


## Political Polarization in the U.S. The Nature of the Disconnect

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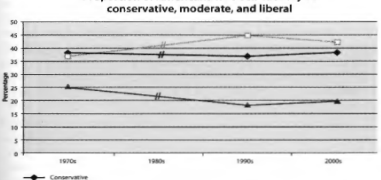
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**Fiorina, Chapters 1-3**

**Figure 1.5 Average Americans' Ideological Identification.**

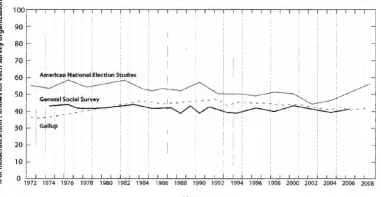
Proportion of Americans who self-identify as conservative, moderate, and liberal



**The mass-public's data in F.1.5 support:**

- Abramowitz (polarization over time)
- Fiorina (pluralism)
- Both

**Figure 1.6 Percentage of Americans who classify themselves as moderates (or answered "don't know") according to three national polls.**



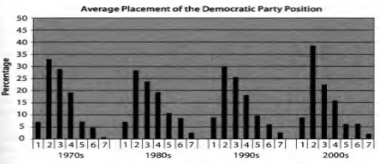
**The mass-public's data in F.1.6 support:**

- Abramowitz (polarization over time)
- Fiorina (pluralism)
- Both

**Figure 1.7 How Americans place the two major political parties on the Liberal-Conservative Scale.**

Scores range from 1 ("very liberal") to 7 ("very conservative")

Average Placement of the Democratic Party Position



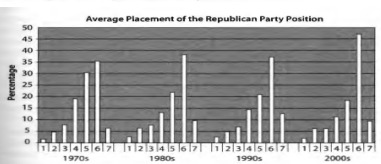
**F.1.7 illustrates the mass-public's perception that the Democratic Party is:**

- Becoming more liberal
- Becoming less liberal
- Both

**Figure 1.7 How Americans place the two major political parties on the Liberal-Conservative Scale.**

Scores range from 1 ("very liberal") to 7 ("very conservative")

Average Placement of the Republican Party Position

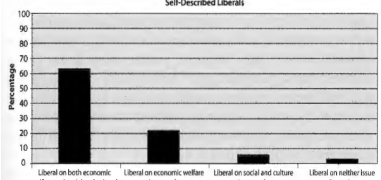


**F.1.7 illustrates the mass-public's perception that the Republican Party is:**

- Becoming more conservative
- Becoming less conservative
- Both

**Figure 1.8 Issue Stances of Self-Described Liberals and Self-Described Conservatives**

Self-Described Liberals

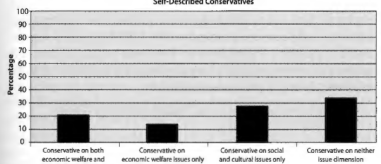


**The data in F.1.8 support which conclusion:**

- Over 6 out of 10 self-identified liberals are ideologically consistent across both issue domains: economic and cultural
- Almost 4 out of 10 self-described liberals are not
- Both

**Figure 1.8 Issue Stances of Self-Described Liberals and Self-Described Conservatives**

Self-Described Conservatives



**The data in F.1.8 support which conclusion:**

- Roughly 2 out of 10 self-described conservatives are ideologically consistent across both issue domains: economic and cultural
- Almost 8 out of 10 self-described conservatives are not
- Both

**Table 1.1 Percentage Point Changes in Policy Views: 1984-2004**

	Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
<b>Left Shift</b>			
Health Insurance	6%	2	3
Spending/Services	5	4	5
<b>Right Shift</b>			
Aid to Blacks	0	-2	-5
Defense Spending	-5	-4	-3
<b>Polarization</b>			
Jobs/GOA	2	1	0
Lib-Con	0	2	3
<b>No Change</b>			
Abortion	1	-1	3

**The data in T.1.1 support:**

- Abramowitz (increasing polarization)
- Fiorina (pluralism)
- Both

**Table 2.3 Americans' views on when abortion should be legal: 2006**

Circumstances in which abortion should be legal	U.S. totals	Red states	Blue states
Threat to mother's life	91%	90%	92%
Rape	84	83	86
Threat to mother's health, not life	68	66	72
Fetal defect	69	67	72
Incest	56	52	61
Financial distress	45	42	49
"Wrong" gender of fetus	22	20	23

**The data in T.2.3 illustrate:**

- Consistent red/blue state differences on abortion
- Small red/blue state differences on abortion
- Both

**Table 2.4** Americans' views on stage of pregnancy during which abortion should be legal

Reason for abortion	Never	1st trimester	2nd trimester	At any time
Threat to mother's life	10	30	14	45
Rape	17	45	17	22
Threat to mother's health, not life	33	27	16	24
Fetal defect	32	26	20	22
Incest	45	25	14	16
Financial distress	56	20	13	12
"Wrong" gender of fetus	79	8	6	7

Source: 2008 Cooperative Congressional Election Study.

**The data in T.2.4 illustrate the important of:**

- The reason for an abortion
- The timing of an abortion
- Both

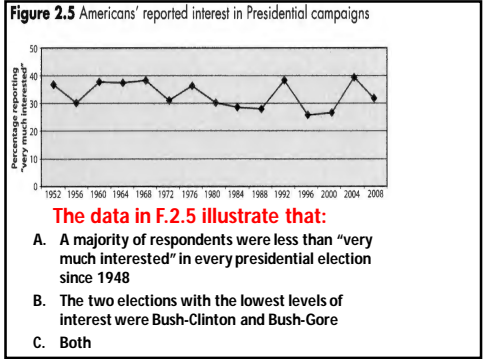
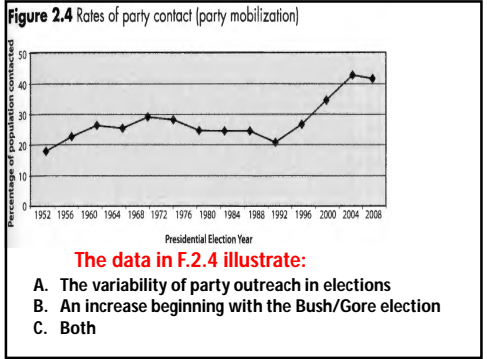
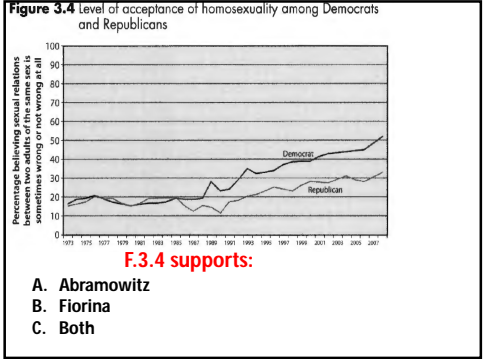
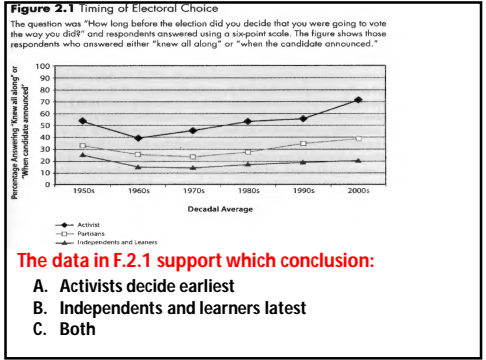
**Table 3.4** Partisan differences on abortion

Circumstances under which abortion should be legal

Partisan Category	Cause Mother's Death (%)	Rape (%)	Hurt Mother's Health, No Death (%)	Serious Birth Defect (%)	Incest (%)	Financial Difficulty (%)	Sex of Fetus Undesired (%)
Strong Democrat (18%)	98	97	89	89	79	74	35
Weak Democrat (13%)	94	92	83	84	65	57	28
Independent (26%)	95	84	71	73	60	55	24
Weak Republican (12%)	87	81	61	61	44	31	11
Strong Republican (29%)	74	62	34	34	23	11	4

**The data in T.3.4 illustrate large bipartisan majorities :**

- Favoring legal access if threat to mother's life
- Favoring legal access if rape
- Opposing legal access if purpose is gender selection
- All of the above



**Table 3.2**

Period	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Period 1	60 liberals, 40 conservatives	100 moderates	40 liberals, 60 conservatives
Period 2	80 liberals, 20 conservatives	100 moderates	20 liberals, 80 conservatives

**The data in T.3.2 illustrate:**

- Party sorting
- Party polarization
- Both
- Neither

