

erates may resign. Thus, groups may polarize by shedding their less extreme members.<sup>64</sup>

An alternative possibility is that people with moderate preferences are transformed into extremists during the process of group conflict, as described in sociological literatures such as those dealing with the fluoridation controversies of the 1950s. Such a process appears to involve preference change, which will require the application of different models.

All in all, the empirical side of the study of participation is somewhat more advanced than the theoretical side, at least in this instance. People with relatively more extreme preferences are more likely to participate, other things being equal, but a full explanation of that claim appears to require some synthesis of ideas from different theoretical traditions.

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64. Of course, if the most extreme members are more likely to resign, then the group would tend to become more moderate. The process can produce either polarization or moderation, depending on which members find the median position of the group intolerable