



Splitting America: How Politicians, Super PACs and the News Media Mirror High Conflict Divorce

Bill Eddy, Donald Saposnek

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Something nasty is happening in American politics. You'd have to be in hibernation to be unaware of the bullying, incivility, and disrespect going on. *Splitting America* is a warning to voters and politicians that current polarizations risks long-term harm to our nation. This book compares the same five traits of high-conflict divorces to today's politics. It generally includes:

- Personal Attacks (calling the other person crazy, stupid, immoral or evil)
- Crisis Emotions (which trigger fear and hatred of each other)
- All-or-Nothing Solutions (which call for the elimination or exclusion of the "other")
- Narcissistic Behavior (acting superior and not caring about anyone else)
- Negative Advocates (constantly recruiting others to join in this hostility)

We are well-acquainted with this pattern in high-conflict divorces, and it's not good. This behavior is called "high-conflict" because it increases the conflict, rather than reducing or resolving it. Worst of all, it's contagious—it spreads when people are exposed to it, like a virus.

We are now concerned that this behavior is spreading into politics at all levels.

Political leaders appear to be adopting and escalating high-conflict behavior, and perhaps, even leading it. Millionaires and billionaires are funding expensive ads as key elements in high-conflict election campaigns. And, the news promotes high-conflict behavior in every broadcast – to children as well as to adults – by relentlessly showing, and thereby teaching, the most dramatic bad behavior of the day.

Even worse, politicians, donors to Super PACs and the news media don't seem to realize how destructive and self-destructive this escalation of high-conflict behavior can be. *Splitting America* warns them and the rest of the nation about the dead-end nature of this unrestrained behavior that knows no limits.

We have seen splitting destroy too many families, and we don't want to see it destroy the American family. We want to avoid a high-conflict political divorce. In approaching these problems, it's not about pointing fingers and deciding who is more at fault. It's about everyone taking responsibility for his or her own behavior, and managing collaborative relationships, even when we disagree.

Analyze your favorite leaders before you vote with the High-Conflict Politician Score Card included in the book and decide for yourself if they would be a good leader or not.

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