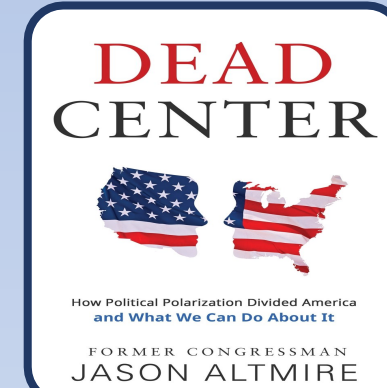
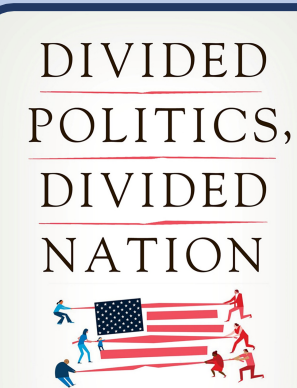


Abstract

During a time of intense partisan polarization our democracy and its respective institutions have experienced several instances of gridlock. Our elected representatives' failure to pursue crucial pieces of legislation has provoked the general public to disapprove of government and politicians. Partisan polarization has changed the entire political environment in the United States. Today, politics is a field most people distance themselves from, fearing to expose their beliefs, or intolerant of opposing partisan views. Some are also led to believe that their views or opinions do not matter, nor would they change the results of an election. For politicians it has become a strategic game, designed for the affluent. This research will illustrate the evolution and development of partisan polarization in the United States, and how such political polarization has affected both constituents and elected government officials.

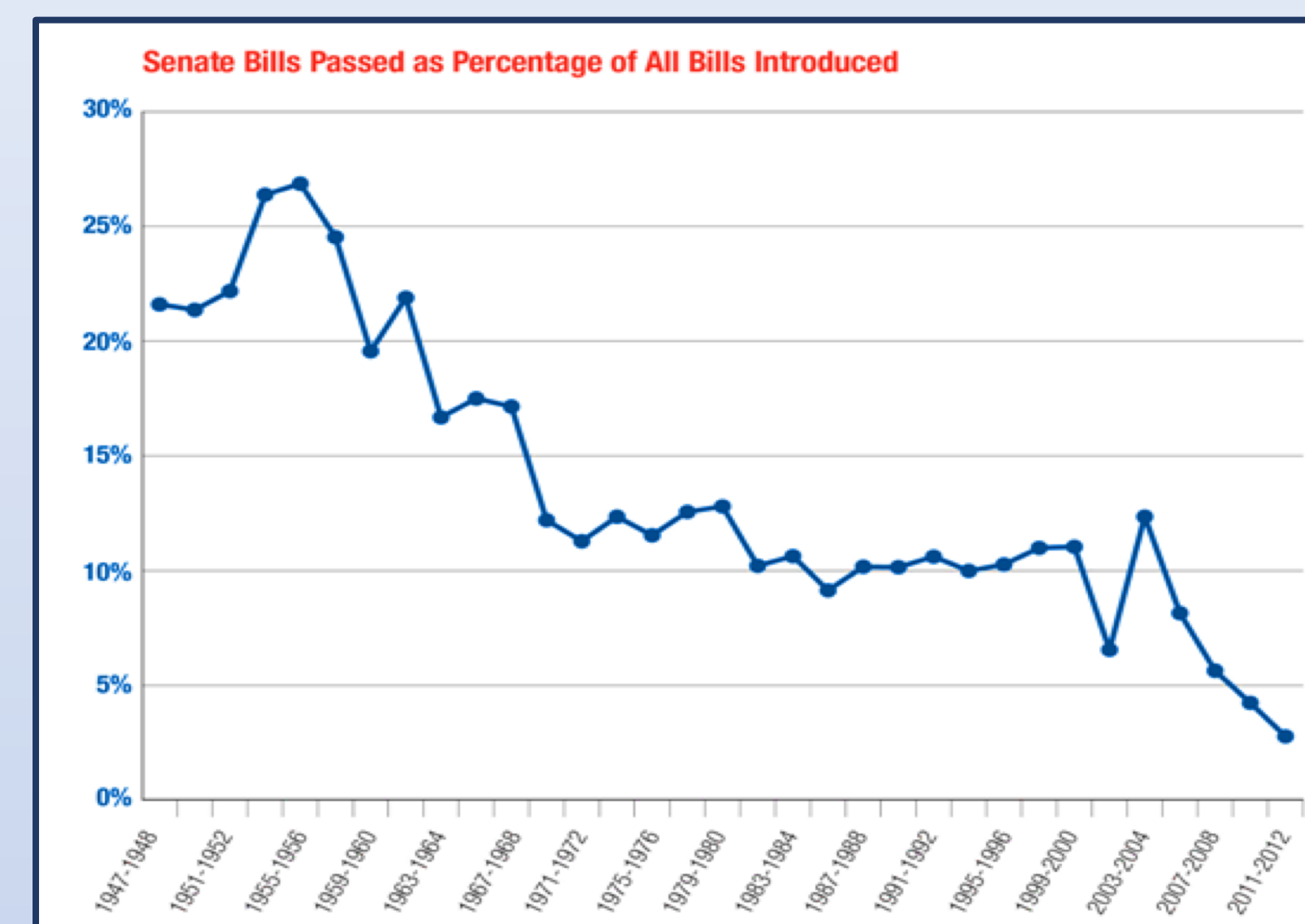
Topic of Research

American democracy's political system has shaped itself into an environment of partisan warfare. Such a scenario has allowed periodic crises, potential federal government shutdowns, and inaction on important legislation to ensue. A political system once composed of bipartisan comradery and tolerance, has developed into intolerance and bipartisan hostility. Candidates and parties have become more reliant on the vast network of resources possessed by extremist activists. Such an instance has paved way for partisanship to pledge allegiance to such polarizing stands on issues, restricting representatives' ability to remain accountable to the opinions of their constituents.

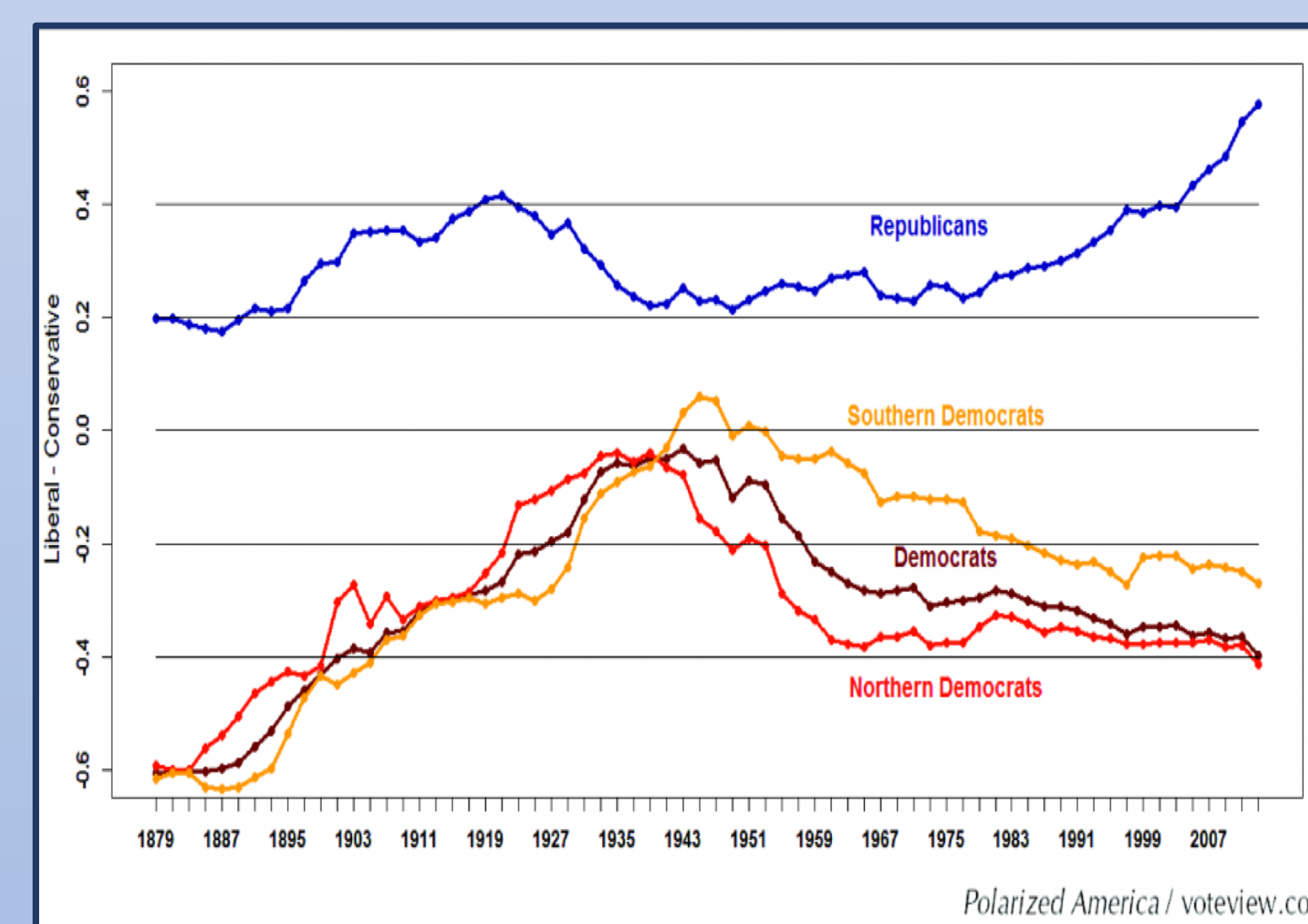


Results

- Increased rates of congressional gridlock.
- Inability for congress to approve crucial legislation.
- Extreme activists' ability to predetermine partisan candidates in local primaries.



- Punishment of bipartisan cooperation.
- Emergence of one-party districts, due to deliberate partisan gerrymandering.



- Highly concentrated partisan districts weaken constituents voting power.
- Disappearance of competitive marginal districts.
- Trends in political polarization portray the exponential separation between our two political parties over the last 23 years

Partisan Polarization Trends

General Public

Politically Active Individuals Only

- Illustrates the development of radical one-sided ideologies, desynchronizing Democrats and Republicans.

Recommendations

- Strengthen the power and influence of the ordinary citizen. Ensure ordinary citizen's interests and desires top political agendas.
- Strengthen local and state government.
- Gerrymander current one-party districts into marginal districts, creating more competitive and quality elections.
- Mandate political campaigns to be primarily funded by public funds, along with small private donations from individuals.
- Restrict candidates from accepting PAC or interest group contributions

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