

The Chair's Role in Creating A Culture of Civility

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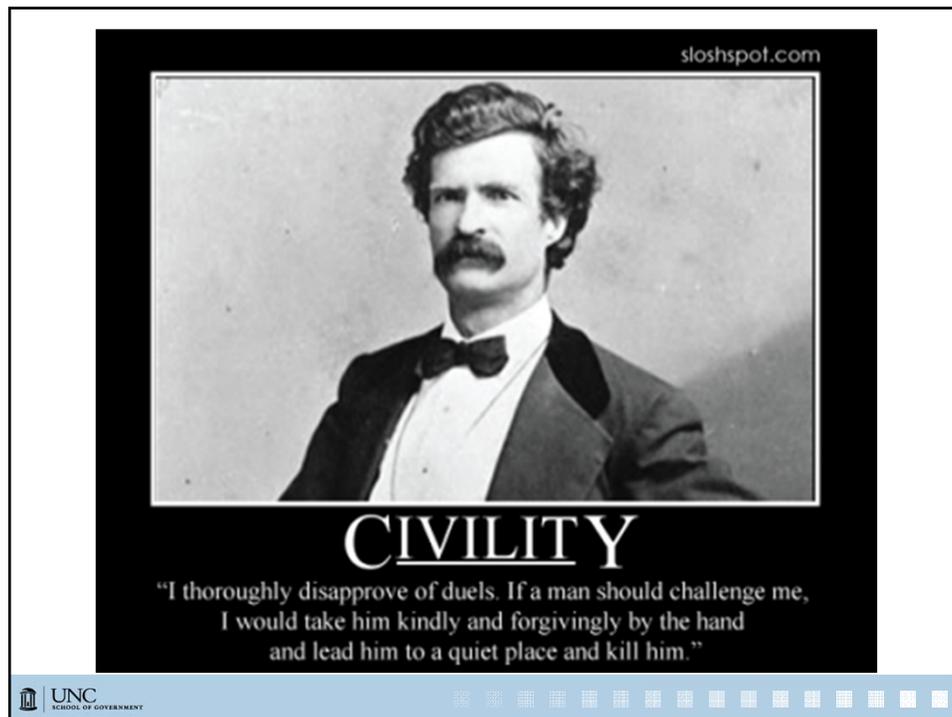
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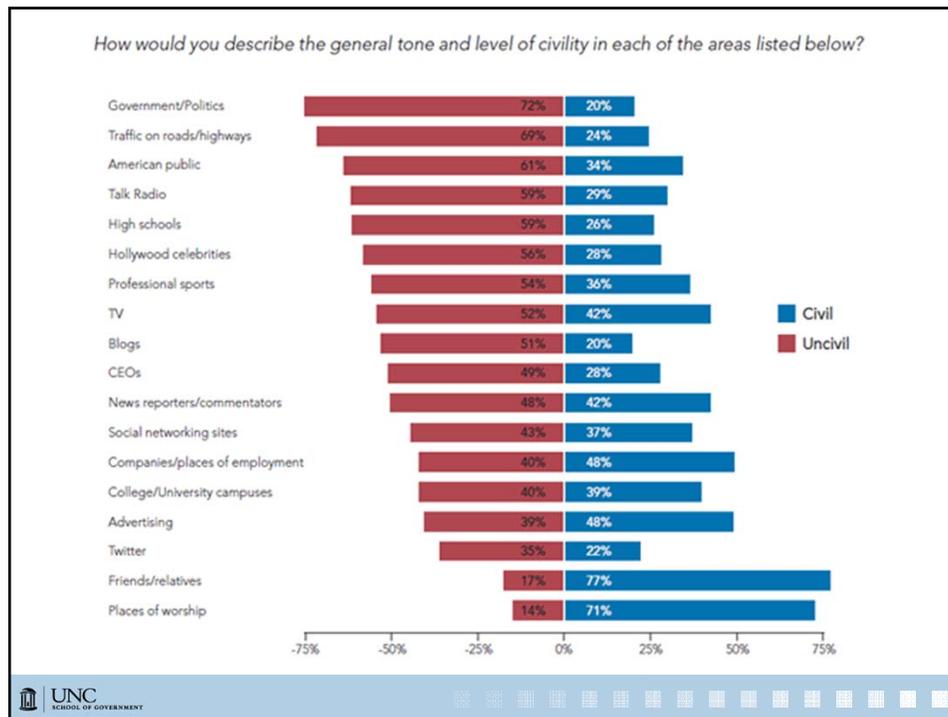
Learning Objectives

- What does “civility” mean?
- Why does civility matter?
- What can Board Chairs do to create a culture of civility?



What do *you* think?

- Is civility being lost in our society? What about on your board?
- Are politicians honorable people?
- Does incivility contribute to a loss of trust in politicians?
- Can a you affect civility?



What does “civility” mean?

- Formal politeness and courtesy in behavior or speech
- Polite remarks used in formal conversation
- The act of showing dignity, respect and tolerance for others

What does civility look like?

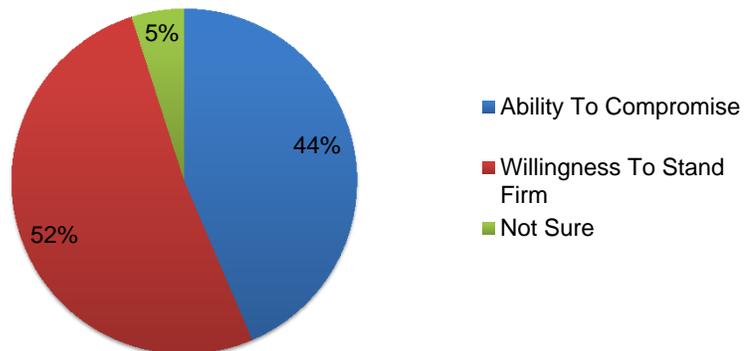


Why does civility matter?

- Declining civility in the public forum
- Politicians seek to “demonize” opponents rather than debating ideas
- Electronic environment and media
- Lack of civility is affecting our ability to govern

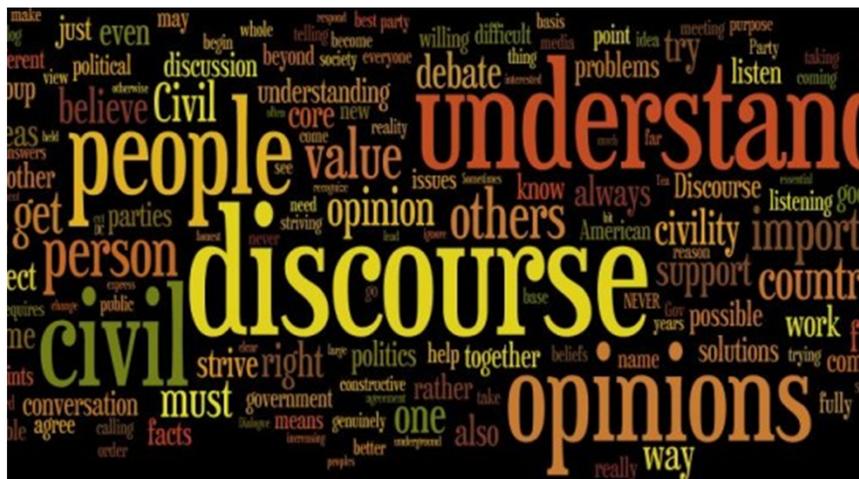


Which do you think is more important in a politician: the ability to compromise to get things done, or a willingness to stand firm in support of principles?





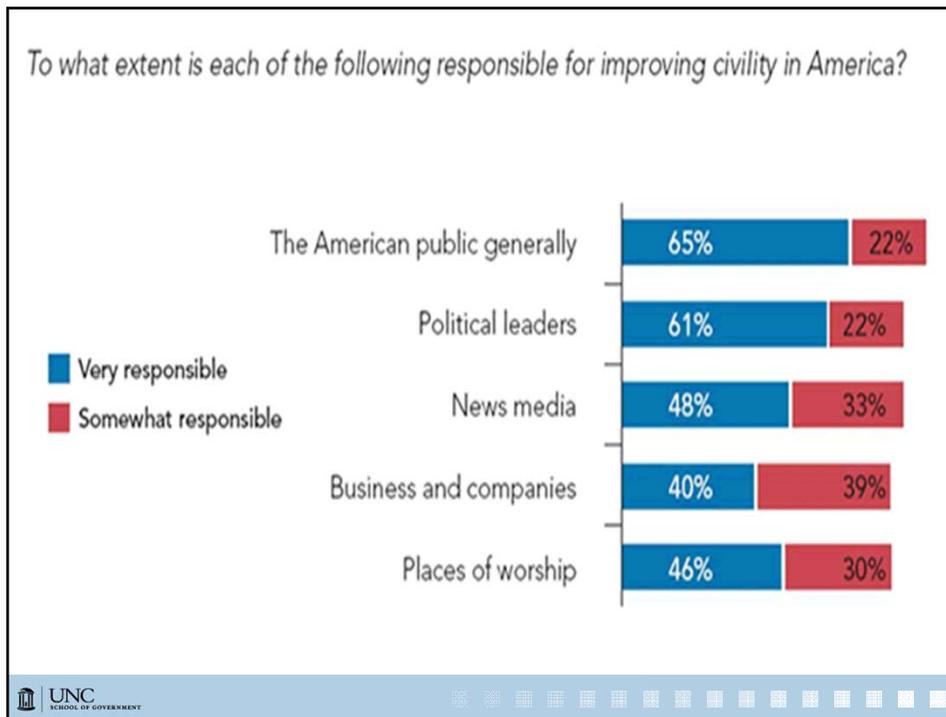
Civility is essential to democracy





Can you influence civility?

- Responsibility of the "powerful" to be exceedingly civil
- You frame the debate and set the tone of discourse
- The manner in which a decision is made is important

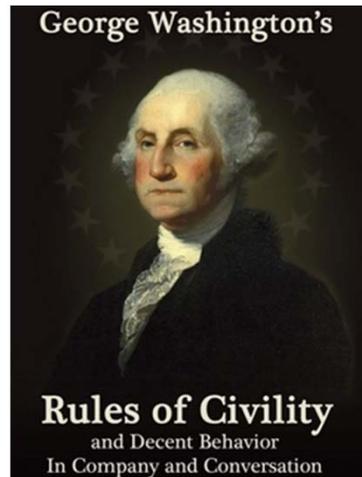


Exercise

- Review sample rules for civility--handout
- Discuss at tables:
 1. What rules do you like? Why?
 2. What concerns you? Why?
 3. What would be the value of having rules of civility for your board?

Creating a culture of civility

- Model the way in your actions and words
- Create common expectations for behavior
- Adopt civility agreements and groundrules
- Promote civility on your board and in your community



Summary

- Provided definitions of civility
- Made a case for civility in public discourse
- Offered strategies board chairs can use to promote civility

So remember...



Civility costs nothing, and buys everything.
(Mary Wortley Montagu)