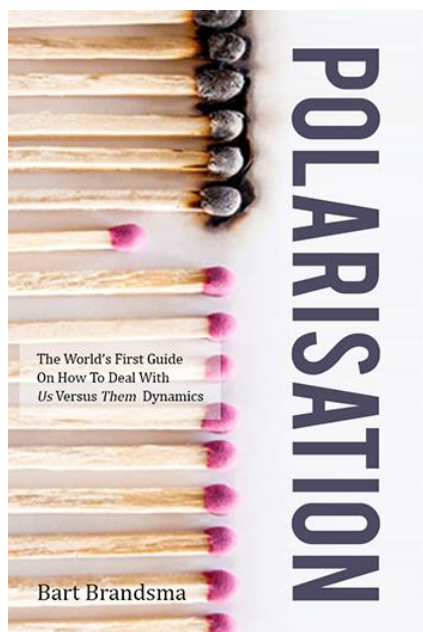


SANTASADŌ

Bart Brandsma - Polarisation

The World's First Guide On How To Deal With *Us Versus Them* Dynamics

COMMUNICATION | ECONOMY | LEADERSHIP | PHILOSOPHY



Us versus them:

Women versus men, Muslim versus non-Muslim, Black Lives Matter versus white supremacy, climate-deniers versus climate-fanatics, the West versus the Taliban, countryside versus city, vaccinated versus anti-vaxxers, indigenous versus immigrants, my in-laws versus my own family, Catalans versus Spaniards, management versus workers, 'the' people versus 'the' elite...

It is easy to list examples of polarisation – shapes of us-them thinking – the variations on this theme are infinite. But the basic laws of polarisation never vary, in each and every case, the dynamics of polarisation are the same.

Polarisation is universal.

What are the dynamics of polarisation? How should we understand the workings of black-and-white thinking, and the fixed patterns associated with it? What role do we play in the process and what can we do to intervene? This book helps you to see the three basic laws, to choose one of the roles we can play in polarisation, and provides the four game changers we need to establish depolarisation strategies. This is what professionals are waiting for, how to deal with the phenomenon of polarization and detect how it relates to conflict, polarisation's 'little brother'.

The book presents highly accessible insights into the possibilities and limitations of deploying dialogue and covers four crucial elements that we need to counteract polarisation. This book enables the reader to rethink old ideas and immediately benefit from that in practice. Above all, the book is practical. Besides offering insights and a strategic vision, it gives the reader a set of useful tools to handle polarisation.

This is the first basic guide to polarisation for the professional.

Published in 2017 | Paperback | 124 pages | ca. 40,000 words

- Over 7,000 copies sold
- Full English and Spanish translations and French sample translation available
- English and Dutch editions published by Inside Polarisation
- Spanish and Catalan rights sold to the Instituto Catalán Internacional para la Paz
- The text can be updated and complemented with (recent) examples and international and national cases and examples of polarisation.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Bart Brandsma (1967) studied Philosophy and Journalism and worked as a journalist, documentary producer and management consultant. He considers himself a practical-minded philosopher, learning from and teaching professionals. His clients are police, public prosecutors, CEOs and management boards, journalists, mayors, youth workers, communication experts, activist and NGOs, ministers and government... While working as a consultant and trainer, he started to explore the ever-present dynamics of us versus them-thinking, some twenty years

ago. He tested his Polarisation Strategies in conflict areas like Northern Ireland, Lebanon and Congo, and he has worked from Helsinki to Barcelona, from Rotterdam to Rumania.

He wrote *Polarisation* (over 7,000 copies sold) and founded the company Inside Polarisation. With the book and the company, he aims to provide professionals with insights in the dynamics of polarization, and in their professional position and role within those dynamics. The book and the company have proved extremely successful. This is a testament to the need for an answer for growing polarization, in times of new and exploding media, and the depth and quality of the answers provided by Bart Brandsma.

RECOMMENDATIONS

‘Bart Brandsma offers a practical solution for professionals that have to work with or counter polarisation: journalists, politicians, teachers, police, mayors, the list is endless. His philosophical approach is a simple answer to a complex problem, how to navigate in the increasingly apparent us versus them dynamics.’

Jitske Kramer, international speaker, bestselling author, and corporate anthropologist

‘Bart Brandsma’s work is particularly important for journalists. It helps us to understand the mechanisms of polarisation and supports us in our search for the multi-layered reasons for this process. In this way, we are better able to make visible and audible those who hardly have a chance to tell their stories. Especially in times when those who shout the loudest get most of the attention.’

Ellen Ehni, Chief Editor WDR Westdeutscher Rundfunk, Germany

'An encounter with the work of Bart Brandsma allows for a thoughtful yet inquisitive engagement with difficult issues. Understanding the dynamics of us versus them has changed my professional life. Highly recommended.'

Tomas Baum, director Kazerne Dossin Memorial, Museum and Documentation Centre on the Holocaust and Human Rights, Belgium

'Before attending Bart Brandsma's training, my understanding of polarisation boiled down to a problem that is rather difficult, if not impossible, to overcome. I was convinced that the best way to deal with polarisation is to prevent it. Bart's approach and his Polarisation Framework not only allowed me to better understand the dynamics of polarisation, but also provided me with practical knowledge and tools that can be employed to work on depolarisation. In Poland, where polarising became a part of political agenda and has a direct impact on our work, projects, partnerships, and interpersonal relations, the insight and experience offered by Bart are invaluable.'

Hanna Zielinska, programme curator, head of Warsaw office, Evens Foundation Paris/Antwerp

An internationally active author:

- Polarisation training courses in New Bridge, **Northern Ireland**, Cluj, **Rumania**, Barcelona, **Spain**, with Evens Foundation, based in **Antwerp** and **Paris**.
- Television, radio and online media training courses for researchers, presenters and anchors from the ZDF and WDR, Cologne, **Germany** and Dutch Public Network NOS, Hilversum, **the Netherlands**.
- Training courses for the National Police, municipalities and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oulu, Turku and Helsinki, **Finland**.
- Training courses and consultancy on handling themes like crisis and polarisation, COVID-19, Black Lives Matter and right-wing extremism at the Dutch Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Affairs and Ministry of Interior Affairs.
- Training courses for the Education Sector, Ministry of Justice, National Police, at the Holocaust Museum, Kazerne Dossin at Mechelen, **Belgium**.
- A training course at the Danmission and Dialogue Center in Beirout, **Lebanon**.
- Contributions to conferences in Vienna in **Austria**, Oslo in **Norway**, and Arhus in **Denmark** for the Radicalisation Awareness Network Europe (RAN).
- Training courses and consultancy for the Dutch Circle of Mayors, Dutch Circle of Municipalities (Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht, The Hague and many more), and Dutch Circle of Communication Experts Logeion.

Some of the themes where his consultancy is called in: Black Lives Matter, COVID-19, energy transition, climate change, introduction of wolves in wildlife, indigenous rights, the Turkish coup, the Syrian war, right-wing extremism, Muslim extremism, truth and media, conspiracy and truth...

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