Is American Democracy in Peril?
Polarization and Tribalism, The Decline of Civility, etc.

DAVID PERITZ
Figure 2-4  Differences in Feelings Toward Ideologues Over Time

Differences between the average feeling thermometer ratings of conservatives and liberals by Republicans and of liberals and conservatives by Democrats. Data are from the American National Election Studies (only face-to-face interviews are included for 2012).

Grossmann & Hopkins, *Asymmetrical Politics*, Figure 2-4, p. 37
Mason, "'I Disrespectfully Agree'," Figure 1, p.134
Negative Partisanship and Bias

Source: Ezra Klein, “White Threat in a Browning America,” Vox, July 30, 2018
Mason, "'I Disrespectfully Agree'," Figure 2, p.134
**Figure 2.8. Polarization and Income Inequality.** The y-axis shows the difference in median positions for the two parties and the Gini coefficient in the United States. The Gini coefficient is a measure of income inequality that ranges between 0 (perfect income equality) and 1 (one person controls 100% of the nation’s income).

Barber & McCarty, Figure 2.8, p.31
FIGURE 3.4. Effects of exposure to oppositional views on awareness of rationales for oppositional viewpoint by orientation to conflict.
Who Engages in Cross-Cutting Discourse 1: Those with Least Political Knowledge and Interest

Diana Muntz, *Hearing the Other Side*, p.32
Who Engages in Cross-Cutting Discourse 2: Race, Income and Education—It’s not What you Might Expect

Diana Muntz, Hearing the Other Side, p.31
Where C-CPD Occurs: Primarily Work, Not Civil Society

Diana Muntz, Hearing the Other Side, p.28

FIGURE 2.2. The dominance of agreement over disagreement, by social context of relationship’s origin. (Note: Spencer Foundation Survey, dyad-level data.)
### WIN THE VOTES, LOSE THE SEATS

Election Results in Pennsylvania, 2012

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Democrats</th>
<th>Republicans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Votes for President</td>
<td>2,990,274 (52%)</td>
<td>2,680,434 (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Votes for House</td>
<td>2,793,538 (50%)</td>
<td>2,710,070 (49%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five (28%) Number of House Districts Won</td>
<td>Thirteen (72%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winning Percentage by District</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st (85%)</td>
<td>3rd (55%)</td>
<td>9th (62%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd (89%)</td>
<td>4th (60%)</td>
<td>10th (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th (69%)</td>
<td>5th (63%)</td>
<td>11th (59%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th (77%)</td>
<td>6th (57%)</td>
<td>12th (52%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th (60%)</td>
<td>7th (59%)</td>
<td>15th (57%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8th (57%)</td>
<td>16th (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>18th (64%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

76% House Winners’ Average  
235,359 Average Votes of House Winners  
333,396 Superfluous Votes  
42% Votes for Winning Candidates

Source: Clerk of the US House of Representatives. Other House candidates won 52,722 votes. Superfluous votes are those over a 55 percent winning margin.
Political Responsiveness Limited to the Very Wealthy
OVERALL, SPENDING ON FEDERAL ELECTIONS & LOBBYING HAS SOARED

- **Elections**
- **Lobbying**

![Bar chart showing spending on elections and lobbying from '97-'98 to '11-'12 with specific amounts for each year: $2.7B, $1.6B, $2.8B, $4.1B, $5.6B, $6.3B, $6.3B, $6.6B.](chart)

Source: Center for Responsive Politics
In 2010, 99.74% of the people in the US gave less than $200 each. 0.26% of the people funded 68% of contributions to Congress:

Data: OpenSecrets.org
How often does the higher-spending candidate win?

Source: Center for Responsive Politics
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Vote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976</td>
<td>Buckley v. Valeo</td>
<td>Overall campaign spending, candidate personal spending, and independent expenditures can't be capped.</td>
<td>5-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Wisconsin Right to Life v. FEC</td>
<td>The government can't halt outside group political advertising in the period before an election.</td>
<td>5-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>FEC v. Davis</td>
<td>The government can't let opponents of self-financed candidates exceed the usual contribution limits</td>
<td>5-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Citizens United v. FEC</td>
<td>No limits on the amount of outside spending are permissible, and corporations can spend directly on campaigns</td>
<td>5-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Arizona Free Enterprise Club's Freedom PAC v. Bennett</td>
<td>Public financing systems can't use escalating matching funds</td>
<td>5-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>McCutcheon v. FEC</td>
<td>A donor's overall spending on federal campaigns can't be capped</td>
<td>5-4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An Overview of the Return of Income Inequality after the Great Compression
Income Inequality in the U.S. Rose Rapidly in the last 30-40 Years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Segment</th>
<th>2013 Mean Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top 5%</td>
<td>$322,343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Top Quintile</td>
<td>$185,206</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Quintile</td>
<td>$83,519</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Quintile</td>
<td>$52,322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Quintile</td>
<td>$30,509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottom Quintile</td>
<td>$11,651</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census Bureau

Data from 1967-2013

Mean (Average) Household Income By Quintile and Top 5%
Decoupling of Economic Growth and Wages for Most Americans
Figure 7: The broken social contract, US, 1947–present

The Results: The Increasing Top-skewed Benefits of Growth...
Especially for the Top 10%…

Distribution of Average Income Growth During Expansions

source: Pavlina R. Tcherneva calculations based on Piketty/Saez data and NBER

bottom 90%  top 10%
And Even More so for the Top 1%
Increasingly Steep Income Gradient

Lowest  Second  Third  Fourth  5 Percent


0  50000  100000  150000  200000  250000  200000  150000  100000  50000  0
The U.S. is also an Increasingly Immobile Society
SLOWING GROWTH RATE UNRAVELS POST-WAR COMPROMISE

U.S. ECONOMIC GROWTH RATES
U.S. Economic Growth, Annual Averages for Five Decades

Average Annual Increase (Percent)


Real GDP Real GDP Per Capita
DIFFERENT FORMS OF DEBT USED TO DELAY CRISSES

**Figure 5. Four Crises of Democratic Capitalism in the US, 1970–2010**

- Debt, % GDP
- Inflation, % GDP

Source: OECD Economic Outlook Database No. 87
ESCALATING DEBT AND ITS POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES

Figure 2: Liabilities as a percentage of US GDP by sector, 1970–2011

Source: OECD National accounts.
TRUMP’S AND SANDER’S POPULISMS APPEAL TO VERY DIFFERENT KINDS OF VOTERS

How Candidate Supporters Prioritize Moral Foundations Compared to the Average American
(Average Responses Standardized)

- Care (Empathy)
- Proportionality (Just Deserts)
- Liberty
- Loyalty-Authority-Sanctity

0--Indicates the Average American Response

---Candidate Supporters---
Bernie Sanders, Hillary Clinton, Jeb Bush, Mike Huckabee, Donald Trump, Ben Carson, Rand Paul, Marco Rubio, Ted Cruz