

How the parties split words

Sometimes the words of presidential candidates run together. But underneath all the platitudes and pandering, as political scientist Kenneth Janda of Northwestern University points out, sharp differences anchor the philosophies of the two major parties.

Janda studied the speeches of several top candidates last year, identifying key words that invoked "three core values—freedom, order and equality—that underlie most policy conflicts in American politics."

One intriguing discovery: Democrats mentioned President Bush frequently, while Republicans ignored their party's leader.

"The Republican candidates were far more likely to stress key words associated with the core value of freedom," Janda wrote. "In contrast, the Democratic candidates were far more likely to use key words signaling the core value of equality. Republicans talked up the value of social order; Democrats ignored it."

In this illustration, the text is sized in proportion to the number of times Republicans or Democrats used the key words that correlate to the three core values.

freedom

freedom

Republicans: **83 times**
Democrats: **12**

Key words counted: free, freedom, tax and taxes

equality

equality

Democrats: **62**
Republicans: **17**

Key words: poor, poverty, jobs, wages, workers, health care

order

Republicans: **97**
Democrats: **0**

Key words: crime, criminals, marriage, abortion, immigration, border

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