



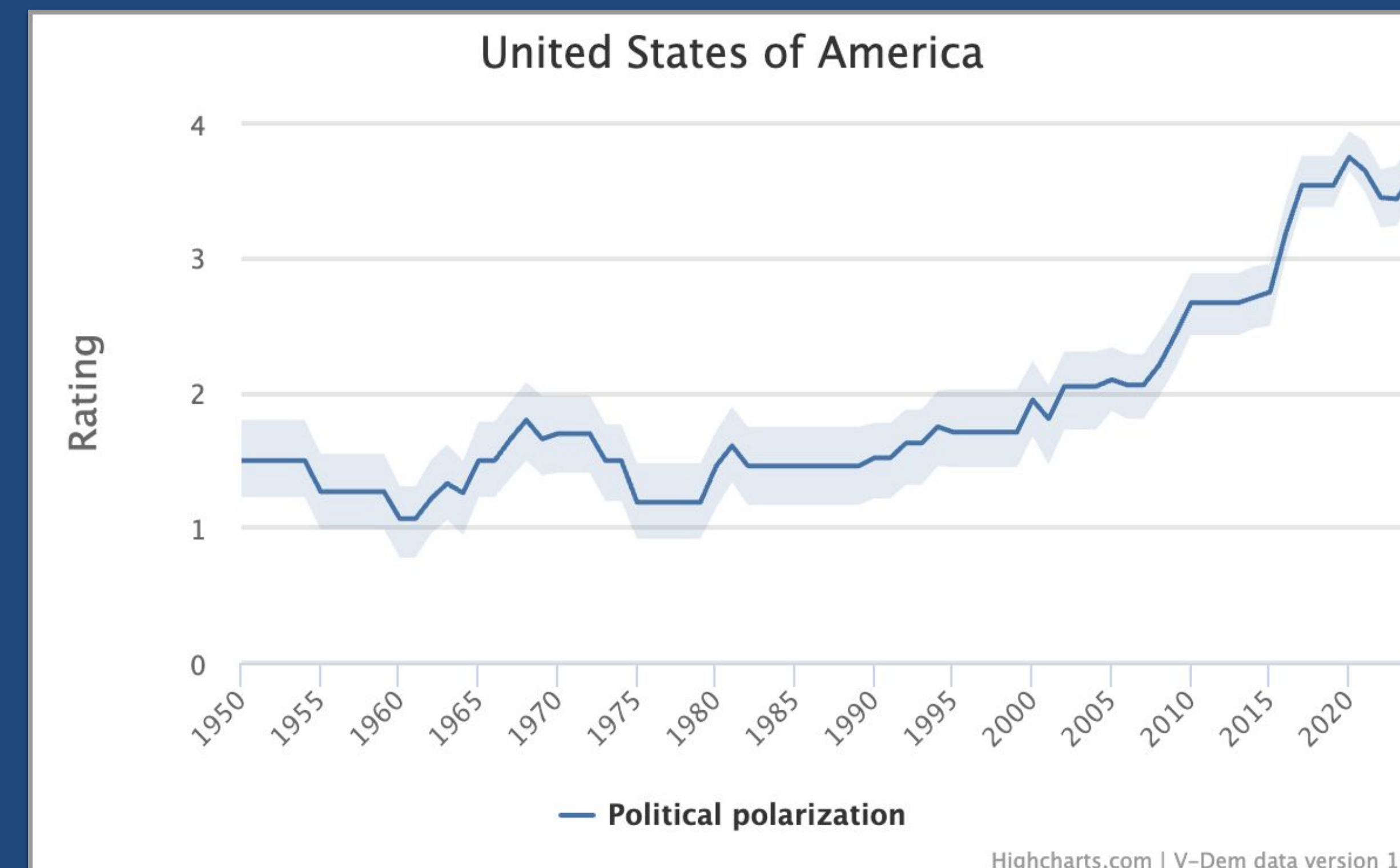
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Source Project - People Politics and the Environment

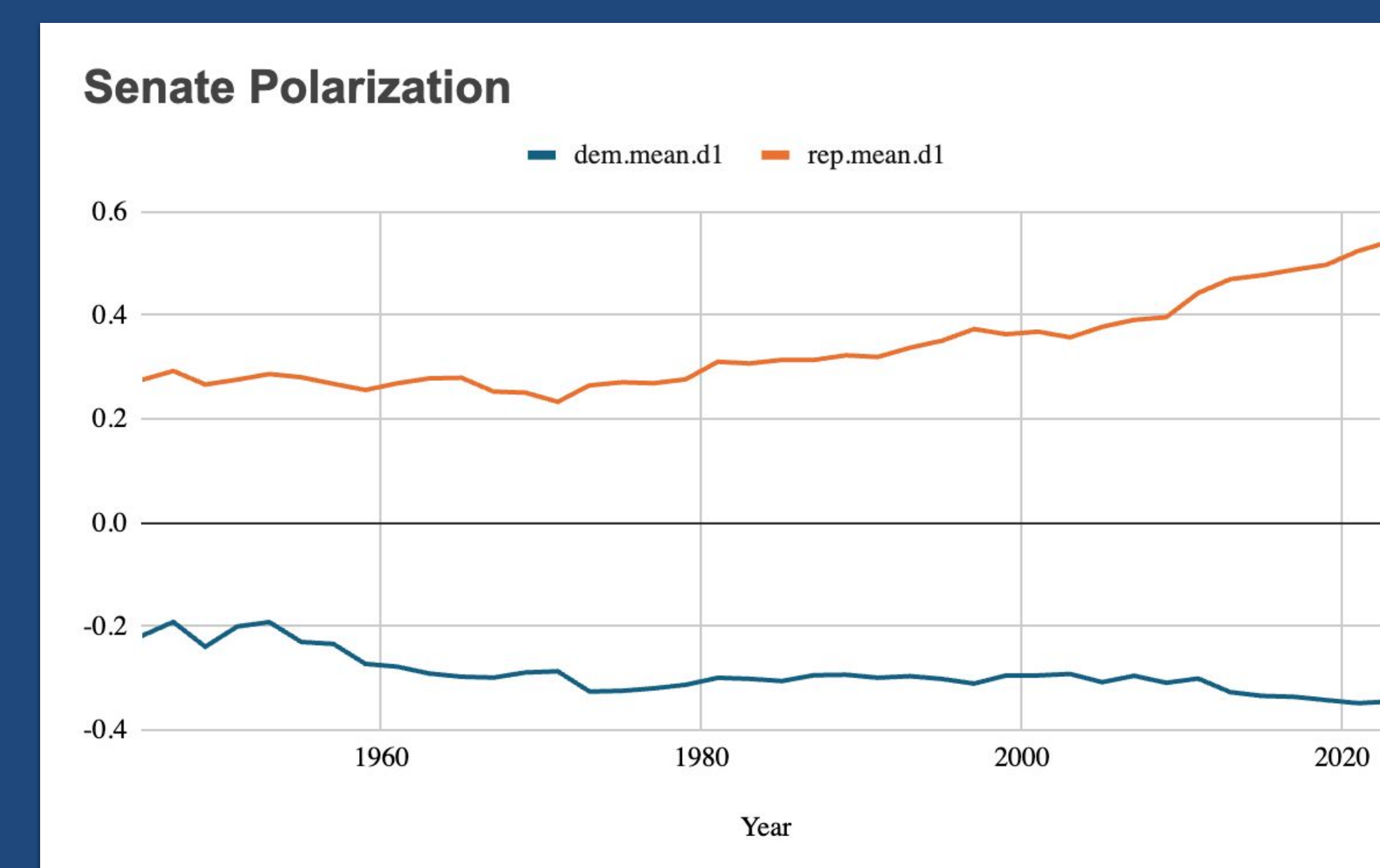
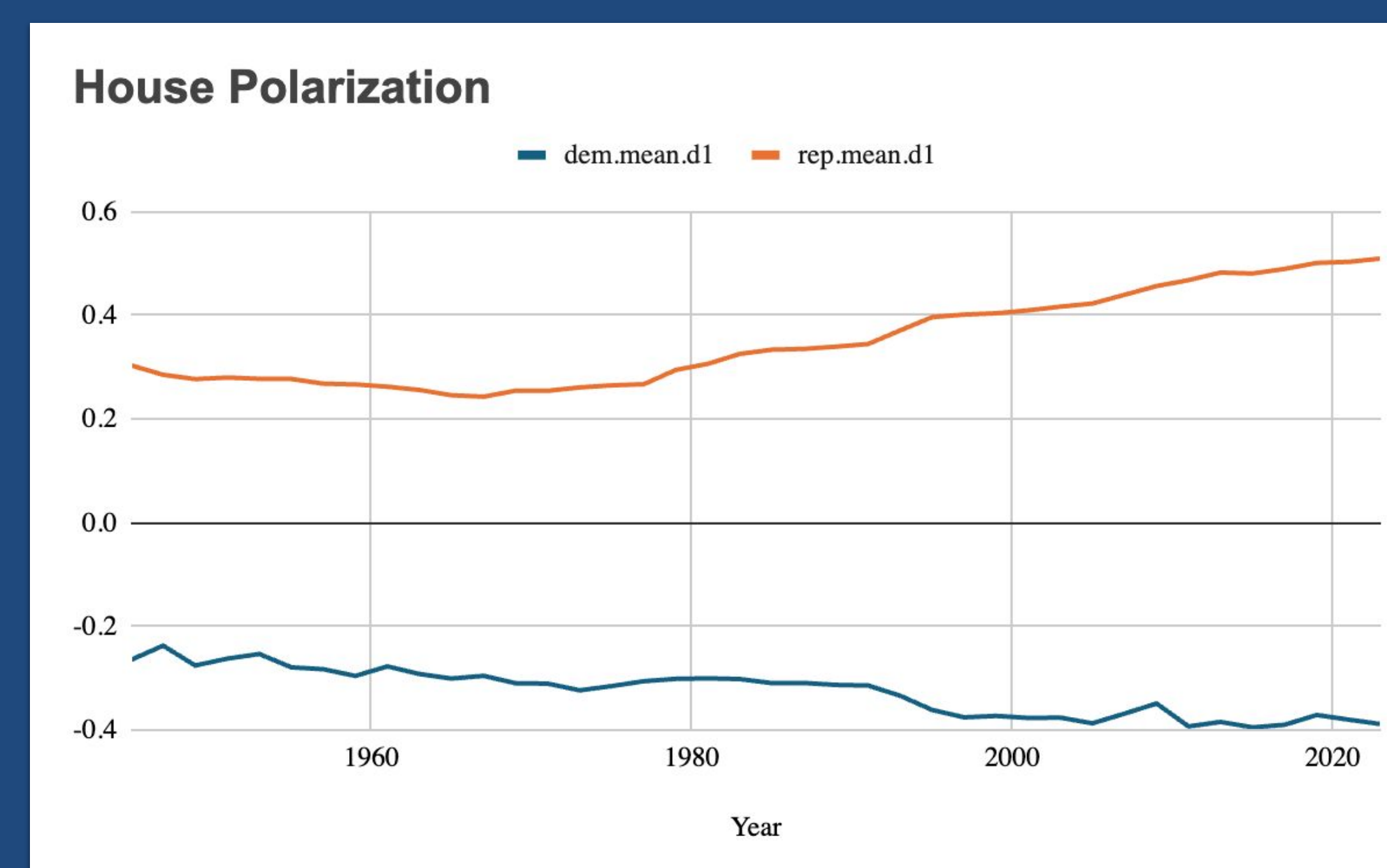
The Consequences of Polarization: Authoritarianism in the United States

BACKGROUND: Political polarization has defined the modern American landscape, both within government institutions and among the public. As each election season seems to be more turbulent than the last and the common ground between political parties is shrinking, the impact on the institutional structure of the United States is called into question.

- Authoritarianism is not an ideal political system.
 - It typically erodes individual freedoms, lacks checks to power, promotes xenophobia and extreme nationalism, and suppresses political opposition.
- Political differences strengthen democratic institutions, to a certain extent.
 - Once that extent is exceeded, polarization is harmful



How has political polarization impacted the democratic integrity of the United States?

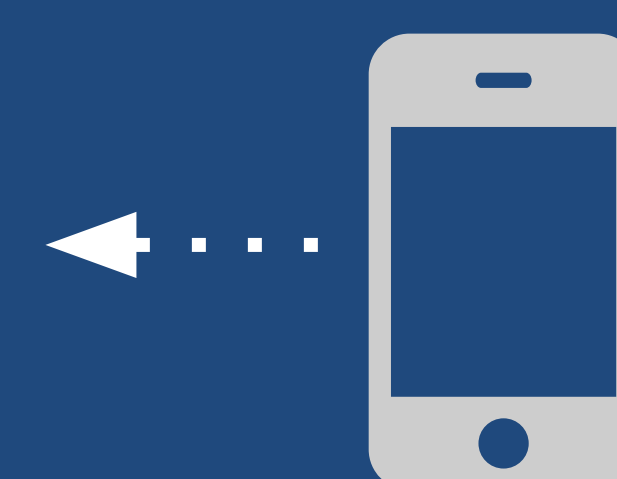


FINDINGS: The correlation between political polarization and authoritarian tendencies suggests several things.

- **High levels of polarization within government likely contribute to authoritarian tendencies.**
 - However, it must be noted that there are many contributing factors to both polarization and authoritarianism.
 - It is also difficult measure levels of authoritarianism in an unbiased and accurate manner.

FURTHER RESEARCH:

Evolving political institutions are complex, and new developments occur each day. To fully understand the real impact of polarization on authoritarian tendencies in the context of the United States, further research into the many interconnected issues that sustain the political divide is necessary. This includes but is not limited to media influence, cultural divides, politicization of the judiciary, and historical patterns. **Without a comprehensive approach, it is difficult to gauge the true extent to which polarization contributes to authoritarian tendencies.**



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