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?