

7 Reasons I Can't Stand Politics

I hate politics. Part of the reason, to be honest, is that I'm a [libertarian](#), and libertarian views have almost no influence in the world of politics. Libertarians don't just lose every election; policy-makers normally summarily reject our position. Libertarians don't just fail to control a major party; "successful libertarian politician" is almost an oxymoron.

I hate the way people think about politics, independent of the ultimate outcome. But perennial defeat isn't the only reason I hate politics. On reflection, I'd loathe politics even if my policy views matched Clinton's or Trump's word-for-word. Indeed, I'd loathe politics even if I thought prevailing policies were the pinnacle of wisdom. Why? Because I hate the way people think about politics, independent of the ultimate outcome.

I hate the [hyperbole](#) of politics. People should speak literal, measured truth, or be silent.

I hate the [Social Desirability Bias](#) of politics. People should describe reality as it is, not pander to wishful thinking.

I hate the [innumeracy](#) of politics. People should focus on what's quantitatively important, not what thrills the masses.

I hate the [overconfidence](#) of politics. People [shouldn't make claims they won't bet on](#), and shouldn't assert certainty unless they're willing to bet everything they own against a penny.

I hate the [myside bias](#) of politics. People should strive to be fair to out-groups, and scrupulously monitor in-groups, to counteract our natural human inclination to do the opposite.

I hate the “[winning proves I’m right](#)” mentality of politics. Winning only proves your views are popular, and popular views are often wrong.

Last but not least:

I hate [the excuses people make for each of the preceding evils](#). While I’m open to consequentialist arguments for doing evil that good may come, most of the arguments in this genre are deeply tainted by innumeracy and overconfidence. If you calmly weigh the social benefits of political hyperbole, carefully crunch the numbers, and [grudgingly and sorrowfully conclude that it’s justified in specific cases](#), I’m all ears. But if you defend hyperbole with casual, indiscriminating delight, life’s too short to listen to you.

P.S. While I hate how people act in politics, I emphatically [don’t hate the people themselves](#). Politics is only a small sliver of most people’s lives, so [the apolitical good normally far outweighs the political bad](#).

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