

NEWS

## **Growing team mentality of Democrats, Republicans is pulling Americans apart**



Photo by Mindy Schauer, Orange County Register/SCNG

The growing polarization of the country's electorate rears its head in this photo from a pro-Trump rally at Bolsa Chica State Beach on March 25, when a Trump supporter — who appears to be wearing brass knuckles, — reaches around another supporter to slug a counter protester.

By **MARTIN WISCKOL** | mwisckol@scng.com | Orange County Register  
 PUBLISHED: May 5, 2017 at 9:58 am | UPDATED: May 5, 2017 at 5:32 pm

4 COMMENTS

Tea Party activist John Berry says Democrats have grown more and more out of touch with reality over the years.

"Before, it was just that they were misinformed," said the Redlands software developer. "Now they're unhinged. They've become irrational. They process information through this political filter and they're willing to let the country go to hell."

Of course, plenty of Democrats feel the same about Berry and his fellow Republicans.

Partisan friction has become particularly overt under President Donald Trump — and was especially on display with Thursday's congressional vote to replace Obamacare. But by many measures, the [divide has been growing for decades](#).

In 1960, 5 percent of those surveyed said they'd be displeased if their children married someone from the other party, [according to research](#) led by Stanford University's Shanto Iyengar. By 2010, more than 30 percent of Democrats and nearly 50 percent of Republicans felt that way.

From 1960 to 2008, those in each party who saw members of the other party as selfish doubled, to 47 percent, according to Iyengar. [Current data from the Pew Research Center](#) shows the trend continuing, with each party seeing the other in an increasingly unfavorable light.

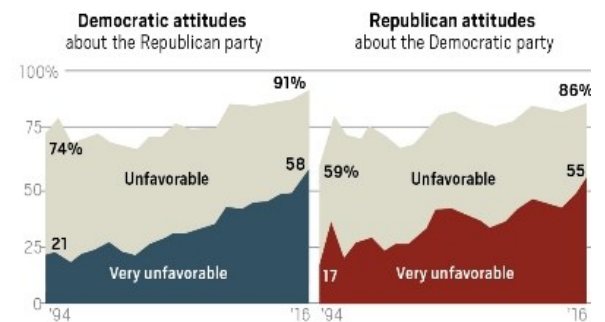
"Red Sox fans hate Yankees fans, but there's nothing more to it than that. Once the subject changes, all that goes away. But in politics, people see it as a moral difference," said Peter Ditto, a social psychologist at UC Irvine.

"And it's fed by the media, and by people surrounding themselves with others who think the same way."

While studies pick apart different factors contributing to growing polarization, the cause cited most consistently is cable TV.

"In the '60s and '70s, you might hear some crazy conspiracy theory during the day," Ditto said. "Then you'd come home and Walter Cronkite would tell you what the truth was. News on the three networks told you the same thing. These days, you can turn on something that supports your views."

### RISING PARTISAN ANTI-PATHY



### What Republicans and Democrats say about each other

Percentage of Democrats who say Republicans are more \_\_\_\_\_ than other Americans

Percentage of Republicans who say Democrats are more \_\_\_\_\_ than other Americans

Close-minded 70

Close-minded 52