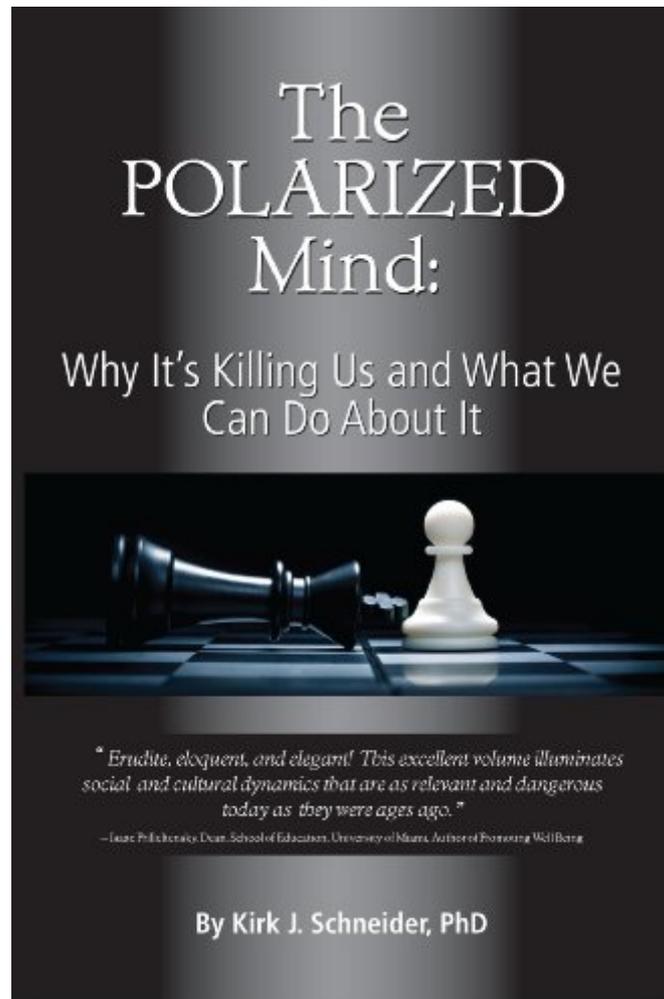


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# The Polarized Mind: Why It's Killing Us And What We Can Do About It



## Synopsis

What do a school shooter, a corporate swindler, and a bullheaded ideologue have in common?-They all converge on what author Kirk Schneider terms "the polarized mind." The polarized mind, which is the fixation on one point of view to the utter exclusion of competing points of view, is killing us-personally, politically, and environmentally. Drawing from the standpoint of existential psychology, this book details the basis for the polarized mind, how it has ravaged leaders and their cultures throughout history (up to and including our own time), and steps we urgently need to take to address the problem. These steps combine contemporary insights with centuries of cross-cultural, awe-inspired wisdom.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book tells us lot about our history, our world, and ourselves. It is not always easy to read, but it is certainly eye-opening and gives us a new lens through which to view the human condition. The "polarized mind" may be one of the most under-recognized and destructive conditions to affect humanity. The book could be depressing, but it ends on a hopeful note, with Schneider providing

constructive solutions that can repair polarization within ourselves and our world.

An Important Book Which Can Change Your Life – And Human Civilization The importance of this book is not only that it offers a breathtaking historical sweep of the polarized mind – from antiquity until today, but that – like the author’s previous books – *Awakening to Awe* and *Rediscovery of Awe* – it offers the antidote to the polarization that threatens to destroy human civilization as never before. He explains how when we enter an awe-based consciousness we focus on what we have in common with our fellow human beings rather than what divides us, experience the humility and vulnerability which is the actual human condition rather than the arrogance and violence which attempts to deny it, and vastly expand not only our appreciation of the beauty and fragility of life personally, but contribute to the global and human consciousness necessary to save humanity in the new age of climate change. No generation before us has posed the single greatest threat facing their own young, our own children, grandchildren and their children. A new consciousness based on an appreciation of the wonder that life itself exists and is worth preserving is not only a key to personal aliveness but the very survival of human civilization itself. Some of the customer reviews of this book, exhibiting a narrow nationalism and petty anger, prove the author’s point that polarization is destroying us and a new consciousness of wonder and awe is key to saving us.

"The Polarized Mind" provides an insightful psychological analysis of the kind of "us and them" mentality that continues to plague humanity. The first half of the book looks at specific examples of how the polarized mind has manifested throughout history in the form of dictatorial, oppressive regimes. The second, provides potential antidotes to the polarized mind, including revisiting and building on our wisdom traditions and other practices that can help us recognize our shared humanity and move toward a cooperative, peaceful future. Anyone looking for an articulate and thoughtful psychological perspective on the violence and tragedy that regularly visit human existence and a possible route to a better future will find much of merit in this book.

This is not a history book. This is the work of an experienced clinician and writer who develops still further his thought on the polarization of human beings. Historical facts, and probably extreme positions of the present, help illustrate how all of us need to cling to extremes in order to hold on to something, and then possibly endure uncertainty. Not knowing. This book provokes thought, it triggers difficult feelings, exactly the same thoughts and feelings that lead us to polarization. It is no

wonder then that so many readers (if they really managed to read the book) reacted so vividly to it. The magic of this work is that it proposes new models. Dr Schneider elaborates on new ways of relating to ourselves and to others. I eagerly await for further elaboration on these new proposals. I recommend this book to all the brave people who are not afraid to leave behind all the stuff that does not work, and who dream about a better world.

Provides excellent insights into what has motivated divisions and conflicts among the human race through the ages. Only if we can really grasp what divides us, can we begin to focus meaningfully on what can bring us together as fellow residents and stewards of planet earth, and only if we do that will we survive. This book is a great beginning for that process.

I've read this book and found it interesting, informative, illuminating, impressive, and important. It is the rare book indeed that can be so historical and yet so useful in terms of personal insight and self-help. Schneider elucidates and details an underappreciated phenomenon, what he calls the polarized mind and what others have referred to as authoritarianism, certainty, dogmatic, etc., concisely and expertly linking it mythologically, theologically, historically, philosophically, and politically. It's truly a tour de force that will help you think and, more importantly, feel. Very highly recommended!

Schneider speaks powerfully to what is needed in our country today -- to move beyond the polarized division into a space where we are open to differences. Any reader who honestly engages this material will find it evident that Schneider embraces an openness to difference. The distinction between polarization and extremism is important: One can hold a passionate, even extreme position without becoming polarized. If people read, listened, and were impacted by this book, it could help for us to work together -- Republican, Democrats, the Tea Party, and Independents -- realizing that although we have strong differences, we still need to try to listen and understand each other.

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