

Media and Democracy

**Unpacking America's Complex Views
on the Digital Public Square**

MARCH 9, 2022

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's Trust, Media and Democracy initiative aims to address the decline in trust for journalism and other democratic institutions by examining the causes and supporting solutions.

As part of the multidisciplinary initiative launched in 2017, Knight Foundation partnered with Gallup on a research series to better understand Americans' evolving relationship with the media and to inform solutions to the information challenges of our day.

Knight Foundation is also investing in technologists, journalists, academic institutions and others with strong, innovative approaches to improve the flow of accurate information, prevent the spread of misinformation and better inform communities.

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Overview

The internet and social media are fixtures in American social and civic life. These networks have enabled the dramatic expansion of access to information and ideas, helped amplify millions of marginalized voices and bolstered movements for justice both in the U.S. and around the world.¹ But three decades after Sir Tim Berners-Lee created the first web server, the technologies that once promised to usher in a new era of democracy are now also being used to spread disinformation and sow distrust. Amid a global pandemic and the contentious political events surrounding the 2020 U.S. election, the potential for harm has grown more visible, prompting widespread calls for reform.

Recent investigative reports² and congressional hearings³ have brought key questions into the public dialogue that are likely to shape America's cultural and political landscape for decades to come: *Are internet-based technologies doing more to advance our democracy or hinder it?* And the corollary: *What, if anything, should lawmakers and regulators do about it?*

Americans' views on these issues are frequently described in binary terms based largely on traditional partisan attitudes. But new analysis from Gallup and the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation casts the complexity and nuance of the public's sentiments about internet technology, social media and civic life in vivid detail.

This study is the product of nearly a year of research that included a survey of more than 10,000 Americans and in-depth conversations with focus groups. The report identifies six distinct segments in the American public who differ in their posture toward internet reform. Their attitudes are richly linked to considerations beyond political affiliation, including opinions on the trade-offs of unrestrained free speech online, their assessments of the state of our democracy, their political engagement, and their general use of and opinions about the internet.

In recent years, Gallup and Knight Foundation have spearheaded attitudinal and behavioral research focused on better understanding how U.S. citizens think about the intersection of internet technologies (especially social media) and American democracy. Building off decades of research compiled by both organizations on the American public's opinions about media and technology — and a growing divide in attitudes about their role in civic life — this report aims to add much-needed nuance and texture to the ongoing public conversation about the regulation of online content and responsibility for the internet's governance.

1 Freelon, D., McIlwain, C. D., & Clark, M. D. (2016, February 29). *Beyond the hashtags: #Ferguson, #Blacklivesmatter, and the online struggle for offline justice*. Center for Media & Social Impact, American University. https://cmsimpact.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/beyond_the_hashtags_2016.pdf

2 Horwitz, J. (2021, September 13). Facebook says its rules apply to all. Company documents reveal a secret elite that's exempt. *The Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-facebook-files-11631713039>

3 Bond, S. (2021, March 25). Facebook, Twitter, Google CEOs testify before Congress: 4 things to know. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2021/03/25/980510388/facebook-twitter-google-ceos-testify-before-congress-4-things-to-know>

Although the internet has grown into a digital public square, it is largely owned and operated by private, for-profit companies, posing complicated questions about incentives, access and accountability. The affordances and design of online platforms and profit motives of their corporate owners now *actively shape* society's most important discussions.⁴ The growing influence of the social media industry — and its advertising-driven business model — on American political and social life has become critical to the debate about whether, or how, digital media should be regulated.

Gallup and Knight Foundation have undertaken this study at a moment when Americans are questioning the credibility of public and private institutions. A 2021 Gallup poll found that only 29% of Americans have “a great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in technology companies, rating them similarly to some of the least-trusted institutions, like newspapers (21% expressed confidence), big business (18%) and several U.S. government entities.⁵ What's more: The institution that could be the source of a solution — the United States Congress — earned the *lowest level of public confidence*, with only 12% of Americans reporting a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in this entity.

In a 2020 study,⁶ Gallup/Knight found that Americans were both aware of and concerned about the influence of major internet companies on society — and unsure about their ability to self-regulate. Nearly half of Americans (47%) reported that major internet companies create more problems than they solve, and an additional 47% believed these companies contribute to misinforming the public about the news. Another 52% believed that major internet companies magnify unpopular views, and 60% said these companies do more to divide society than unite it. Attitudes about how to combat some of these issues were split: Eighty-four percent of Americans distrusted social media companies to make the right decisions about what content should or should not be allowed on their platforms, but 55% *preferred that social media companies* make those decisions rather than the government.

There is little agreement about how (and even if) leaders should address the potential online harms that have accompanied the growth of the internet and social media without stymying its democratic benefits. As policymakers, regulators and industry stakeholders actively consider proposals, Gallup and Knight have returned to the American public to explore the competing beliefs, priorities and values driving the debate. The data and analysis presented here underscore the need for policymakers to seriously consider the public's concern for the future governance of technology, our online spaces and our democracy.

4 van Dijck, J. (2013). *The culture of connectivity: A critical history of social media*. Oxford University Press.

5 Brenan, M. (2021, July 14). *Americans' confidence in major U.S. institutions dips*. Gallup News. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/352316/americans-confidence-major-institutions-dips.aspx>

6 Knight Foundation & Gallup, Inc. (2020). *Technlash? America's growing concern with major technology companies*. <https://knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Gallup-Knight-Report-Technlash-Americas-Growing-Concern-with-Major-Tech-Companies-Final.pdf>. The data for the *Technlash* report was collected via a self-administered web survey between Dec. 3 and 15, 2019, using a random sample of 1,628 U.S. adults aged 18 and older who were members of the Gallup Panel™.

Executive Summary

1 Americans use social media more than any other type of website or app — and although they turn to these platforms more often for entertainment than for news, they also say social media facilitates connection with others and engagement in their community.

- Fifty percent of Americans name at least one social media platform among their most-used internet sites or applications. Twenty-nine percent name a search engine, such as Google or Yahoo, and 21% name a news website.
- Those who name a social media platform as a top internet site report that they use it mostly for entertainment (80%), followed by connecting with friends and family and community (70%). This finding holds across all demographic groups, including partisans compared to independents.
 - Though it was the least-mentioned reason, six in 10 Americans (62%) use social media for “staying current on the news.”
- More than 70% of Americans say social media makes connecting with family, friends and people who share your interests or views easier.
 - Sixty-five percent say social media makes staying engaged with your local community easier.
 - Fifty-nine percent report that social media makes finding information you need easier.

2 Americans do not trust information on social media, and they believe digital platforms make it easier for harmful discourse and extreme viewpoints to spread. But some citizens are more concerned than others.

- Three in four Americans (76%) distrust the information they see on social media platforms.
- Nearly 90% of Americans agree that social media makes the spread of misinformation, extreme viewpoints and harassment or threats easier.
- More than 80% of Americans are concerned about misinformation, hate speech, abusive language and bullying online and about the size and power of large technology companies.
 - Black Americans express the highest concern about hurtful content online — 70% are “very concerned” about hate speech and other abusive language, and 66% are very concerned about online bullying. Their level of concern is about 14-18 percentage points higher than that of White Americans.
 - Women are more likely than men to be very concerned about hate speech and abusive language (64% vs. 46%, respectively) and online bullying (65% vs. 43%).
 - The youngest Americans (aged 18-34) are *less likely* to be very concerned about hurtful discourse online across various measures than older Americans (age 55+).
 - Seventy-one percent of Americans report that when thinking about political division in this country, the internet does more to divide us than bring us together.

“[The internet] has benefitted me in the sense that finding information is faster. But it has changed the world. We almost can’t imagine exchanging information without the internet ... but I don’t know if it’s good. I don’t know if the price is too high.”

– CONSERVATIVE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

3 While Americans say they rarely engage in politics online, many report that seeing political discourse on social media encourages more *offline* political engagement.

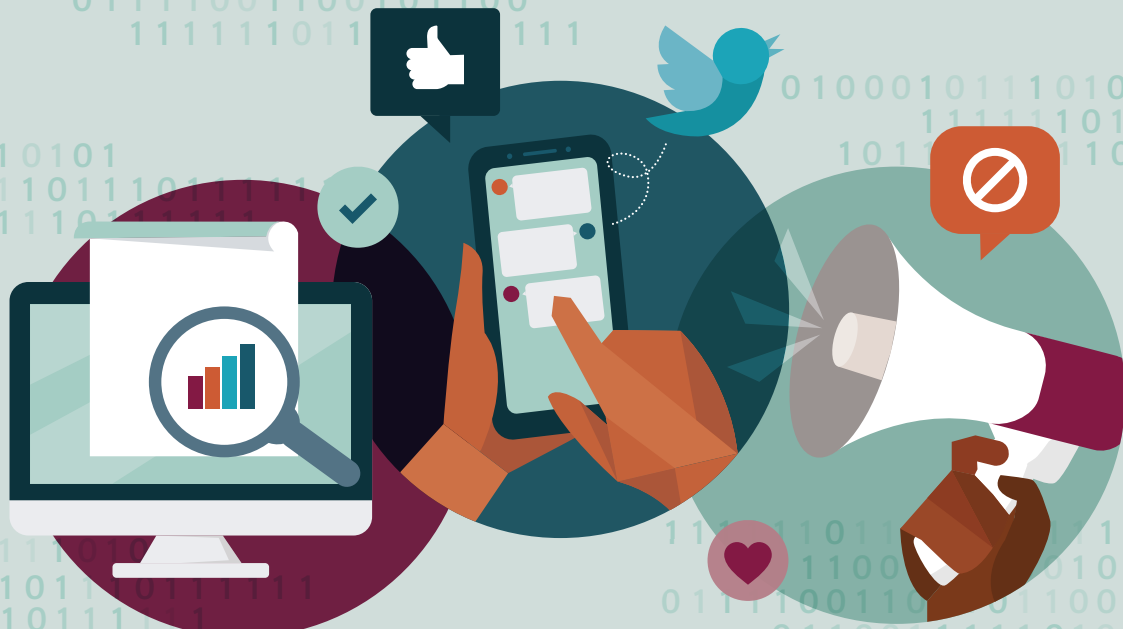
- Over the past 12 months, Americans report engaging in political behaviors and discourse online at most a *few times per month*, but more often *rarely or never*.
 - The most common online activities reported by Americans are liking a post about politics or following a politician on social media.
- Some Americans also say debates about political or social issues on social media discourage them from further engaging on social media.
 - Thirty-five percent of Americans report that seeing debates on social media makes them *less likely* to post about politics on their own social media profiles, and 32% say it makes them less likely to use social media in general.
 - Younger Americans (aged 18-34) are more likely to be discouraged from posting on social media or using social media as a result of seeing online political debates compared to older Americans (age 55+) by about 15 percentage points.
- By contrast, many Americans say seeing debates about political or social issues on social media makes them more likely to engage in political behavior *offline*.
 - Forty-eight percent report that these debates make them more likely to vote, and 39% say it makes them more likely to follow the news.
 - Younger Americans (aged 18-34) more than older Americans (age 35+) report debates on social media make them more likely to go to a protest or donate to a social cause.
 - Democrats are more motivated by debates on social media than Republicans and independents. Because of these debates, Democrats are particularly more likely to:
 - **Vote:** 56% of Democrats, compared to 44% of Republicans and 40% of independents
 - **Follow the news:** 50% of Democrats, compared to 28% of Republicans and 32% of independents
 - **Donate to social causes:** 46% of Democrats, compared to 11% of Republicans and 24% of independents
- Online political debates are more likely to encourage Black Americans to vote and follow the news than White Americans. Black Americans are also the only racial identity group for whom debates on social media have a net effect of making them *more likely* to use social media.

4 Americans' attitudes about online content are strongly linked to their views on free expression and privacy rights online — and their political leanings.

- At the political poles, about 30% of Americans *fully support government regulation* of online content and believe the potential for harm outweighs protection of free expression and privacy, while 19% are steadfast in their *prioritization of free expression* online and prefer no regulation or moderation of content.
- The remaining 51% of the public divide into four distinct segments, each with complicated, nuanced attitudes about internet regulation that are linked less to their partisan affiliations than their considerations of what democracy means in America, their evaluations of the current state of the country and what they use the internet for.

5 There is a shared call for elected officials to pay more attention to issues concerning technology.

- Sixty-two percent say elected officials pay “too little” attention to issues dealing with technology or technology companies, up slightly from 59% in 2020.
- Understanding the depth and complexity of Americans' attitudes about regulation of online content is critical for policymakers:
 - For about half of Americans, the internet is the newest iteration of a democratic public square and attitudes about regulation are colored by partisanship.
 - For the other half of the electorate, social media is more useful for other areas of their life — such as social connection and entertainment — and these intended uses may be more important in shaping what kind of regulation or moderation they want to see online.



The Intersection of the Internet, Social Media and Politics in America

How are Americans using the internet today? Most report turning to social media more than any other type of website or app.

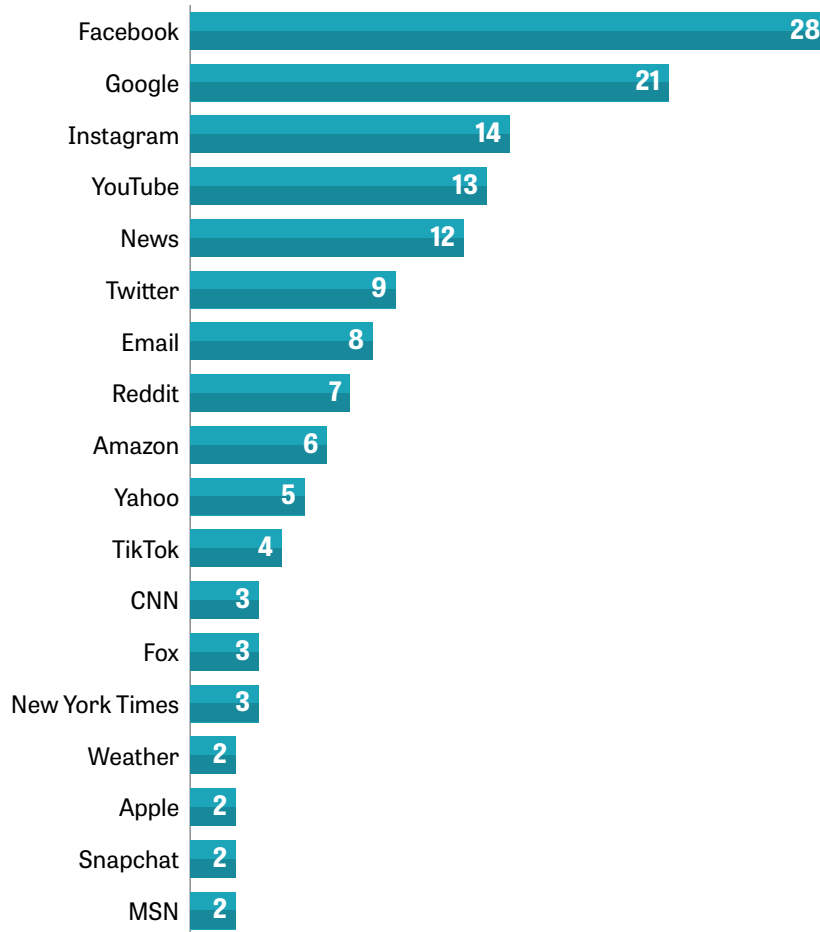
Half of all American adults (50%) name at least one social media platform among their most-used websites or applications, while 29% name a search engine and 21% name a news site or app. Smaller percentages list email (8%), shopping (7%), sports and entertainment (3%) and weather (2%) among their most-visited websites or applications.

Facebook (28%) is the top site Americans age 18+ report using, while a variety of other social media platforms, including YouTube (13%), Instagram (14%), Twitter (9%), Reddit (7%) and TikTok (4%) are all among the top 20 most-used sites. The second-most-used website or app is Google (21%).

FIGURE 1
Americans' Most-Used Websites and Applications (2%+)

Please name the top two to three websites or apps you use. Be as specific as possible.

% Mentioned



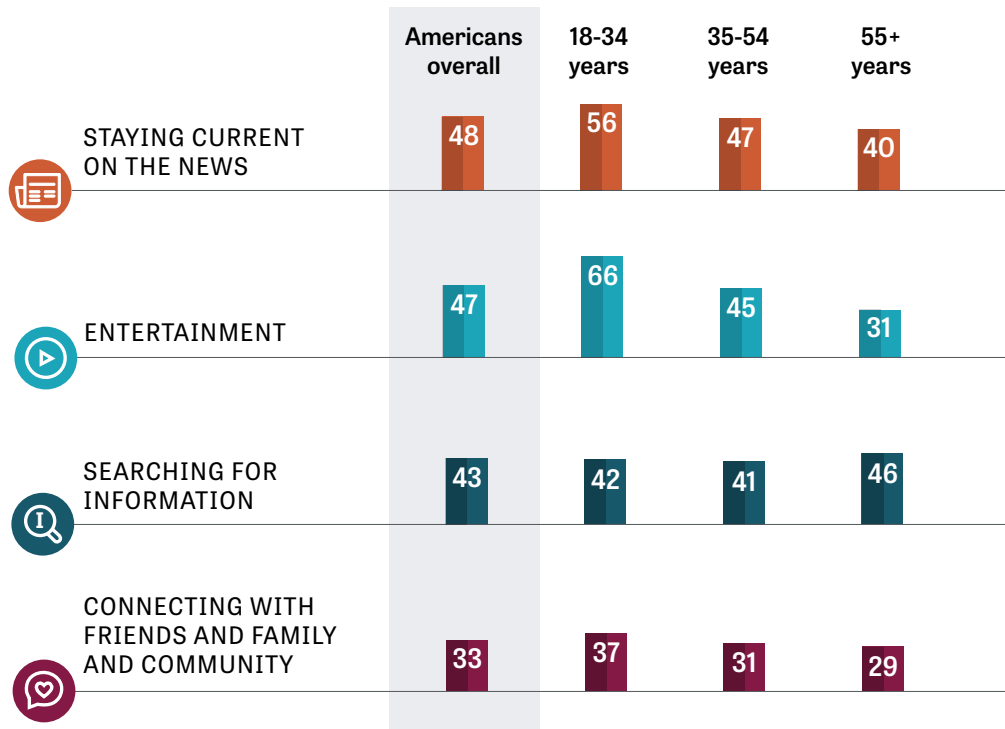
Note: The percentages reported in this chart are pooled from the "top three" listed internet websites or apps. For example, 28% of people listed Facebook as one of the three sites or apps they use most.

Overall, Americans are about equally as likely to report that their *most-used* website or application is for staying current on the news (48%) or for entertainment (47%), followed by searching for information (43%). Only 33% say they use their top site or app to connect with friends, family and community.

Younger adults aged 18-34 are much more likely than older Americans to use their most-used site or app for entertainment (66%). Adults aged 35-54 are about equally as likely to use their top-used site or app for entertainment (45%) as for staying current on the news (47%). Adults aged 55 and older are most likely to use their top app or site to search for information (46%).

FIGURE 2
Reasons for Using Top Websites and Applications, by Age

For what purposes do you use [most-used website or app]? Please select all that apply.
 % Mentioned



Note: The percentages reported in this chart are pooled from the “top three” listed internet websites or apps.

At least four in 10 Americans across political divides report using their top site or app to stay current on the news, although Democrats (52%) are the most likely to report this use. Democrats also tend to use their top site or app for entertainment (52%), while Republicans also report using their top site to search for information (45%). Independents are mixed, with nearly half saying they use their top site for entertainment, searching for information or staying current on the news.

The most frequent internet users report a variety of reasons for turning to their top website or application. The 92% of Americans who say they use the internet daily most often turn to their top website for entertainment or staying current on the news (at 48% each). The 7% of adults who use the internet less often overwhelmingly turn to the internet to search for information (56%) rather than for news (30%), entertainment (22%) or staying connected with others (21%). Predictably, those who consume news on a daily basis (68%) turn to their top internet site or app to stay up to date on the news (53%). Those who consume news less frequently seek entertainment most (52%) — by a difference of at least 10 percentage points more than other motivations.

Americans are using social media platforms more for entertainment than for news; they also say social media facilitates connecting with others and engaging in their community.

Among the half of Americans who name a social media platform specifically among their top-three internet sites or apps, eight in 10 say they use these sites or apps for entertainment, while 70% use them to connect with friends, family and community, and 62% use them to stay current on the news.

What Americans use social media for the most, however, shifts slightly depending on age and political party affiliation. For the youngest Americans (aged 18-34) who list social media as a top site or app, 92% report using it for entertainment, and 72% use it to stay current on news. Adults aged 35-54 also report entertainment as their top reason for using a social media site or app (79%), but it is followed by staying connected with friends, family and community (69%). For older Americans (age 55+), staying connected with others is their top-cited reason for using social media (70%), and 61% report using it for entertainment. Democrats and independents who list social media as a top site or app are slightly more likely than Republicans to report using social media for entertainment (83% and 82% vs. 70%, respectively), while Republicans are equally as likely to report using social media for entertainment as for connecting with friends, family and community.

Most Americans agree that social media makes it “easier” or “much easier” to connect with family and friends (74%) and connect with people who share your interests or views (71%), stay engaged with your local community (65%) and find information you need (59%). But when it comes to social media making direct political action easier, majorities of Americans say social media makes voting (74%) and participating in politics (52%) “neither” easier nor harder.

The public is split on whether social media makes it easier to freely express yourself (43%) or neither easier nor harder (42%). About one in seven Americans say social media makes it harder to express themselves.

FIGURE 3
Perceived Effect of Social Media on Civic and Social Activities

To what extent does social media make the following easier or harder for you:

Social media makes the following ...	% Easier/ Much easier	% Neither	% Harder/ Much harder
Connecting with family and friends	74	23	3
Connecting with people who share your interests or views	71	26	3
Staying engaged with your local community	65	32	3
Finding information you need	59	31	9
Freely expressing yourself	43	42	14
Participating in politics	35	52	13
Voting	18	74	8

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

Women are more likely than men to say social media makes it easier to connect with family and friends, stay engaged with your local community and find information you need. Differences between the two groups are small or negligible across other civic or social activities.

Younger adults aged 18-54 are more likely than older adults (age 55+) to say social media makes it easier to connect with family and friends, stay engaged with your local community and connect with people who share your interests and views. The youngest age group (those aged 18-34) are more likely than older adults to see social media as a facilitator of positive political outcomes — i.e., that social media makes it easier to vote and freely express yourself. Meanwhile, adults aged 55 and older are more likely than younger adults to say it makes it easier to find information you need.

Across political party affiliation, Democrats have a slightly more positive outlook on the impact of social media.

They are more likely than Republicans and independents to say social media makes civic and social activities easier across all measures. Republicans are slightly more likely than independents to say social media makes connecting with people who share your interests or views easier.

"... when you're sort of stuck at home and you're not engaged in your local community or you're not engaged in your larger community and work life, social media also makes it possible to communicate about those larger things that are sort of controlling in your life. So, on a personal level both from a family and social standpoint, as well as a health standpoint ... I connect with my community that way. My local community, all of it is sort of online at this point."

– LIBERAL/MODERATE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

Despite Americans using social media more than any other website or app, their attitudes about these platforms (and other internet-based technologies) overall are negative.

About half of Americans agree that social media (53%) has a negative impact on people like them. They express similar negative concerns about targeted advertising (50%) and personalized algorithms (48%) online. Many Americans are more neutral about search engines having a positive or negative impact, but overall are more likely to say their impact is more positive. The only new internet-based technologies that Americans clearly believe *positively* impact people like them are smart devices and smart technology (41%).

Most Americans are unfamiliar with non-fungible tokens, or NFTs (51%), while three in 10 are unfamiliar with cryptocurrency or Blockchain.

FIGURE 4
Perceived Positive/Negative Impact of New Technology on Society

To what extent do you think the following have a positive or negative impact on people like you?

New technology	% Lean positive	% Neutral	% Lean negative	% Unfamiliar
Smart devices/Smart technology	41	30	25	4
Search engines	33	46	17	3
Social media	19	25	53	3
Targeted advertising	15	32	50	3
Personalized algorithms	13	28	48	10
Cryptocurrency/Blockchain	12	37	21	30
NFTs (non-fungible tokens)	4	31	14	51

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

Younger Americans, Black Americans and Democrats have a slightly more positive outlook on new technologies.

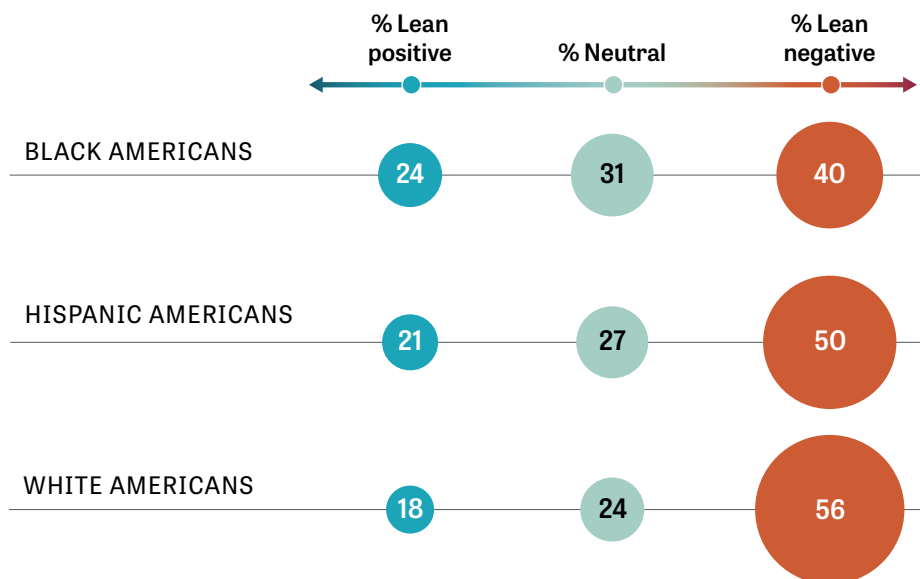
Young adults aged 18-34 are more positive than older adults in their views on the impact of nearly all technologies, while adults aged 55 and older are generally the least likely to rate these technologies positively. Adults across age groups are most in agreement in their view that social media and targeted advertising have a negative impact on people like them, with at least about half in each age group saying it has a negative impact. Younger adults also report being more familiar with cryptocurrency and NFTs than their older counterparts.

White Americans generally hold more negative views of the impact of various technologies on society than Black or Hispanic Americans, particularly in evaluating the impact of social media and targeted advertising.

Only 40% of Black Americans believe social media has a negative impact on people like them, compared to 50% of Hispanic and 56% of White Americans. Black Americans are also more likely than other racial identity groups to say social media has a neutral or slightly positive impact on people like them.

FIGURE 5
Perceived Impact of Social Media, by Racial Identity

To what extent do you think the following have a positive or negative impact on people like you? [Social media]



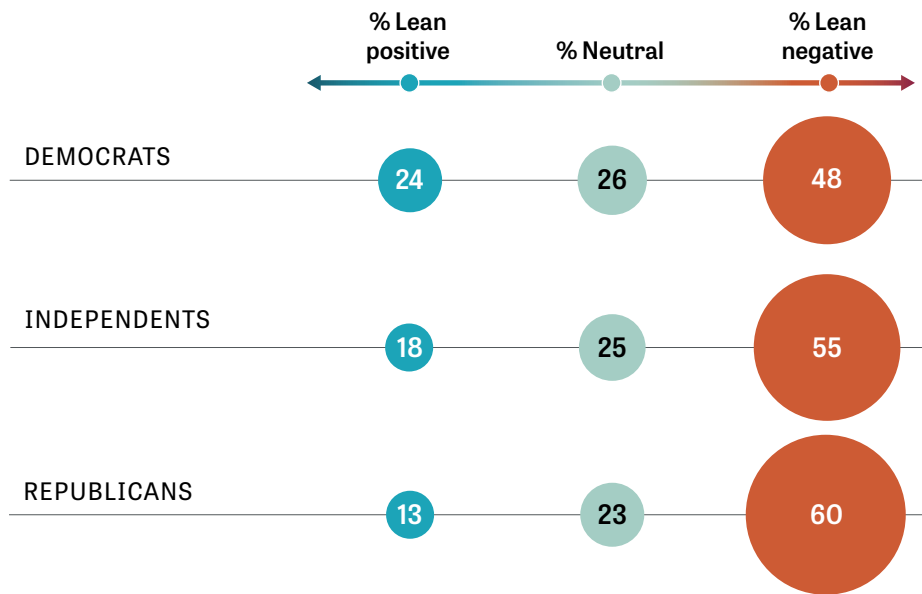
Note: "I am not familiar with this" answers not shown.

Although Americans of all political party affiliations say social media has a negative impact on people like them, this sentiment is strongest among Republicans.

Republicans are also much more negative than Democrats and independents in their views of the impact of search engines. Overall, Democrats are generally more positive than independents and Republicans in their assessments of the impact of all new technologies surveyed.

FIGURE 6
Perceived Impact of Social Media, by Political Party

To what extent do you think the following have a positive or negative impact on people like you? [Social media]



Note: "I'm not familiar with this" answers not shown.

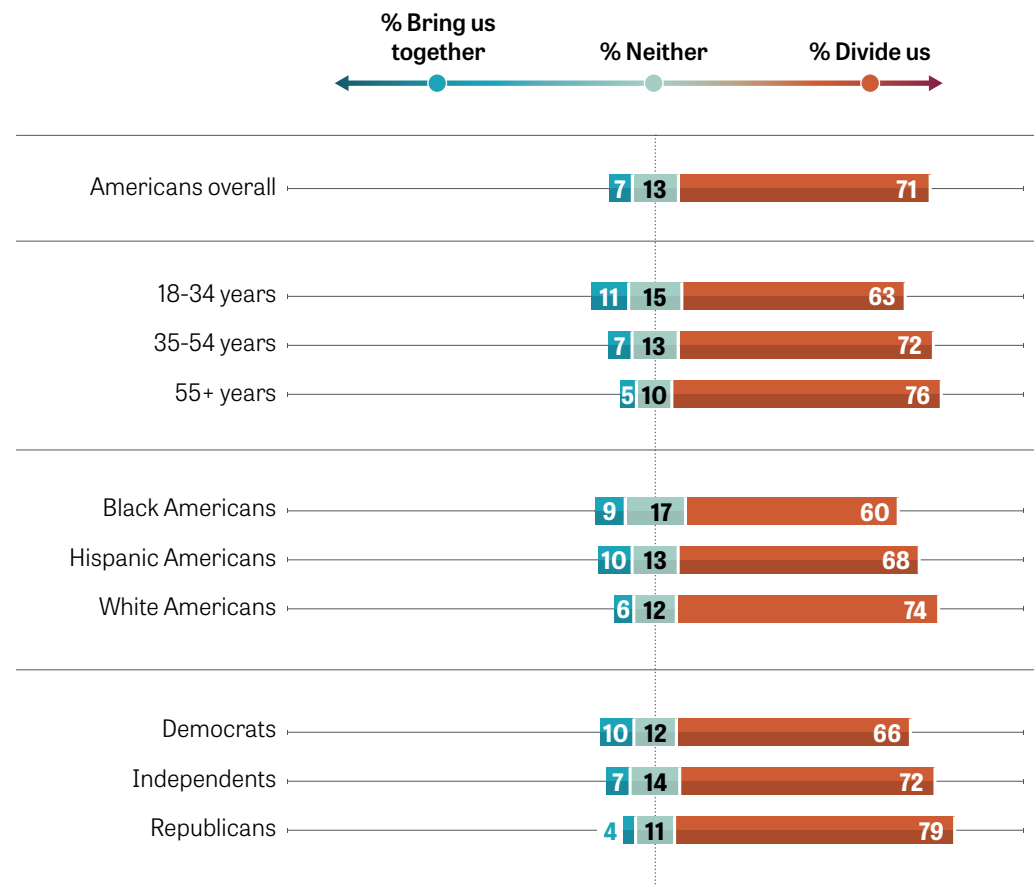
Americans think the internet divides us more than bring us together.

Seventy-one percent of Americans report that when thinking about political division in this country, the internet does more to *divide* us than bring us together.⁷ There is some variation in the level of agreement with this statement across age, political party affiliation and racial identity groups. The youngest Americans (aged 18-34), Black Americans and Democrats are slightly less harsh critics of the internet, being less likely to say the internet “divides” us but are *not* significantly more likely to say it brings us together. However, there is still majority agreement among U.S. adults (at least six in 10 across groups) that the internet is a catalyst for division.

FIGURE 7

Opinions on Whether the Internet Unites or Divides Americans

Thinking about the political divisions in this country, do you think that the internet does more to bring us together or divide us?



Note: “Don’t know” answers not shown.

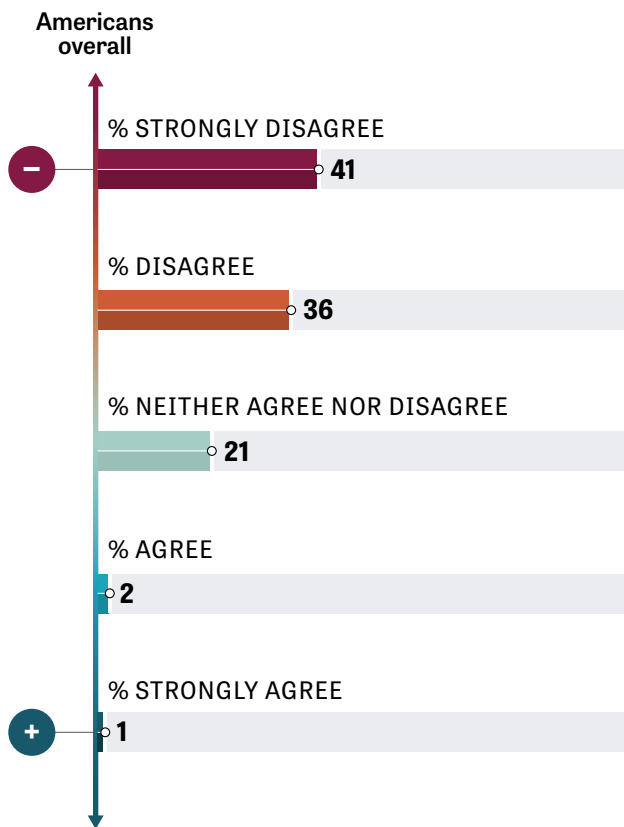
⁷ In the 2020 *Techlash? America’s Growing Concern With Major Technology Companies* report, Gallup/Knight asked respondents to rate on a 1-to-5 scale whether they felt “major internet companies” specifically divided society more than unite it, or united society more than divide it. Sixty percent of respondents chose “4” or “5,” which leaned toward dividing society more than uniting it.

Americans distrust information on social media platforms.

More than three in four Americans say they “disagree” or “strongly disagree” that they trust the information they see on social media. This general sentiment holds across all demographic groups. However, White Americans (80%) are more likely than Hispanic (72%) and Black Americans (62%) to disagree that they trust information on social media. Republicans (84%) and independents (80%) are more likely to disagree than Democrats (70%).

FIGURE 8
Trust in Information on Social Media

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: I trust the information I see on social media.



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

An overwhelming majority of Americans think social media makes it easier for harmful discourse and extreme viewpoints to spread.

While many Americans say social media has made finding information and connecting with others easier, they also report with much stronger consensus that it facilitates the spread of content online that could be hurtful to others or damaging to political discourse broadly.

Virtually all U.S. adults say social media makes it “easier” or “much easier” for people to say things they would not say in person (95%) and for people to harass and threaten others (92%). About nine in 10 Americans say social media makes it easier to spread misinformation and extreme viewpoints. And 76% say it makes it easier for people to interfere with elections.

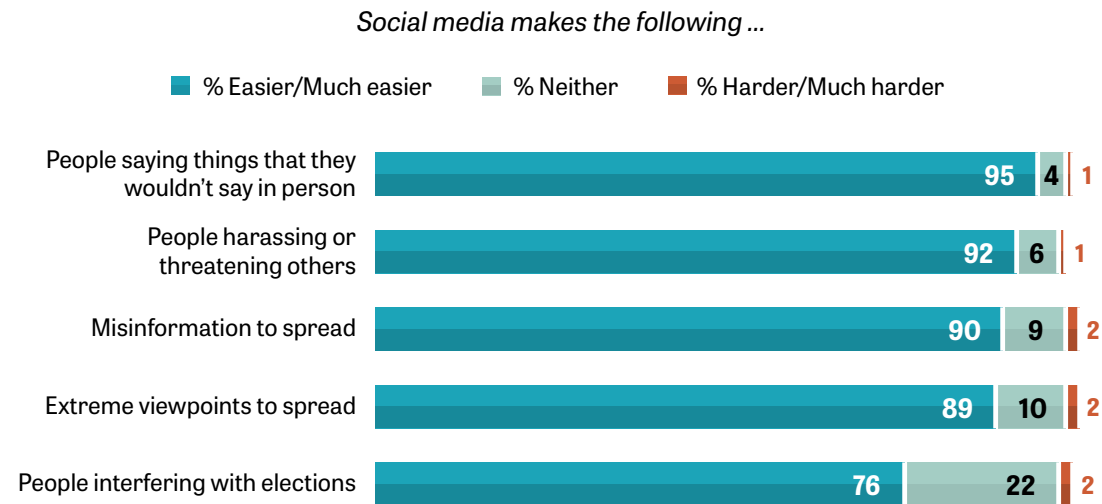
“That sort of cloak of anonymity allows people to act in ways that they wouldn’t if they were looking at your face. Hate speech and threats of violence wouldn’t probably come if someone were standing next to you in the grocery store.”

– LIBERAL/MODERATE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 9

Perceived Ability of Social Media to Facilitate Potentially Threatening or Hurtful Content Online

To what extent does social media make the following easier or harder:



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

Some Americans are more concerned about the negative impact of hurtful content online than others.

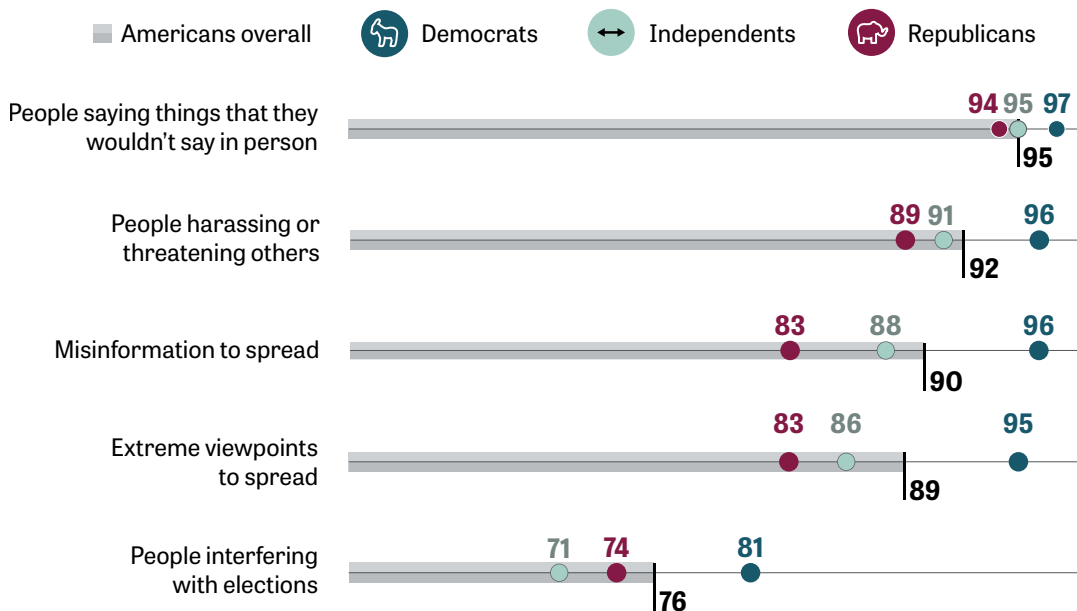
Across most subgroups, Americans agree that social media makes it easier for negative outcomes to occur than positive ones. Differences between age, racial identity and gender groups are generally small.

Across political party groups, however, Democrats are consistently the most likely to say social media makes negative outcomes easier. While solid majorities of Republicans, Democrats and independents agree that social media makes it easier for misinformation and extreme viewpoints to spread, Democrats are much more likely to hold this view, with about 12 points separating them from Republicans and about nine points separating them from independents.

FIGURE 10
Perceived Ability of Social Media to Facilitate Potentially Threatening or Hurtful Content Online, by Political Party

To what extent does social media make the following easier or harder:

%Easier/Much easier



Most Americans also report being “very” or “somewhat concerned” about the potential for major technology companies and hurtful content to negatively impact society.

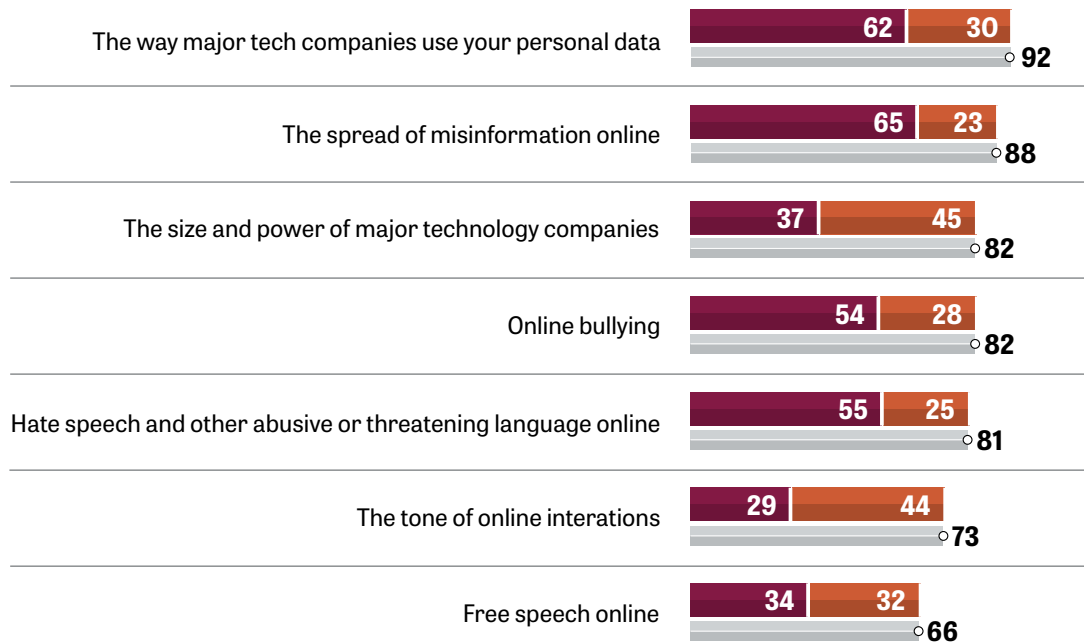
Nearly all Americans express concern over the way major technology companies use their personal data (92%) and the spread of misinformation online (88%).

Eight in 10 Americans are concerned about the size and power of major technology companies, online bullying and hate speech, and other abusive or threatening language online. Smaller majorities express concern about the tone of online interactions (73%) and free speech online (66%).

FIGURE 11
General Concerns About the Internet

How concerned are you about each of the following issues?

■ % Very concerned ■ % Somewhat concerned
■ % Total very concerned/somewhat concerned



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to ±1%.

While these concerns are shared across most demographic groups, there are differences in extremity of concern between political parties. Democrats are more concerned than Republicans and independents about the spread of misinformation, hate speech and other abusive language and online bullying, and the tone of online interactions.




Republicans are more concerned than nearly all other demographic groups about the way major technology companies use personal data, the size and power of major technology companies and free speech online. Independents mostly fall in between Republicans and Democrats in their level of concern on these issues.

"I don't trust the platforms. Because obviously they're run by whoever they're run by and that's a human being with an opinion and they don't have consistent rules and boundaries on what they do."

– CONSERVATIVE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 12
General Concerns About the Internet, by Political Party

How concerned are you about each of the following issues?

	Partisan differences % Very concerned		
			
The way major tech companies use your personal data	55	64	71
The spread of misinformation online	80	59	49
The size and power of major technology companies	26	37	51
Online bullying	65	48	46
Hate speech and other abusive or threatening language online	72	47	40
The tone of online interactions	32	27	24
Free speech online	16	37	57

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

Beyond political party affiliation, older Americans and women — particularly Black women — report the highest levels of concern about hurtful content online.

There are other notable differences across age, gender and racial identity groups in general concern about the internet. Women are overall more concerned about potentially harmful content online than are men — specifically online bullying (65% are “very concerned,” vs. 43%, respectively) and hate speech or abusive language online (64% very concerned vs. 46% of men).

Adults aged 55 and older are more concerned than younger adults about these issues, while Americans aged 18-34 are the *least* concerned about the negative impact of the internet in general.

Black Americans are among the most concerned groups when it comes to the spread of misinformation (92% are “somewhat” or “very” concerned) and hate speech (89%), while White Americans are among the most concerned about major tech companies’ use of personal data (93%) and the size and power of technology companies (84%).

It is important to note, however, that after more robust statistical testing, the impact of racial identity on concern about the internet is not statistically significant when accounting for political party affiliation (which was highly significant). Thus, these differences by racial identity group are likely driven by common political party affiliation among Black Americans (as Democrats) rather than their racial identity alone.⁸

There are key differences in the degree of concern about hate speech and other abusive language online and online bullying when examining the intersection of racial identity and gender. By far, Black women report the highest levels of being “very concerned” about hate speech and online bullying compared to their male counterparts and Hispanic and White women. Conversely, White men report the lowest levels of being very concerned about these issues. It is important to note that overall, gender appears to be the biggest driving factor, as women of all racial identities are more likely than men to be very concerned about these issues — the exception being White women (61%) compared to Black men (64%) in concern for hate speech.



⁸ Running a basic OLS regression model reveals that racial identity loses statistical significance as a predictor of concern levels about online content when political party affiliation is accounted for in the model. Importantly, gender maintains statistical power in predicting varying levels of concern in the model while including all other demographic variables (like political party affiliation).

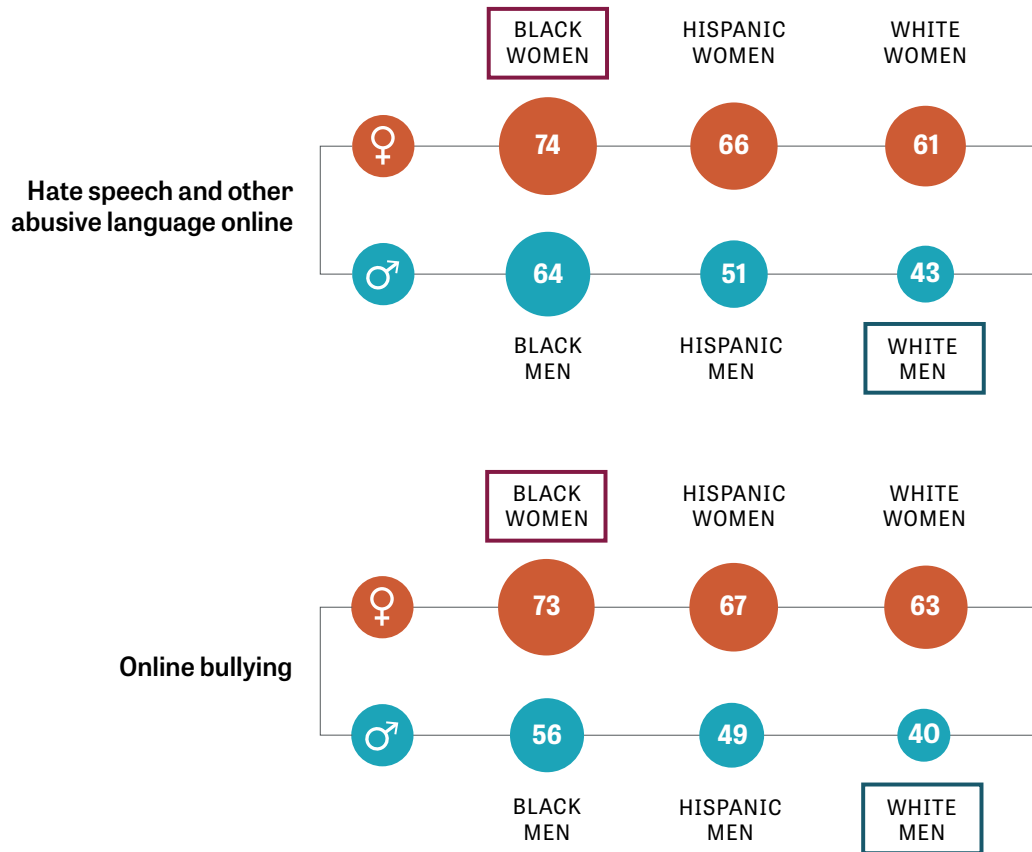
FIGURE 13

Intersection of Racial Identity and Gender in Concern About Hurtful Content Online

How concerned are you about each of the following issues?

% Very concerned

Most concerned Least concerned



Few Americans say they used the internet or social media to participate in politics during the past year.

Much of the conversation about whether or how to regulate content on the internet has evolved out of a general sense that people frequently engage in political activity online. During election cycles, in particular, one might expect quite a bit of online political activity. However, responses to survey items about whether political or civic behaviors are part of Americans' regular and natural use of the internet show that the frequency of engagement is surprisingly low. When asked about 10 common political behaviors online, most U.S. adults say they "rarely" or "never" engaged in them during the past year — a period that included a presidential election.⁹

Starting a political or cause-related group on social media is the *least* reported political behavior in the past 12 months, with 83% of Americans saying they "never" participated in this activity online. More than half of Americans also say they never used a political hashtag (71%), volunteered to help online with a political cause or campaign (74%) or donated money online to a political candidate (58%) during the past year.

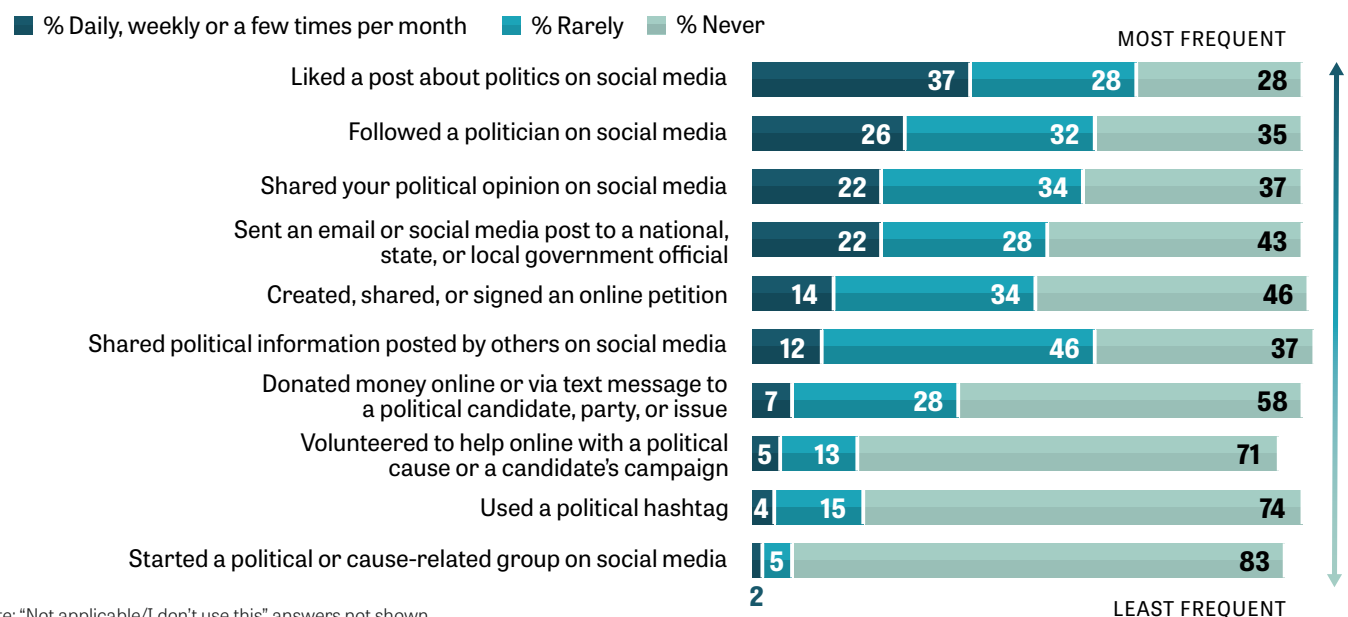
When they have participated, Americans are most likely to report engaging in more passive behaviors on a "daily" or "weekly" basis or, at most, "a few times a month," including liking a political post (37%) or following a politician on social media (26%).

"I think that there's a good side and a bad side of using technology in democracy ... the good side is where you have people trying to motivate everyone to participate in the system, and you have the people who are informing and presenting campaigns and why you should vote. But at the same time, you have the dark side of this, and how they misinform people and try to influence how people think. That's when people start to abuse technology, and I think that right now, it is getting harder to find what's the truth and what isn't."

– LIBERAL/MODERATE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 14
Political and Civic Participation Online

In the last 12 months, how often have you done each of the following:



Note: "Not applicable/I don't use this" answers not shown.

9 The Gallup/Knight survey was fielded July 30-Aug. 26, 2021. See the Methodology section for more details.

Self-identified Republicans and Democrats are more likely than independents — though not to a large extent — to report having engaged in political or civic behavior online in the past year, particularly in activities such as liking political posts, following politicians and expressing political opinions.

Furthermore, Democrats are slightly more likely than Republicans and independents to have participated in an online petition (15% among Democrats vs. 9% among Republicans and 10% among independents) or donated money (10% among Democrats vs. 4% among Republicans and 4% among independents).

Across other demographic groups, there are slight differences in reported online political behavior (daily/weekly/a few times per month) for people of different ages, racial identities and levels of education.

For example:

- Young adults aged 18-34 (46%) are slightly more likely than adults aged 35-54 (38%) and 55 and older (30%) to say they have liked political posts on social media at least a few times per month over the past year.
- White Americans (23%) are slightly more likely than Black Americans (18%) to say they have shared their political opinions on social media (Hispanic Americans split the difference, with 21% reporting they have done this with some frequency over the past year).
- Women (14%) are slightly more likely than men (10%) to have participated in an online petition.
- College graduates (42%) are more likely than adults with no college education (32%) to report liking political posts on social media — and are slightly more likely to say they donated to a campaign or cause (9% among college graduates vs. 5% among adults with no college degree).

“What I like about social media is that you can get notifications about meetings or protests, and you can mobilize a lot of people in a very short amount of time. That’s been a positive. When you say participation, I think getting people to participate directly in the democratic process by going to meetings and protests. I also get mailings from MoveOn and other groups — it’s been very helpful to me in finding out what’s going on.”

– LIBERAL/MODERATE
FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

Despite low political engagement *online* overall, many Americans report that political discourse on social media encourages them to engage more in political and civic behaviors *offline*.

While most Americans did not participate in politics online with great frequency over the past 12 months, many report that seeing debates about politics or social issues on social media encourages them to participate in more traditional political and prosocial behaviors. The activities most encouraged by debates on social media are voting, following the news, contacting representatives and donating to social causes. In contrast, these debates make Americans *less likely* to use social media, post about politics on social media, volunteer to help with a political cause or campaign or spend time with neighbors.

The results indicate that Americans who use social media as a platform for political exchange — i.e., a digital public square — are motivated to engage in positive traditional political and civic activities outside that square while paradoxically being *demotivated* from further engaging *within* that digital platform (i.e., activities on social media).

The survey asked if political and social debates between people on social media make Americans “more likely,” “neither” or “less likely” to engage in various political or social activities. Nearly half of U.S. adults (48%) say they are more likely to vote as a result of debates in their social media feeds, and 39% say it makes them more likely to follow the news. In all other cases, the most reported reaction to debates on social media is that it was neither encouraging nor discouraging.

When moving past the “neither” category to examine the net effect of debates on social media on these behaviors, people are slightly *more likely* to say they contacted a national, state or local government official about an issue or donated to social causes.

Calculating Net Scores

In the following analyses, Gallup/Knight calculate net scores by taking the percentage of U.S. adults who say they are “more likely” to participate in an activity and subtracting from it the percentage who say they are “less likely.” Net scores are a simplified tool that shows the overall the direction of the effect on respondents.

FIGURE 15
Encouraging Impact of Political Debates on Social Media

Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...

	% More likely	% Neither	% Less likely	Net effect (More likely minus Less likely)
Vote	48	48	4	+44 pct. pts.
Follow the news	39	39	22	+17 pct. pts.
Contact a national, state, or local government official about an issue	29	58	14	+15 pct. pts.
Donate to social causes	30	53	17	+13 pct. pts.

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

Most Americans say political debates on social media have no effect (“neither”) on prosocial activities like spending time with friends and family or joining a local community group — nor do these debates affect whether they will attend a protest or donate to a political candidate. Otherwise, social media debates have roughly a net-neutral effect on these actions, with similar percentages saying they are encouraged and discouraged to take them up in response.

FIGURE 16
Relatively Neutral Impact of Political Debates on Social Media

Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...

	% More likely	% Neither	% Less likely	Net effect (More likely minus Less likely)
Spend time with friends	16	72	12	+4 pct. pts.
Go to a protest	25	53	22	+3 pct. pts.
Join community or social groups in your area	15	69	16	-1 pct. pts.
Donate to a political candidate	21	56	23	-2 pct. pts.
Spend time with family	13	69	18	-5 pct. pts.

Americans also report they feel mostly discouraged from posting about political and social issues on their social media accounts and using social media in general because of online political debates.

“At the end of the day, you don’t have to use it. Twitter got too negative for me, so I just stopped using it. Just get off ... I haven’t used Facebook in years ... If they’re going against your beliefs or anything, just cut it off and they’ll get the message.”

– CONSERVATIVE FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT

FIGURE 17

Discouraging Impact of Political Debates on Social Media

Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...

	% More likely	% Neither	% Less likely	Net effect (More likely minus Less likely)
Volunteer to help online with a political cause or a candidate's campaign	13	66	20	-7 pct. pts.
Spend time with your neighbors	6	79	15	-9 pct. pts.
Use social media	17	51	32	-15 pct. pts.
Post about political and social issues on your social media account(s)	20	45	35	-15 pct. pts.

Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

If the internet has the capacity for being a digital public square, one might hope that internet-based platforms designed to promote free and accessible social interactions would be an ideal space for these political exchanges to take place. Yet, the results show that when Americans are exposed to debates on social media about political or social issues, they are *deterred* from further engaging on those platforms. Interestingly, exposure to these debates in digital spaces appears to positively impact their willingness to engage in *offline* civic activity, like voting or consuming news.

Further analysis reveals that some people are more motivated by these online debates to engage civically and socially than others. Political party affiliation is the biggest driver, followed by differences by racial identity and age.

Democrats are overall more encouraged to act in response to social media debates, while Republicans and independents are slightly discouraged. On a net basis, Democrats are much more likely to vote and contact government officials than their Republican and independent counterparts as a result of these debates.

While Democrats feel motivated to attend a protest and donate to political candidates in response to debates on social media, Republicans and independents report being *demotivated* from taking these actions. Democrats are highly motivated to follow the news due to political debates, while this has a roughly net-neutral effect on Republicans and independents. Democrats are also motivated to donate to social causes, while Republicans are demotivated, but the effect on independents is fairly neutral. On the other hand, Democrats and independents are overall less likely to spend time with family because of political debates, whereas Republicans are less affected in this aspect.

FIGURE 18
Impact of Political Debates on Social Media, by Political Party Affiliation

Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...

Net scores: “More likely” minus “Less likely”

	Americans overall	Democrats	Independents	Republicans
Vote	+44	+54	+34	+39
Follow the news	+17	+38	+4	-4
Contact a national, state, or local government official about an issue	+15	+24	+9	+6
Donate to social causes	+13	+37	+5	-15
Go to a protest	+3	+27	-7	-25
Donate to political candidates	-2	+15	-17	-13
Spend time with family	-5	-9	-6	+4

Americans react to online political debates differently across racial identity groups as well. Black Americans are more encouraged to follow the news, vote, donate to social causes and spend time with friends as a result of seeing debates about political or social issues on social media than their Hispanic and White counterparts. Additionally, while people across racial identity groups most report being “neither” more nor less likely to spend time with family when evaluating the impact of social media debates, among those who are affected, White and Hispanic Americans say they are overall less likely to spend time with family, and Black Americans report they are more likely to do so.

While they do feel discouraged from posting about social and political issues on social media because of debates they see online, Black Americans are slightly *less* discouraged than White and Hispanic Americans. And they are the only racial identity group to be net *more likely* to use social media as a result of seeing political debates on social media.

These data suggest that Black Americans are more encouraged than Americans overall to positively respond (i.e., be further encouraged to participate) to social media as a space for political discourse and conversation.

FIGURE 19
Impact of Political Debates on Social Media on Civic and Social Activity, by Racial Identity

Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...

Net scores: “More likely” minus “Less likely”

	Americans overall	Black Americans	Hispanic Americans	White Americans
Vote	+44	+52	+43	+41
Follow the news	+17	+33	+24	+12
Donate to social causes	+13	+19	+15	+11
Spend time with friends	+4	+12	+5	+1
Donate to political candidates	-2	+1	-6	-2
Spend time with family	-5	+16	-1	-9
Post about political and social issues on your social media account(s)	-15	-7	-13	-16
Use social media	-15	+4	-8	-19

The data also indicate that younger Americans are more resistant to social media as a digital public square or place for political conversation. By net score, they are more *discouraged* from posting about politics or using social media in general by seeing political and social debates online compared to the average American overall and older Americans. And they are further discouraged from engaging in social activity by these debates. The youngest Americans also report higher rates of being “less likely” to spend time with family and neighbors than Americans 55+. Conversely, young adults are more motivated to participate in traditional civic behaviors like donating to social causes, attending protests and contacting government officials than those over 35. Thus, for the youngest Americans, seeing political debates online appears to deter them from connecting with others — both online and potentially in-person — while also potentially activating more traditional political behaviors.

FIGURE 20
Impact of Political Debates on Social Media on Civic and Social Activity, by Age

Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...

Net scores: “More likely” minus “Less likely”

	Americans overall	18-34 years	35-54 years	55+ years
Vote	+44	+45	+43	+43
Follow the news	+17	+16	+11	+23
Contact a national, state, or local government official about an issue	+15	+22	+15	+8
Donate to social causes	+13	+32	+13	-3
Spend time with friends	+4	+5	+1	+5
Go to a protest	+3	+27	0	-16
Join community or social groups in your area	-1	+5	-1	-4
Spend time with family	-5	-15	-5	+5
Volunteer to help online with a political cause or a candidate’s campaign	-7	0	-6	-15
Spend time with your neighbors	-9	-13	-11	-5
Post about political and social issues on your social media account(s)	-15	-18	-17	-8
Use social media	-15	-23	-17	-3

Key Takeaways

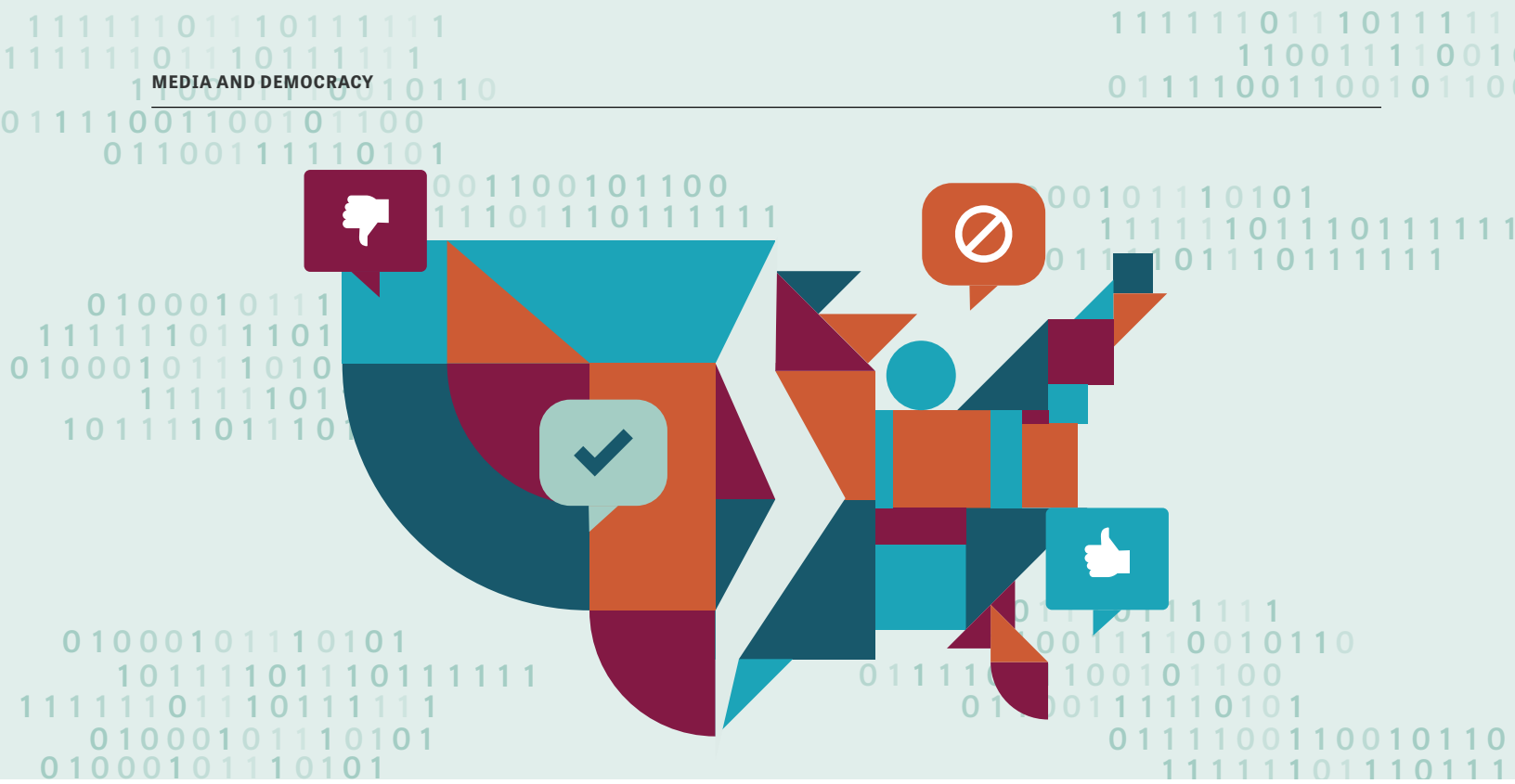
These results reveal many non-political motivations and uses of the internet among a large portion of the American public. The conversation about whether or how online content should or should not be regulated cannot be singularly limited to its political uses and political effects. For some Americans, the potential restriction of the internet could mean restricting their entertainment and connection with others.

Americans also hold complex and often contradictory attitudes about the benefits and potential negative effects online content can have in society. This study finds that the degree of concern about content that is hurtful to other citizens, elections or democracy in general is greater than the degree of appreciation for the positive civic and prosocial behaviors social media platforms make easier.

When it comes to social media functioning as a digital public square, overall political discourse online encourages more traditional means of engagement — like voting, following the news and donating — while discouraging further participation directly in the square itself — like posting about political or social issues on social media. This finding is especially true for the youngest Americans who report the highest levels of discouragement from further engaging on social media in the face of political debate online. Yet, Black Americans defy the national trend by reporting the highest levels of encouragement (and lowest levels of discouragement comparatively) in response to political discourse on social media compared to other racial identity groups.

The next section of this report explores how these complexities shape Americans' attitudes about internet reform. By using cluster analysis, Gallup/Knight have identified six segments of the population who vary in their attitudes about the internet, democracy and how (or if) reform is needed. This analysis reveals that about half of the American public *does not view* these issues simply through a partisan lens — a novel and instructive finding that should inform industry leaders and policymakers alike as they consider the future of internet governance.





Deep Dive Into Americans' Diverse Attitudes About Governing the Digital Public Square

A closer look at public opinion on internet governance

It is evident that Americans are united in their concern about the potential harm of hurtful or misleading content online. Yet, there is little consensus on whether technology companies or the government should intervene. In 2020, Gallup/Knight found that although 84% of Americans did not trust social media companies “much” or “at all” to make the right decisions about what content should or should not be allowed on their platforms, 55% of Americans still preferred technology companies to make their own policies about what people can and cannot post on their websites over the government (44%).¹⁰

The current study finds that 85% of Americans report being familiar with “online content moderation” but have mixed attitudes about its impact. Twenty-three percent of U.S. adults feel it has a positive impact, 29% negative, and 34% report neither a positive nor negative impact.

¹⁰ Knight Foundation & Gallup, Inc. (2020). *Techlash? America's growing concern with major technology companies*. <https://knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Gallup-Knight-Report-Techlash-Americas-Growing-Concern-with-Major-Tech-Companies-Final.pdf>. The data for the *Techlash* report was collected via a self-administered web survey between Dec. 3 and 15, 2019, using a random sample of 1,628 U.S. adults aged 18 and older who were members of the Gallup Panel™.

*"I think [content moderation is] a good thing. **We as a society have decided that there are acts that are illegal, and I don't think that private companies should say freedom of speech can happen on my site.** If you look through the privacy policies on Facebook and Instagram, if you try to report something, there are different buttons you can click on and say why you're reporting it. If someone is overly violent, if it's child pornography, if it's inciting hatred or racism or things like that, [content moderation is] absolutely acceptable."*

- LIBERAL/MODERATE FOCUS
GROUP PARTICIPANT

***"You either have freedom of speech or you don't.** I think that's kind of where we're at right now. And too much is being censored or only certain things are being censored and they're allowing other things, and I think that's what's really putting the nation into disarray right now, because we're only seeing one side of things and not the other. **Too many people are being silenced and you're not truly getting what you need.**"*

- CONSERVATIVE FOCUS
GROUP PARTICIPANT

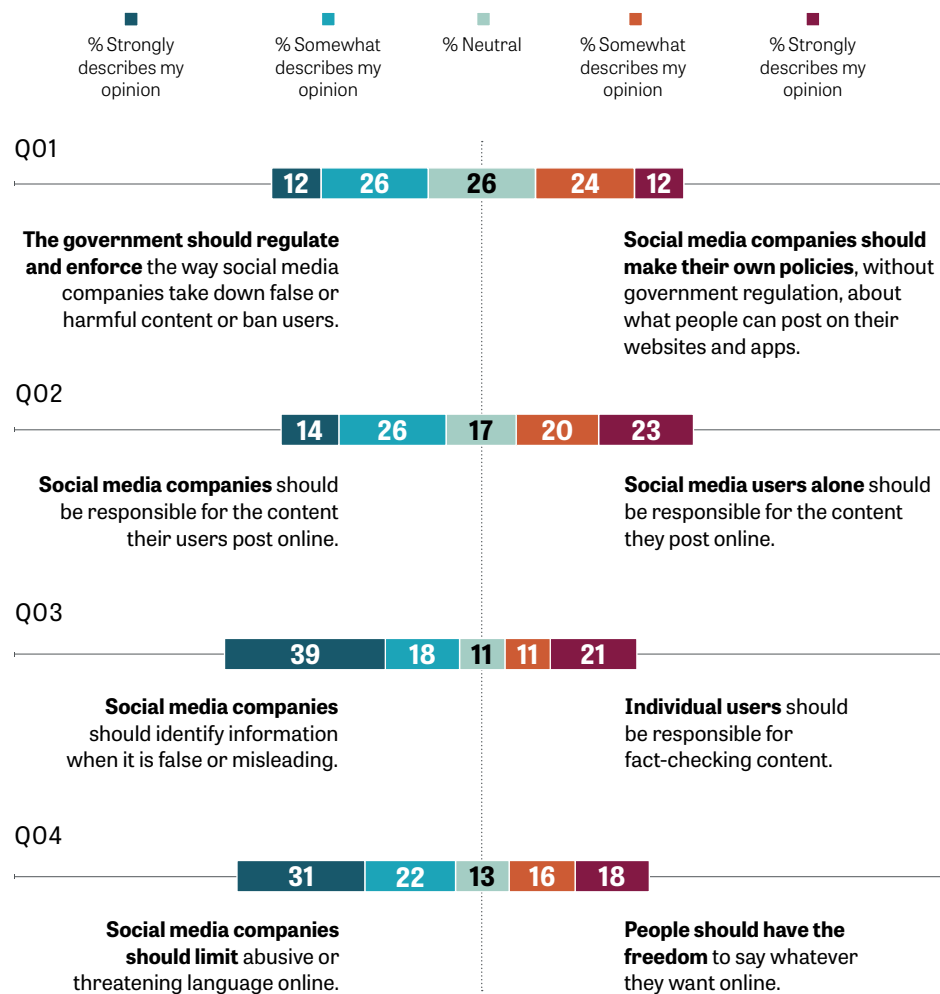


When asked who should be responsible for content posted online and when it should or should not be removed, no single solution received majority support, reflecting the continued division seen in previous surveys on this topic.¹¹

However, there is some agreement when it comes to who should be responsible for *false or misleading content* — 57% of Americans say social media companies should identify that information, compared to 32% who say individual users should be responsible for fact-checking the content displayed to them.

FIGURE 21
Americans' Opinions on Who Should Be Responsible for Online Content

Please read the following statements and indicate which of the following comes closer to your view: When it comes to social media companies and the content users post on their platforms ...

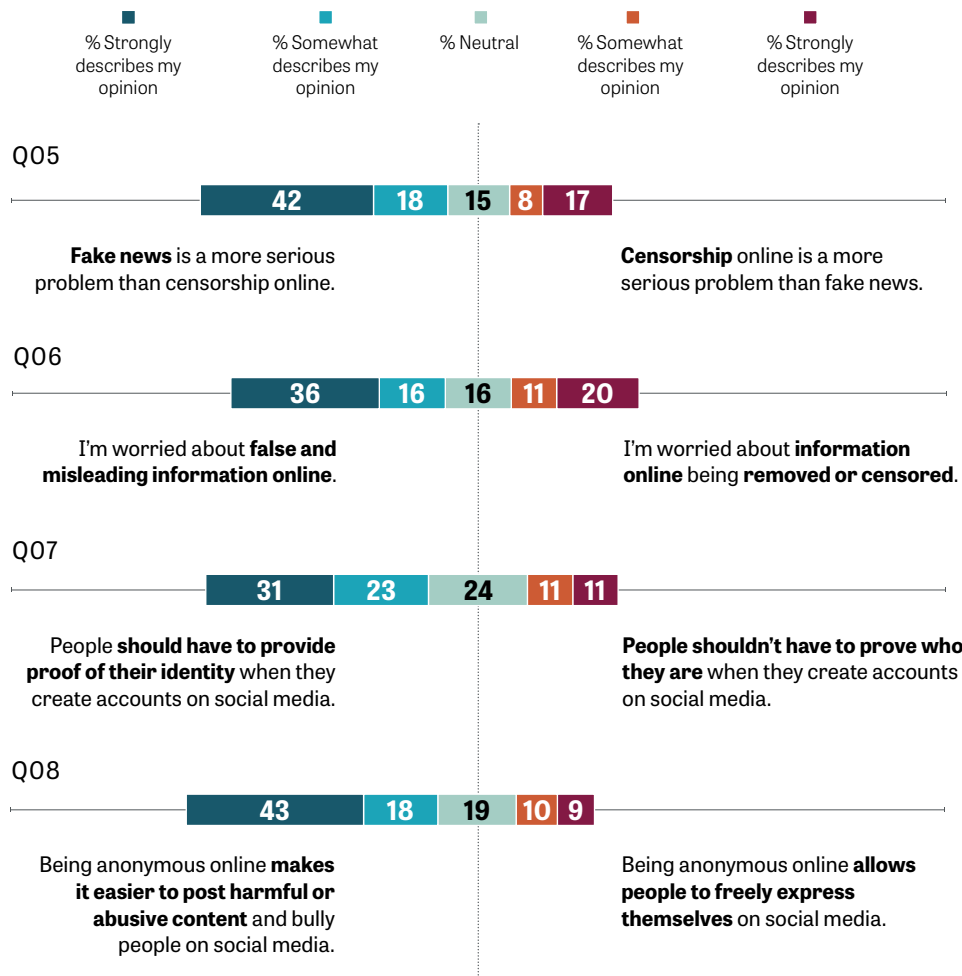


¹¹ Knight Foundation & Gallup, Inc. (2020). *Techlash? America's growing concern with major technology companies*. <https://knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Gallup-Knight-Report-Techlash-Americas-Growing-Concern-with-Major-Tech-Companies-Final.pdf>.

Slightly more than half of Americans are aligned in expressing their concern about abusive language or false and misleading information online and that anonymity online may facilitate those negative outcomes.

FIGURE 22
Opinions on Moderating Online Social Content

Please read the following statements and indicate which of the following comes closer to your view: When it comes to users posting and sharing content on social media platforms ...

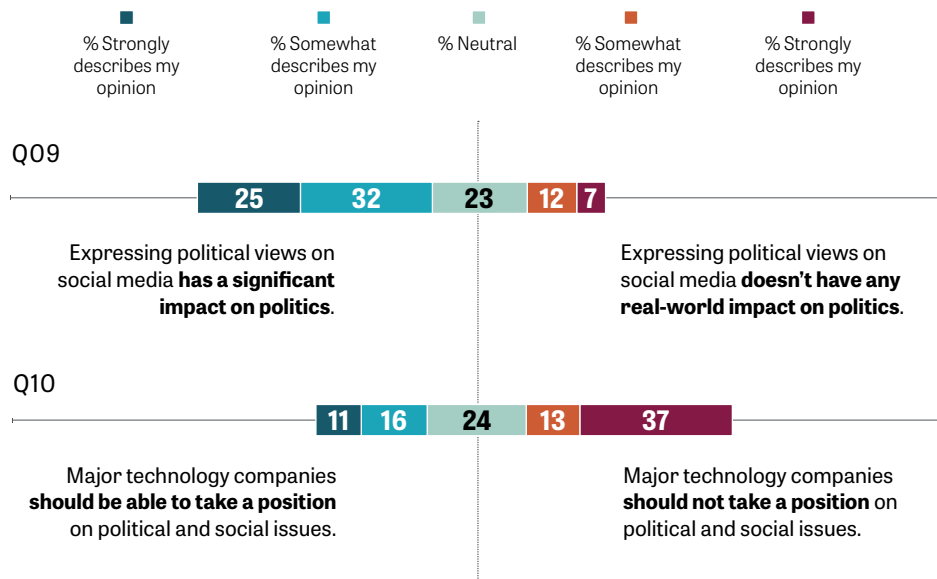


Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

Finally, Americans are mostly in agreement in their perception that social media has an impact on politics in the real world, but half *do not* support major technology companies taking stances on political or social issues.

FIGURE 23
Opinions on Political Impact of Social Media and Technology Companies

Please read the following statements and indicate which of the following comes closer to your view: Now, we would like to ask you about major technology companies. Which of the following comes closest to your view?



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

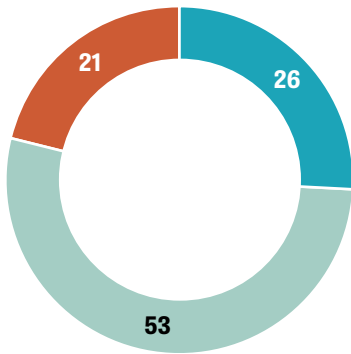
Views of technology and American democracy play a role in people's opinions on internet reform.

More than half of Americans agree that science and technology are developing at “just the right pace” but generally lean toward distrusting major technology companies. Americans also agree on what constitutes the essential characteristics of democracy in the United States — e.g., free elections, speech and press. But there are varying degrees of intensity with which different groups align with these ideas and a few characteristics — such as government aid and protection of a free market — where Americans diverge slightly. The public also holds opposing views about how the country is performing in upholding democratic ideals — particularly on how the press and the public find consensus on facts.

FIGURE 24
Attitudes About Technology

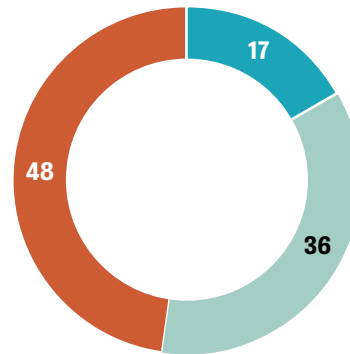
Do you think science and technology in recent years have developed too fast, too slow, or just the right pace?

- % Too fast
- % Just the right pace
- % Too slow



To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I trust major technology companies.

- % Agree/Strongly agree
- % Neither
- % Disagree/Strongly disagree

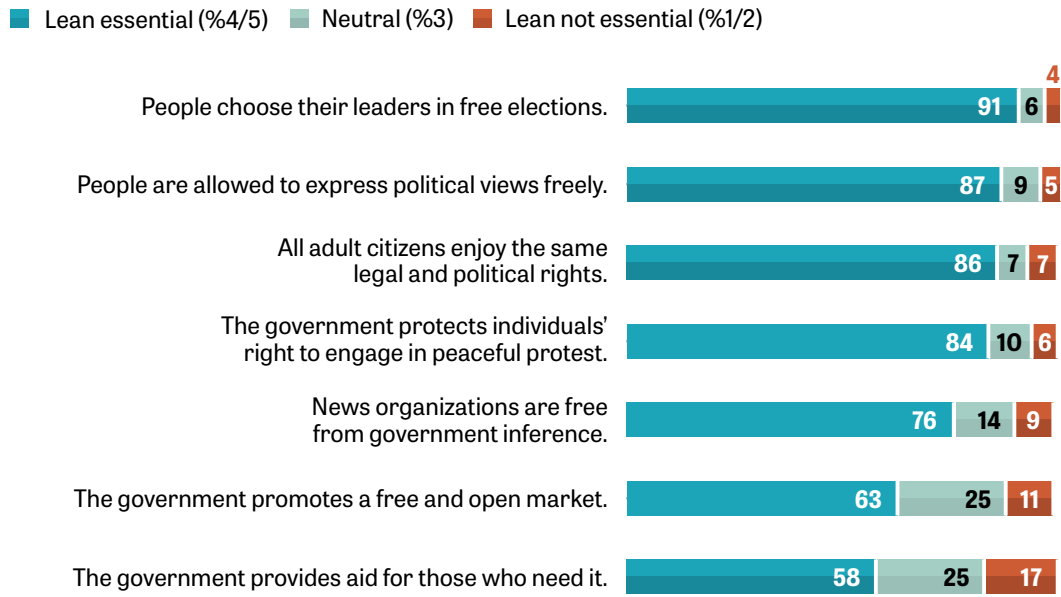


Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.

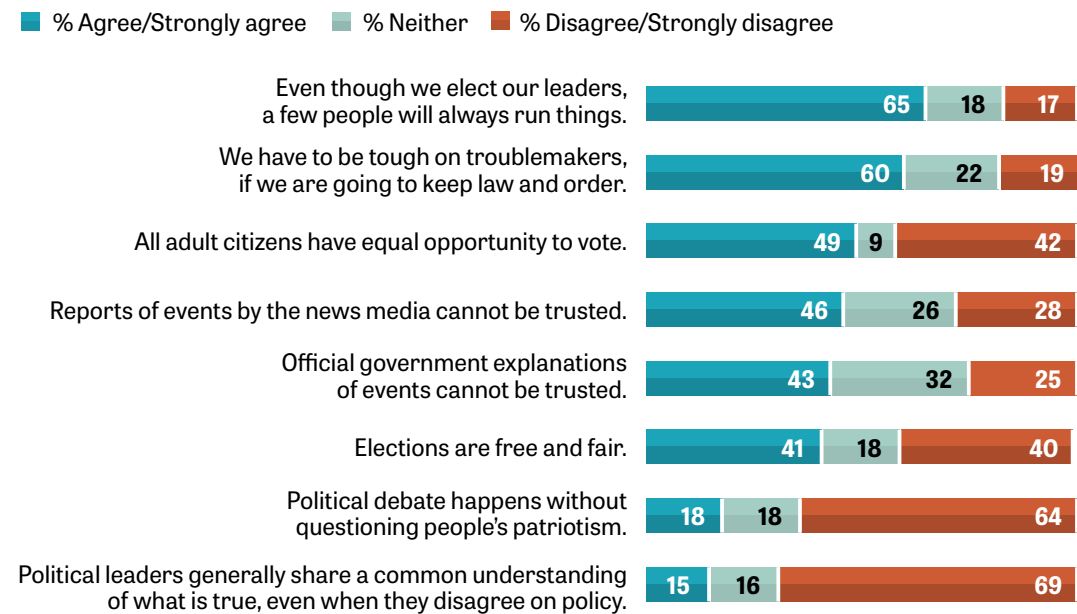
FIGURE 25

Evaluations of the State of America

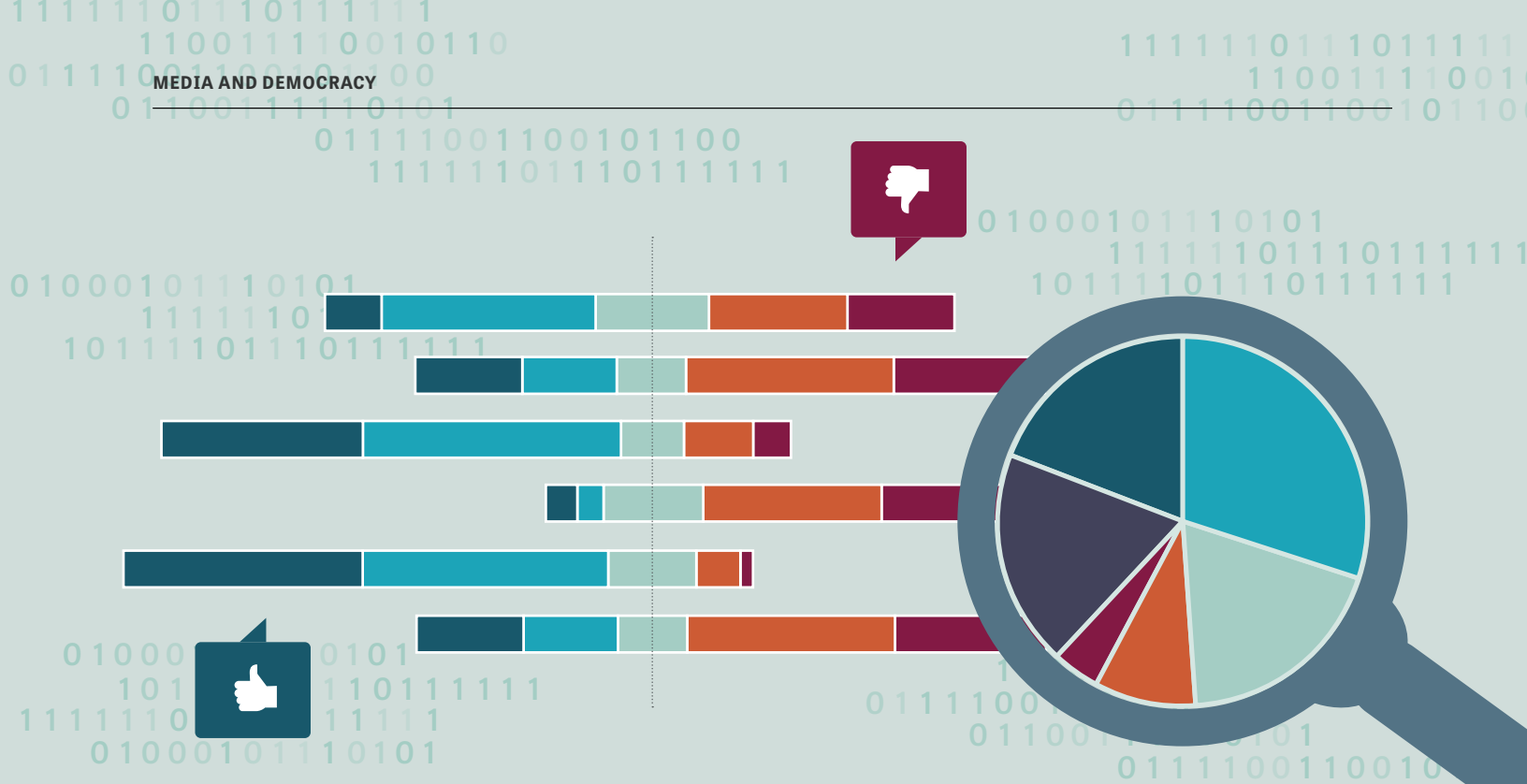
Many things are desirable, but not all of them are essential characteristics of the United States. Please indicate how essential you feel each of the following are to the United States.



Thinking about the current state of our country, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:



Note: Due to rounding, percentages may sum to 100% ±1%.



Public Opinion on Internet Content Regulation: Six Segments

While Americans mostly align in their concerns about the harms of false or misleading information, hurtful content and “fake news” online, between a quarter and a third of Americans express greater concern about protecting free expression and the impact of censorship online. Further, Americans have conflicting attitudes about *how* content online should be regulated, if at all, and particularly diverging opinions about who should be responsible for it.

Political party affiliation explains some of this variation, but even within party lines, there is not a strong consensus on what should be done in practice.

For example, while 44% of Democrats prefer the government regulate and enforce the way social media companies take down false or harmful content, about a third (32%) of Democrats prefer that social media companies make their own policies without government regulation (an additional 23% are “neutral”). Similarly, although 55% of Republicans believe people should have the freedom to say whatever they want online, a third (33%) support social media companies limiting abusive or threatening language online over complete free expression (12% are neutral).

While some of these incongruities may be partly due to a lack of knowledge about internet regulation or existing laws, public opinion is not clear-cut. Depending on the lens through which questions are posed — who is responsible, the importance of freedom of expression, the dangers of harmful content, protecting privacy, etc. — Americans hold varied and conflicting attitudes about internet policy.

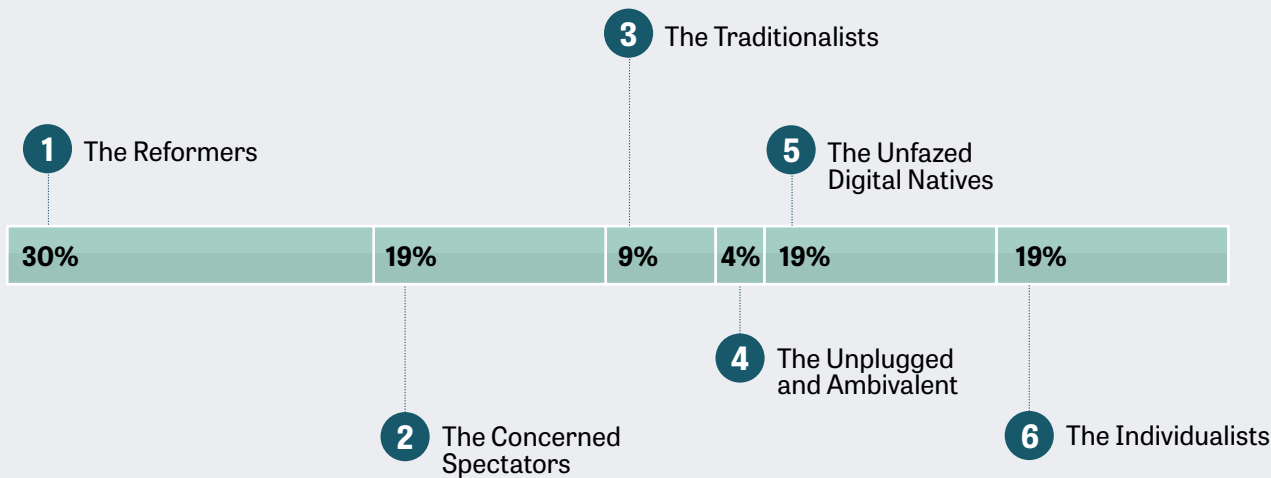
To shed new light on these attitudes, Gallup/Knight used cluster analysis to reveal patterns in how the American public feels about different aspects of regulation or moderation of content online. Using the 10 forced-choice questions outlined at the beginning of this section ([see pages 32-34](#)), the analysis reveals six distinct groups that differ from one another in views on aspects of internet regulation.

Specifically, respondents were asked to consider who should be held responsible or liable for harmful content online — the government, social media companies or individual users. They were also asked to weigh concerns about misinformation or fake news against the risk of restricting free expression if content were to be regulated. Finally, they evaluated whether anonymity online does more harm than good and whether social media, and the companies that own these platforms, are or should be playing a role in American politics.

For about half of Americans (two of the segments), partisanship is strongly correlated with attitudes about regulation. Seventy percent of people who fall into the first segment (The Reformers) affiliate with the Democratic Party and report the strongest support for government regulation of content online. Conversely, 52% of the people who fall into the sixth segment (The Individualists) affiliate with the Republican Party and report the strongest support of protection of free expression online (and reject government intervention).

But for the other four segments — representing 51% of Americans — attitudes about regulation of online content are more textured. These segments comprise people whose political affiliations are varied and whose attitudes are not explained through partisanship alone. Their perspectives correlate with their perceptions of American democracy, their evaluations of the current state of the country, the degree to which they are concerned about discourse on the internet and, broadly, how they are consuming news and using the internet.

Summary of the Six Public Opinion Segments:



The Reformers (30%)

Highly engaged internet users and active consumers of news, The Reformers are politically active and tilt heavily toward the Democratic Party. They tend to favor more intervention by the government and social media companies to address social harms online.



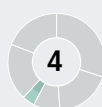
The Concerned Spectators (19%)

While it also leans slightly Democratic, this segment is less politically active online. They are worried about the spread of misinformation and other hurtful content online and how social media companies use their personal data, but they are split on whether government or social media companies should be responsible for moderating content online. This group skews older and tends to consume more traditional network news.



The Traditionalists (9%)

While The Traditionalists recognize the potential for harm online, they are also wary of government being the arbiter of free expression. This segment tends to take a laissez-faire approach and assign responsibility to individuals and social media companies. They have mostly mixed political affiliations and engage less frequently online.



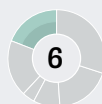
The Unplugged and Ambivalent (4%)

The smallest among the segments, this group tends to be offline, disconnected from news and mixed in terms of partisan attachments. They hold conflicted and contradictory views on who should be responsible for harmful content online.



The Unfazed Digital Natives (19%)

The youngest of the segments, these digital natives tend to use the internet for entertainment more than for news or politics. They are less concerned about the potential harms of content online than most others and favor individual responsibility and a hands-off approach by the government. Nevertheless, they support some degree of content moderation by social media companies.



The Individualists (19%)

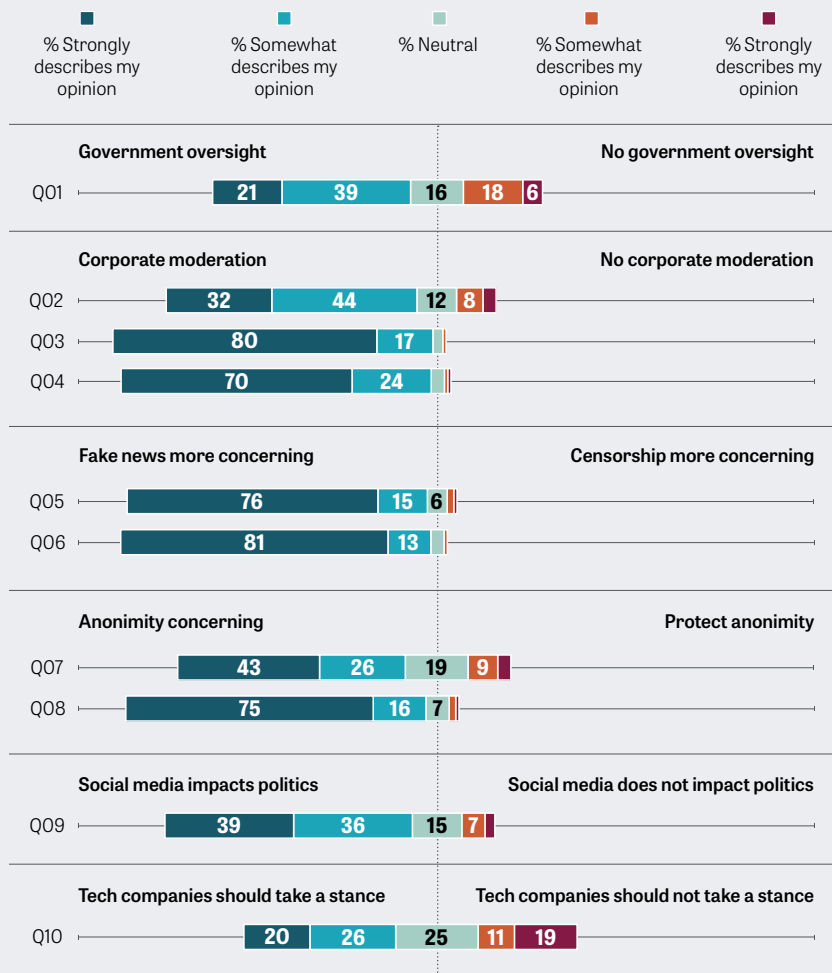
Avid consumers of right-leaning news, this politically engaged group is also the most homogenous. They show a strong affinity for the Republican Party, and concerns about free expression and censorship online outweigh any apprehension about hurtful content. They favor individual responsibility and as little intervention by the government or social media companies as possible.

SEGMENT ONE

The Reformers

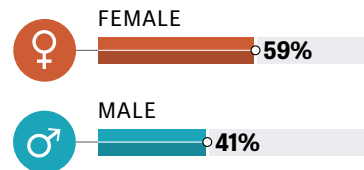
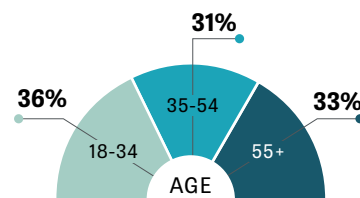
The policy attitudes that characterize this segment:

The **30% of Americans** who fall into this segment are aligned in their high support of intervention in digital spaces. They lean toward government regulation and social media company moderation of content over individual responsibility for what is posted online. They view counteracting the potential harms of online content and anonymity as *more important* than protecting free expression or privacy. They believe social media has an impact on politics and think tech companies should take a stand on political and social issues.

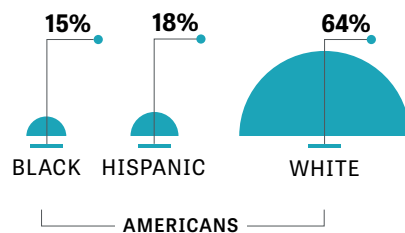


Note: Values under 5% are not displayed.

Americans in this segment are:



Live mostly in **urban or suburban** areas

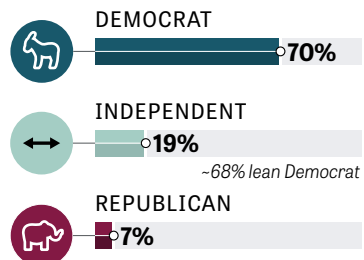


Wealthiest:

45% household income \$90K+

Highest educated:

62% college graduates



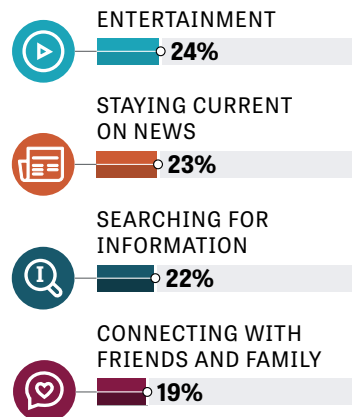
Slightly more likely to have participated in civic activity online in the past year

They get their news from:

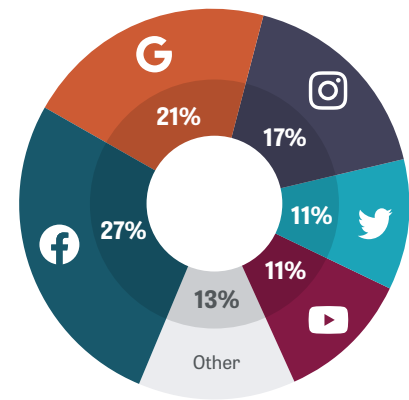
39% liberal-leaning sources (CNN, MSNBC, New York Times)

- 37%** newspapers
- 27%** network news
- 21%** radio
- 20%** local news
- 14%** news aggregators
- 12%** international news

They use the internet for:



Top internet sites:



A shared outlook on the state of the democracy, internet and technology:

Based on their responses to the other questions in the survey, The Reformers appear to be engaged with the political sphere online and the most concerned about how technology may target people and encourage harmful discourse online. They are the only group leaning toward *some* faith in institutions, like the news media and government. The strong policy attitudes they hold supporting internet regulation are likely shaped by their unique coupling of higher levels of concern with higher levels of confidence in the government relative to other segments.¹²

Attitudes about the current state of the country, democracy and institutions:

- Sixty-seven percent believe the government is doing “too little” when it comes to issues of technology and technology companies.
- Overall, they hold the most favorable attitudes toward which democratic ideals are essential in the U.S., with particularly high credence for “the government provides aid for those who need it” (57% report it as “absolutely essential”).
- They are the only segment to lean toward trusting government explanations (45%) and news media reporting (50%) of events.
- They are among the most critical of general political discourse — 77% *disagree* that political leaders generally share a common understanding of what is true, and 73% disagree that political debate happens in the country without questioning people’s patriotism.

Attitudes about the current state of technology and the internet:

- They have divergent attitudes about the impact of technology on society.
 - They hold the most positive attitudes about search engines and smart devices, but they hold the most negative attitudes about targeted advertising.
- Across segments, they are the most worried about bias in *other people’s* social media feeds (74% are more worried about other people’s compared to their own) and search results (46% are more worried about other people’s results than their own).
- They also report the highest level of feeling the pace of science and technology is developing “too slow” (26%) compared to other segments; 54% of The Reformers report the pace is “just right.”
- Overall, this segment is the most concerned about hate speech, abusive or threatening language, online bullying and misinformation online.
- People in this segment are most affected by debates about politics or social issues on social media:
 - They are the least likely to engage with people in their network and post on social media in response to these debates.
 - They are the most likely to participate in politics directly via voting, following the news and donating money.

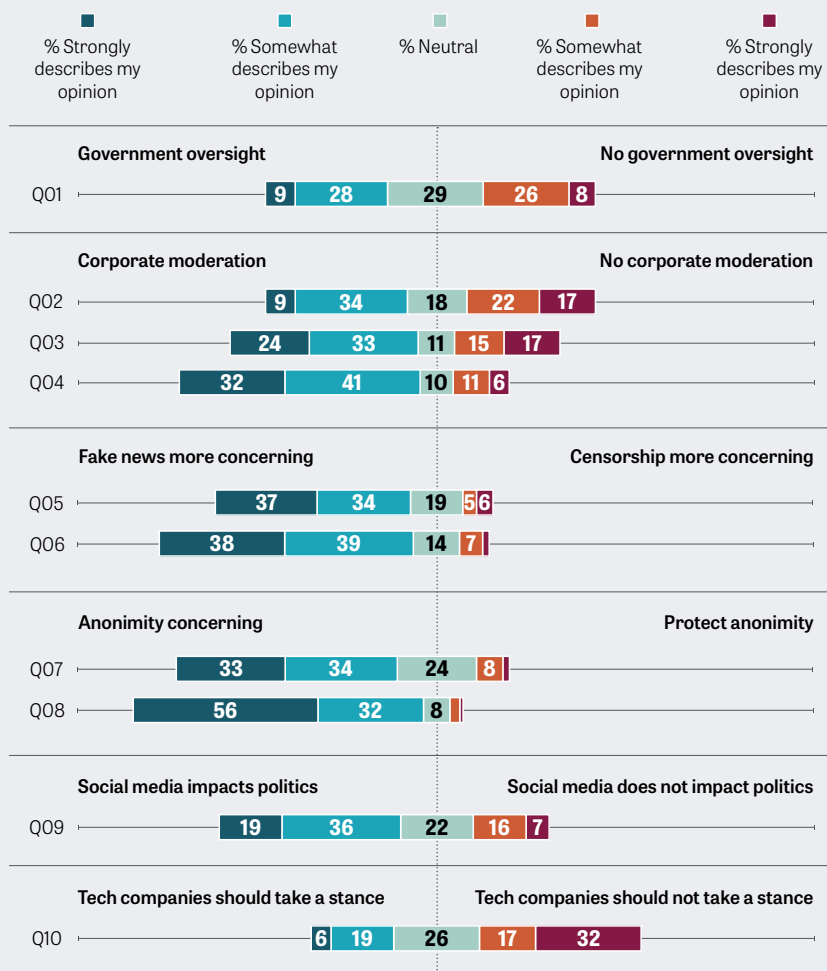
¹² For a characterization of “lean” of news sources, please see: *Media bias chart 9.0*. (2022, January). Ad Fontes Media. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from https://adfontesmedia.com/static-mbc/?utm_source=HomePage_StaticMBC_Button&utm_medium=OnWebSite_Button; *AllSides media bias ratings*. (n.d.). AllSides. Retrieved February 2, 2022, from <https://www.allsides.com/media-bias/media-bias-ratings#ratings>

SEGMENT TWO

The Concerned Spectators

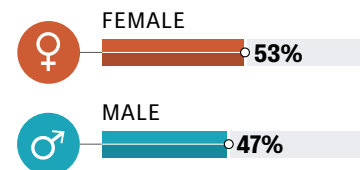
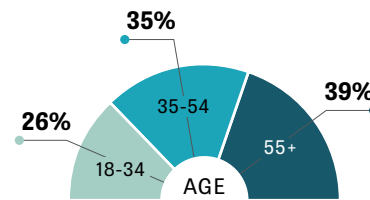
The policy attitudes that characterize this segment:

The **19% of Americans** who make up The Concerned Spectators segment support some government regulation but prefer that social media companies do more to moderate content on their platforms. They lean toward weighing the potential harms of online content and anonymity as being more important than protecting free expression online. They believe social media has an impact on politics but *do not* think major tech companies should take a stand on political and social issues.

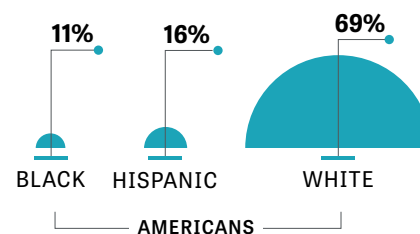


Note: Values under 5% are not displayed.

Americans in this segment are:



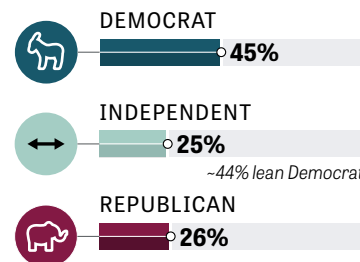
Live mostly in a **small town** or **suburban area**



Average household income:

- 30% <\$48K
- 35% \$48K - \$90K
- 35% \$90K+

44% college graduates



Least active in civic behavior online in the past year (most likely to report “never” sharing info on social media, liking political posts, using political hashtag)

They get their news from:

31% network news
(e.g., CBS, NBC, ABC)

31% newspapers

25% local news

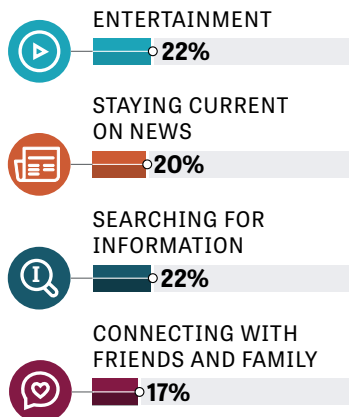
23% liberal-leaning news

17% radio

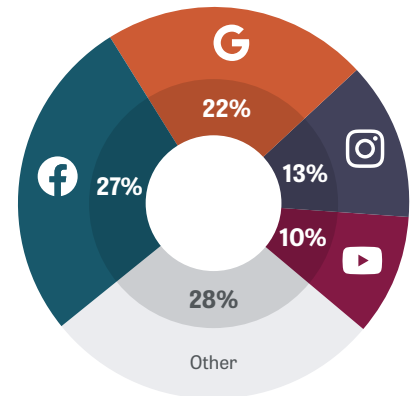
16% conservative-leaning news

13% news aggregators

They use the internet for:



Top internet sites:



A shared outlook on the state of the democracy, internet and technology:

Based on their answers to the other questions in the survey, the people in this segment are the second-most worried about hurtful discourse online after The Reformers. However, they are much less civically engaged. Thus, although they support some intervention online (likely driven by this concern), they do not hold as much explicit faith in government (i.e., regulation) to be the be-all-end-all solution and see social media company-set policies as another viable way to approach these issues.

Attitudes about the current state of the country, democracy and institutions:

- Compared to other segments, they are “middle of the pack” in their concern about government handling of technology issues, with 57% reporting that elected officials and political candidates pay “too little” attention to these matters.
- Compared to The Reformers, people in this cluster lean more toward distrusting official government explanations and reports by the news media of events and are slightly less critical of the current state of general political discourse in America.

Attitudes about the current state of technology and the internet:

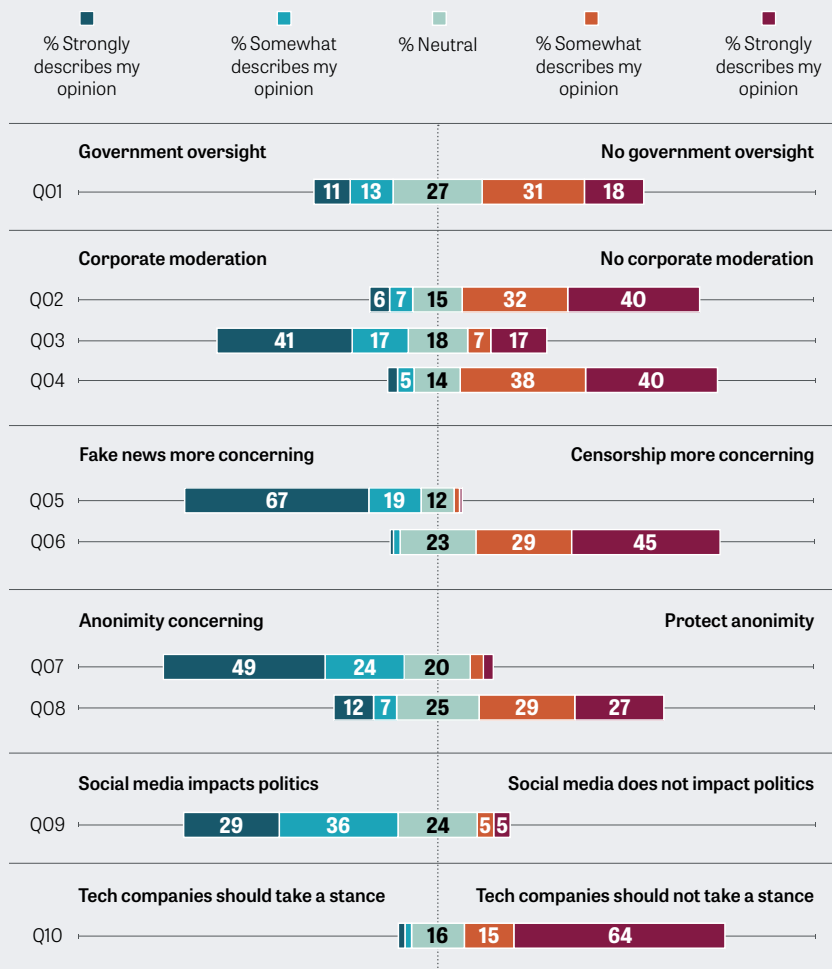
- More than half of this segment (55%) say the pace of science and technology is “just right,” while 26% believe it is developing “too fast.”
- The people in The Concerned Spectators segment are the *second-most concerned* about the spread of misinformation, hate speech, abusive or threatening language and bullying online.
 - They are *second-lowest* in their concern about limits to free speech online (22% report being “very concerned”).
- They are also second-highest in reporting that social media makes hurtful content (i.e., misinformation, harassment and threats and extreme viewpoints) much easier to spread.
- They are less affected by debates about politics or social issues on social media compared to other segments in terms of likelihood to vote, follow news or support causes on social media.

SEGMENT THREE

The Traditionalists

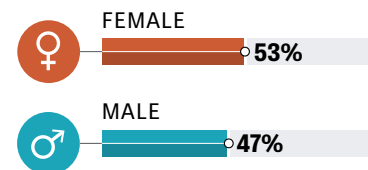
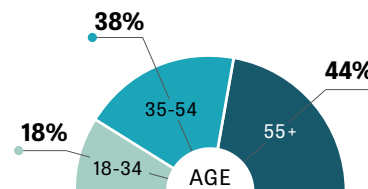
The policy attitudes that characterize this segment:

The **9% of Americans** who fall into this segment do not support government regulation but do support *some moderation* by social media companies and individual responsibility for what is posted online. They are concerned about protecting free expression but also express some concern about hurtful discourse online and support proof of self-identification on social media. They believe social media has an impact on politics but *do not* think major tech companies should take a stand on political and social issues.

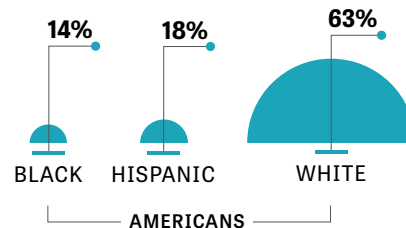


Note: Values under 5% are not displayed.

Americans in this segment are:



Live mostly in a small town or suburban area, but also **highest rural**

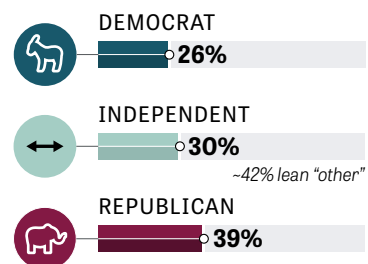


Average household income:

32% <\$48K
36% \$48K - \$90K
32% \$90K+

Lowest education:

31% college graduates



Less active in civic behavior online in the past year (mostly share or like posts about politics posted by others)

They get their news from:

34% network news
(e.g., CBS, NBC, ABC)

28% conservative-leaning news
(Fox News)

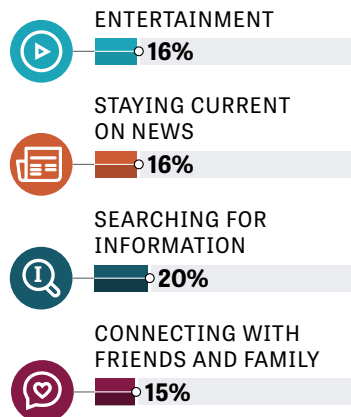
24% newspapers

21% local news

19% liberal-leaning news
(CNN highest)

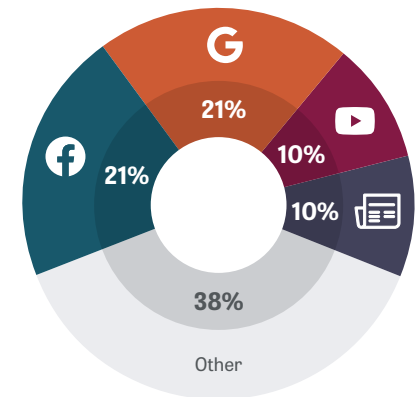
13% news aggregators

They use the internet for:



Top internet sites:

Second-lowest users of social media overall



A shared outlook on the state of the democracy, internet and technology:

Based on their answers to the other questions in the survey, The Traditionalists segment holds tension between supporting free expression and feeling some concern about harmful discourse online. They do not see government regulation as “the answer,” but in recognizing the potential harm of hurtful content, they are more open to some moderation and limits to anonymity online. Overall, they are lower in civic activity, consuming news and actively using the internet for social media.

Attitudes about the current state of the country, democracy and institutions:

- The people in this segment are second-highest in recognizing the government promoting a “free and open market” and people being allowed to “express political views freely” as absolutely essential to American democracy (42% and 68%, respectively).
- They are also second-highest in distrusting official government explanations of events (62%) and reporting on events by the news media (67%).

Attitudes about the current state of technology and the internet:

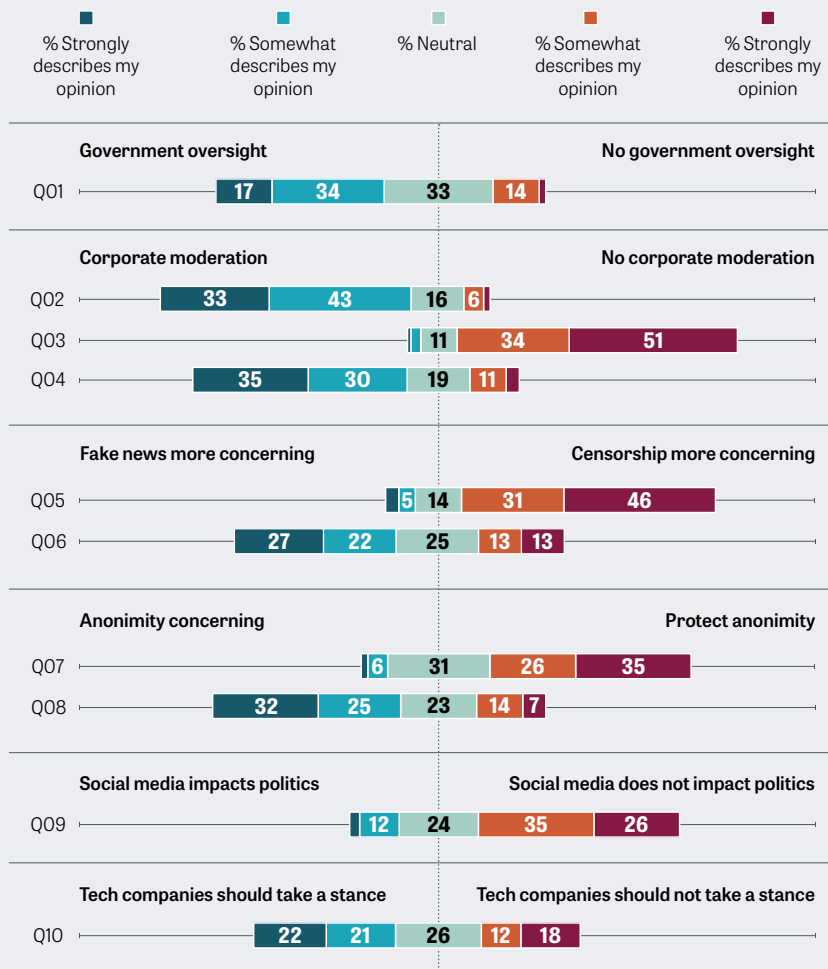
- Seventy-five percent say the internet divides us more than it brings us together — second-highest after The Individualists.
- Forty-eight percent of this segment say the pace of science and technology is “just right”; 33% believe it is developing “too fast.”
 - This segment is tied with The Unplugged and Ambivalent for the second-highest reported rate of “too fast,” after The Individualists.
- Eighty percent distrust the information they see on social media.
- They express a great deal of concern about all potential pitfalls of the internet, including what major technology companies are doing with personal data and hurtful discourse online (i.e., misinformation and online bullying). But they are equally worried about hate speech and other abusive or threatening language (50% are “very concerned”) and free speech online (50%).
- They are not as inclined as the previous two segments to think that social media is making the spread of hurtful content online “much easier” — though they still say it does make it easier to spread overall.

SEGMENT FOUR

The Unplugged and Ambivalent

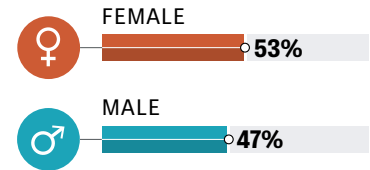
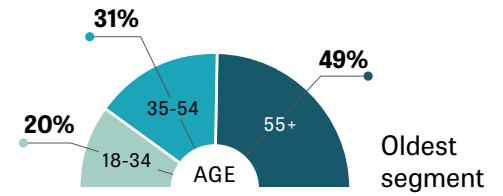
The policy attitudes that characterize this segment:

Only about **4% of Americans** fall into this segment, who hold the most mixed and inconsistent attitudes about internet regulation. They believe everyone should take some responsibility for regulating online content — government, companies and individuals. They simultaneously express concern about hurtful content online and the importance of free expression and support protecting anonymity online — all while recognizing its potential for harm. They are the only cluster that believes social media does not have an impact on politics yet supports major technology companies taking a position on political and social issues.

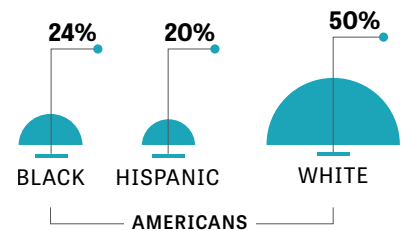


Note: Values under 5% are not displayed.

Americans in this segment are:



Live mostly in a **small town** or **suburban area**

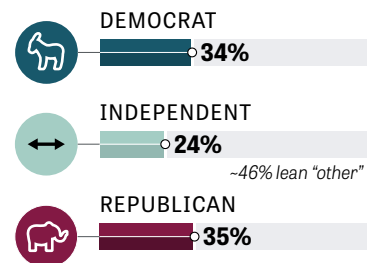


Average household income:

- 32% <\$48K
- 32% \$48K - \$90K
- 36% \$90K+

Second-lowest education:

32% college graduates



Least active in civic behavior

online over the past year

They get their news from:

Lowest consumers of news (63% daily)

57% network news (CBS highest)

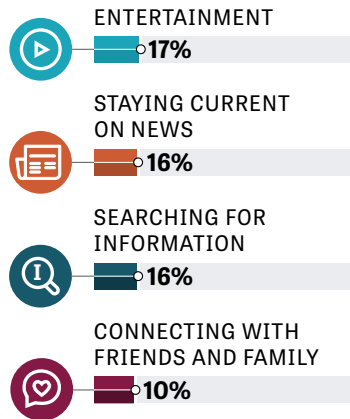
52% newspaper

15% local news

15% conservative-leaning (Fox News)

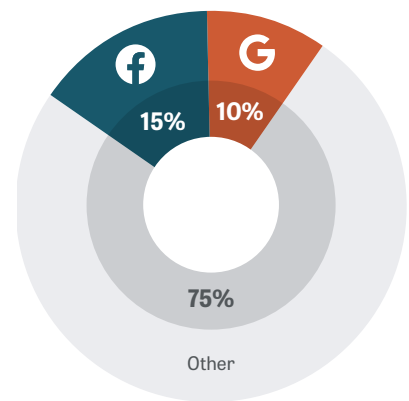
They use the internet for:

Lowest users of the internet overall (84% daily)



Top internet sites:

Lowest users of social media overall (40%)



A shared outlook on the state of the democracy, internet and technology:

Based on their answers to the other questions in the survey, The Unplugged and Ambivalent group's attitudes about regulation may be less driven by concern about hurtful discourse or attitudes about the state of the country, and more by being the *lowest* users of the internet and social media compared to the other segments. They are the only segment that says social media *does not* have an impact on real-world politics.

Attitudes about the current state of the country, democracy and institutions:

- The Unplugged and Ambivalent segment has some of the lowest ratings for democratic ideals as “absolutely essential” in America. Only 46% say news organizations being “free from government interference” is absolutely essential.
- The people in this segment are the most likely to agree that political debate can happen without questioning people's patriotism (29% agree or strongly agree).

Attitudes about the current state of technology and the internet:

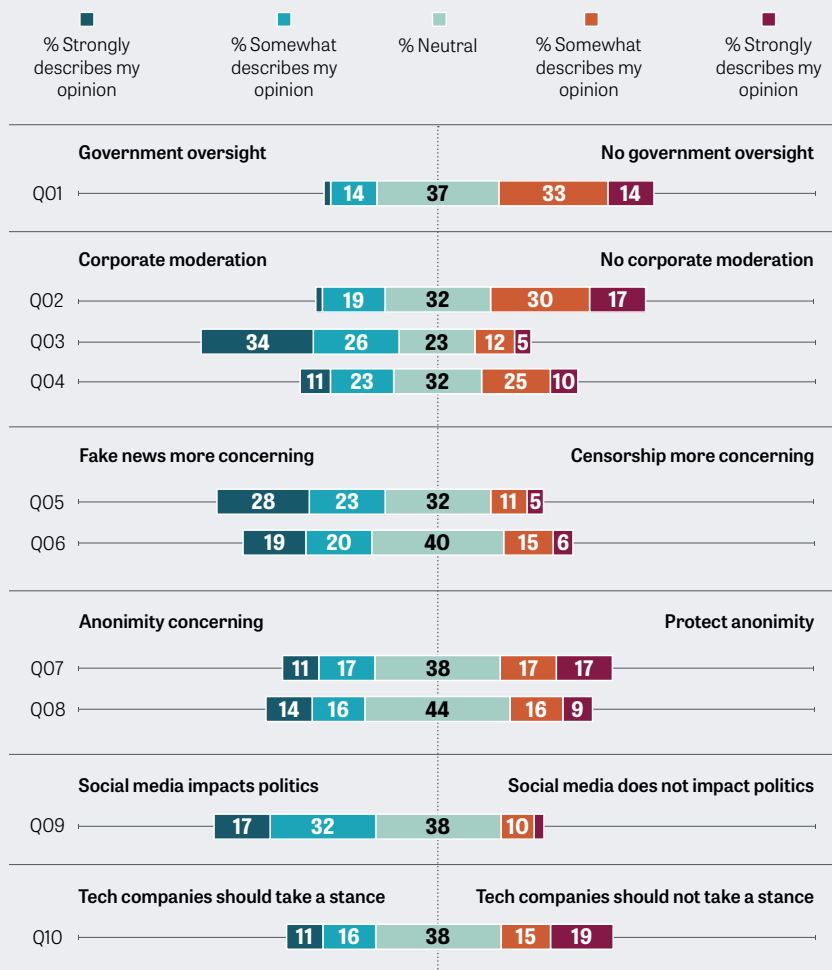
- Overall, the people in this segment are the most unfamiliar with various technologies or internet-based systems (like algorithms or content moderation) and thus have more neutral attitudes about their impact on society.
- Fifty-one percent say the pace of science and technology is “just right,” while 33% believe it is developing “too fast.” This segment ties The Traditionalists for the second-highest reported rate of “too fast,” after The Individualists.
- Beyond being some of the least engaged in political activity online in the past year, this segment is universally the most likely to report the activities as “not applicable” or “I don't use this,” ranging between 10% and 20% across various ways of participating in politics online.
- Fifteen percent say they “don't know” whether the internet divides us more than brings us together.
- In response to political debates on social media, Americans in this segment say they are more likely to connect with others (friends, family, social groups) than other segments but are more neutral when it comes to whether debates on social media motivate (or demotivate) them toward other political behavior.

SEGMENT FIVE

The Unfazed Digital Natives

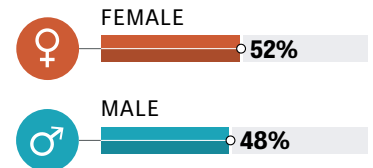
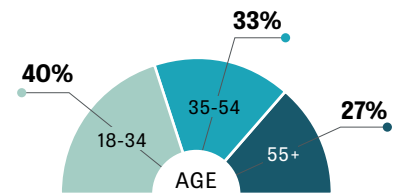
The policy attitudes that characterize this segment:

The **19% of Americans** who fall into this segment do not support government regulation but favor individual responsibility and social media companies moderating some content on their platforms. They recognize the harms of online content, the importance of free expression and lean toward protecting anonymity online. They believe social media impacts politics but prefer that tech companies not take a stand on political and social issues.

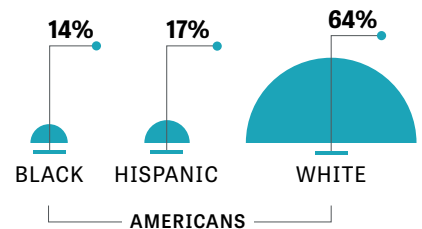


Note: Values under 5% are not displayed.

Americans in this segment are:



Live mostly in **suburbs or small towns**, but also **second highest urban**

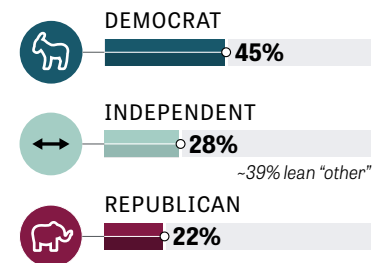


Lowest household income:

- 36% <\$48K
- 30% \$48K - \$90K
- 35% \$90K+

Second-highest educated:

47% college graduates



Average participation in civic activities online in the past year

They get their news from:

32% newspapers

28% network news (CBS highest)

21% liberal-leaning (CNN highest)

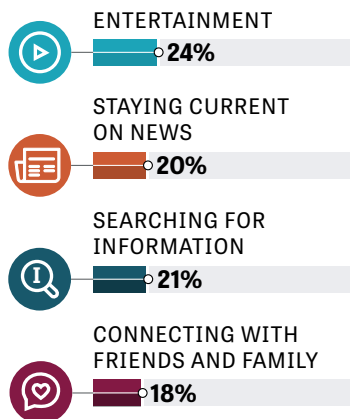
15% radio

12% conservative-leaning (Fox News highest)

11% news aggregators

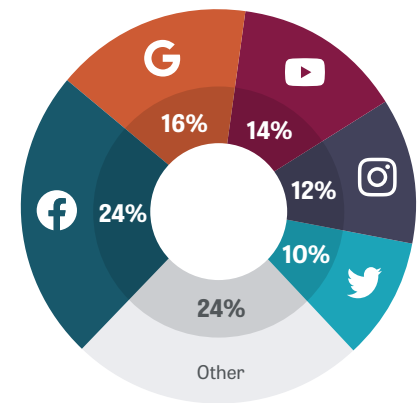
10% social media

They use the internet for:



Top internet sites:

Second-highest users of social media overall (54%)



A shared outlook on the state of the democracy, internet and technology:

Based on their answers to the other questions in the survey, The Unfazed Digital Natives group is very active on the internet. They report using the internet mostly for entertainment, which may help contextualize why they lean away from government intervention and show lower levels of concern about the state of discourse on the internet. Overall, they hold mostly neutral attitudes toward technology. They also do not have as clear a stance on the state of the country compared to other clusters.

Attitudes about the current state of the country, democracy and institutions:

- The people in this segment’s evaluations of various democratic ideals being “absolutely essential” in America fall roughly in the middle. But they are the least likely segment to say the government promoting a “free and open market” is absolutely essential (26%).
- They are the most apathetic segment in assessing the state of the country today, with the highest-reported “neither agree nor disagree” for various evaluations, such as official government explanations of events (39%) and reports of events by the news media (35%) cannot be trusted.

Attitudes about the current state of technology and the internet:

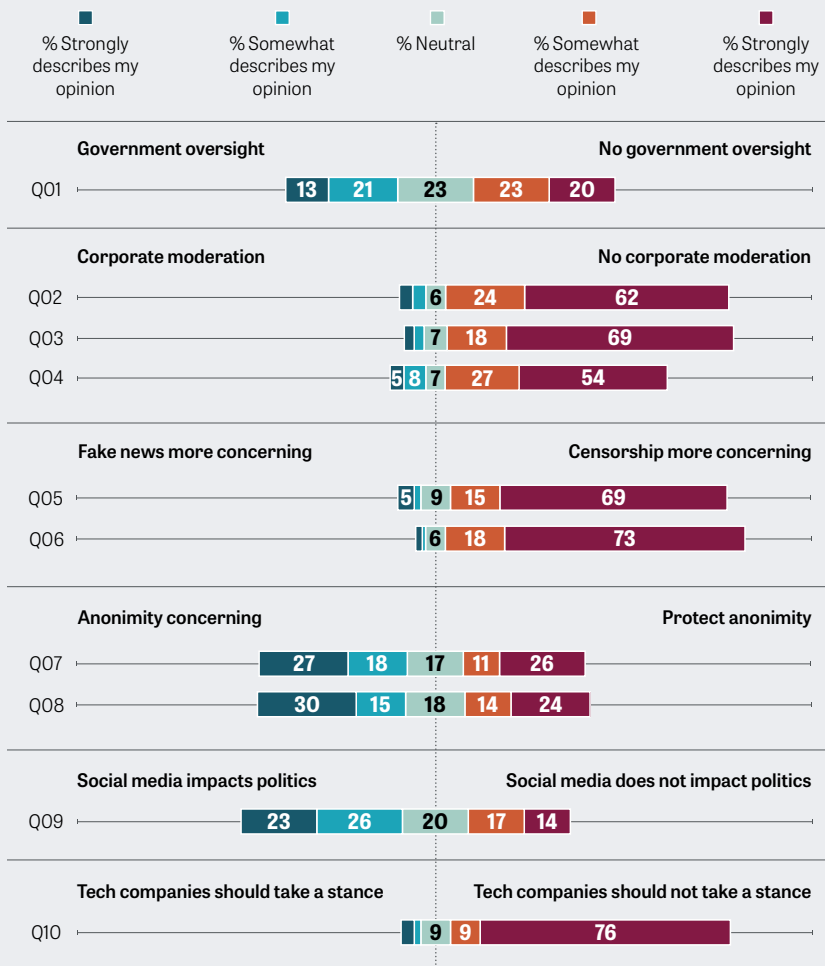
- More than half of The Unfazed Digital Natives think the pace of science and technology is “just right.” The other half expresses mixed feelings, with 24% reporting the pace is “too slow” and 21% saying it is “too fast.”
- The people in this segment report some of the lowest levels of being “very concerned” about the size and power of major technology companies (25%), how personal data is used on the internet (53%), online bullying (45%) and the general tone of interactions online (22%).
- Debates about political or social issues on social media also affect them less than people in most other segments.
- Overall, they hold slightly less-negative views about the impact of various technologies on society.
- They are much less concerned about bias in social media feeds and internet searches compared to other groups and express more concern about other people’s social media feeds being biased (53%) than their own (21%).
- Thirty-two percent say the social media they use most often has “a great deal” of bias; only 21% say the search engine they use most often has a great deal of bias.

SEGMENT SIX

The Individualists

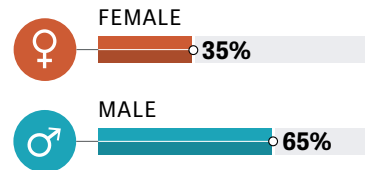
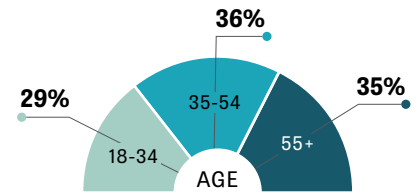
The policy attitudes that characterize this segment:

The **19% of Americans** who fall into this segment support individual responsibility for content online above all, and when forced to choose between social media company moderation or government regulation, they choose moderation. In all areas, they are most concerned about protecting free expression and preventing censorship, though they do express some concern about the harms of anonymity and lean toward proof of self-identification online. They see social media as having an impact on politics but do not think tech companies should take a stance on political or social issues.

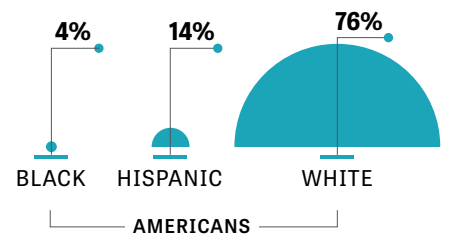


Note: Values under 5% are not displayed.

Americans in this segment are:



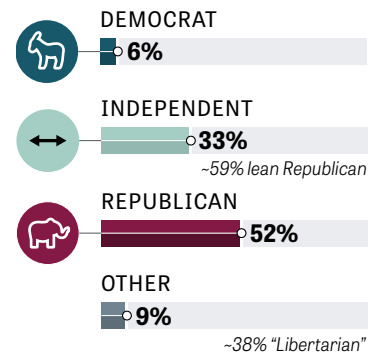
Live mostly in a **small town** or **suburban area**



Second wealthiest:

41% household income \$90K+

37% college graduates



Slightly more likely to have participated in civic activity online in the past year

They get their news from:

54% conservative-leaning
(Fox News, Newsmax)

- 18% local news
- 17% newspapers
- 13% network news
- 11% news aggregators

A shared outlook on the state of the democracy, internet and technology:

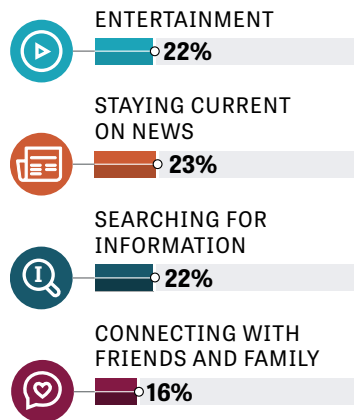
Based on their answers to the other questions in the survey, The Individualists report the highest levels of viewing elected officials as doing “too little” about issues of technology. Yet, based on their perceptions of the state of the country and attitudes about technology, this may not refer to combating harmful discourse online (like it does for other segments). Their biggest areas of concern are the size and power of tech companies, how personal data is being used and the protection of free expression. Their lack of support for any kind of intervention from the government (or from social media companies) aligns with their rating those characteristics of democracy most emphasizing freedom from government as “absolutely essential.”

Attitudes about the current state of the country, democracy and institutions:

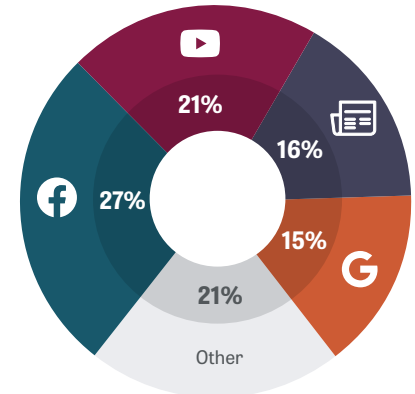
- Seventy-four percent say elected officials and political candidates pay “too little” attention to issues dealing with technology or major technology companies — the highest percentage across segments.
- The Individualists are highest in rating democratic ideals that most exemplify freedom from government involvement as being “absolutely essential” in America.
 - Sixty-six percent say the government promoting a “free and open market” is absolutely essential.
 - Eighty-nine percent say people being allowed to “express political views freely” is absolutely essential.
 - Seventy-three percent report news organizations being “free from government interference” as absolutely essential.
 - Only 10% say it is absolutely essential that “the government provides aid for those who need it.”
- The people in this segment are also the most likely to agree that accounts of events provided by the government and news media cannot be trusted (79% and 87% agree, respectively).

They use the internet for:

Most likely to report using internet for “news”



Top internet sites:



- They are second-highest — tied with The Reformers segment — in concern that America’s political leaders generally share a common understanding of what is true (77% disagree), and political debate happens without questioning people’s patriotism (71% disagree).

Attitudes about the current state of technology and the internet:

- Thirty-four percent agree that science and technology are moving “too fast” — the highest percentage across segments.
- Seventy-six percent say the internet divides us more than brings us together — the highest percentage across segments. They also express the highest levels of distrust toward major technology companies (75%) and the information they see on social media (87%).
- They are mostly concerned about free speech online (76% are “very concerned”), the size and power of technology companies (67% very concerned) and how those companies are using personal data online (78% very concerned).
- The people in this segment are the least concerned about harmful discourse online, such as misinformation (only 25% are very concerned), hate speech or other abusive language (17% very concerned) and online bullying (25% very concerned). The Individualists also report the lowest levels of belief that social media makes hurtful content online “much easier” to spread.
- Overall, they have the most-negative evaluations of the impact of various technologies and internet systems on society (i.e., social media, personalized algorithms and online content moderation) and report seeing the highest levels of “a great deal” of bias in the social media (69%) and search engines (60%) they use most often.
- They are the most likely to say debates about politics or social issues on social media make them “neither” more nor less likely to take other actions. But among those who say they are affected by these debates, most deter them from further social or civic activities.



A Wake-Up Call for Policymakers

There is a shared desire for elected officials to pay more attention to issues concerning technology.

Sixty-two percent of U.S. adults believe elected officials pay “too little” attention to issues dealing with technology or technology companies. This sentiment holds across racial identity and political groups as a shared call to action for the nation’s leaders to focus their energies on understanding and addressing Americans’ concerns about technology.

This finding, coupled the data analysis presented in this report, offer unique insights into Americans’ complex attitudes about internet technology in the context of our democracy. The findings show that about half of the population are more partisan, active users of the internet who see it as a critical forum for politics to play out. They exhibit high levels of concern about the discourse online and how harmful content is handled, either through regulation or strict protection of free speech. However, for the other half of Americans, including the youngest U.S. adults, the internet is a space for entertainment and connection to others, where politics — and harmful discourse — may interfere with those aims. These Americans are more ambivalent about limiting online content, weighing both the importance of free expression and the potential for harm in some online discourse.

When it comes to understanding public opinion on internet regulation and policy, one has to weigh not just what people think of the state of politics on social media platforms but also their outlook on democracy and what role these online media play in their lives overall. Much of the current public conversation about internet reform has been consumed by partisan binaries. Yet, this analysis reveals that half of Americans hold views and engage in different behavior online in ways that shape their perspectives on internet reform. These findings can serve as an important touchpoint for policymakers, industry leaders, civil society, journalists and scholars to ensure the diversity of American attitudes is more vividly represented in the ongoing public discussion. As our society debates the future ground rules of the digital public square, we are also debating the future ground rules for our democracy.

Understanding the depth and complexity of Americans' attitudes about online content regulation is critical for policymakers and industry leaders.



Methodology

Results are based on a Gallup Panel™ web and mail study conducted between July 30 and Aug. 26, 2021. The Gallup Panel is not an opt-in panel; it is a probability-based panel of U.S. adults whom Gallup randomly selects using address-based sampling methods or dual-frame random-digit-dial phone interviews. The survey was completed by 10,226 American adults aged 18 and older. The AAPOR5 response rate was 22%.

Gallup weighted the obtained sample to correct for unequal selection probability and nonresponse. Nonresponse adjustments were made by adjusting the sample to match the national demographics of gender, age, race, Hispanic ethnicity, education and region. Demographic weighting targets were based on the 2019 Current Population Survey figures for the aged-18-and-older U.S. population. For results based on this sample of U.S. adults, the margin of sampling error is ± 1.3 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. Margins of error for subgroups are higher. All reported margins of sampling error include the computed design effects for weighting.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

The full questionnaire, topline results, detailed cross tabulations and raw data may be obtained upon request. For questions about how the survey was conducted, please contact galluphelp@gallup.com.

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Appendix

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Do you think science and technology in recent years have developed at too fast, too slow, or just the right pace?	Too slow	21.73%	26.37%	18.51%	19.33%	15.89%	24.34%	17.44%
	Just right	52.69%	53.98%	55.24%	48.05%	50.80%	54.76%	48.63%
	Too fast	25.58%	19.65%	26.25%	32.62%	33.31%	20.91%	33.93%
I trust major technology companies.	Strongly disagree	18.75%	10.85%	9.67%	23.78%	15.92%	13.40%	44.10%
	Disagree	29.43%	30.67%	29.20%	27.44%	22.89%	28.13%	31.38%
	Neither agree nor disagree	35.29%	38.44%	42.71%	34.25%	34.09%	41.02%	17.62%
	Agree	14.72%	18.47%	17.27%	13.16%	21.24%	15.22%	5.08%
	Strongly agree	1.81%	1.57%	1.15%	1.38%	5.86%	2.22%	1.81%
I trust the information I see on social media.	Strongly disagree	40.71%	37.92%	33.97%	46.01%	30.79%	29.19%	63.20%
	Disagree	35.97%	39.97%	41.62%	34.03%	29.53%	38.49%	23.59%
	Neither agree nor disagree	20.52%	20.09%	21.98%	16.77%	27.74%	29.12%	11.30%
	Agree	2.11%	1.66%	2.01%	1.93%	9.69%	2.71%	0.82%
	Strongly agree	0.69%	0.36%	0.41%	1.26%	2.25%	0.50%	1.09%
The government provides aid for those who need it.	1 - Not at all essential	5.05%	0.94%	2.73%	7.39%	5.96%	3.41%	14.24%
	2	11.69%	3.45%	9.24%	17.06%	13.57%	9.33%	26.56%
	3	24.77%	12.15%	25.50%	34.93%	31.36%	26.16%	36.09%
	4	23.04%	26.82%	27.64%	18.48%	21.35%	24.95%	13.02%
	5 - Absolutely essential	35.45%	56.64%	34.89%	22.14%	27.75%	36.15%	10.09%
The government promotes a free and open market.	1 - Not at all essential	3.88%	2.58%	2.30%	6.14%	9.50%	4.93%	4.18%
	2	7.29%	8.54%	6.40%	9.71%	5.97%	8.97%	3.60%
	3	25.32%	29.21%	29.99%	22.39%	25.26%	30.40%	10.67%
	4	26.43%	30.78%	29.97%	19.85%	28.49%	29.23%	15.87%
	5 - Absolutely essential	37.08%	28.90%	31.33%	41.92%	30.79%	26.47%	65.68%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
People choose their leaders in free elections.	1 - Not at all essential	1.67%	0.49%	1.69%	3.70%	4.20%	1.73%	1.90%
	2	1.78%	0.77%	2.00%	3.35%	2.59%	2.53%	1.43%
	3	5.17%	2.74%	3.82%	7.67%	13.38%	7.99%	4.51%
	4	7.54%	5.31%	9.07%	10.35%	11.94%	9.59%	5.08%
	5 - Absolutely essential	83.85%	90.69%	83.42%	74.94%	67.88%	78.17%	87.09%
All adult citizens enjoy the same legal and political rights.	1 - Not at all essential	3.34%	2.20%	2.58%	7.19%	8.21%	3.61%	2.73%
	2	3.31%	1.41%	4.32%	5.76%	7.36%	4.41%	2.07%
	3	6.49%	2.96%	5.38%	9.89%	14.51%	9.98%	6.25%
	4	9.87%	7.41%	11.92%	8.58%	12.48%	11.75%	9.79%
	5 - Absolutely essential	76.99%	86.02%	75.80%	68.58%	57.44%	70.25%	79.16%
People are allowed to express political views freely.	1 - Not at all essential	1.79%	0.68%	1.47%	3.74%	3.40%	2.57%	1.78%
	2	2.62%	1.42%	2.70%	5.63%	5.75%	3.53%	1.35%
	3	8.38%	9.34%	9.59%	8.81%	13.67%	10.40%	2.22%
	4	19.92%	27.30%	24.54%	14.13%	20.94%	20.28%	5.77%
	5 - Absolutely essential	67.29%	61.26%	61.70%	67.69%	56.23%	63.22%	88.89%
The government protects individuals' right to engage in peaceful protest.	1 - Not at all essential	2.36%	1.27%	1.76%	5.16%	4.61%	2.88%	2.34%
	2	3.37%	1.74%	4.04%	7.05%	4.46%	4.22%	2.34%
	3	9.83%	4.65%	10.73%	13.58%	22.32%	13.53%	8.82%
	4	15.98%	14.67%	19.72%	15.42%	18.38%	15.59%	14.37%
	5 - Absolutely essential	68.45%	77.68%	63.74%	58.80%	50.23%	63.79%	72.14%
News organizations are free from government inference.	1 - Not at all essential	4.59%	2.42%	4.13%	8.85%	7.17%	5.59%	4.80%
	2	4.33%	3.61%	4.64%	7.13%	8.87%	4.77%	2.32%
	3	14.10%	11.54%	15.47%	18.11%	20.18%	17.96%	9.50%
	4	16.96%	18.92%	21.14%	12.23%	17.55%	18.09%	10.61%
	5 - Absolutely essential	60.03%	63.51%	54.62%	53.67%	46.22%	53.59%	72.78%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
We have to be tough on troublemakers, if we are going to keep law and order.	Strongly disagree	5.83%	7.45%	3.75%	4.66%	3.40%	8.04%	4.29%
	Disagree	13.27%	21.73%	11.66%	5.67%	7.28%	15.53%	4.32%
	Neither agree nor disagree	22.27%	27.05%	24.67%	13.09%	13.59%	26.68%	14.14%
	Agree	32.71%	29.33%	35.82%	33.74%	36.12%	32.63%	33.68%
	Strongly agree	25.91%	14.44%	24.10%	42.85%	39.61%	17.13%	43.58%
Even though we elect our leaders, a few people will always run things.	Strongly disagree	4.73%	5.13%	3.57%	4.60%	4.07%	5.53%	4.67%
	Disagree	12.60%	18.76%	11.72%	6.62%	8.31%	11.79%	8.50%
	Neither agree nor disagree	17.55%	18.78%	19.68%	15.87%	16.82%	20.12%	11.79%
	Agree	46.11%	43.83%	48.48%	46.40%	45.29%	47.16%	46.24%
	Strongly agree	19.00%	13.50%	16.56%	26.50%	25.51%	15.40%	28.80%
Official government explanations of events cannot be trusted.	Strongly disagree	3.62%	6.79%	2.39%	2.05%	2.59%	3.65%	0.86%
	Disagree	21.85%	38.01%	23.44%	9.78%	12.32%	21.08%	3.49%
	Neither agree nor disagree	32.55%	36.32%	38.34%	26.53%	34.16%	38.61%	17.04%
	Agree	25.03%	13.90%	25.61%	30.47%	27.91%	25.51%	38.16%
	Strongly agree	16.96%	4.98%	10.22%	31.17%	23.02%	11.15%	40.45%
Reports of events by the news media cannot be trusted.	Strongly disagree	5.06%	9.96%	3.87%	2.81%	2.25%	4.53%	0.80%
	Disagree	23.16%	40.50%	24.78%	12.14%	13.87%	22.81%	1.90%
	Neither agree nor disagree	26.39%	29.53%	31.72%	17.78%	32.18%	34.91%	10.27%
	Agree	21.01%	13.56%	22.10%	27.28%	24.58%	23.22%	25.52%
	Strongly agree	24.38%	6.45%	17.52%	39.99%	27.11%	14.53%	61.51%
Elections are free and fair.	Strongly disagree	14.76%	6.80%	11.04%	25.14%	14.07%	10.27%	30.73%
	Disagree	25.32%	20.44%	24.09%	29.86%	25.82%	21.97%	35.33%
	Neither agree nor disagree	18.41%	15.26%	19.55%	18.27%	22.73%	24.09%	15.56%
	Agree	28.28%	36.49%	33.85%	17.47%	21.15%	30.54%	14.12%
	Strongly agree	13.24%	21.02%	11.48%	9.26%	16.23%	13.13%	4.25%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
All adult citizens have equal opportunity to vote.	Strongly disagree	15.76%	27.17%	12.13%	8.33%	7.79%	17.91%	4.65%
	Disagree	27.18%	42.69%	31.19%	16.00%	15.56%	26.44%	7.31%
	Neither agree nor disagree	9.04%	6.46%	9.83%	9.83%	12.47%	14.67%	5.41%
	Agree	21.60%	12.01%	25.45%	28.46%	29.06%	22.38%	27.00%
	Strongly agree	26.42%	11.67%	21.39%	37.38%	35.12%	18.60%	55.62%
Political leaders generally share a common understanding of what is true, even when they disagree on policy.	Strongly disagree	30.10%	36.01%	21.89%	25.92%	19.51%	23.31%	40.47%
	Disagree	40.02%	40.99%	45.43%	36.67%	26.43%	40.85%	36.57%
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.69%	10.83%	17.62%	18.60%	22.65%	23.01%	10.98%
	Agree	11.77%	10.16%	13.84%	15.58%	21.00%	10.87%	9.25%
	Strongly agree	2.42%	2.00%	1.21%	3.23%	10.41%	1.96%	2.72%
Political debate happens without questioning people's patriotism.	Strongly disagree	28.32%	33.87%	23.22%	25.27%	16.72%	21.59%	35.68%
	Disagree	36.63%	38.63%	38.26%	31.83%	28.40%	37.47%	35.04%
	Neither agree nor disagree	17.78%	13.66%	18.40%	20.68%	25.56%	24.87%	13.30%
	Agree	12.59%	10.29%	15.65%	15.00%	16.56%	12.41%	11.23%
	Strongly agree	4.68%	3.55%	4.47%	7.22%	12.76%	3.66%	4.76%
Please read the following statements and indicate which of the following comes closer to your view: <i>When it comes to social media companies and the content users post on their platforms ...</i>								
Social media companies should make their own policies, without government regulation, about what people can post on their websites and apps. (1)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	11.78%	6.40%	8.27%	18.29%	2.21%	14.35%	20.08%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	24.39%	18.34%	25.98%	30.50%	13.57%	32.88%	22.88%
	3 Neutral	25.39%	15.82%	28.90%	26.94%	32.85%	36.63%	23.02%
OR The government should regulate and enforce the way social media companies take down false or harmful content or ban users. (5)	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	26.08%	38.77%	28.19%	12.84%	34.03%	13.90%	21.20%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	12.36%	20.67%	8.65%	11.42%	17.34%	2.25%	12.82%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Social media users alone should be responsible for the content they post online. (1) OR Social media companies should be responsible for the content their users post online. (5)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	23.15%	4.11%	16.65%	40.28%	1.77%	17.08%	62.14%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	20.10%	8.22%	22.36%	31.53%	6.27%	29.92%	23.77%
	3 Neutral	16.20%	11.58%	18.09%	15.22%	16.43%	31.75%	6.07%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	26.42%	44.20%	34.12%	7.09%	42.81%	18.96%	4.13%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	14.14%	31.89%	8.78%	5.89%	32.73%	2.29%	3.90%
Social media companies should identify information when it is false or misleading. (1) OR Individual users should be responsible for fact-checking content. (5)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	39.22%	79.98%	24.43%	41.18%	0.55%	33.77%	3.19%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	18.38%	16.73%	32.53%	17.27%	3.47%	25.72%	2.67%
	3 Neutral	10.69%	2.54%	10.98%	17.53%	11.49%	23.24%	6.89%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	10.82%	0.72%	14.99%	7.28%	33.93%	11.78%	18.26%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	20.88%	0.03%	17.07%	16.74%	50.56%	5.49%	69.00%
People should have the freedom to say whatever they want online. (1) OR Social media companies should limit abusive or threatening language online. (5)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	17.31%	0.72%	6.48%	40.12%	3.75%	9.78%	53.95%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	16.06%	1.07%	10.61%	37.71%	11.47%	24.55%	26.91%
	3 Neutral	12.64%	4.45%	9.93%	13.96%	18.93%	31.99%	6.58%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	22.60%	24.22%	40.65%	5.38%	30.42%	22.86%	7.99%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	31.39%	69.54%	32.33%	2.84%	35.43%	10.82%	4.57%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Fake news is a more serious problem than censorship online. (1) OR Censorship online is a more serious problem than fake news. (5)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	42.20%	75.76%	36.54%	66.73%	4.40%	28.39%	5.33%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	17.75%	14.83%	34.13%	19.08%	4.66%	23.30%	1.93%
	3 Neutral	14.93%	6.13%	18.76%	11.52%	14.38%	32.29%	8.91%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	7.96%	1.92%	4.90%	2.08%	30.84%	11.33%	15.20%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	17.16%	1.36%	5.66%	0.59%	45.72%	4.69%	68.63%
Expressing political views on social media has a significant impact on politics. (1) OR Expressing political views on social media doesn't have any real-world impact on politics. (5)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	25.52%	39.42%	18.53%	29.38%	2.81%	16.77%	22.73%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	32.36%	35.68%	35.87%	36.28%	12.17%	32.32%	25.94%
	3 Neutral	22.84%	14.90%	21.88%	24.20%	24.39%	37.88%	19.99%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	12.26%	7.00%	16.28%	5.40%	34.69%	9.82%	17.49%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	7.01%	3.01%	7.44%	4.75%	25.94%	3.20%	13.84%
People should have to provide proof of their identity when they create accounts on social media. (1) OR People shouldn't have to prove who they are when they create accounts on social media. (5)	1 Strongly describes my opinion	30.65%	42.63%	32.70%	49.44%	1.71%	10.55%	27.15%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	23.36%	25.70%	34.01%	23.51%	5.98%	17.44%	18.39%
	3 Neutral	23.75%	18.64%	23.90%	20.25%	31.49%	38.05%	17.13%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	10.96%	9.24%	7.62%	3.80%	25.85%	16.85%	11.46%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	11.27%	3.80%	1.77%	3.00%	34.98%	17.10%	25.87%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
<p>I'm worried about information online being removed or censored. (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>I'm worried about false and misleading information online. (5)</p>	1 Strongly describes my opinion	20.08%	0.35%	1.93%	45.49%	12.87%	5.93%	73.30%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	11.06%	0.89%	7.34%	28.65%	13.04%	14.98%	17.85%
	3 Neutral	15.85%	4.33%	13.75%	22.73%	24.74%	40.22%	5.96%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	16.70%	13.44%	39.22%	1.81%	22.28%	20.09%	1.29%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	36.31%	80.98%	37.76%	1.31%	27.07%	18.78%	1.60%
<p>Being anonymous online allows people to freely express themselves on social media. (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Being anonymous online makes it easier to post harmful or abusive content and bully people on social media. (5)</p>	1 Strongly describes my opinion	9.29%	0.50%	0.74%	27.19%	6.77%	9.47%	23.51%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	10.07%	1.89%	2.96%	28.57%	13.63%	16.39%	14.00%
	3 Neutral	18.63%	7.21%	8.12%	25.02%	23.07%	43.83%	17.61%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	18.42%	15.73%	32.31%	7.17%	24.98%	16.23%	14.69%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	43.58%	74.67%	55.88%	12.05%	31.55%	14.08%	30.18%
<p>Major technology companies should not take a position on political and social issues. (1)</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Major technology companies should be able to take a position on political and social issues. (5)</p>	1 Strongly describes my opinion	36.00%	18.55%	31.51%	64.45%	17.51%	18.77%	75.62%
	2 Somewhat describes my opinion	13.00%	10.52%	17.22%	14.73%	12.24%	15.46%	9.33%
	3 Neutral	23.75%	24.66%	25.86%	16.49%	26.43%	37.86%	8.73%
	4 Somewhat describes my opinion	16.10%	26.13%	19.17%	2.40%	21.37%	16.48%	2.40%
	5 Strongly describes my opinion	11.15%	20.14%	6.24%	1.94%	22.44%	11.43%	3.92%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Do you think elected officials and political candidates are paying too much, the right amount, or too little attention to issues dealing with technology or technology companies?	Too little	62.42%	66.74%	57.11%	60.76%	54.90%	52.32%	73.68%
	Right amount	23.98%	25.15%	29.66%	21.68%	27.82%	30.62%	9.85%
	Too much	13.61%	8.11%	13.23%	17.56%	17.28%	17.06%	16.46%
<i>How concerned are you about each of the following issues?</i>								
The size and power of major technology companies	Not concerned at all	3.69%	3.40%	2.93%	4.69%	3.84%	5.24%	2.83%
	Not very concerned	14.56%	14.65%	18.94%	13.76%	15.56%	19.05%	5.50%
	Somewhat concerned	45.25%	53.15%	50.79%	39.83%	41.92%	50.87%	24.73%
	Very concerned	36.50%	28.80%	27.34%	41.72%	38.67%	24.83%	66.94%
The way major technology companies use your personal data	Not concerned at all	1.17%	1.15%	0.86%	1.27%	1.45%	1.54%	1.06%
	Not very concerned	6.53%	6.76%	7.19%	5.82%	6.07%	9.08%	3.36%
	Somewhat concerned	30.44%	32.86%	36.29%	26.03%	26.22%	36.16%	17.85%
	Very concerned	61.85%	59.23%	55.66%	66.89%	66.26%	53.22%	77.73%
The spread of misinformation online	Not concerned at all	3.43%	0.11%	0.26%	2.52%	1.94%	1.16%	15.01%
	Not very concerned	8.87%	0.43%	3.86%	7.87%	10.97%	7.68%	28.58%
	Somewhat concerned	22.92%	7.23%	26.14%	23.67%	34.28%	32.91%	31.34%
	Very concerned	64.77%	92.23%	69.74%	65.93%	52.80%	58.25%	25.07%
Hate speech and other abusive or threatening language online	Not concerned at all	6.82%	0.26%	1.38%	7.12%	4.57%	2.50%	27.48%
	Not very concerned	12.90%	2.33%	6.92%	16.14%	14.71%	14.97%	31.59%
	Somewhat concerned	25.35%	16.64%	30.54%	26.30%	28.20%	34.13%	23.69%
	Very concerned	54.93%	80.77%	61.16%	50.44%	52.51%	48.40%	17.24%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Online bullying	Not concerned at all	5.71%	0.67%	1.41%	6.91%	3.76%	3.39%	20.27%
	Not very concerned	12.25%	4.24%	6.88%	13.75%	11.91%	15.50%	26.39%
	Somewhat concerned	28.68%	23.52%	31.91%	23.46%	25.54%	36.41%	28.83%
	Very concerned	53.36%	71.58%	59.79%	55.88%	58.79%	44.70%	24.50%
Free speech online	Not concerned at all	6.34%	9.52%	4.59%	7.02%	5.94%	5.70%	3.51%
	Not very concerned	28.24%	43.53%	34.12%	14.39%	18.34%	29.47%	5.69%
	Somewhat concerned	31.94%	33.15%	39.74%	28.82%	35.42%	39.63%	14.98%
	Very concerned	33.49%	13.81%	21.54%	49.77%	40.30%	25.20%	75.83%
The tone of online interactions	Not concerned at all	7.04%	2.28%	2.34%	6.57%	6.49%	5.87%	20.92%
	Not very concerned	20.70%	12.73%	20.70%	20.80%	16.43%	25.98%	28.73%
	Somewhat concerned	44.44%	47.55%	49.86%	43.08%	47.06%	45.96%	32.56%
	Very concerned	27.81%	37.43%	27.10%	29.56%	30.01%	22.20%	17.80%
How much, if any, bias do you believe there is in the social media you use most often?	None at all	1.80%	2.22%	1.74%	2.01%	2.87%	1.94%	0.76%
	Only a little	10.10%	13.82%	10.50%	9.88%	8.27%	12.15%	2.26%
	A fair amount	35.59%	42.64%	40.74%	29.52%	32.82%	42.42%	15.79%
	A great deal	40.47%	28.68%	34.99%	49.97%	39.48%	31.87%	68.99%
	I don't use social media	12.03%	12.64%	12.02%	8.62%	16.55%	11.63%	12.22%
<i>To what extent does social media make the following easier or harder for you:</i>								
Connecting with family and friends	Much easier	34.53%	35.91%	34.02%	36.23%	33.10%	34.74%	32.09%
	Easier	39.98%	41.08%	42.16%	36.25%	38.39%	40.17%	38.06%
	Neither easier nor harder	22.85%	20.94%	22.15%	23.05%	20.88%	22.91%	26.80%
	Harder	1.80%	1.68%	1.38%	2.42%	5.37%	1.47%	1.73%
	Much harder	0.84%	0.40%	0.29%	2.06%	2.26%	0.71%	1.32%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Staying engaged with your local community	Much easier	18.64%	20.18%	16.49%	22.41%	20.44%	17.91%	16.93%
	Easier	46.66%	48.60%	52.41%	40.93%	41.69%	45.93%	42.38%
	Neither easier nor harder	31.56%	29.20%	29.55%	31.93%	29.23%	32.32%	36.83%
	Harder	2.19%	1.48%	1.46%	3.29%	4.70%	2.74%	2.42%
	Much harder	0.94%	0.54%	0.10%	1.44%	3.95%	1.09%	1.43%
Connecting with people who share your interests or views	Much easier	24.61%	27.63%	22.22%	21.96%	23.46%	25.67%	22.86%
	Easier	46.42%	47.05%	48.63%	43.28%	41.60%	46.67%	45.46%
	Neither easier nor harder	25.89%	24.08%	27.49%	29.15%	25.05%	25.36%	26.16%
	Harder	2.04%	0.97%	1.39%	3.92%	5.83%	1.54%	3.16%
	Much harder	1.03%	0.26%	0.27%	1.70%	4.06%	0.76%	2.36%
Finding information you need	Much easier	22.71%	22.49%	22.25%	23.60%	23.99%	25.26%	20.17%
	Easier	35.81%	36.41%	37.90%	35.52%	39.86%	36.24%	31.58%
	Neither easier nor harder	31.78%	32.72%	31.83%	30.21%	23.13%	30.06%	34.60%
	Harder	7.02%	6.49%	6.53%	8.13%	7.81%	6.14%	8.55%
	Much harder	2.69%	1.90%	1.49%	2.54%	5.21%	2.30%	5.10%
Participating in politics	Much easier	9.27%	9.38%	6.80%	10.13%	11.90%	9.69%	10.26%
	Easier	25.15%	28.42%	24.36%	21.28%	22.88%	26.93%	21.48%
	Neither easier nor harder	52.65%	52.67%	57.45%	50.60%	52.00%	53.34%	48.14%
	Harder	8.26%	6.27%	7.85%	10.99%	7.64%	7.41%	11.40%
	Much harder	4.67%	3.26%	3.55%	7.00%	5.58%	2.63%	8.73%
Voting	Much easier	4.79%	4.21%	3.46%	7.97%	12.66%	4.66%	3.98%
	Easier	13.00%	15.80%	11.88%	12.54%	14.36%	16.39%	6.22%
	Neither easier nor harder	74.30%	74.23%	76.94%	67.19%	62.66%	73.63%	78.44%
	Harder	4.58%	3.55%	5.20%	5.67%	6.75%	3.58%	5.59%
	Much harder	3.32%	2.22%	2.53%	6.63%	3.58%	1.74%	5.77%
Freely expressing yourself	Much easier	11.92%	11.94%	10.44%	12.76%	13.75%	13.41%	11.05%
	Easier	31.37%	35.10%	32.99%	29.21%	33.73%	34.27%	21.45%
	Neither easier nor harder	42.46%	47.30%	47.24%	38.00%	34.53%	42.31%	34.04%
	Harder	8.38%	3.92%	6.37%	11.97%	8.97%	7.19%	16.69%
	Much harder	5.88%	1.74%	2.96%	8.06%	9.01%	2.82%	16.77%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
<i>To what extent do you think the following have a positive or negative impact on people like you?</i>								
Misinformation to spread	Much easier	68.93%	90.89%	74.94%	61.35%	50.29%	65.93%	39.19%
	Easier	20.91%	7.96%	21.66%	23.60%	28.53%	24.58%	33.66%
	Neither easier nor harder	8.57%	0.83%	2.56%	12.71%	12.49%	7.76%	24.78%
	Harder	0.92%	0.29%	0.48%	1.51%	4.54%	0.96%	1.26%
	Much harder	0.67%	0.03%	0.36%	0.83%	4.14%	0.76%	1.11%
People saying things that they wouldn't say in person	Much easier	77.61%	92.90%	79.92%	70.86%	61.66%	71.90%	63.87%
	Easier	17.91%	6.43%	18.14%	20.86%	23.18%	21.34%	29.52%
	Neither easier nor harder	3.36%	0.41%	1.43%	5.95%	7.75%	5.22%	5.86%
	Harder	0.70%	0.16%	0.30%	1.21%	3.43%	1.23%	0.63%
	Much harder	0.42%	0.10%	0.21%	1.13%	3.98%	0.32%	0.13%
People harassing or threatening others	Much easier	69.40%	87.96%	71.40%	62.76%	54.83%	64.07%	50.06%
	Easier	23.26%	10.83%	25.08%	25.28%	28.35%	28.09%	33.84%
	Neither easier nor harder	6.29%	1.08%	3.00%	9.69%	10.68%	6.26%	15.28%
	Harder	0.66%	0.07%	0.49%	1.29%	3.18%	1.05%	0.50%
	Much harder	0.39%	0.06%	0.03%	0.97%	2.96%	0.53%	0.31%
People interfering with elections	Much easier	46.42%	59.56%	42.38%	51.38%	36.76%	35.86%	40.34%
	Easier	29.39%	28.52%	34.28%	24.08%	24.21%	35.35%	23.27%
	Neither easier nor harder	22.52%	11.44%	22.21%	23.19%	29.64%	26.58%	34.26%
	Harder	0.94%	0.18%	0.67%	1.06%	3.90%	1.09%	1.59%
	Much harder	0.73%	0.29%	0.46%	0.29%	5.48%	1.12%	0.53%
People buying and selling goods and services	Much easier	55.34%	59.09%	54.88%	52.27%	49.42%	54.92%	53.15%
	Easier	36.71%	35.65%	39.03%	38.58%	34.17%	34.32%	38.04%
	Neither easier nor harder	7.25%	4.98%	5.78%	8.40%	11.48%	9.95%	8.06%
	Harder	0.42%	0.27%	0.19%	0.46%	2.68%	0.43%	0.41%
	Much harder	0.28%	0.01%	0.12%	0.29%	2.26%	0.38%	0.35%
Extreme viewpoints to spread	Much easier	64.09%	87.18%	67.89%	54.39%	46.94%	60.10%	36.58%
	Easier	24.89%	11.64%	27.51%	29.41%	30.96%	28.95%	35.18%
	Neither easier nor harder	9.56%	0.98%	4.27%	13.76%	15.63%	9.66%	25.00%
	Harder	0.88%	0.14%	0.26%	0.91%	4.14%	0.78%	2.11%
	Much harder	0.58%	0.05%	0.07%	1.54%	2.33%	0.51%	1.13%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Which of the following concerns you more?	The social media feed you see might be biased	23.80%	16.27%	24.28%	36.12%	29.08%	21.41%	30.13%
	The social media feed other people see might be biased	55.36%	73.51%	54.01%	42.26%	41.97%	52.73%	40.48%
	Neither concerns me	20.85%	10.22%	21.71%	21.63%	28.95%	25.86%	29.39%
How much, if any, bias do you believe there is in the results of the search engine you use most often?	None at all	6.45%	8.17%	7.26%	5.40%	6.03%	7.49%	2.47%
	Only a little	23.52%	31.06%	26.49%	17.48%	17.07%	26.78%	9.60%
	A fair amount	37.52%	40.77%	40.76%	36.01%	32.15%	41.45%	26.92%
	A great deal	29.82%	18.35%	23.11%	38.12%	30.55%	20.89%	59.65%
	I don't use search engines	2.69%	1.65%	2.38%	3.00%	14.19%	3.40%	1.36%
Which of the following concerns you more?	The results of your internet searches might be biased	36.46%	27.86%	36.18%	46.89%	37.53%	33.21%	48.24%
	The results of other people's internet searches might be biased	36.76%	45.55%	34.52%	27.79%	32.53%	32.89%	34.17%
	Neither concerns me	26.79%	26.59%	29.30%	25.32%	29.94%	33.89%	17.59%
Thinking about the political divisions in this country, do you think that the internet does more to bring us together or divide us?	Bring us together	7.40%	6.75%	6.61%	7.23%	12.69%	9.59%	5.97%
	Neither	12.67%	9.00%	11.77%	12.86%	13.38%	17.68%	14.06%
	Divide us	70.83%	74.16%	72.62%	75.26%	59.13%	59.18%	75.92%
	Don't know	9.10%	10.09%	9.00%	4.65%	14.80%	13.55%	4.05%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
<i>To what extent do you think the following have a positive or negative impact on people like you?</i>								
Search engines	Very negative	3.18%	0.92%	1.66%	5.46%	3.62%	2.00%	8.31%
	Somewhat negative	13.92%	7.79%	12.93%	18.04%	16.45%	9.36%	26.69%
	Neither positive nor negative	45.97%	46.25%	49.04%	50.16%	42.96%	45.52%	41.38%
	Somewhat positive	19.71%	24.31%	19.79%	17.59%	13.93%	19.81%	14.50%
	Very positive	14.39%	18.12%	13.88%	6.45%	12.43%	19.42%	8.23%
	I'm not familiar with this	2.84%	2.62%	2.69%	2.30%	10.62%	3.88%	0.89%
Social media	Very negative	17.62%	14.79%	13.70%	22.20%	13.26%	11.27%	31.22%
	Somewhat negative	35.96%	39.21%	40.76%	33.11%	28.17%	32.31%	32.61%
	Neither positive nor negative	24.94%	21.81%	25.27%	27.70%	30.17%	29.92%	22.02%
	Somewhat positive	16.57%	19.60%	15.97%	12.21%	15.06%	20.92%	10.48%
	Very positive	2.48%	2.19%	2.16%	2.94%	6.99%	2.65%	1.95%
	I'm not familiar with this	2.43%	2.41%	2.14%	1.84%	6.36%	2.94%	1.72%
Personalized algorithms	Very negative	17.60%	16.74%	13.01%	18.34%	13.66%	12.12%	29.66%
	Somewhat negative	31.27%	34.69%	31.33%	24.71%	24.46%	31.03%	30.72%
	Neither positive nor negative	27.94%	24.79%	29.07%	36.34%	29.50%	31.80%	23.39%
	Somewhat positive	11.91%	13.55%	12.61%	8.26%	12.85%	13.63%	8.48%
	Very positive	1.41%	1.19%	1.01%	1.76%	4.41%	1.64%	1.16%
	I'm not familiar with this	9.87%	9.05%	12.97%	10.60%	15.12%	9.78%	6.59%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Smart devices/Smart technology	Very negative	6.57%	4.99%	4.58%	7.43%	8.22%	4.89%	12.07%
	Somewhat negative	18.76%	14.87%	19.69%	20.19%	17.74%	16.84%	25.36%
	Neither positive nor negative	30.10%	27.66%	28.52%	38.00%	29.05%	33.70%	28.25%
	Somewhat positive	28.94%	34.57%	32.82%	22.80%	22.09%	28.49%	21.00%
	Very positive	12.40%	14.77%	11.15%	8.94%	15.80%	12.22%	11.13%
	I'm not familiar with this	3.22%	3.14%	3.24%	2.64%	7.09%	3.85%	2.18%
NFTs (non-fungible tokens)	Very negative	7.88%	8.71%	6.40%	7.54%	7.30%	9.04%	7.20%
	Somewhat negative	5.78%	5.38%	6.48%	7.28%	5.94%	6.35%	4.36%
	Neither positive nor negative	31.68%	31.79%	28.95%	30.87%	33.34%	35.28%	30.69%
	Somewhat positive	2.49%	2.01%	2.11%	3.66%	4.91%	2.92%	2.15%
	Very positive	1.13%	0.70%	0.47%	1.41%	2.19%	0.26%	3.01%
	I'm not familiar with this	51.04%	51.41%	55.60%	49.23%	46.32%	46.16%	52.59%
Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act	Very negative	6.15%	2.13%	2.92%	8.52%	6.56%	2.66%	18.07%
	Somewhat negative	7.05%	6.02%	5.04%	7.94%	8.02%	5.43%	11.72%
	Neither positive nor negative	18.73%	15.33%	17.23%	26.84%	22.25%	22.67%	16.95%
	Somewhat positive	7.53%	8.46%	7.87%	6.19%	7.50%	9.24%	4.61%
	Very positive	3.54%	2.97%	2.92%	3.13%	4.73%	4.19%	4.37%
	I'm not familiar with this	57.00%	65.09%	64.02%	47.37%	50.95%	55.79%	44.28%
Targeted advertising	Very negative	16.26%	16.17%	12.59%	19.04%	14.49%	13.29%	22.22%
	Somewhat negative	34.29%	38.94%	37.14%	29.16%	24.63%	30.65%	32.30%
	Neither positive nor negative	31.86%	28.56%	33.46%	34.04%	31.75%	34.99%	31.15%
	Somewhat positive	13.68%	14.02%	13.36%	12.90%	14.20%	15.21%	12.20%
	Very positive	1.55%	1.17%	1.06%	1.83%	5.69%	2.12%	1.06%
	I'm not familiar with this	2.36%	1.14%	2.39%	3.03%	9.24%	3.73%	1.07%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Cryptocurrency/Blockchain	Very negative	10.09%	12.27%	8.08%	10.47%	10.18%	9.96%	8.68%
	Somewhat negative	11.60%	12.75%	12.07%	10.38%	10.53%	11.65%	10.08%
	Neither positive nor negative	37.02%	38.10%	36.02%	34.94%	30.67%	38.11%	37.60%
	Somewhat positive	7.98%	6.43%	6.78%	7.44%	8.63%	9.67%	10.05%
	Very positive	4.09%	2.06%	2.40%	3.79%	5.49%	2.22%	10.76%
	I'm not familiar with this	29.22%	28.40%	34.65%	32.99%	34.50%	28.39%	22.83%
Online content moderation	Very negative	11.13%	2.52%	4.86%	14.44%	7.79%	4.36%	37.07%
	Somewhat negative	17.57%	9.53%	15.91%	24.15%	20.22%	16.43%	29.31%
	Neither positive nor negative	33.59%	33.20%	39.47%	35.76%	30.75%	41.72%	19.43%
	Somewhat positive	19.93%	32.55%	20.67%	9.28%	15.65%	20.62%	4.73%
	Very positive	3.58%	6.81%	2.38%	1.17%	7.35%	2.95%	0.80%
	I'm not familiar with this	14.19%	15.39%	16.71%	15.19%	18.24%	13.91%	8.64%
<i>In the last 12 months, how often have you done each of the following:</i>								
Sent an email or a social media post to a national, state, or local government official	Daily	2.73%	1.82%	1.98%	4.79%	4.54%	3.52%	2.73%
	Weekly	2.11%	1.74%	1.91%	3.94%	2.36%	1.81%	2.26%
	A few times a month	9.09%	10.68%	6.19%	9.37%	7.73%	7.25%	11.59%
	Rarely	33.97%	37.50%	31.55%	30.60%	28.01%	30.18%	37.65%
	Never	46.39%	43.59%	52.03%	44.54%	43.14%	50.87%	42.03%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	5.72%	4.67%	6.33%	6.75%	14.22%	6.38%	3.74%
Donated money online or via text message to a political candidate, party, or issue	Daily	0.23%	0.12%	0.00%	0.30%	0.81%	0.45%	0.25%
	Weekly	0.49%	0.14%	0.69%	0.74%	1.09%	0.75%	0.34%
	A few times a month	6.15%	9.30%	4.41%	4.73%	5.54%	5.73%	4.21%
	Rarely	28.38%	36.69%	23.62%	22.38%	20.18%	25.24%	28.09%
	Never	58.06%	48.97%	64.77%	64.28%	56.90%	59.41%	61.30%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	6.69%	4.79%	6.51%	7.56%	15.49%	8.43%	5.82%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Created, shared, or signed an online petition	Daily	0.60%	0.50%	0.52%	0.93%	1.77%	0.69%	0.34%
	Weekly	1.73%	2.04%	0.92%	1.93%	2.90%	1.23%	2.25%
	A few times a month	9.85%	12.60%	7.22%	8.94%	9.77%	8.87%	9.71%
	Rarely	46.61%	50.01%	46.07%	41.51%	31.68%	43.31%	50.88%
	Never	36.90%	32.22%	41.68%	41.13%	39.96%	39.95%	33.51%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	4.30%	2.64%	3.59%	5.56%	13.92%	5.96%	3.32%
Volunteered to help online with a political cause or a candidate's campaign	Daily	0.40%	0.47%	0.03%	0.50%	1.73%	0.46%	0.27%
	Weekly	0.57%	0.46%	0.25%	0.28%	1.31%	1.04%	0.59%
	A few times a month	2.80%	3.60%	2.19%	3.41%	3.44%	2.49%	2.03%
	Rarely	15.11%	20.77%	12.02%	12.76%	12.19%	13.69%	12.62%
	Never	74.50%	69.40%	78.83%	75.66%	65.31%	75.01%	78.91%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	6.62%	5.30%	6.67%	7.39%	16.02%	7.31%	5.57%
Started a political or cause-related group on social media	Daily	0.35%	0.15%	0.04%	0.35%	2.21%	0.49%	0.47%
	Weekly	0.59%	0.56%	0.35%	1.10%	1.29%	0.39%	0.67%
	A few times a month	1.34%	1.11%	0.96%	2.50%	2.96%	1.22%	1.30%
	Rarely	5.35%	5.44%	4.04%	5.51%	5.60%	5.78%	6.01%
	Never	83.29%	84.24%	85.14%	81.77%	72.43%	81.86%	84.38%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	9.08%	8.51%	9.46%	8.77%	15.51%	10.25%	7.17%
Followed a politician on social media	Daily	5.61%	6.09%	4.04%	6.10%	4.47%	4.21%	7.88%
	Weekly	5.76%	5.61%	3.52%	7.15%	5.68%	5.24%	8.16%
	A few times a month	15.17%	16.07%	13.52%	15.33%	13.94%	12.87%	17.98%
	Rarely	31.85%	33.45%	31.32%	31.48%	25.22%	31.10%	32.21%
	Never	35.05%	32.58%	41.35%	33.13%	38.07%	38.41%	29.29%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	6.57%	6.20%	6.24%	6.80%	12.62%	8.16%	4.47%
Shared your political opinion on social media	Daily	3.93%	3.10%	2.68%	4.89%	4.40%	3.14%	6.76%
	Weekly	5.87%	6.39%	3.35%	5.24%	3.49%	5.84%	8.46%
	A few times a month	12.36%	12.82%	10.45%	15.60%	10.67%	11.38%	13.39%
	Rarely	34.10%	36.47%	35.01%	31.05%	24.04%	32.72%	34.45%
	Never	37.02%	34.70%	41.89%	36.61%	44.30%	39.62%	31.70%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	6.72%	6.53%	6.63%	6.61%	13.11%	7.29%	5.24%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Shared political information posted by others on social media	Daily	3.72%	3.07%	2.13%	3.77%	3.76%	2.98%	7.12%
	Weekly	5.19%	4.84%	3.15%	5.55%	4.31%	4.70%	8.37%
	A few times a month	12.80%	13.43%	9.61%	14.49%	12.65%	13.65%	13.44%
	Rarely	28.55%	28.28%	30.75%	31.08%	22.07%	26.39%	29.06%
	Never	42.80%	43.99%	47.29%	38.70%	43.24%	44.56%	36.40%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	6.93%	6.38%	7.07%	6.40%	13.97%	7.72%	5.60%
Used a political hashtag	Daily	0.53%	0.38%	0.32%	0.54%	1.99%	0.31%	0.87%
	Weekly	1.18%	1.13%	0.50%	1.50%	1.04%	0.87%	2.16%
	A few times a month	3.10%	3.45%	1.98%	5.12%	4.03%	3.50%	2.12%
	Rarely	13.49%	16.82%	10.20%	11.44%	9.36%	13.06%	13.93%
	Never	70.58%	68.44%	75.64%	67.63%	64.76%	70.95%	71.05%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	11.12%	9.78%	11.36%	13.76%	18.82%	11.32%	9.87%
Liked a post about politics on social media	Daily	9.62%	10.17%	7.27%	7.27%	5.27%	9.03%	13.86%
	Weekly	10.06%	11.03%	7.24%	8.74%	6.10%	10.00%	12.97%
	A few times a month	18.46%	19.00%	16.59%	20.76%	16.99%	18.54%	18.62%
	Rarely	27.71%	27.18%	29.30%	32.00%	27.80%	25.85%	26.72%
	Never	27.08%	26.06%	32.63%	24.66%	30.61%	28.18%	22.26%
	Not applicable/I don't use this	7.07%	6.56%	6.98%	6.57%	13.23%	8.40%	5.56%
<i>Thinking about political and social debates between people on social media, would you say they have made you more or less likely to ...</i>								
Spend time with family	More likely	12.78%	9.15%	12.57%	19.61%	23.40%	12.08%	13.83%
	Neither	69.06%	65.71%	70.83%	69.09%	61.54%	69.75%	73.22%
	Less likely	18.16%	25.13%	16.60%	11.30%	15.05%	18.17%	12.95%
Spend time with friends	More likely	15.43%	15.85%	14.18%	18.14%	22.30%	15.41%	13.32%
	Neither	72.57%	70.12%	74.37%	72.47%	65.34%	74.08%	74.47%
	Less likely	12.01%	14.02%	11.45%	9.39%	12.37%	10.51%	12.20%
Post about political and social issues on your social media account(s)	More likely	20.75%	21.65%	16.83%	21.08%	18.67%	19.98%	24.37%
	Neither	44.16%	40.29%	47.02%	50.25%	50.77%	46.18%	40.87%
	Less likely	35.09%	38.06%	36.15%	28.66%	30.56%	33.84%	34.77%
Spend time with your neighbors	More likely	5.58%	4.77%	5.01%	8.35%	10.99%	4.72%	5.84%
	Neither	79.01%	77.50%	80.52%	75.94%	77.85%	80.66%	79.95%
	Less likely	15.41%	17.73%	14.48%	15.71%	11.15%	14.62%	14.21%

		Americans Overall	The Reformers	The Concerned Spectators	The Traditionalists	The Unplugged and Ambivalent	The Unfazed Digital Natives	The Individualists
Join community or social groups in your area	More likely	15.40%	18.12%	12.84%	14.63%	24.26%	15.38%	12.47%
	Neither	69.01%	65.48%	71.78%	69.30%	60.74%	70.64%	71.48%
	Less likely	15.59%	16.40%	15.37%	16.07%	15.00%	13.98%	16.06%
Use social media	More likely	16.73%	15.60%	14.67%	22.72%	21.17%	17.87%	15.53%
	Neither	51.14%	49.66%	52.48%	52.89%	55.87%	52.99%	48.40%
	Less likely	32.13%	34.74%	32.86%	24.39%	22.96%	29.14%	36.07%
Follow the news	More likely	38.60%	47.48%	38.28%	32.88%	39.04%	38.72%	27.64%
	Neither	39.03%	38.06%	40.51%	40.53%	38.20%	42.22%	35.17%
	Less likely	22.37%	14.46%	21.21%	26.59%	22.75%	19.07%	37.19%
Contact a national, state, or local government official about an issue	More likely	29.15%	35.05%	26.12%	22.76%	25.49%	26.71%	29.46%
	Neither	57.52%	55.34%	61.07%	56.95%	55.02%	60.01%	55.53%
	Less likely	13.33%	9.61%	12.81%	20.29%	19.49%	13.27%	15.01%
Volunteer to help online with a political cause or a candidate's campaign	More likely	13.62%	19.78%	9.77%	10.74%	9.63%	13.32%	10.44%
	Neither	66.22%	64.75%	68.69%	62.01%	63.17%	67.92%	67.01%
	Less likely	20.16%	15.47%	21.54%	27.26%	27.20%	18.76%	22.55%
Vote	More likely	47.65%	54.33%	45.02%	46.90%	47.34%	46.19%	41.82%
	Neither	48.52%	44.05%	52.13%	45.34%	45.71%	49.82%	52.62%
	Less likely	3.83%	1.61%	2.85%	7.76%	6.95%	3.98%	5.56%
Go to a protest	More likely	25.92%	40.54%	21.75%	15.15%	16.23%	28.03%	12.49%
	Neither	52.81%	47.97%	56.48%	52.28%	57.48%	54.53%	54.26%
	Less likely	21.26%	11.49%	21.77%	32.58%	26.29%	17.44%	33.25%
Donate to social causes	More likely	30.73%	47.08%	27.23%	19.15%	26.20%	32.20%	13.88%
	Neither	53.13%	45.25%	57.10%	55.48%	50.56%	54.25%	59.60%
	Less likely	16.14%	7.67%	15.67%	25.37%	23.24%	13.55%	26.52%
Donate to political candidates	More likely	21.35%	30.95%	15.96%	14.02%	17.44%	20.25%	17.42%
	Neither	55.80%	53.72%	58.13%	54.84%	55.09%	59.07%	53.93%
	Less likely	22.86%	15.33%	25.92%	31.14%	27.47%	20.68%	28.65%

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