Measuring Ideology

- Standard approach used by Pew Research, and many others, is to ask self-identification, usually using a 5 or 7 point scale
- In 2014, generally consistent finding that more self-id as conservative than liberal

**Pew 5-point (2014)**
- NET 24% Liberal
- Moderate
- NET 36% Conservative

**GSS 7-point (2014)**
- NET 25% Liberal
- Moderate
- NET 32% Conservative
Self-Identification Relatively Stable

2015 to date

- NET: 24% Liberal
- 7% Very liberal
- 17% Liberal
- 36% Moderate
- NET: 36% Conservative
- 29% Conservative
- 7% Very conservative

Pew Research Center, merged data 2000-2015
### Why Examine Ideology?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideology</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very liberal</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very conservative</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET 24% Liberal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET 36% Conservative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partisanship</th>
<th>Percentages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean Dem</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No lean</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean Rep</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET 48% Dem/Lean Dem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NET 39% Rep/Lean Rep</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

July 28, 2015  www.pewresearch.org
Why Examine Ideology?

**Ideology**
- Very liberal: 7
- Liberal: 17
- Moderate: 35
- Conservative: 29
- Very conservative: 7
- DK/Ref: 24%

NET 24% Liberal

**Partisanship**
- Democrat: 32
- Lean Dem: 16
- No lean: 13
- Lean Rep: 16
- Republican: 23
- DK/Ref: 48%

NET 48% Dem/Lean Dem

**Among...**
- Rep/Lean Rep: 25
- 30
- 14

= 46

**Dem/Lean Dem**
- 12
- 27
- 16
- 3

= 40
The Current Study

• Data from the Pew Research Center’s political polarization phone survey in early 2014 (N=10,013), and a follow-up web and mail survey with a subset of the same respondents in fall 2014 (N=3,154) conducted as a part of the American Trends Panel

• Explores two different approaches to self-identification
  • Standard 5-point scale (phone)
  • Visual 0-10 point scale (web/mail)

• Relationship between ideological self-identification and ideologically valenced political values
The Self-Identification Measures

**Standard Telephone Question**  
**Spring 2014**

In general, would you describe your political views as...

- Very conservative
- Conservative
- Moderate
- Liberal [OR]
- Very liberal

**Visual Scale (Web/Mail)**  
**Fall 2014**

In politics, people sometimes talk about liberal and conservative. Where would you place YOURSELF on a scale from 0 to 10 where 10 means very liberal and 0 means very conservative?  
(reversed ½ of sample)
Using Political Values to Measure Ideology

- Developed as a part of the Pew Research Center’s exploration of political polarization
- Designed to measure ideology across multiple dimensions, not overly weighted to any one political arena
- All items have a clear liberal/conservative valence
### 10 Items in the Ideological Consistency Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservative Position</th>
<th>[OR]</th>
<th>Liberal Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government is almost always wasteful and inefficient</td>
<td>Government often does a better job than people give it credit for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulation of business usually does more harm than good</td>
<td>Government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor people today have it easy because they can get government benefits without doing anything in return</td>
<td>Poor people have hard lives because government benefits don't go far enough to help them live decently</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The government today can't afford to do much more to help the needy</td>
<td>The government should do more to help needy Americans, even if it means going deeper into debt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks who can't get ahead in this country are mostly responsible for their own condition</td>
<td>Racial discrimination is the main reason why many black people can't get ahead these days</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants today are a burden on our country because they take our jobs, housing and health care</td>
<td>Immigrants today strengthen our country because of their hard work and talents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The best way to ensure peace is through military strength</td>
<td>Good diplomacy is the best way to ensure peace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most corporations make a fair and reasonable amount of profit</td>
<td>Business corporations make too much profit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stricter environmental laws and regulations cost too many jobs and hurt the economy</td>
<td>Stricter environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homosexuality should be discouraged by society</td>
<td>Homosexuality should be accepted by society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Items in the Scale Correlate with Self-Identification

- Govt almost always wasteful and inefficient
  - Very lib: 36, 39, 53, 70, 77
  - Lib: 31, 28, 42, 63, 73
  - Mod: 17, 27, 41, 59, 68
  - Cons: 25, 32, 51, 65, 74
  - Very cons: 38, 47, 64, 75, 80

- Regulation of business more harmful than good
  - Very lib: 24, 22, 32, 45, 52
  - Lib: 13, 14, 27, 41, 58
  - Mod: 21, 28, 37, 50, 61
  - Cons: 22, 18, 34, 55, 74
  - Very cons: 17, 15, 23, 45, 65

- Poor people have it easy because of govt benefits
  - Very lib: 40, 39, 53, 70, 77
  - Lib: 31, 28, 42, 63, 73
  - Mod: 17, 27, 41, 59, 68
  - Cons: 25, 32, 51, 65, 74
  - Very cons: 38, 47, 64, 75, 80

- Govt can’t afford to do more to help the needy
  - Very lib: 24, 22, 32, 45, 52
  - Lib: 13, 14, 27, 41, 58
  - Mod: 21, 28, 37, 50, 61
  - Cons: 22, 18, 34, 55, 74
  - Very cons: 17, 15, 23, 45, 65

- Blacks are responsible for their own condition
  - Very lib: 36, 39, 53, 70, 77
  - Lib: 31, 28, 42, 63, 73
  - Mod: 17, 27, 41, 59, 68
  - Cons: 25, 32, 51, 65, 74
  - Very cons: 38, 47, 64, 75, 80

- Immigrants are a burden on our country
  - Very lib: 24, 22, 32, 45, 52
  - Lib: 13, 14, 27, 41, 58
  - Mod: 21, 28, 37, 50, 61
  - Cons: 22, 18, 34, 55, 74
  - Very cons: 17, 15, 23, 45, 65

- Best way to ensure peace through military strength
  - Very lib: 36, 39, 53, 70, 77
  - Lib: 31, 28, 42, 63, 73
  - Mod: 17, 27, 41, 59, 68
  - Cons: 25, 32, 51, 65, 74
  - Very cons: 38, 47, 64, 75, 80

- Business corporations make fair amt of profit
  - Very lib: 40, 39, 53, 70, 77
  - Lib: 31, 28, 42, 63, 73
  - Mod: 17, 27, 41, 59, 68
  - Cons: 25, 32, 51, 65, 74
  - Very cons: 38, 47, 64, 75, 80

- Stricter environ laws cost jobs and hurt econ
  - Very lib: 24, 22, 32, 45, 52
  - Lib: 13, 14, 27, 41, 58
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  - Cons: 22, 18, 34, 55, 74
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- Homosexuality should be discouraged by society
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  - Lib: 31, 28, 42, 63, 73
  - Mod: 17, 27, 41, 59, 68
  - Cons: 25, 32, 51, 65, 74
  - Very cons: 38, 47, 64, 75, 80
### Each Measure Tells a Different Story of Ideology

#### Two measures of self-identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very liberal</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard 5-point</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-10 scale</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>39% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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#### Ideological consistency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 item scale</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(51% expanded definition)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(40% expanded definition)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

July 28, 2015  
www.pewresearch.org
Self-identification varies by question design/mode.

Among those who, on a 11-point scale of "very liberal" to "very conservative" on a 5-point scale, say they are...

- **Very lib**: 83% liberal, 34% moderate, 11% conserv, 6% very conserv.
- **Liberal**: 79% liberal, 15% moderate, 15% conserv, 6% very conserv.
- **Moderate**: 38% liberal, 13% moderate, 34% conserv, 10% very conserv.
- **Conserv**: 19% liberal, 15% moderate, 66% conserv, 10% very conserv.
- **Very conserv**: 14% liberal, 3% moderate, 83% conserv, 40% very conserv.
Among those who say they are...

Placement on 10-item scale of ideological consistency

- **Very liberal**: 85% liberal, 12% conservative
- **Liberal**: 56% liberal, 4% conservative
- **Moderate**: 30% liberal, 61% conservative
- **Conservative**: 21% liberal, 72% conservative
- **Very conservative**: 8% liberal, 16% conservative
Party and The Different Measures of Ideology

**Standard 5-Point Self-ID (Phone)**

Among...
- Rep/Lean Rep: 60% conservative, 39% liberal
- Dem/Lean Dem: 60% conservative, 39% liberal

**11-Point Visual Self ID (Web-Mail)**

Among...
- Rep/Lean Rep: 42% conservative, 50% liberal
- Dem/Lean Dem: 42% conservative, 50% liberal

**10 Item Ideological Consistency**

Among...
- Rep/Lean Rep: 49% conservative, 57% liberal
- Dem/Lean Dem: 49% conservative, 57% liberal
Stronger Association Between Measures Among Those who Are More Politically Engaged

Correlation between measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Placement Measures</th>
<th>5-point Self-Placement and Scale of Ideological Consistency</th>
<th>11-point Self-Placement and Scale of Ideological Consistency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Political engagement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percent Correctly Self-Classified by Political Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political View</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Not Engaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very liberal</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very conservative</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Association Between Measures Varies by Demographics

Correlation between measures

### Self-Placement Measures

#### Sex
- **Men**: 0.56
- **Women**: 0.58

#### Education
- **HS or less**: 0.39
- **Some coll**: 0.66
- **Coll grad**: 0.76
- **Post grad**: 0.76

#### Age
- **18-29**: 0.51
- **30-49**: 0.58
- **65+**: 0.54
- **50-64**: 0.60

#### Race/Ethnicity
- **Black**: 0.24
- **Hisp**: 0.36
- **White**: 0.68

### 5-point Self-Placement and Scale of Ideological Consistency

#### Sex
- **Women**: 0.50
- **Men**: 0.62

#### Education
- **HS or less**: 0.38
- **Some coll**: 0.58
- **Coll grad**: 0.70
- **Post grad**: 0.73

#### Age
- **18-29**: 0.46
- **50-64**: 0.60
- **30-64**: 0.53
- **65+**: 0.58

#### Race/Ethnicity
- **Black**: 0.02
- **Hisp**: 0.44
- **White**: 0.66

### 11-point Self-Placement and Scale of Ideological Consistency

#### Sex
- **Women**: 0.54
- **Men**: 0.61

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Correlation between measures

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- **Race/Ethnicity**
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  - White: 0.63
Among African Americans, Only Modest Relationship Between Political Values and Self-Identification

- Govt almost always wasteful and inefficient
- Regulation of business more harmful than good
- Poor people have it easy because of govt benefits
- Govt can’t afford to do more to help the needy
- Blacks are responsible for their own condition

- Immigrants are a burden on our country
- Best way to ensure peace through military strength
- Business corporations make fair amt of profit
- Stricter environ laws cost jobs and hurt econ
- Homosexuality should be discouraged by society
### Ideology Measures Among White, Non-Hispanics

#### Two measures of self-identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Type</th>
<th>Very liberal</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard 5-point</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-10 scale</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>45% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ideological consistency

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 item scale</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(43% expanded definition)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(48% expanded definition)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Ideology Measures Among Black, Non-Hispanics

#### Two measures of self-identification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Very liberal</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Standard 5-point</strong></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>29% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>0-10 scale</strong></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>22% conservative</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ideological consistency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
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<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>10 item scale</strong></td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>48% liberal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3% conservative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(67% expanded definition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(15% expanded definition)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Jocelyn Kiley
Associate Director, Research
jkiley@pewresearch.org
@jocelynkiley
### 5-pt Self-Identification Measure Among Race/Ethnicity

#### White, non-Hispanic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 5-point</th>
<th>Very liberal</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
<th>DK/Ref</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 21% liberal
- 42% conservative

#### Black, non-Hispanic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 5-point</th>
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<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
<th>Very conservative</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black, non-Hispanic</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 29% liberal
- 32% conservative

#### Hispanic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard 5-point</th>
<th>Very liberal</th>
<th>Liberal</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Conservative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 22% liberal
- 41% conservative
11-pt Self-Identification Measure Among Race/Ethnicity

**White, non-Hispanic**

35% liberal

45% conservative

**Black, non-Hispanic**

49% liberal

22% conservative

**Hispanic**

46% liberal

29% conservative
Ideological Consistency Measure Among Race/Ethnicity

**White, non-Hispanic**

10 item scale

31% liberal  
(43% expanded definition)  
36% conservative  
(48% expanded definition)

**Black, non-Hispanic**

10 item scale

48% liberal  
(67% expanded definition)  
3% conservative  
(15% expanded definition)

**Hispanic**

10 item scale

41% liberal  
(68% expanded definition)  
9% conservative  
(23% expanded definition)
Ideology Measures Among Hispanics

Two measures of self-identification

- **Standard 5-point scale**
  - Very liberal: 6
  - Liberal: 16
  - Moderate: 34
  - Conservative: 34
  - Very conservative: 7
  - DK/Ref: 22% liberal
  - 41% conservative

- **0-10 scale**
  - Very liberal: 11
  - 1: 9
  - 2: 8
  - 3: 7
  - 4: 10
  - 5: 21
  - 6: 5
  - 7: 6
  - 8: 4
  - Very conservative: 6
  - DK/Ref: 8
  - 46% liberal
  - 29% conservative

Ideological consistency

- **10 item scale**
  - Very liberal: 3
  - Liberal: 7
  - Moderate: 12
  - Conservative: 20
  - Very conservative: 27
  - DK/Ref: 9
  - 41% liberal
  - 9% conservative
  - (68% expanded definition)
  - (23% expanded definition)