



1

Ideology

- **Definition:** a set of ideas about beliefs about how society should work
- Ideology is multi-dimensional
 - social issues (e.g., abortion, same-sex marriage)
 - social order (e.g., egalitarian vs. hierarchy)
 - social change (e.g., progress vs. tradition)
 - economic issues (e.g., taxes)
 - foreign policy (e.g., war vs. peace)
- Canadians tend to be liberal on social issues and conservative on economic issues
- However, a single dimension is a good first approximation of where people stand, especially when social issues becomes a team sport (as it is right now)
- In this course, we will focus on a single left-right dimension

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A	B	C	D	E
liberals (freedom, liberty)	How do you identify?			conservatives (constraint, tradition)
left-wing (egalitarian)				right-wing (hierarchy)
 marriage equality			 traditional religion	
 environment			 productivity	
 victims			 law and order	

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Are you more for or against affirmative action?

- A. For
- B. Against

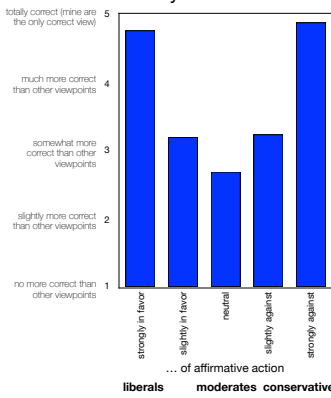
Affirmative Action

giving underrepresented minority groups preference in hiring decisions and admissions to university
AKA **Employment Equity**



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My beliefs are...



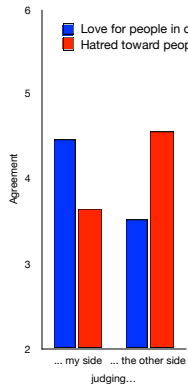
- 527 Americans across the political spectrum reported their views on several issues and their "belief superiority" extremists on both ends of the spectrum had very high belief superiority (self-righteous) whereas moderates were more humble (but still self-righteous)

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Legend:
■ Love for people in own political party
■ Hatred toward people in the opposition



- 285 Americans were asked to...
- Think about the political party that you belong to. Now, think about members of the opposing political party. When your party engages in conflict with the opposing party, how much is your party motivated by each of the following:
 - love for people in your political party
 - hatred toward people in the opposing party
- same question about the other side's motives
- people reported that their own side was motivated by love and the other side was motivated by hatred
- both sides thought this simultaneously

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Patients who....	Rash Got...	
	Worse	Better
...used the cream	223	75
...did not use the cream	107	21

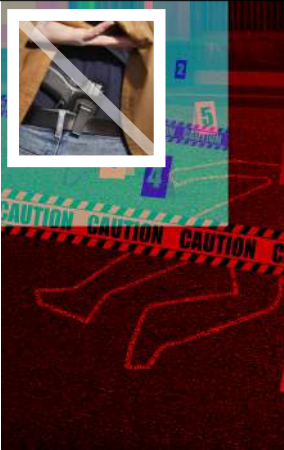
- Based on these results, which conclusion is supported?
- People who used the skin cream were more likely to **get better** than those who didn't
 - People who used the skin cream were more likely to **get worse** than those who didn't

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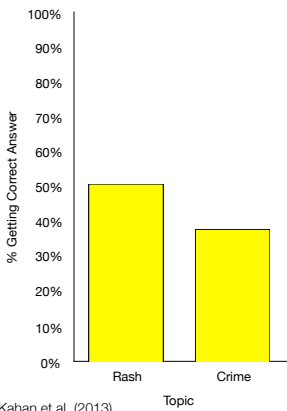
A city government was trying to decide whether to pass a law banning private citizens from carrying concealed handguns in public.

Government officials were unsure whether the law will be more likely to decrease crime by reducing the number of people carrying weapons or increase crime by making it harder for law-abiding citizens to defend themselves from violent criminals.

To address this question, researchers had divided cities into two groups: one consisting of cities that had recently enacted bans on concealed weapons and another that had no such bans.



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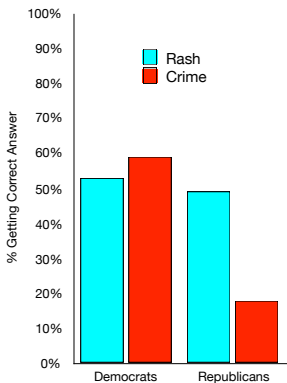


- American participants were asked to do a difficult math/logic/reasoning problem about the results of a hypothetical scientific study
 - either on a non-political topic (rashes and skin creams)
 - or on a political topic (crime and gun restrictions)
- People in general did worse on the political topic
- The results from both studies suggested that the intervention (cream, gun restrictions) are effective
 - this conclusion about guns should bother Republicans the most



Kahan et al. (2013)

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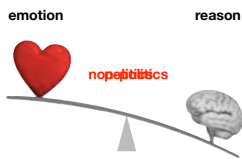


- Democrats and Republicans tend to disagree about gun restrictions.
- Democrats are in favour of restrictions whereas Republicans are not
- Therefore, Democrats' ideology is aligned with the facts in this study whereas Republicans' ideology diverges with the facts
- As a result, Republicans did much worse than Democrats on the political study

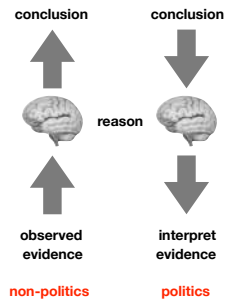
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Why the ideological off-switch?

1. emotional take-over



2. repurposing reason



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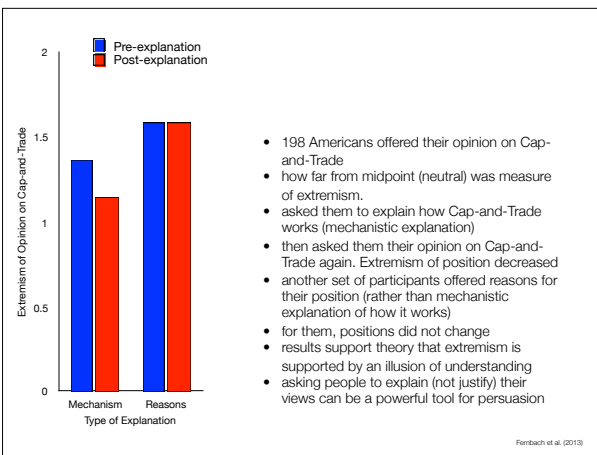
Illusion of Understanding



extremely liberal moderate extremely conservative

- People at the extremes *think* that they know more about policy than they do
- This illusion allows them to maintain their extreme and self-righteous positions
- When these people try to explain *how* their preferred policies would work, they realize that they don't know what they are talking about, and fall back to a more moderate position

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- 198 Americans offered their opinion on Cap-and-Trade
- how far from midpoint (neutral) was measure of extremism.
- asked them to explain how Cap-and-Trade works (mechanistic explanation)
- then asked them their opinion on Cap-and-Trade again. Extremism of position decreased
- another set of participants offered reasons for their position (rather than mechanistic explanation of how it works)
- for them, positions did not change
- results support theory that extremism is supported by an illusion of understanding
- asking people to explain (not justify) their views can be a powerful tool for persuasion

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Political people tend to be...

- self-righteous
- live in information bubbles
- want to silence critics
- not be very smart
- and have poorly thought out views

Donald Trump...

- is self-righteous
- lives in information bubbles
- wants to silence critics
- is not very smart
- and has poorly thought out views

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Is Trump usual?

- A. Totally. Trump is just like everyone else.
- B. Sort of. But Trump is more biased than the average person.
- C. Sort of. Trump is like others on the political right.
- D. Not all. Almost no one is like Trump.



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Are all opinions equally valid?

No.

The approach we take is to:

- respect ideological diversity (left-right)
 - take a stand for sensibility over nonsense
- We will do our best to avoid confusing ideology for nonsense

sensible



Jordan Peterson

left-wing
(egalitarian)

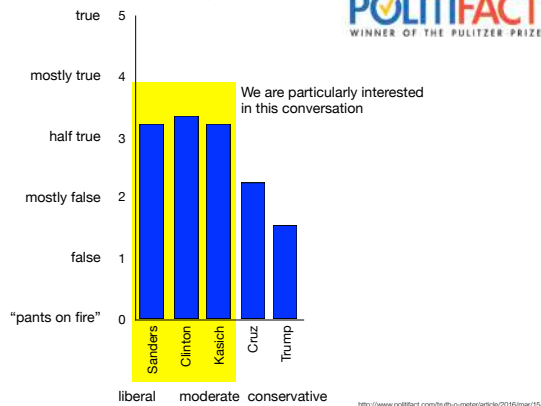
right-wing
(hierarchy)

nonsense



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Average Score



27

http://theflipside.io



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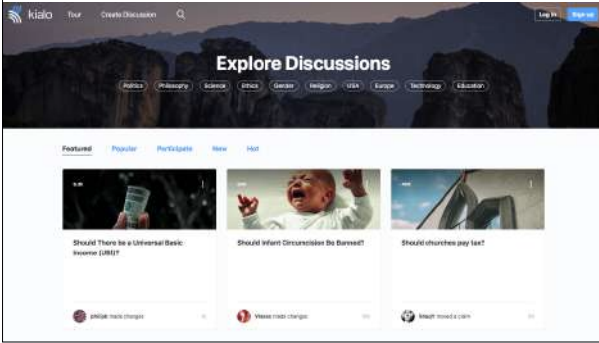
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Each side has important and unique strengths

defend rights

"Give me your tired,
your poor, your huddled
masses yearning to
breathe free"
-Lazarus

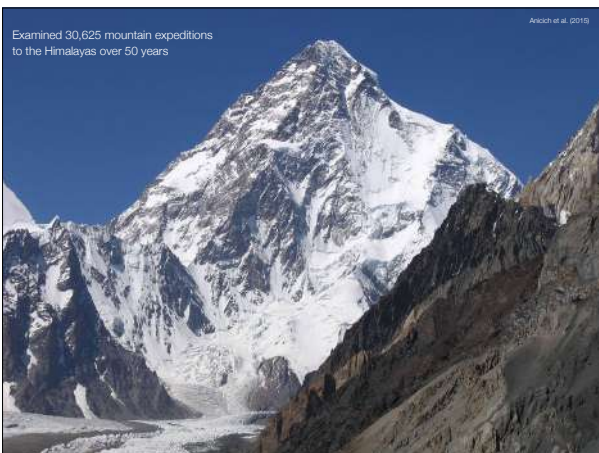
focus on success

"The restraints
on [people], as well as
their liberties, are to be
reckoned among their
rights."
-Burke

left-wing
(egalitarian)

right-wing
(hierarchy)

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32
