America on a mission to understand the roots of personal politics and bridge the partisan divide.

Bring It is sparking conversations across the country and empowering people to take an active role in breaking down hyper-partisanship at the ground level, citizen-to-citizen. The campaign includes a mobile app that turns audience members into participants and measures people's willingness to engage.



BRING IT TO THE TABLE

PRODUCED & DIRECTED BY Julie Winokur
CINEMATOGRAPHY & EDITING BY Jessey Dearing
ASSOCIATE PRODUCER Elissa Pellegrino
PRODUCTION COORDINATOR Julie Turkewitz
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT Sasha Jiwani
A PRODUCTION OF TALKING EYES MEDIA

WHO & HOW

CORE AUDIENCE

Before holding a screening, no matter how large or small, please consider:

*Who is your target audience?
How will you reach out to them most effectively?*

A diverse audience is the best kind of audience for a Table Talk event. Imagine two disparate groups coming together for one evening of constructive conversation on important issues of the day.



STRATEGY

Once you have decided on the target audience for your *Bring It to The Table* event, think about:

- ★ What are your objectives for showing the film and hosting a Table Talk with this group?
- ★ How will you motivate the community to take action?
- ★ How will you frame it so that your objectives will be met?
- ★ Will the event be open to the public or invite-only?
- ★ How long should the event be and how will you break it down into different sections?
- ★ Who will be the main event facilitator(s)? Will he/she be the most energized, and knowledgeable person for both your audience and panelists?



- ★ Will you have panelists and speakers to expand upon some of the issues in the film? Or just facilitators?
- ★ Who will be the panelists? Who will be the speakers?
- ★ Will you choose to focus on one particular issue or a range of issues?
- ★ Will you provide additional materials and resources?
- ★ Will you have a meet-and-greet reception with food and/or refreshments after the screening?

PRELIMINARY PLANNING

1) Order & watch the film

After ordering the DVD from Talking Eyes at bringit2thetable.org, watch the video to familiarize yourself with the content and to rule out any technical problems with the DVD. If you encounter technical problems, contact us immediately at (973) 746-7040 or studio@talkingeyesmedia.org.



2) Find a venue

Where will your event be held? At a university? At a community center? There are plenty of venues that cost little or nothing to use. Perhaps choose a community-oriented location such as a public library, museum, church, community center, school auditorium, or even your own home.

Make sure that...



...your venue will comfortably accommodate the number of people you expect will attend.



...if the space is large, there's a microphone and PA system.



...access is available for physically challenged people.



...there is access to restrooms.



...the space is available long enough for discussion after the screening.



...you can serve food/refreshments if you plan to have a meet-and-greet reception.



...video and audio equipment is available and functioning.

PRELIMINARY PLANNING

3) Identify attendee groups to invite, screening partners, and possible guest speakers or panelists.

Allied organizations can get involved in a range of ways including getting the word out about the film via newsletters, flyers, and websites, contributing time or resources to the screening, and/or participating in a post-screening discussion. The key in approaching co-sponsors is to help them understand how your screening event supports or benefits their organization's mission and priorities. Also, be ambitious in whom you invite by contacting influential leaders and policy makers in your community. This is a great way to attract their attention on the issue as well as a way to spotlight your organization.

- ★ Consider collaborating with organizations who can help get the word out or participate in a post-screening discussion. Maybe have a guest speaker or small panel featuring policy professionals, local politicians, and activists in your community.
- ★ For on-campus screenings consider inviting departments, professors and their classes, research centers, and student organizations that have an interest in the topic/issue.
- ★ Depending on availability, filmmaker Julie Winokur may be able to come speak about the film and lead discussions. For more information about availability and fees, please contact Talking Eyes Media directly at bringit@talkingeyesmedia.org or (973) 746-7040.
- ★ Enlist the help of friends, neighbors and other volunteers to ensure your event runs smoothly.

SPREAD THE WORD!

You've secured the perfect venue and assembled a noteworthy group of experts, advocates and volunteers – now spread the word! People will attend events that feel relevant, timely, and important. Ask related organizations to help spread the word, use community networks, and reach out to local media.



MARKETING KIT

Use the *Bring It* Marketing Kit to:

- ★ Create an email announcement and send it out widely to various listservs, encouraging all recipients to forward to their contacts. We suggest sending out the email twice: two weeks before the event and a reminder the day before the event.
- ★ Tailor our flyer/email templates to your needs, and then make copies and post them in high-traffic areas in your community and around town, including town halls, schools, markets, cafés, churches, libraries, bus and train stations.
- ★ Reach out to local media and use the *Bring It to The Table* template press release as a guide as you begin to contact the media in your community. Remember to send the release to reporters covering politics. A couple of days prior to your event, send an email to remind them of the event and to encourage them to attend.

SOCIAL MEDIA



Use your organization's blog, Facebook page, and/or Twitter account to spread the word. Be sure to include a link to the *Bring It* trailer and website:
bringit2thetable.org.

Follow *Bring It*:

 [facebook.com/bringit2thetable](https://www.facebook.com/bringit2thetable)

 [@2thetable](https://twitter.com/2thetable)

AT THE TABLE

BEFORE THE EVENT

- Test the DVD for picture and sound levels
- If you are doing a live Table Talk at your event, have a Table and two chairs at the front of the room. Ideally the Table will have one or two mics so the audience can hear clearly.

TABLE TALK RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

What Does Bring It Want to Know?

We want to know a lot of whys and hows.

Anyone game enough to sit at the Table is invited to discuss pressing national issues, such as taxation, the economy, same-sex marriage, civil rights, abortion, religion, and immigration. People are asked to explain the roots of their beliefs so we understand WHY they believe WHAT they believe.

What Bring It Does NOT Want to Do

We do not bring people to the table to put them on the spot.

We bring them to the table to truly discuss an issue on a personal level. We want to ask constructive questions that get to the heart of the matter. Avoid statements that dismiss the opinions of others. You'll find that when we encourage people to really explain their beliefs, we'll all learn more than trying to convince them otherwise.

People are asked to explain the roots of their beliefs so we understand WHY they believe WHAT they believe.

5 GREAT CONVERSATION GUIDELINES FOR HOSTS

Don't micromanage the Table Talk.

Let silence play a role in the conversation. Give guests at the table time to collect their thoughts.

Avoid judgment and dismissive remarks while the guests explain themselves.

This is a dialogue, not a debate!

Stay neutral!

If you get stuck, remember, you can always ask, "Why" or "How?" in an encouraging and inquisitive way to get out of a dead-end in the conversation.

Ask about personal experiences.

"What have you witnessed that shaped that opinion?" How personal experiences affect someone's opinion can be illuminating.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO BRING IT?

*There are a few ways to Bring It to The Table.
Pick the one that fits best for your organization's needs.*

SCENARIO 1

The Original Table Talk

After the audience has seen the film, open up the discussion with a fully immersive and interactive Table Talk. Invite members of the audience to come up to the table to explain their whys and hows. Here is a sample list of questions.

★ How do you align politically and why?

Place an object at the center of the Table and ask your volunteer to move the object on the right to left spectrum as they answer the question (from the perspective of the "host," right is conservative and left is liberal).

★ What personal experiences have shaped your political identity?

Whatever issue the volunteer has self-identified, explore deeper why they believe what they believe on the topic.

★ What issue have you changed your mind about politically?

★ Which of your views might veer more toward the other side of the political spectrum? (For people who identify as dead center, ask which of their views skew right and which skew left.)

★ What does the other side get right?

SCENARIO 2

Issue Table Talk

This is a version of the Original Table Talk that looks to unpack one particular issue that might be most important to your audience. After your audience has seen the film, focus the discussion on a social, political, religious, or financial issue and invite several members of the audience to come up to the Table to explain their whys and hows. Use the same questions from Scenario 1 to wade through the issue in an in-depth discussion with people from all walks of life.

FOR EXAMPLE...

Say this person believes in gun control.

- ★ Why do you believe in gun control?
- ★ What personal experiences have helped you come to this belief?
- ★ What does the other side get right about the right to bear arms?
- ★ How have your views on this issue evolved over time?
- ★ Do you think compromise is possible, and if so, what might it look like?

SCENARIO 3

Question Table Talk

Do you have a question or two that you've been dying to ask a liberal/conservative? Maybe a Republican really wants a few answers out of a socially liberal young person, or wants to know how he compares to other social conservatives out there. Now is your chance. This exercise is especially great as a facilitated group exercise for people who want to learn from others, rather than prove their points.

1. Generate a list of top five or top ten questions your audience wants to ask "the other side" of important issues.
2. Make sure you get a good mix of questions from a good mix of political and social types.
3. Carry out the Table Talk, and make sure to employ the same rules of engagement as with the previous Table Talk scenarios. Ask why and how!

FOR EXAMPLE...

A socially liberal senior citizen wants to know why a fiscally conservative Democrat thinks social welfare is toxic to the country's financial future.

A conservative male wants to know why a socially liberal woman believes in the right to choose when it comes to abortion.

Bring these types up to the table, and encourage them to ask their burning questions about the other side. Then use the question list from Scenario 1 to help guide them through their discussion.

FOLLOW UP

Empower your audience to move toward action!

SHARE IT

FACEBOOK

- ★ Take photos & videos and post on our *Bring It* Facebook page: facebook.com/bringit2thetable
- ★ Ask everyone to share the film's Facebook page on their newsfeed before they leave

TWITTER

- ★ Create a Twitter #hashtag theme for your event and ask people to tweet before, during, and after the event
- ★ Tag us @2thetable and we will retweet

DOCUMENT

- ★ Consider recording real time reactions on your iPhone with video testimonials
- ★ Create a *Bring It* video booth to record reactions, feedback, etc.

TELL US ABOUT IT

After your event - Please send to bringit@talkingeyesmedia.org:

- ★ Your event comments – favorite moments & testimonials
- ★ Your next steps for action in your community

LEARN IT

Know the facts

ProCon.org provides resources for critical thinking and educating without bias in a straightforward, nonpartisan format that allows us to become better informed and actively engaged citizens.

Learn the Pros and Cons of 52 Controversial Issues including:

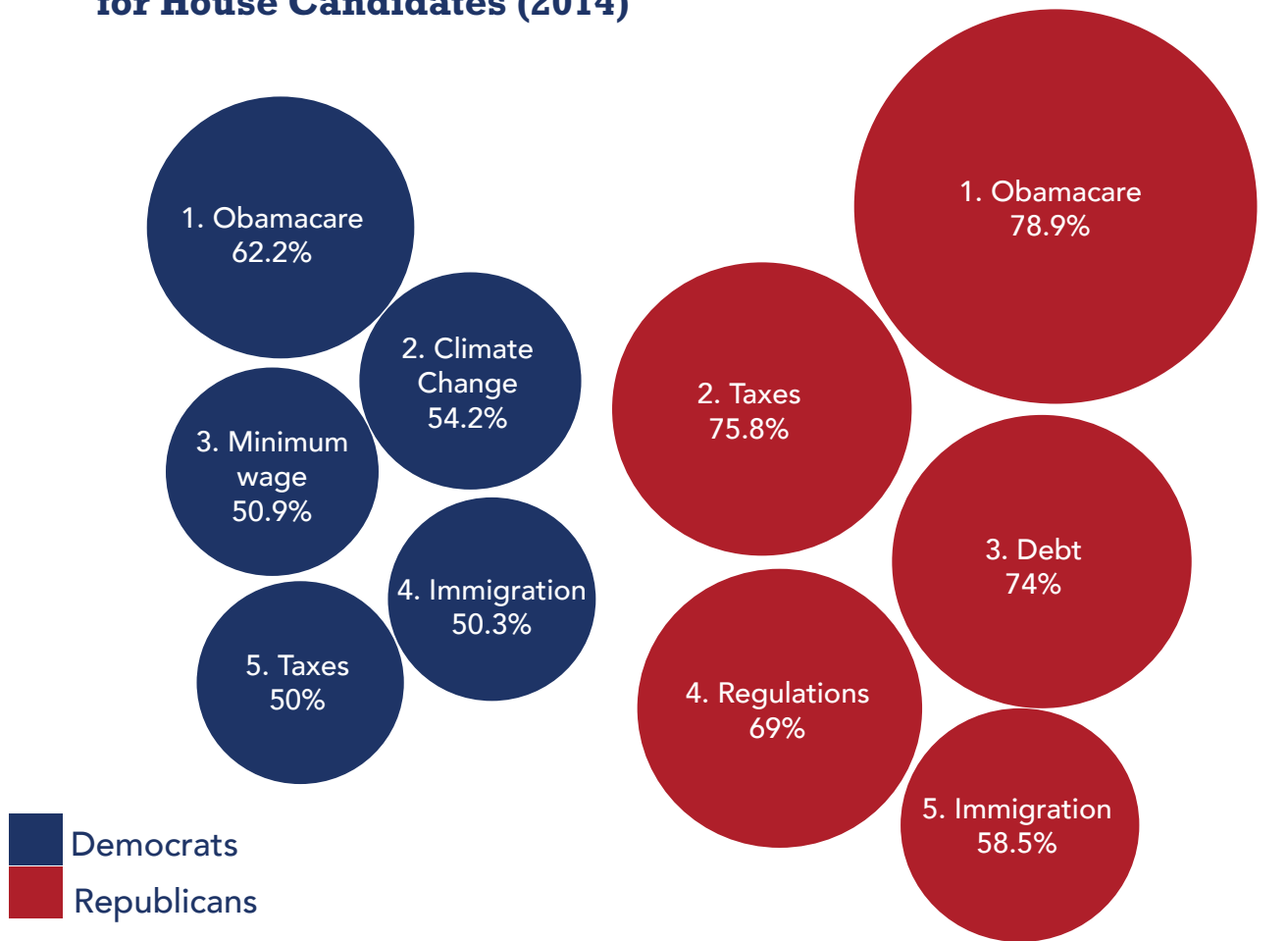
- ★ Abortion
- ★ Gay Marriage
- ★ Illegal Immigration
- ★ Right to Health Care
- ★ Corporate Tax Rate & Jobs
- ★ Gun Control

DO IT

- ★ Register to vote
- ★ Update your voter registration
- ★ Request an absentee ballot
- ★ Sign up for a reminder system for registration deadlines and upcoming elections
- ★ Volunteer and become civically engaged.

MATERIALS

Ranked Issue Mentions by Party for House Candidates (2014)

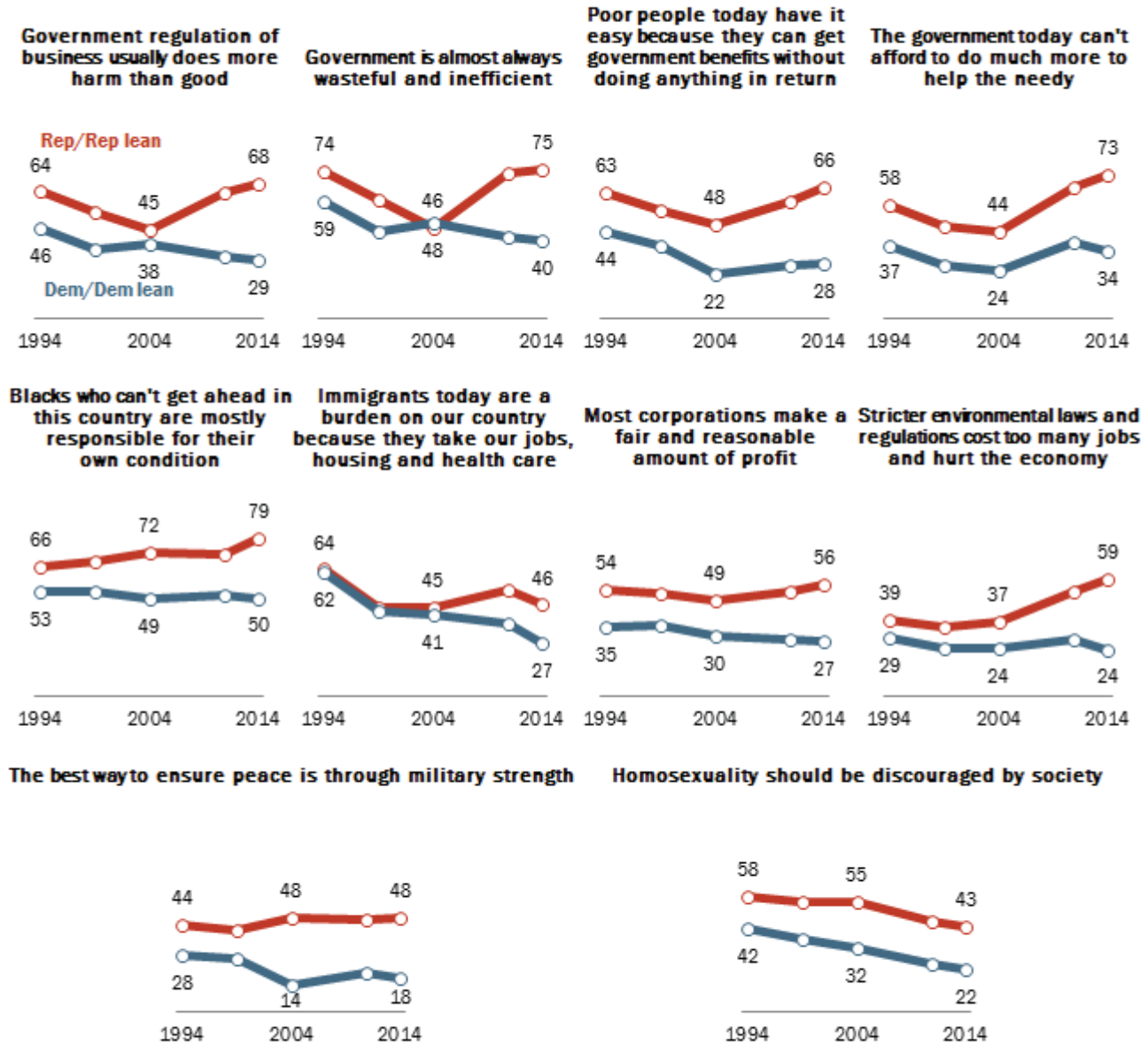


BROOKINGS

MATERIALS

Growing Gaps between Republicans and Democrats

% who take the *more conservative* position on each question in the ideological consistency scale



Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public
 Line charts show the survey questions included in the 10-item ideological consistency scale. Questions are forced-choice questions with two options; only the conservative responses are shown here. See topline for the full question wording and trends for each question.

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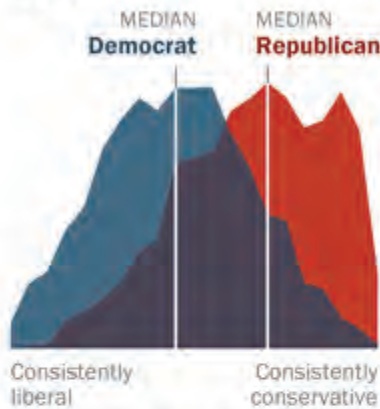
MATERIALS

Polarization Surges Among the Politically Engaged

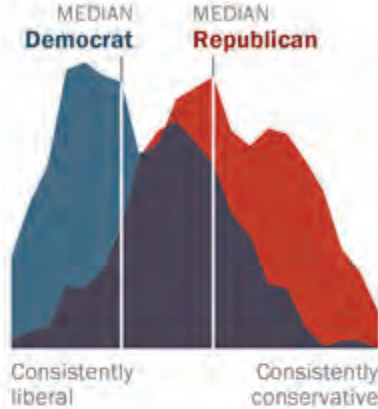
Distribution of Democrats and Republicans on a 10-item scale of political values, by level of political engagement

Among the politically engaged

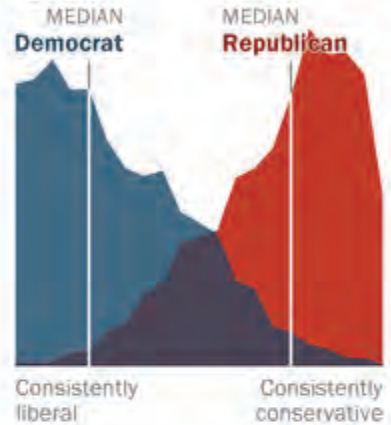
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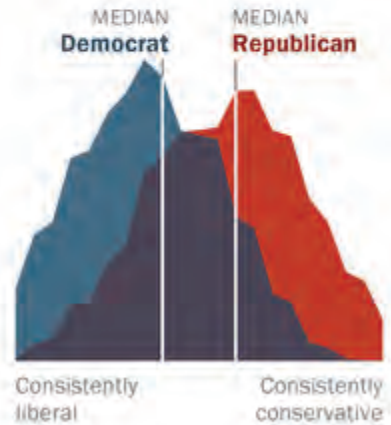
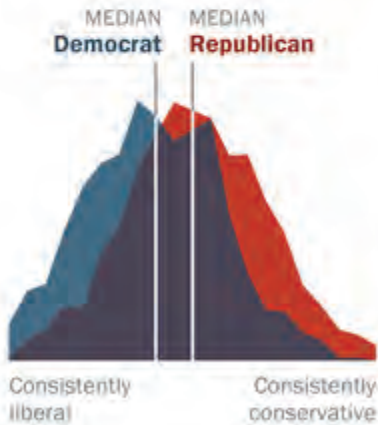
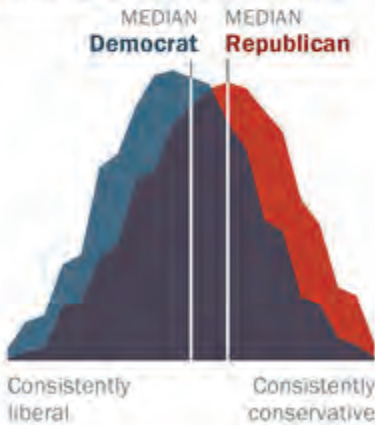
2004



2014



Among the less engaged



Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public

Notes: Ideological consistency based on a scale of 10 political values questions (see Appendix A). Republicans include Republican-leaning independents; Democrats include Democratic-leaning independents (see Appendix B). Politically engaged are defined as those who are registered to vote, follow government and public affairs most of the time and say they vote always or nearly always.

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MATERIALS

The 2014 Political Typology: Polarized Wings, a Diverse Middle

	Percent of ...		
	General public	Regist. voters	Politically engaged
	%	%	%
The Partisan Anchors	36	43	57
● Steadfast Conservatives <i>Socially conservative populists</i>	12	15	19
● Business Conservatives <i>Pro-Wall Street, pro-immigrant</i>	10	12	17
● Solid Liberals <i>Liberal across-the-board</i>	15	17	21
Less Partisan, Less Predictable	54	57	43
● Young Outsiders <i>Conservative views on government, not social issues</i>	14	15	11
● Hard-Pressed Skeptics <i>Financially stressed and pessimistic</i>	13	13	9
● Next Generation Left <i>Young, liberal on social issues, less so on social safety net</i>	12	13	11
● Faith and Family Left <i>Racially diverse and religious</i>	15	16	12
● Bystanders <i>Young, diverse, on the sidelines of politics</i>	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	100	100	100
N	10,013	7,999	4,767

2014 Political Typology. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding. The politically engaged are registered to vote, closely follow public affairs and say they always or nearly always vote.

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