

# Being 'Out of the Mainstream' Is Suddenly a Political Non-Starter?

☒ It seems you can't listen to a political debate these days without hearing some liberal politician or media pundit using the term "out of the mainstream" to marginalize a conservative viewpoint. Much like "the one percent", it's one of those nauseating catchphrases designed to discount an argument on the basis that its perspective falls outside of a common perception.

For example: If you don't think it makes sense to raise taxes on job creators during a weak economy and high unemployment, you're "out of the mainstream" because most people have no problem with *rich people* paying higher taxes.

I guess it's no longer enough to prop up an argument by simply saying, "Most people agree with me." No, you now have to degrade the opposition by claiming that they're not part of the *all important* "mainstream" – the inference being that they're not only wrong, but also *weird* for not subscribing to the prevailing mindset.

I assume the phrase has been poll-tested and was somehow determined to strike a chord with people, otherwise we wouldn't be hearing it so often. I guess that makes sense. After all, it's important to a lot of people to be part of the 'in' crowd. No one wants to be the outcast. Republicans, apparently recognizing its value, even tapped into the phrase recently in their criticism of defense secretary nominee, Chuck Hagel.

I realize that it's just part of a political tactic, but the choice of words is interesting – especially coming from liberals.

I thought liberalism was supposed to be the ideology that took the lead on pressuring society to reject bullying and be more accepting of those who march to the beat of a different drum. I thought they were supposed to be the protectors of minorities and the defenders of the *little guy*. I thought they were the preachers of diversity and inclusion.

When they make the “mainstream” argument, however, they sound like a clique of popular high school kids, defining those who aren’t part of their group as being dopey.

Maybe I’m reading into this too much. Maybe their use of the term is simply another way for them to say that they have majority support, and thus their policy ideas are the correct ones. But if that’s the case, since when did liberals begin basing the merits of policies on majority support?

Obamacare certainly didn’t have majority support. On the contrary... It faced overwhelming public resistance. It’s passage even led to a historical take-over of the House of Representatives by the party whose future had widely been written off by political observers two years earlier.

Most people believe the federal government needs to reduce its spending. Most people believe our entitlement programs need to be reformed. Most people favor smaller government, less services, and lower taxes. Most people believe that identification should be required in order to vote. Most people want to expand domestic oil drilling and to get the Keystone Pipeline built. Some national polls are even showing that the pro-lifers are beginning to outnumber the pro-choicers.

If being in the mainstream is so important, how can the Democrats possibly hold the positions they do on these issues?

The lack of an answer makes me think I was right in my original assessment.

In the grand scheme of things, political jargon is the least of our country's worries right now, thus my beef is a minor one. Still, it's hard not to be annoyed by what is yet another example of our Obama-driven culture of divisiveness. Though the rhetoric may not be as sharp as it was during campaign season, the key elements remain the same. The winning method for building coalitions is no longer to unite support through common interests, but rather to divide people into categories, create tension between them, and debase the ones who don't choose your side.

Judging by the apparent success of this approach, I'm sure there will be many more of these irritating little phrases that we can look forward to hearing in the future.