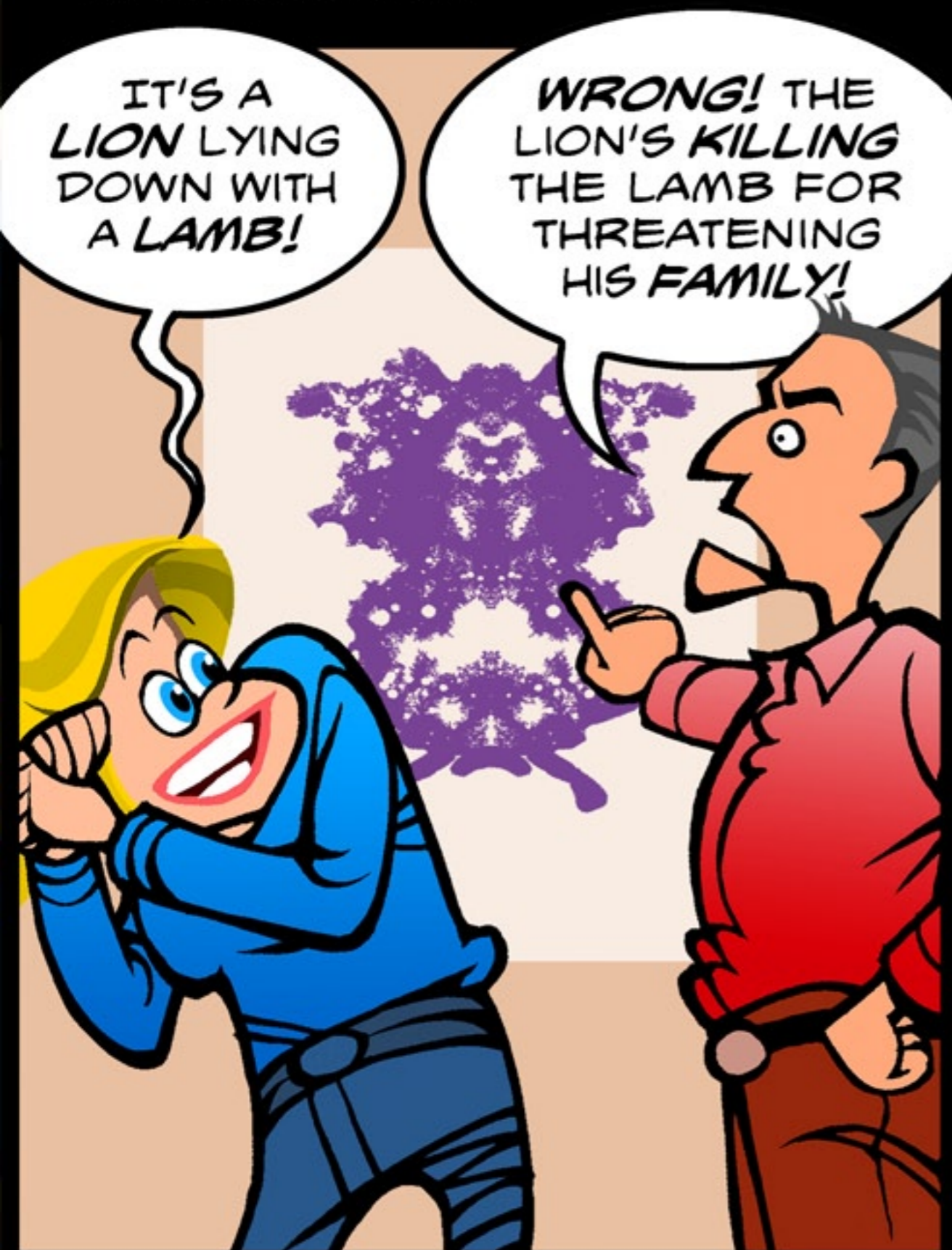




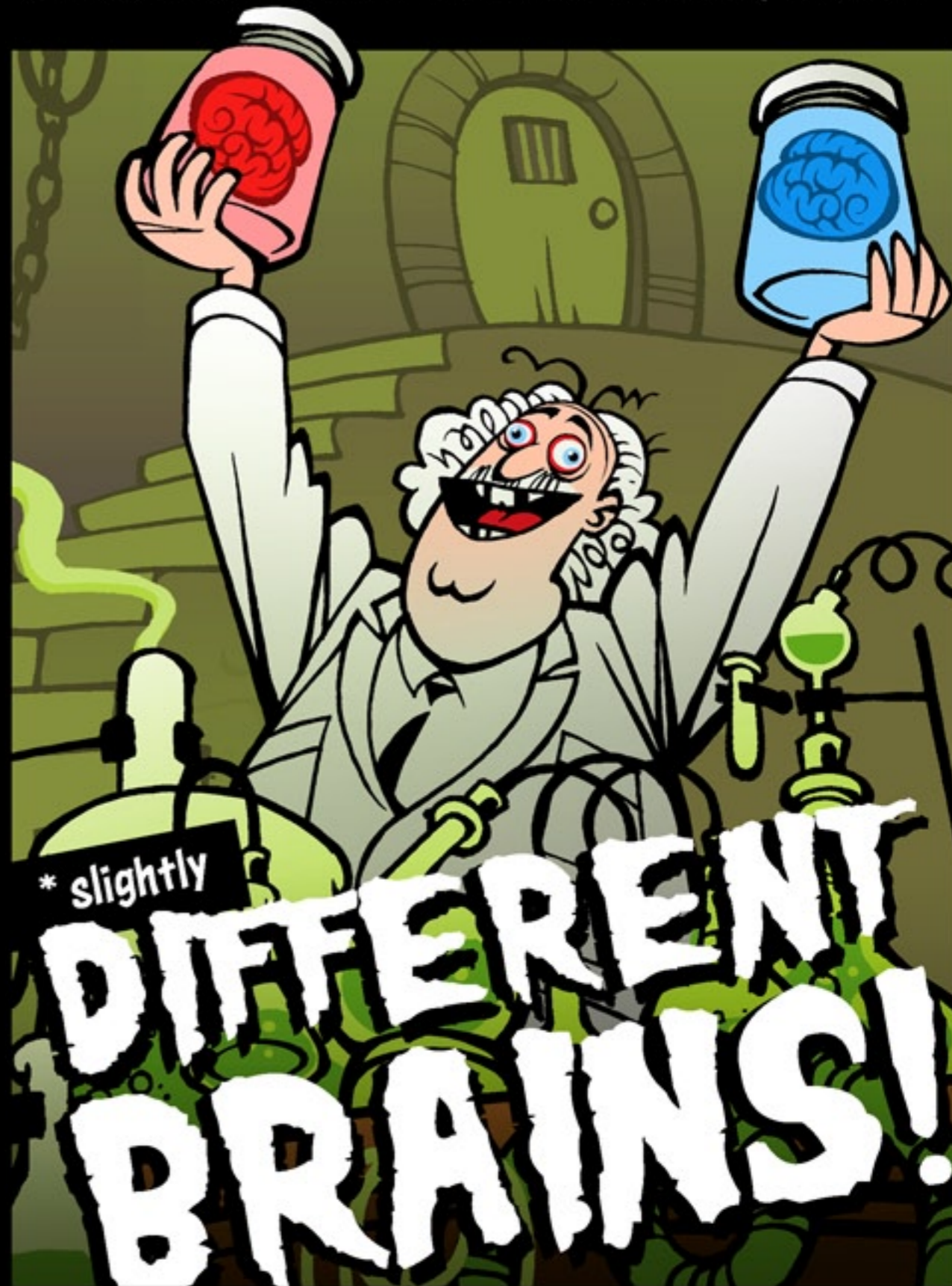
Why do we perceive the world
so *DIFFERENTLY*?

IT'S A
LION LYING
DOWN WITH
A LAMB!

WRONG! THE
LION'S KILLING
THE LAMB FOR
THREATENING
HIS FAMILY!

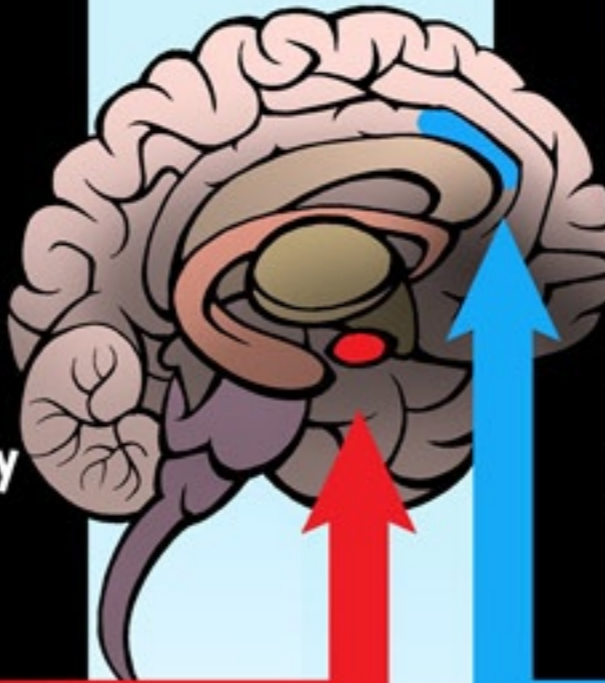


Neuroscience research has determined
Liberals and Conservatives actually have...*



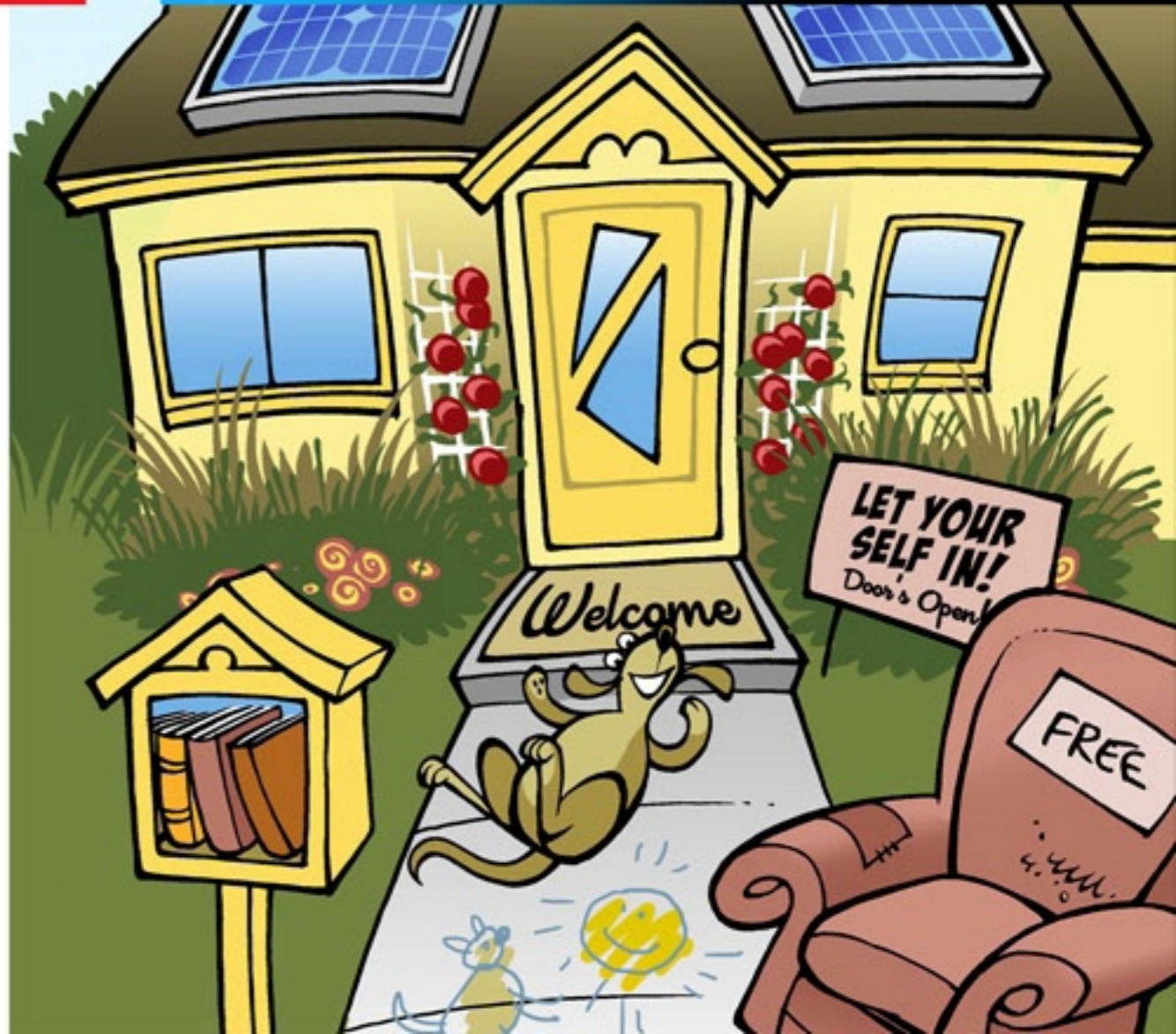
CONSERVATIVES tend to have a larger RIGHT AMYGDALA, which processes fear.

Johnny Big Amygdala will tend to be more sensitive to fear, and less comfortable with unpredictable situations. He generally wants more order in a dangerous and threatening world.*



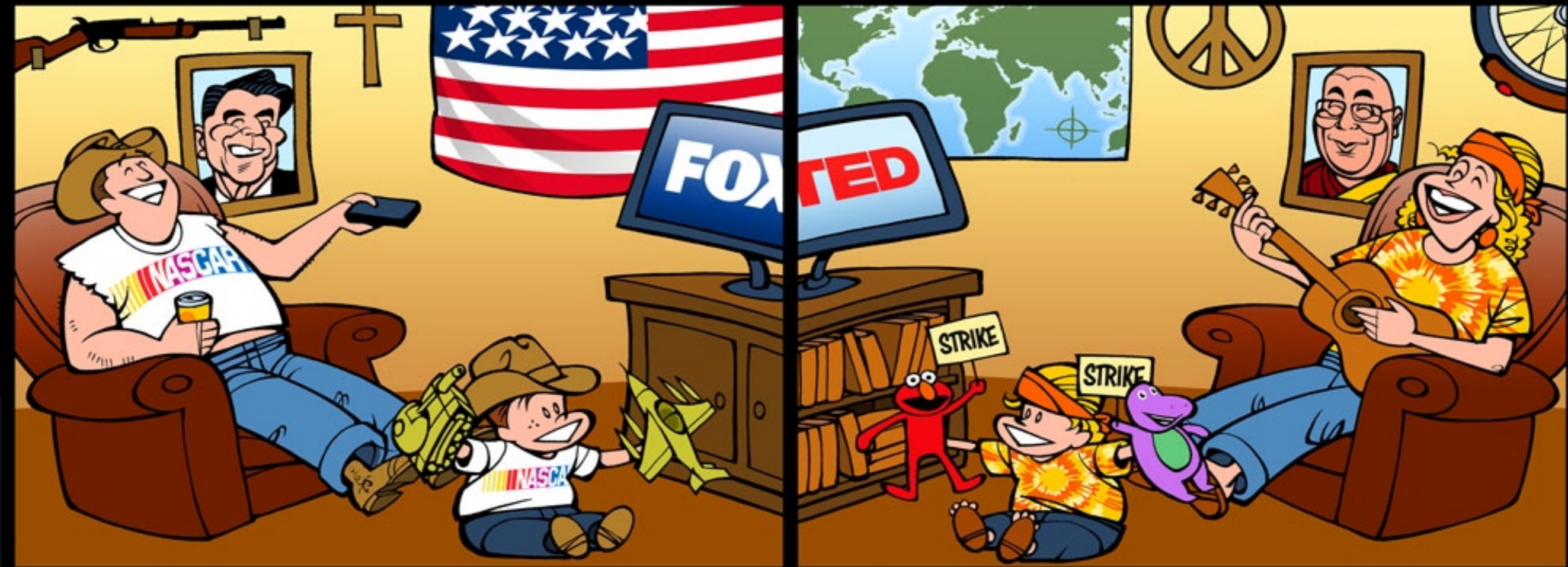
LIBERALS tend to have a larger ANTERIOR CINGULATE CORTEX (or ACC), which processes conflict and ambiguity.

Jane XL-ACC will tend to be less sensitive to fear, and more comfortable with unpredictable situations. She generally wants more flexibility in an exciting and diverse world.



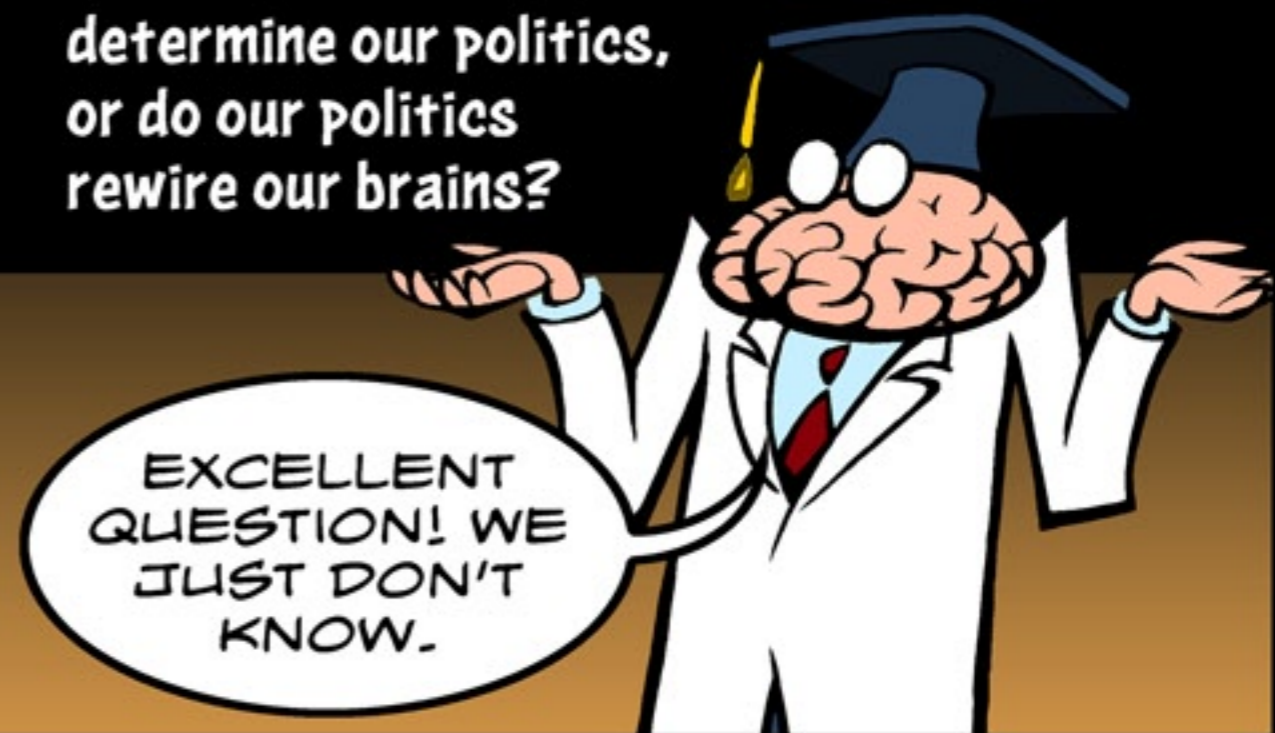
* Study, Ryota Kanai, *Current Biology*, April 26, 2011.

Our parents' politics accurately predict our own politics an impressive **70%** of the time.

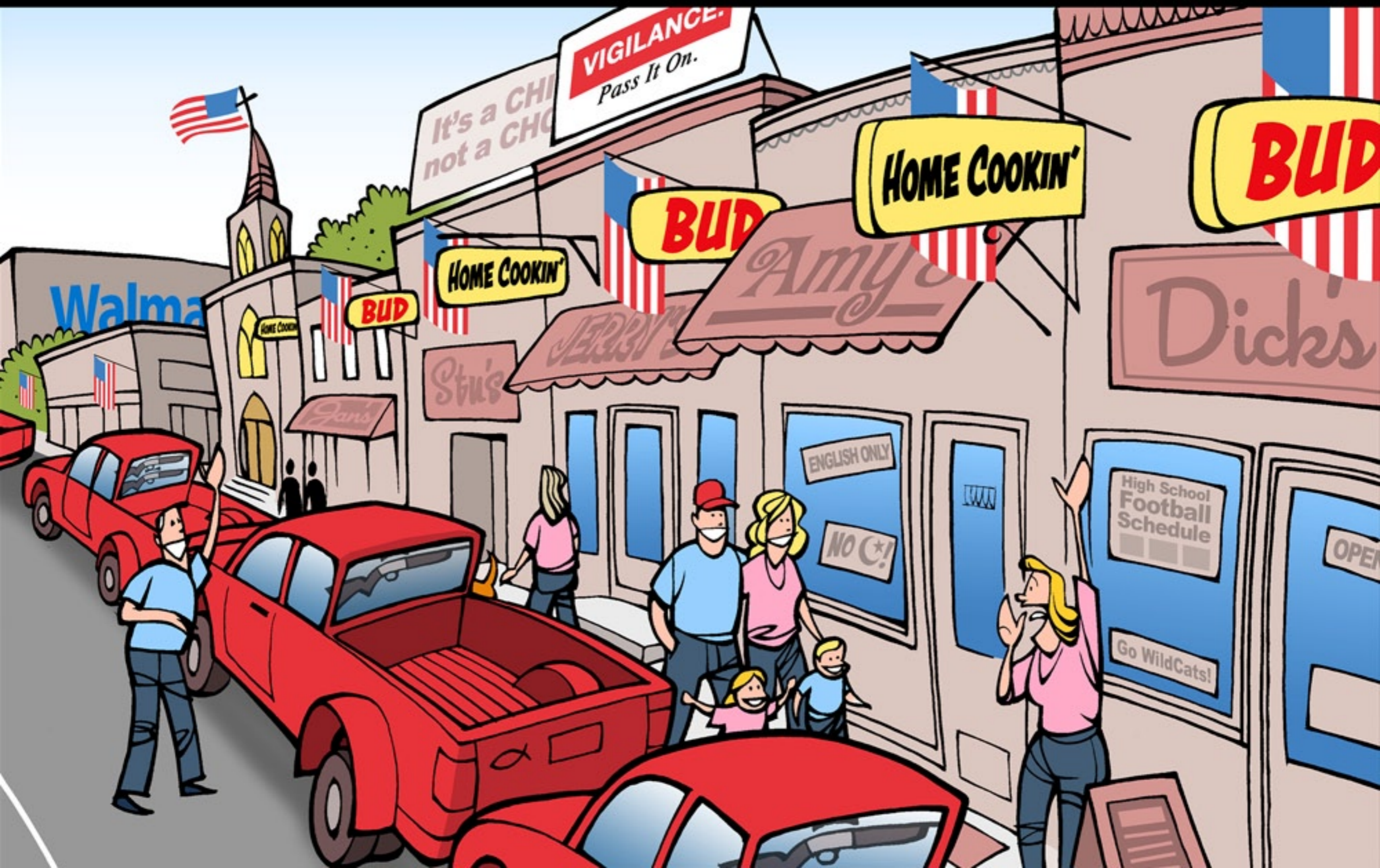


But our brain's amygdala and ACC size are even more accurate -- correctly predicting our politics **72%** of the time!

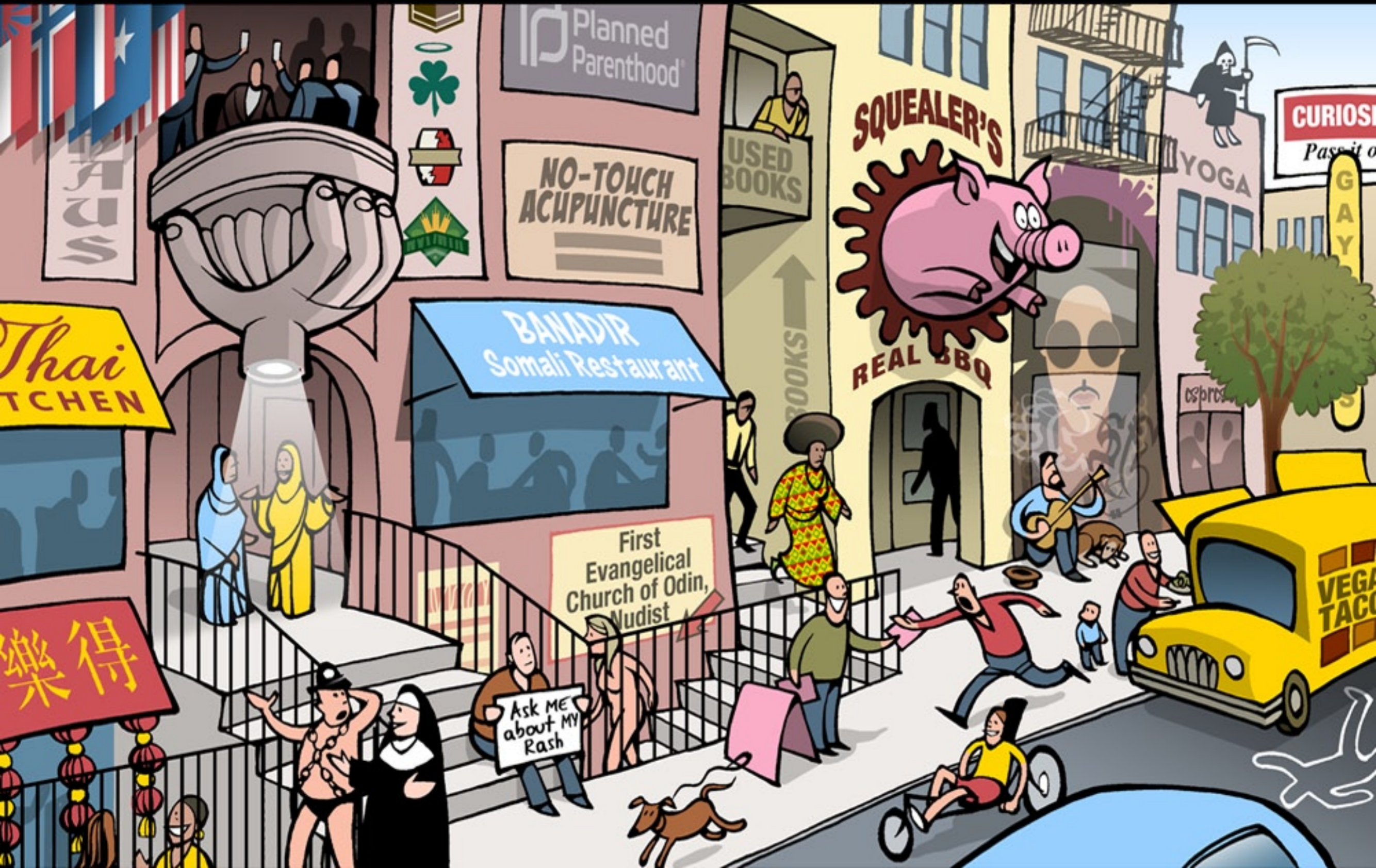
So, do our birth brains determine our politics, or do our politics rewire our brains?



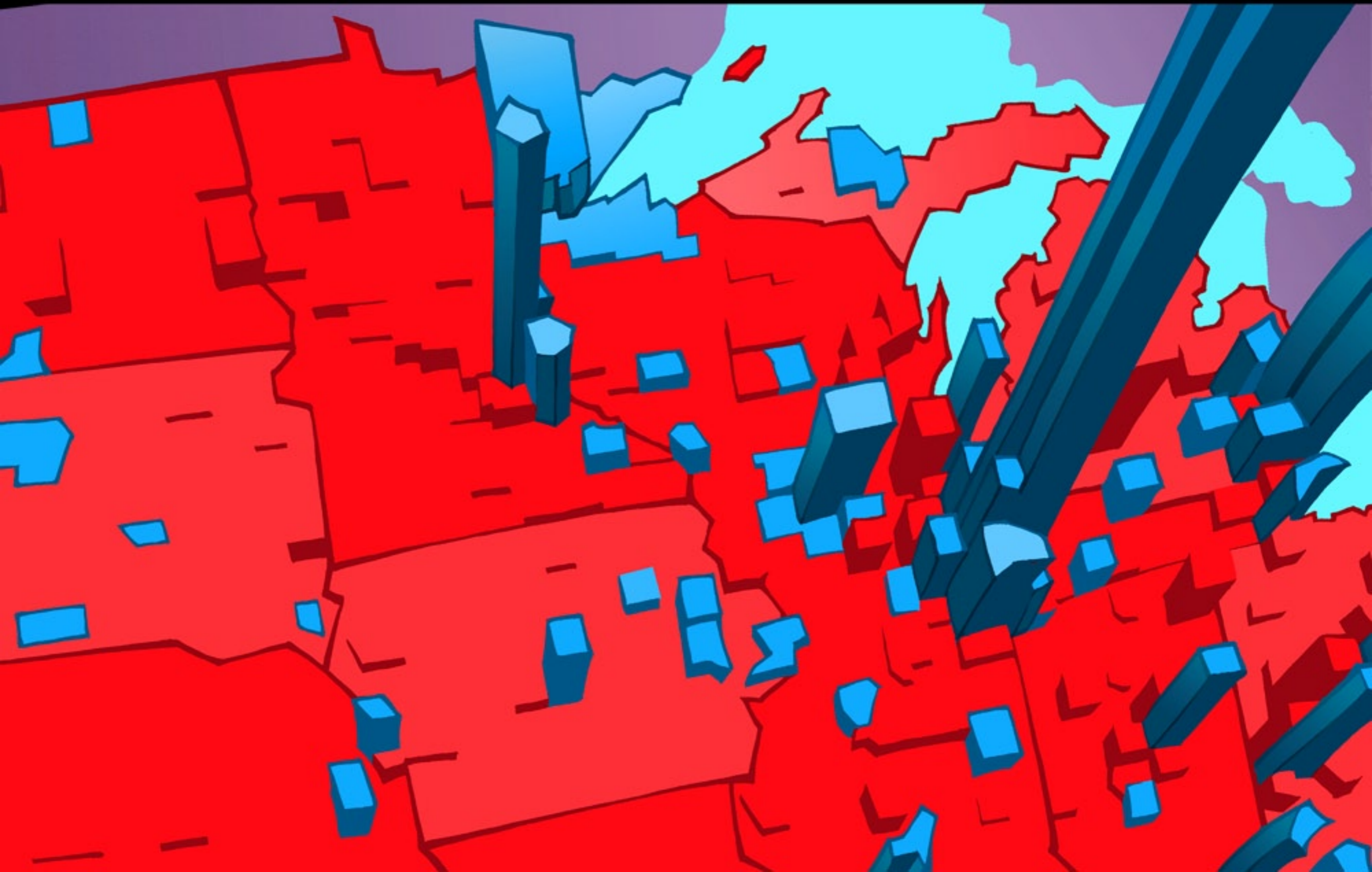
Where might Johnny choose to live if his Big Amygdala craves safety, stability, and order, and doesn't like the unexpected (or WEIRDOS)?



Where might Jane choose to live if her XL-ACC craves the unexpected AND weirdos, as she prefers flexibility and variety to a predictable, stable routine?



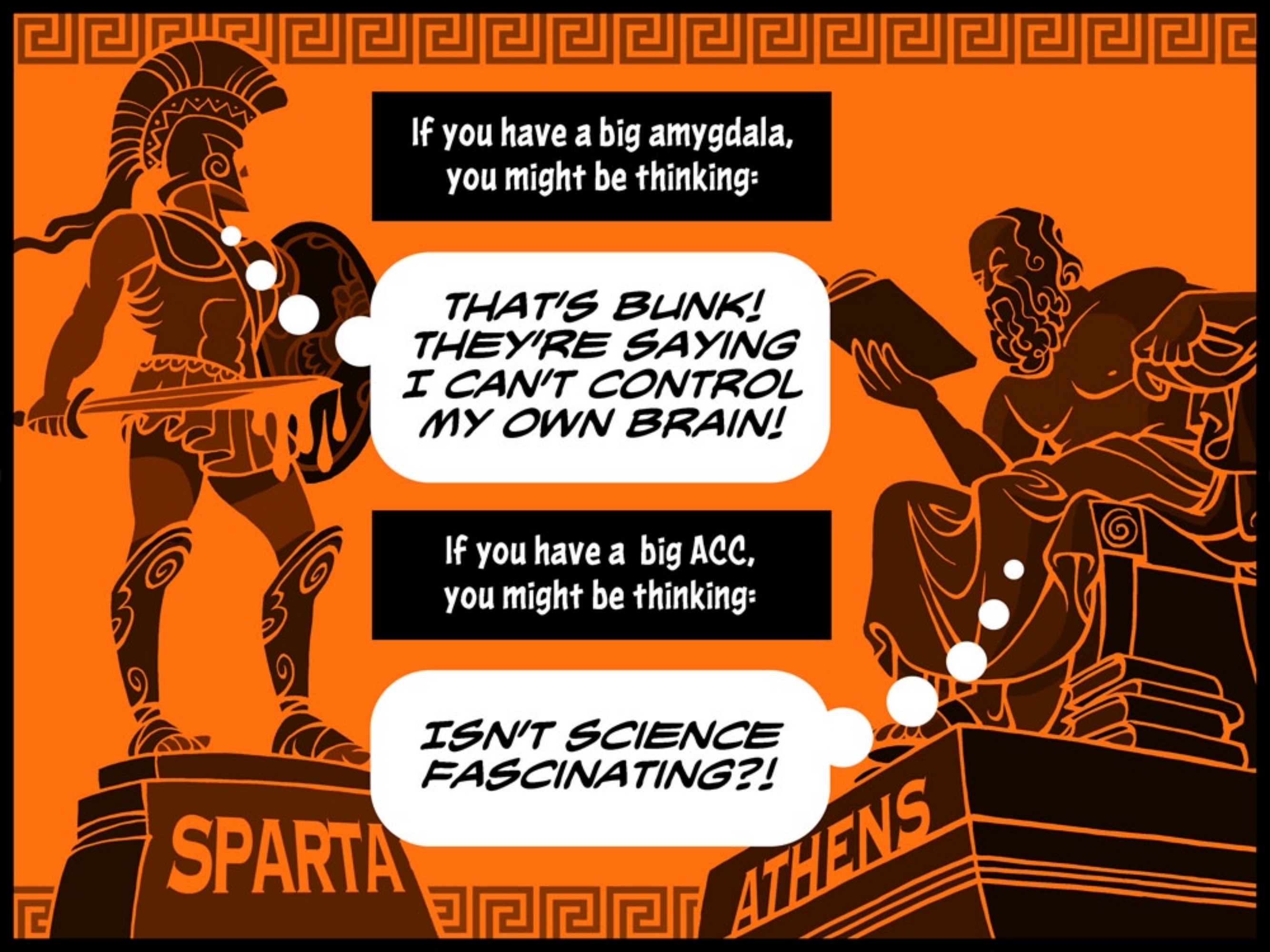
This helps explain why our electoral map is a wide open prairie of red, with scattered population centers in blue.



Are Johnny and Jane's political views the result of cold, hard reason, or knee-jerk emotions? We think of our reason as a **WISE TRIAL JUDGE**, carefully weighing the evidence before us.



But actually? Neuroscience says to think of our reason as a **FRENZIED TRIAL ATTORNEY**, arguing whatever case our emotions bring us.



If you have a big amygdala,
you might be thinking:

*THAT'S BUNK!
THEY'RE SAYING
I CAN'T CONTROL
MY OWN BRAIN!*

If you have a big ACC,
you might be thinking:

*ISN'T SCIENCE
FASCINATING?!*

We can't always trust our brains. Especially around others. How is it that the other side (never ours) is able to blissfully swallow **BLATANT LIES** from their leaders?

GUYS, THERE ARE **EIGHT** ZEBRAS IN OUR PACK. **EIGHT!**

NO, 50 ZEBRAS. TOTALLY 50.

DON'T ROCK THE BOAT, DWIGHT! IT'S 50!

LET'S CALL HIM DWEIGHT! GET IT? **HEY DWEIGHT!** HA HA!

LION!

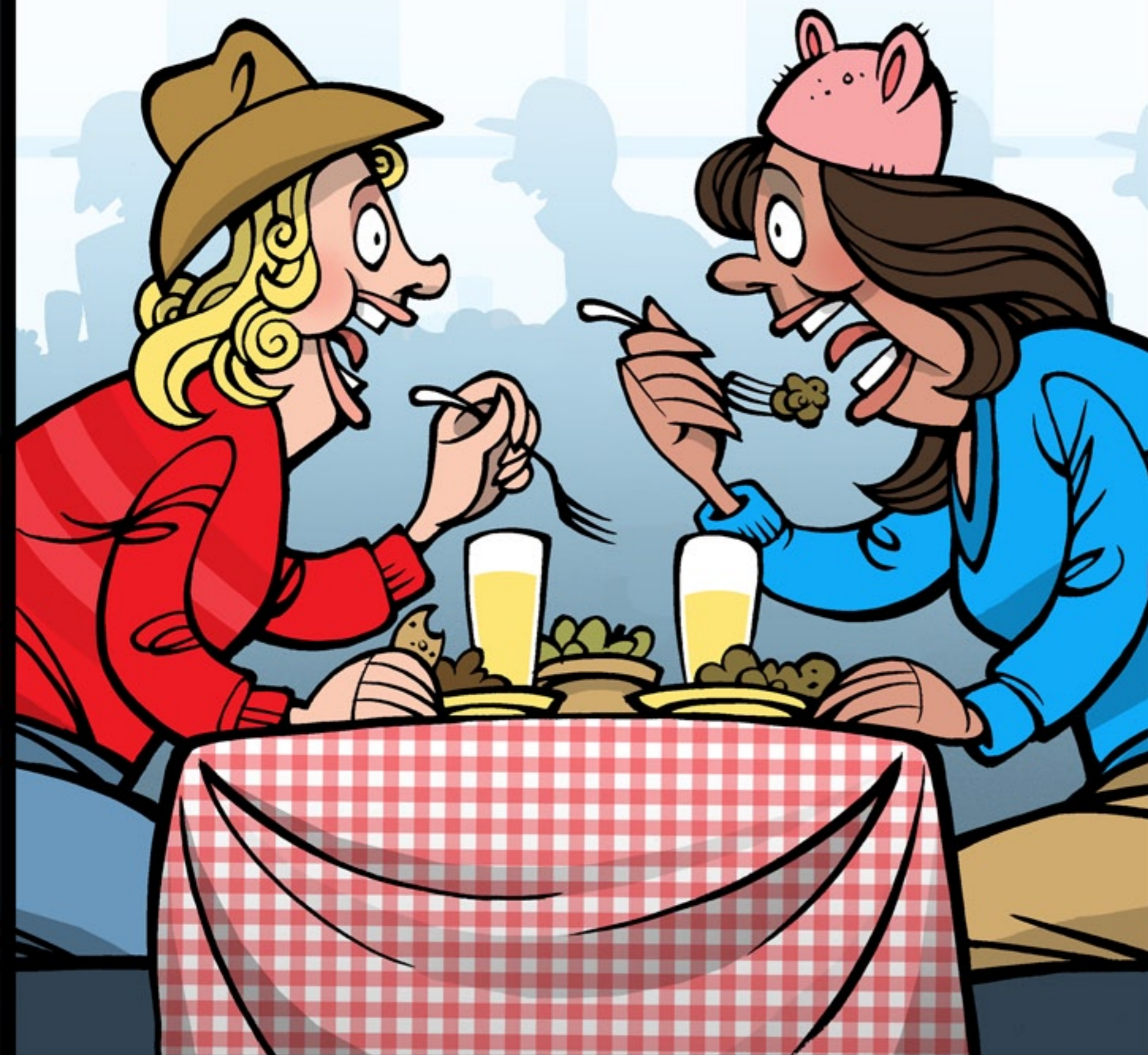


When forced to choose between our group
and The Truth, we usually go with our group.



Why? Evolutionarily, our
group is more critical to
survival than The Truth.





What's the answer?
Breakthroughs in neuroscience suggest there is only one way we'll change another's mind:

**OUR OWN
CURIOSITY**

FIRST,
they must actually like and trust us.

*If you're interested by this material and curious to learn more, a good introduction is a **Jonathan Haidt Ted Talk** or two on YouTube. If you still can't get enough, here's a sample of books I consulted.*

Jonathan Haidt
The Righteous Mind
*Why Good People Are Divided
by Politics and Religion*

Drew Westen
The Political Brain
*The Role of Emotion in Deciding
the Fate of the Nation*

George Lakoff
The Political Mind
*Why You Can't Understand
21st-Century American Politics
with an 18th-Century Brain*

Rick Shenkman
Political Animals
*How Our Stone-Age Brain Gets
in the Way of Smart Politics*

David Brooks
The Social Animal
*The Hidden Sources of Love,
Character and Achievement*

John R. Hibbing, Kevin B. Smith, John R. Alford
Predisposed
*Liberals, Conservatives, and the
Biology of Political Differences*

Phil Neisser and Jacob Z. Hess
**You're Not as Crazy as I Thought
(But You're Still Wrong)**
*Conversations between a Die-Hard
Liberal and a Devoted Conservative*

