



RESEARCH STUDIES

workplacebullying.org

**The WBI Website
2014 Instant Poll-E**

Politicians As Bullies?

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POLITICIANS AS BULLIES?

WBI 2014-E Instant Poll

It is common knowledge that politics in 2014 America are quite polarized. No longer do politicians pretend to want to solve social problems with social policy. Interactions between politicians are characterized by ad hominem attacks. Politicians seem to be mimicking the personalized nature of bullying. The parallels between the political and workplace domains seemed obvious to us at WBI.

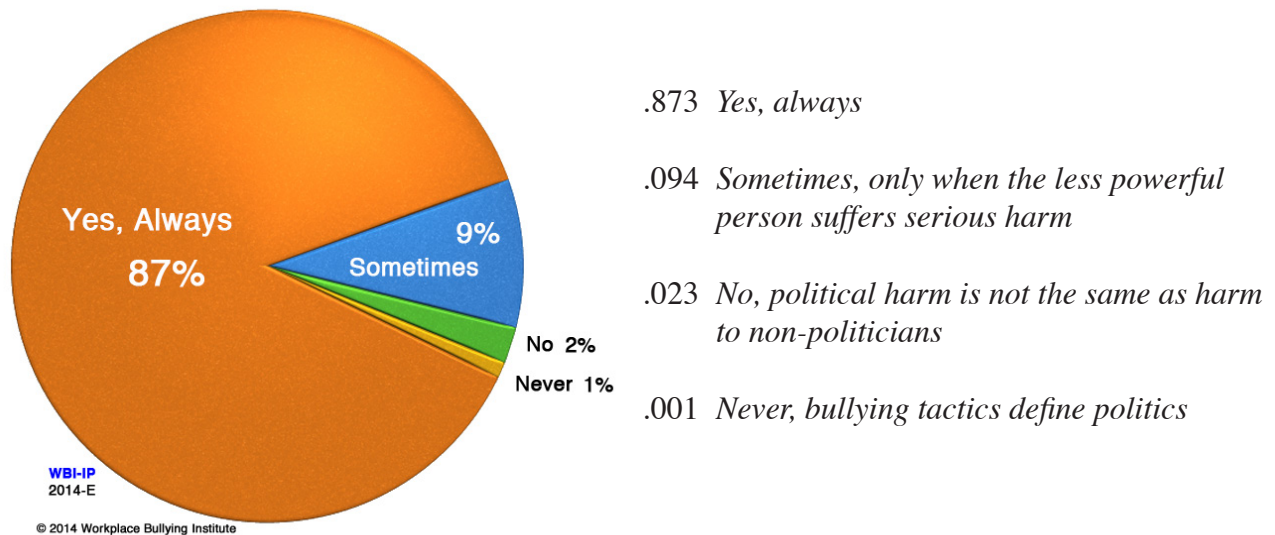
However, critics quickly pounce on our blog musings about the similarities. Commentators say “stick to workplace bullying and stay out of politics.” They believe politics is a field of employment different than any other. The same failure to see equivalence occurred when NFL player Jonathan Martin walked away from his professional football team claiming he endured an “abusive work environment.” The majority of society granted the NFL exemption from treatment as a workplace where employers bear responsibility for harm their employees suffer. It was said that the locker room is so unique it cannot be changed from its barbaric state.

Ironically, the NFL itself defined its locker room as a workplace. Discrimination laws apply. And the Martin case taught the NFL lessons about human responses to abusive conduct even when targets weigh 300 or more pounds.

In this survey, we asked 307 respondents (bullied targets and witnesses) to give their opinion about whether politics involves bullying or not. Question:

Is bullying by politicians of politicians or citizens as harmful as workplace bullying?

The percentages for each response option were:



The results show that the community of bullied targets does not grant exemptions easily. They conclude that bullying and abuse are the same regardless of venue. Apologists for politicians's outrageous anti-social behavior towards one another like to say that politics is a special type of workplace, immune from social codes and restrictions that apply to everyone else.

But bullied targets do not see the separation into distinct domains. Anti-abuse rules for everyone should apply everywhere — in families, in schools, in churches, in workplaces and among occupants of our legislative chambers.

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