

# "We're So Freaking Polarized": See How Americans With Opposing Views Interpret the Same Situation

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This year, some Republicans have accused Democrats of wanting “to destroy the country” and “spewing hatred,” while some Democrats can be heard saying Republicans are “fascists, ruining this country” — a far cry from what would be called ideological debate.

A growing number of researchers believe politics has the ability to alter one’s perception of reality and others.

“It’s getting worse, and I don’t see it unwinding anytime soon,” said New York University psychology professor Jay Van Bavel. “Political identities are one of the most important and powerful identities that people have right now in this country. And that’s grown over time.”

Gallup polling going back two decades shows a stark and widening political divide on many issues — more Americans are choosing to live in places that are politically like-minded, and UCLA research found in 2016 that more than half of Americans prefer their child marry someone from a specific political party — leading to questions over just how sharply one’s beliefs could shape their worldview.

By showing an identical clip of police [clashing with](#) protesters to both Republicans and Democrats, “CBS This Morning” co-host Tony Dokoupil got a firsthand look at how stark the differences could be.

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