

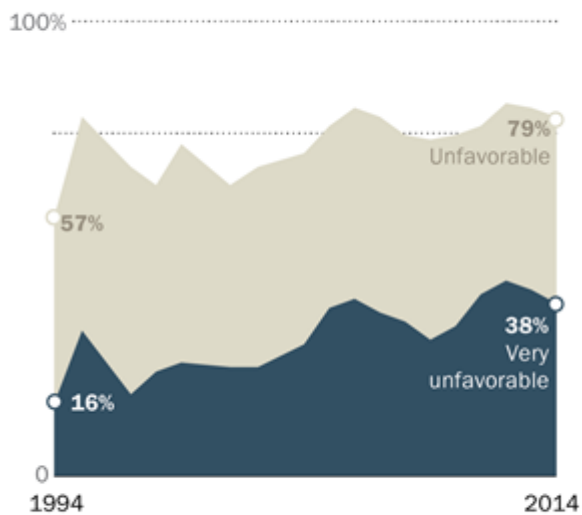
Hillary Clinton has mostly held smaller events, but protesters have shown up carrying signs with slogans like "Ditch the Witch," "Liar, Liar Pants-Suit on Fire" and "Hillary for Prison!"

If that makes you think that the two major political parties hate each other more than they have in decades, you'd be right.

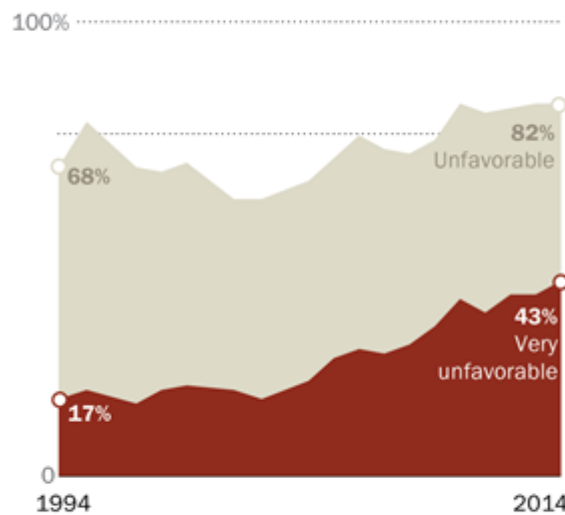
According to a report released Wednesday from the Pew Research Center, more than half of Republicans and Democrats each have "very unfavorable" views of the opposing party, representing a sharp increase from just two years ago. It's the continuation of a decades-long upward trend in animosity.

A Rising Tide of Mutual Antipathy

Democratic attitudes about the Republican Party



Republican attitudes about the Democratic Party



Source: 2014 Political Polarization in the American Public

Note: Republicans include Republican-leaning independents; Democrats include Democratic-leaning independents.

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"For many, partisanship is as much about disagreeing with the other party as it is about agreeing with their party, and in some cases, more so," said Jocelyn Kiley, a primary researcher on the study.

The report, the bulk of which comes from a nationally representative panel of over 4,000 people, was conducted this spring, before Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton became their respective parties' presumptive nominees.

What Republicans and Democrats say about each other

% of Republicans who say Democrats are more ___ than other Americans

			About the same	
Closed-minded	52%	Open-minded	11%	35%
Immoral	47	Moral	3	49
Lazy	46	Hard-working	3	50
Dishonest	45	Honest	2	52
Unintelligent	32	Intelligent	3	64

% of Democrats who say Republicans are more ___ than other Americans

			About the same	
Closed-minded	70%	Open-minded	5%	23%
Dishonest	42	Honest	5	51
Immoral	35	Moral	9	54
Unintelligent	33	Intelligent	7	58
Lazy	18	Hard-working	9	71

Note: Don't know/No answer not shown.

Source: Survey conducted March 2-28 and April 5-May 2, 2016.

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This intensifying polarization, Iyengar said, also means more gridlock in Congress.

"It sends a clear signal to elected officials that you shouldn't betray the party," he said.

"Anyone who tries to compromise is seen as a traitor."

So, is there any hope for us all to just get along?



[Independents are] leaning away from a party rather than leaning toward one.

Jocelyn Kiley

Maybe. While there is a lot of hate out there, having a friend on the other side of the aisle makes a difference. According to the Pew report, people with at least some cross-partisan friendships were less likely to rate the other party coldly.

Iyengar said forming those friendships is just a matter of finding common ground

elsewhere. He brought up the Cleveland Cavaliers and their historic Sunday-night victory against the Golden State Warriors. That's an opportunity to make a friend without bringing up politics right away.

"I don't think I'm going to turn to the person sitting next to me at the Cavaliers game and say, 'Hey, are you a Democrat?' " he said.

If you're not fortunate enough to be a Cleveland fan this week, you might want to take a moment at your family's July 4 barbecue to spark up a debate with that uncle or aunt of yours (you know the one). Maybe you'll find some room for compromise.

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