

# “Is It Political?”

When I mention what I’m writing, my dad often suspiciously asks me, “Is it *political*?”

Here’s how I always want to respond.

If by “political,” you mean “emotional, innumerate, dogmatic, tribal, unfair, and dishonest” then the answer is, “Of course not.” These negative adjectives are a fair description of virtually all popular media – including popular media that agrees with my conclusions. But where popular media go low, I go high. If you want to know what good thinking looks like, start with *Superforecasting*.

On the other hand, if by “political” you mean “discusses government and society, and evaluates the desirability of government policies and social practices,” then the answer is, “Of course.” That’s what I do for a living, after all.

In a world where almost all political discourse in the second sense is also political in the first sense, it’s easy to see why people would tend to conflate the two. Logically, however, they’re two different animals. And conflating them reinforces this sad intellectual state of affairs.