

# Polarity in America: The Rise and Fall of 20th Century Civility

Prelude: [Adolph Ochs](#) bought the NYT in 1898.

He responded to his many Yellow Journalism competitors with

["All The News That's Fit To Print."](#)

Result was a more congenial media for about 60 years.

Then Civility Declined, Animosity and Polarity Increased.

Here is the WHY!

## 1. Did Supreme Court Begin the Fall?

Court Allowed State Redistricting Plans, Schools Integration/busing/housing, and easier Abortions.

Trouble began when Federal efforts went beyond stopping [Jim Crow laws](#).

## 2. Has Political Control Affected Civility?

**Political Parties Began to polarize** when FDR kept control of the Democratic Party by excluded many poor southerners from New Deal.

Northern Democrats began catering to blacks.

LBJ sealed the change with the 1966 Civil Rights Act.

Roe v. Wade added fuel to the fire.

South became Republican, Coasts became Democratic.

## 3. Did a 1987 Federal Communication Policy Increase Polarity?

[Fairness Doctrine](#) eliminated by FCC.

Radio Stations were no longer required to present contrasting views.

[Rush Limbaugh](#), who had popularized conservative talk radio, now had fewer restrictions.

Talk Radio and [Identity Politics](#) Flourished.

Conservative and Liberal Polarization Proliferated.

## 4. [Telecommunications Act of 1996](#) Deregulated Broadcast Industry

by allowing multi-station company ownership allowing national networks to developed.

Clear Channel Communications-now [iHeart Media](#)- owned over 800 US radio stations by 2011 and Rush Limbaugh wealth eventually climbed to \$400 million.

## 5. [Citizens United v. FEC](#)

Political Contributions restrictions eliminated in 2010

Campaign funding increased and sponsorship diversified allowing both intended and unintended [Fake News](#) to proliferate.

## 6. Sports Trash Talking Went Public

Cassius Clay practically invented this 1960's genre as a boastfully Mohamed Ali.

ntil then. athlete had been formal, cordial, and boring.

Ali changed everything with his elite out-of-ring bantering,

which was only rivaled by his in-ring dominance.

Larry Bird and others soon followed.

## 7. [2011 Banning Earmarks](#) increased polarization as political cooperation to "bring home the bacon" ended.

See [Avoiding Effects Of Groupthink](#)

