

Public Opinion

Really this is about polarization – how at odds is one citizen from another?

- Fiorina -
 - The culture war is one of elites – average citizens have not polarized, only their choices have
 - (Red states elect blue governors, etc.)
- Wilson –
 - Definition of polarization – bottom of page 99
 - Blames changing politics of Congress, new competitiveness of the mass media, and the rise of new interest groups

Questions –

How polarized are we?

How can we do a better job of telling/measuring?

Is polarization positive/negative/neither?

What would the Founders have thought about it?

Blogs and the Mainstream Media

- Perlmutter and McDaniel –
 - Blog advantages – adaptability, innovation, speed, low costs
- Sunstein –
 - Filtering can be dangerous – prefers a society in which people are exposed to things they disagree with - “to materials they would not have chosen in advance...involving topics and points of view we have not sought out and perhaps find irritating”
- Vaden –
 - Lack of editing/other news norms deteriorates the quality of information ; some bloggers are good but not all; doesn't serve all of society (poor, disadvantaged)

Questions –

What do we want from our media? What should the media's role in politics be?

Can the blogosphere give us that?

Will there be a place for traditional media in the future?