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# Public Highly Critical of State of Political Discourse in the U.S.

*Reactions to Trump's rhetoric: Concern, confusion, embarrassment*

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# Public Highly Critical of State of Political Discourse in the U.S.

## *Reactions to Trump's rhetoric: Concern, confusion, embarrassment*

The public renders a harsh judgment on the state of political discourse in this country. And for many Americans, their own conversations about politics have become stressful experiences that they prefer to avoid.

Large majorities say the tone and nature of political debate in the United States has become more negative in recent years – as well as less respectful, less fact-based and less substantive.

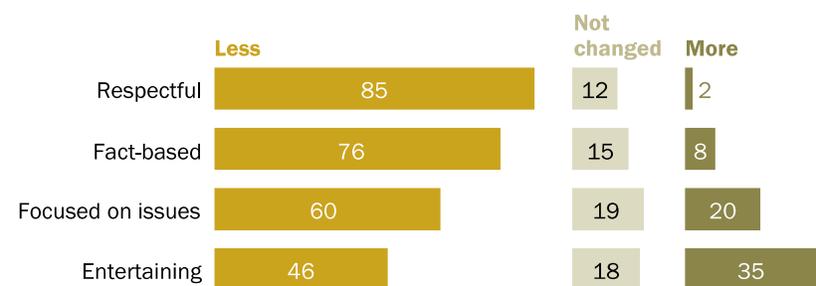
Meanwhile, people's everyday conversations about politics and other sensitive topics are often tense and difficult. Half say talking about politics with people they disagree with politically is “stressful and frustrating.”

When speaking with people they do not know well, more say they would be very comfortable talking about the weather and sports – and even religion – than politics. And it is people who are most comfortable with interpersonal conflict, including arguing with other people, who also are most likely to talk about politics frequently and to be politically engaged.

Donald Trump is a major factor in people's views about the state of the nation's political discourse. A 55% majority says Trump has changed the tone and nature of political debate in this country for

### Most Americans say political debate in the U.S. has become less respectful, fact-based, substantive

*% who say over the last several years the tone and nature of political debate in this country has become ...*



*% who say Donald Trump has changed the tone and nature of political debate in the U.S. ...*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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the worse; fewer than half as many (24%) say he has changed it for the better, while 20% say he has had little impact.

Perhaps more striking are the public's feelings about the things Trump says: sizable majorities say Trump's comments often or sometimes make them feel concerned (76%), confused (70%), embarrassed (69%) and exhausted (67%). By contrast, fewer have positive reactions to Trump's rhetoric, though 54% say they at least sometimes feel entertained by what he says.

Pew Research Center's wide-ranging survey of attitudes about political speech and discourse in the U.S. was conducted April 29-May 13 among 10,170 adults. Among the other major findings:

**Broad agreement on the dangers of "heated or aggressive" rhetoric by political leaders.** A substantial majority (78%) says "heated or aggressive" language directed by elected officials against certain people or groups makes violence against them more likely. This view is more widely shared among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents than Republican and Republican leaners.

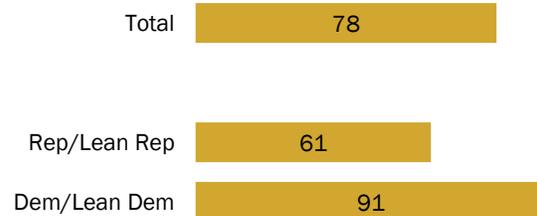
**Partisans demand a higher standard of conduct from the other party than from their own.**

Majorities in both parties say it is very important that elected officials treat their opponents with respect. But while most Democrats (78%) say it is very important for Republican elected officials to treat Democratic officials with respect, only about half (47%) say it is very important for officials from their party to treat Republican politicians with respect.

There is similar divide in the opinions of Republicans; 75% say Democrats should be respectful of GOP officials, while only 49% say the same about Republicans' treatment of Democratic officials.

**Large majority says 'heated' rhetoric by politicians raises risk of violence**

*% who say elected officials using heated or aggressive language to talk about certain people or groups makes violence against those groups more likely ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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**Uncertainty about what constitutes “offensive” speech.** As in the past, a majority of Americans (60%) say “too many people are easily offended over the language that others use.” Yet there is uncertainty about what constitutes offensive speech: About half (51%) say it is easy to know what others might find offensive, while nearly as many (48%) say it is hard to know. In addition, majorities say that people in this country do not generally agree about the types of language considered to be sexist (65%) and racist (61%).

**Majority says social media companies have responsibility to remove “offensive” content.** By a wide margin (66% to 32%), more people say social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms than say they do not have this responsibility. But just 31% have a great deal or fair amount of confidence in these companies to determine what offensive content should be removed. And as noted, many Americans acknowledge it is difficult to know what others may find offensive.

**Talking about Trump with people who feel differently about him.** The survey asks people to imagine attending a social gathering with people who have different viewpoints from theirs about the president. Nearly six-in-ten (57%) of those who approve of Trump’s job performance say they would share their views about Trump when talking with a group of people who *do not* like him. But fewer (43%) of those who disapprove of Trump say they would share their views when speaking with a group of Trump supporters.

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### Majorities say people do not agree on what is seen as racist, sexist language

% who say ...

It's hard to know what others might find offensive 48

% who say people in this country *do not* generally agree on what is considered to be ...

Racist language 61

Sexist language 65

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## What's OK – and off-limits – for political debates

While Americans decry the tone of today's political debates, they differ over the kinds of speech that are acceptable – and off-limits – for elected officials to use when criticizing their rivals.

Some language and tactics are viewed as clearly over the line: A sizable majority (81%) says it is never acceptable for a politician to deliberately mislead people about their opponent's record. There is much less agreement about the acceptability of elected officials using insults like “evil” or “anti-American.”

Partisanship has a major impact on these opinions. For the most part, Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say many of the insults and taunts are *never* acceptable.

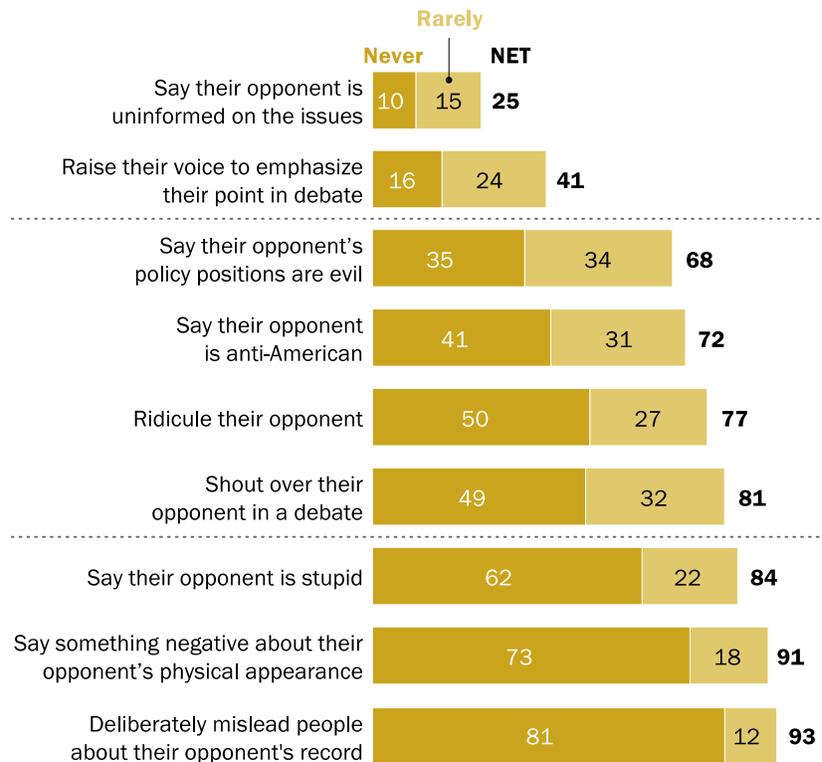
For example, 53% of Democrats say it is never acceptable for an elected official to say their opponent is anti-American; only about half as many Republicans (25%) say the same.

As with views of whether elected officials should “respect” their opponents, partisans hold the opposing side to a higher standard than their own side in views of acceptable discourse for political debates.

Most Republicans (72%) say it is never acceptable for a Democratic official to call a Republican opponent “stupid,” while far fewer (49%) say it is unacceptable for a Republican to use this slur against a Democrat. Among Democrats, 76% would rule out a Republican calling a Democratic

### Insulting an opponent's appearance is widely viewed as *never* acceptable; less agreement on use of ‘evil’

% who say it is \_\_\_ acceptable for elected officials to ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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opponent “stupid,” while 60% say the same about Democrat calling a Republican “stupid.” See Chapter 2 for an interactive illustration of how people’s views about the acceptability of political insults vary depending on whether or not they share the same party affiliation of the elected officials casting the insults.

## Large shares have negative reactions to what Trump says

Majorities of Americans say they often or sometimes feel a range of negative sentiments – including concern, confusion, embarrassment and exhaustion – about the things that Trump says.

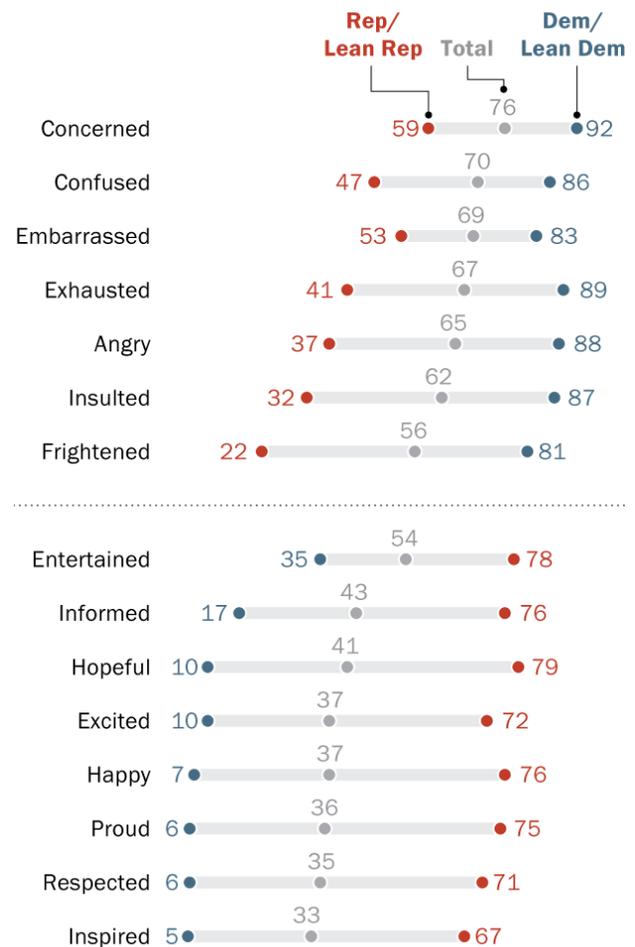
Positive feelings about Trump’s comments are less widespread. Fewer than half say they often or sometimes feel informed, hopeful, excited and happy about what the president says. A 54% majority says they at least sometimes feel entertained by what Trump says, the highest percentage expressing a positive sentiment.

Democrats overwhelmingly have negative reactions to Trump’s statements, while the reactions of Republicans are more varied. Among Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents, at least 80% say they often or sometimes experience each of the seven negative emotions included in the survey.

A 59% majority of Republicans and Republican leaners say they often or sometimes feel concerned by what Trump says. About half also say they are at least sometimes embarrassed (53%) and confused (47%) by Trump’s statements.

## Trump’s statements spur feelings of concern, confusion, embarrassment

*% who say Trump’s comments often/sometimes make them feel ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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By contrast, large majorities of Republicans say they often or sometimes feel hopeful (79%), entertained (78%), informed and happy (76%) and other positive sentiments in response to the things Trump says.

No more than about 10% of Democrats express any positive feelings toward what Trump says, with two exceptions: 17% say they are often or sometimes informed, while 35% are at least sometimes entertained.

## Republicans see a less ‘comfortable’ environment for GOP views

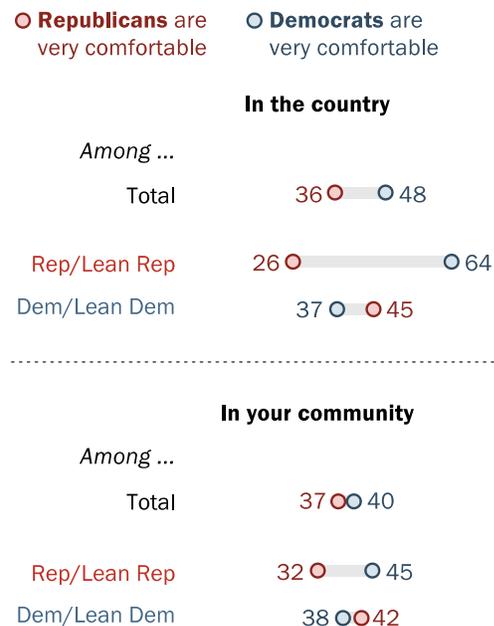
Republicans say that members of their party across the country are less comfortable than Democrats to “freely and openly” express their political views. In addition, Republicans are far more critical than Democrats about the climate for free expression in the nation’s educational institutions – not just colleges, but also community colleges and K-12 public schools.

Just 26% of Republicans say that Republicans across the country are very comfortable in freely and openly expressing their political opinions; nearly two-thirds of Republicans (64%) think Democrats are very comfortable voicing their opinions. Among Democrats, there are more modest differences in perceptions of the extent to which partisans are comfortable freely expressing their political views.

There are smaller partisan differences when it comes to opinions about how comfortable Republicans and Democrats are expressing their views in their local communities. Yet these opinions vary depending on the partisan composition of the local community. Republicans and Democrats living in counties that Trump won by wide margins in 2016 are more likely than those in evenly divided counties (or those that Hillary Clinton won decisively) to say Republicans are very comfortable expressing their views.

### Republicans less likely to say GOPers are ‘very comfortable’ voicing views

*% who say each group is very comfortable to freely and openly express their political views*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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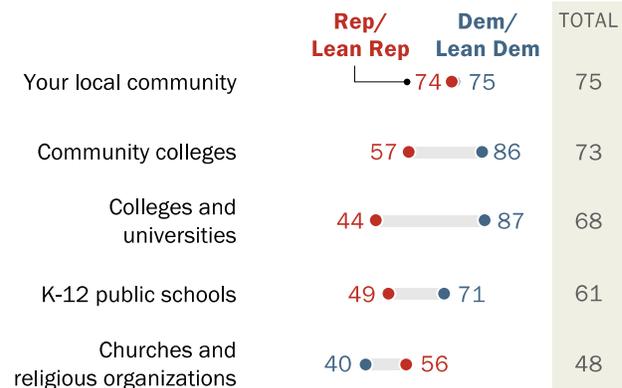
Republicans' concerns about the climate for free speech on college campuses [are not new](#). The new survey finds that fewer than half of Republicans (44%) say colleges and universities are open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints; Democrats are nearly twice as likely (87%) to say the same.

Republicans also are less likely than Democrats to say community colleges and K-12 public schools are open to differing viewpoints. By contrast, a larger share of Republicans (56%) than Democrats (40%) say that churches and religious organizations are very or somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints.

Members of both parties generally view their own local communities as places that are open to a wide range of viewpoints. Large and nearly identical shares in both parties say their local community is at least somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints (75% of Democrats, 74% of Republicans).

## Reps less likely to say colleges, K-12 schools are open to differing opinions

*% who say each is very/somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## 1. The climate for discourse around the country, on campus and on social media

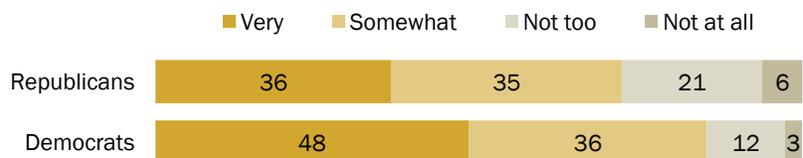
Seven-in-ten or more Americans say that Democrats, Republicans, liberals and conservatives are at least somewhat comfortable to “freely and openly express their political views” in both their local communities and in the country overall. But there are key partisan differences in these feelings – particularly in views of the national political climate, with Republicans especially likely to believe there is a more stifling environment around speech for Republicans than for Democrats.

Overall, Americans are more likely to see Democrats as comfortable expressing their views in this country than to say this about Republicans. While about half of the public (48%) says that Democrats in this country are “very comfortable” to freely and openly express their political views, a smaller share (36%) says the same about Republicans.

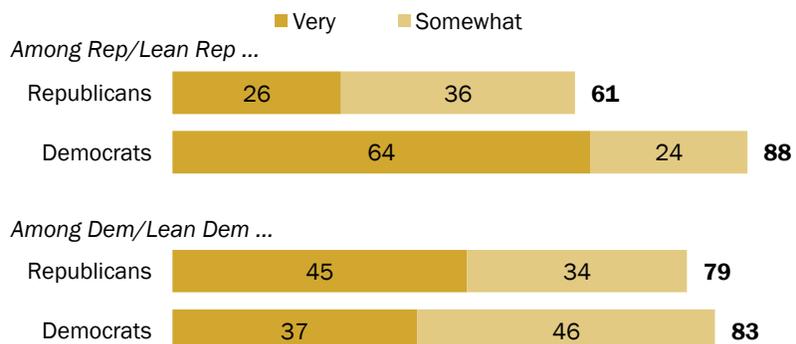
Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are especially likely to feel that Democrats and liberals are comfortable sharing their political views in this country – and also to feel that Republicans are *not*. Nearly nine-in-ten Republicans (88%) say Democrats are at least somewhat comfortable openly sharing their views, with 64% saying that Democrats in the country are “very comfortable” openly expressing their political views. By comparison, only about a quarter (26%) say Republicans in the country are very comfortable doing this (61% say Republicans are at least somewhat comfortable doing this).

### GOP perceptions differ over how comfortable Reps, Dems are to freely express their views in this country

*In general, how comfortable do you think \_\_\_ in this country are to freely and openly express their political views? (%)*



*% who say \_\_\_ in this country are very/somewhat comfortable to freely and openly express their political views*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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By comparison, there are only modest differences in Democratic perceptions of partisans' comfort with political expression in the country. Roughly eight-in-ten Democrats say Republicans are at least somewhat comfortable freely and openly expressing their opinions in this country – roughly the same share as say this about Democrats (79% and 83%, respectively).

While Democrats are slightly more likely to describe Republicans than Democrats as very comfortable to freely express their views (45% vs. 37%), the 8 percentage point gap in these perceptions is considerably narrower than the 38 point gap in GOP perceptions.

There are similar patterns in beliefs about liberals' and conservatives' comfort expressing their political views in the country. Overall, 83% of Americans say liberals in this country are at least somewhat comfortable freely and openly expressing their views, while 71% say this about conservatives. Democrats are modestly more likely to say conservatives are more comfortable than liberals with expressing their views (85% vs. 79%, respectively). By contrast, about nine-in-ten Republicans (91%) say liberals are at least somewhat comfortable freely expressing their views in this country, while 56% say conservatives are at least somewhat comfortable doing this.

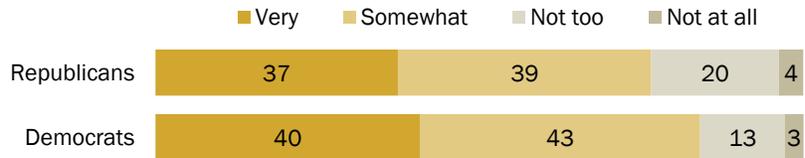
When asked about partisan groups in “your community,” roughly similar shares of Americans say Republicans (37%) and Democrats (40%) are very comfortable expressing their views.

Democrats are about equally likely to say Republicans in their community and Democrats in their community are comfortable to freely and openly express their views: About eight-in-ten say both groups are somewhat comfortable doing this, including about four-in-ten saying they are very comfortable.

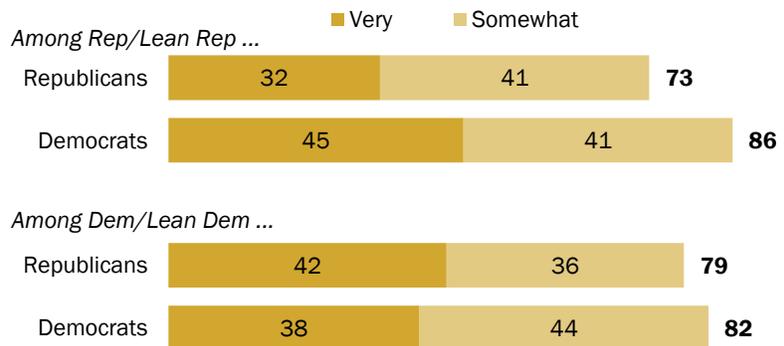
Republicans are more likely to say Democrats in their community are comfortable freely and openly expressing their political views than to say this about Republicans: 86% say Democrats are at least somewhat comfortable, while 73% say this about Republicans. However, this difference in perceptions about GOP comfort and Democratic comfort is considerably narrower at the community level than it is for the national environment.

### Most say Democrats and Republicans in their community are comfortable sharing their views

*In general, how comfortable do you think \_\_\_ in your community are to freely and openly express their political views? (%)*



*% who say \_\_\_ in your community are very/somewhat comfortable to freely and openly express their political views*



Note: No answer responses not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## How open people think their community is to Republicans and Democrats expressing their views depends on how red or blue it is

Perceptions of how comfortable partisans are expressing political views in their local communities vary by the political makeup of those communities. For example, 48% of adults who live in counties that Donald Trump carried by 10 points or more in the 2016 election say that Republicans in their local community are “very” comfortable expressing their political views; by contrast, just 30% of adults living in counties that Hillary Clinton won by similar margins say Republicans in their community are very comfortable freely and openly expressing their political views.

An opposite – though somewhat less pronounced – pattern is seen in views of Democrats’ comfort expressing their political views: 46% of adults living in counties that Clinton won by 10 points or more say Democrats in their communities are very comfortable expressing their political views; 37% of adults living in counties that Trump won by 10 or more points say this.

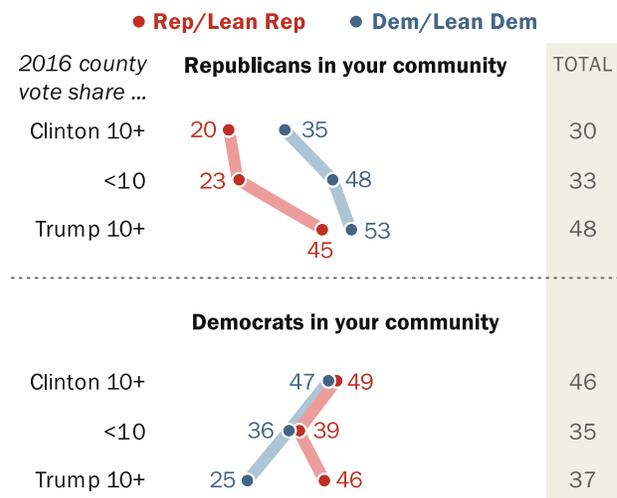
When it comes to Republicans’ comfort of political expression in their communities, both Democrats and Republicans see greater Republican comfort in counties Trump carried by 10 points or more than in counties where the election was closely contested or where Clinton won by at least 10 points.

This same dynamic is present in Democrats’ views of how comfortable Democrats in their communities are to freely and openly express their views (as the Clinton share of the 2016 vote rises, Democrats’ perceptions of the comfort Democrats feel expressing their views increases).

But Republican views of how comfortable Democrats are sharing their political views do not follow this pattern. About equal shares of Republicans who live in solid Clinton counties (49%) and solid

### 2016 vote tied to views of partisans’ comfort expressing views in community

% who say \_\_\_\_ are very comfortable to freely and openly express their political views



Note: 2016 vote margin is the county-level percentage point difference among those who voted for either of the two major party candidates. See appendix for details.  
 Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.  
 2016 vote data from Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections.

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Trump counties (46%) say they think Democrats in their community feel very comfortable sharing their political views.

## Public sees a deterioration in the tone of national political debate

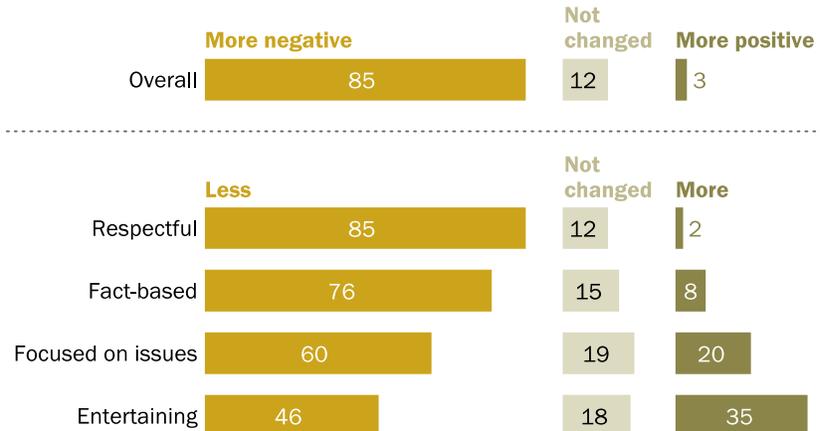
Overwhelming majorities of the public say that the tone and nature of political debate in the country has become more negative (85%), less respectful (85%) and less fact-based (76%) over the last several years. And six-in-ten say the debate has been less focused on issues than in the past.

Few Americans say there has been positive movement on any of these dimensions over the last several years – just 3% say the tone of national political debate has become more positive, while 2% say it has become more respectful, 8% say more fact-based and 20% say it has become more focused on issues.

About a third of the public (35%) says that the tone of politics has become more entertaining in recent years. Still, nearly half (46%) say it has become less entertaining over this period.

### Most say political debate has become less respectful, fact-based and focused on the issues in recent years

*% who say over the last several years the tone and nature of political debate in this country has become ...*



Note: No response answers not shown.

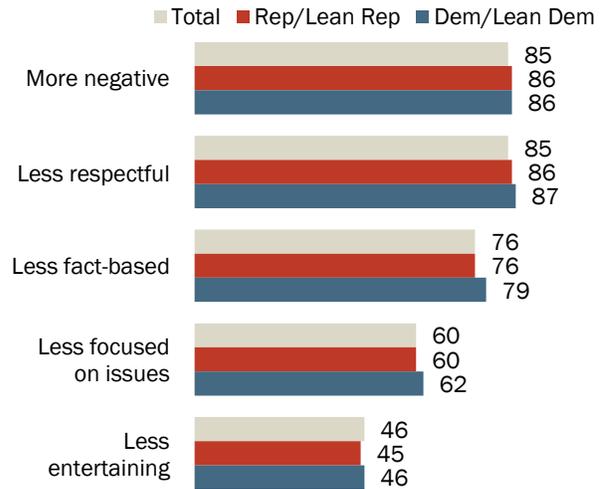
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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Partisans offer similar evaluations of the current state of political debate in the country. For instance, 86% of both Republicans and Democrats say the tone of political debate has become more negative in recent years, while about six-in-ten in both groups say political debate has become less focused on issues (60% of Republicans, 62% of Democrats). Those who discuss politics more frequently – in both partisan groups – are somewhat more likely than others to view a decline in national political discourse.

**Widespread – and bipartisan – view that national political debate has worsened**

*% who say over the last several years the tone and nature of political debate in this country has become ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## Wide partisan differences in views of how open educational institutions, religious organizations are to a ‘wide range of opinions and viewpoints’

Roughly two-thirds of Americans (68%) say colleges and universities are very or somewhat open to “a wide range of opinions and viewpoints,” while a slightly larger majority (73%) say the same about community colleges. About six-in-ten (61%) view K-12 public schools as at least somewhat open to different views, while about half (48%) describe churches and religious organizations this way.

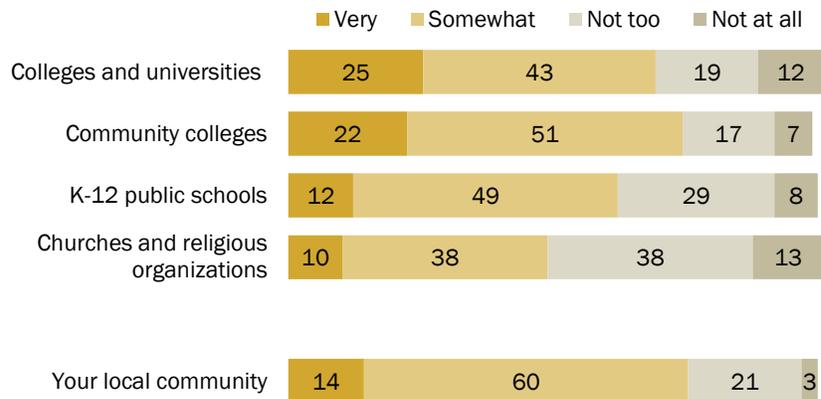
Three-quarters (75%) say their own local community is very or somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints.

However, relatively small shares describe any of these places or institutions as “very” open – a quarter (25%) say this about colleges and universities, while roughly the same share (22%) says this about community colleges; 14% describe their own community this way. About one-in-ten say K-12 public schools (12%) and churches and religious organizations (10%) are very open to many different views.

There are wide partisan differences in these views – particularly in assessments of the openness of postsecondary educational institutions. Nearly nine-in-ten Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (87%) describe colleges and universities as at least somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints – including 34% who say these institutions are very open. By comparison, just 44% of Republicans and Republican leaners say colleges and universities are either very (15%) or somewhat (30%) open in this way (roughly a quarter say colleges and universities are “not at all” open to viewpoint diversity).

### Majorities say educational institutions are at least somewhat open to a range of opinions and viewpoints

*% who say each is \_\_\_ open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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The partisan gap is smaller, though still substantial, in evaluations of community colleges. About six-in-ten Republicans (57%) say community colleges are very or somewhat open to many different opinions and viewpoints, while almost nine-in-ten Democrats (86%) say this.

The partisan gap seen in assessments of educational institutions extends to views of primary and secondary public schools as well. While about seven-in-ten Democrats (71%) describe K-12 public schools as at least somewhat open to differences in opinions and viewpoints, roughly half of Republicans (49%) say the same.

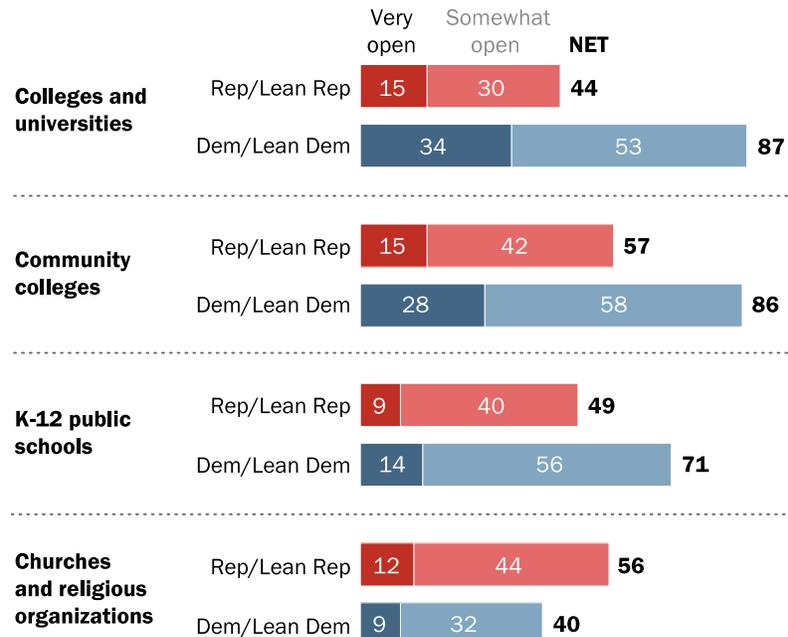
In contrast, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say churches and religious organizations are open to a range of opinions and viewpoints. A 56% majority of Republicans say this, compared with just 40% of Democrats.

When it comes to their local communities, partisans are in general agreement – about three-quarters of both Republicans (74%) and Democrats (75%) say their local communities are at least somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints.

Overall, women (73%) are more likely than men (63%) to say colleges and universities are at least somewhat open. And while just 57% of Americans ages 65 and older say these institutions are at least somewhat open, fully seven-in-ten (71%) of Americans under 65 say this.

## Republicans much less likely than Democrats to see educational institutions as open to many viewpoints

*% who say each is very/somewhat open to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## Most say social media companies should remove offensive content, but fewer are confident in them to determine what should be removed

Amid public debate about how social media companies should handle controversial content, about two-thirds of Americans (66%) say these companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms; 32% say they do not have this responsibility.

While majorities in both parties say social media companies should remove offensive content from their platforms, this view is more widely held by Democrats than Republicans: About three-quarters of Democrats (77%) say this, compared with 52% of Republicans and Republican leaners.

Yet the public does not have very much confidence in social media companies to determine what offensive content should be removed from their platforms.

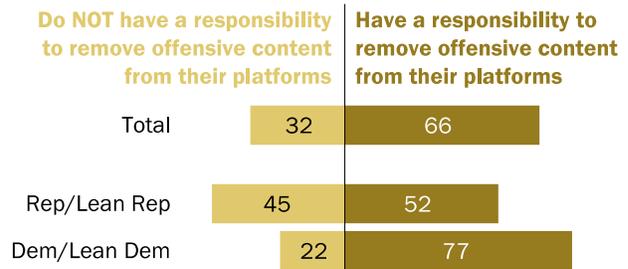
About three-in-ten Americans (31%) have at least a fair amount of confidence in social media companies to decide which content to remove – including just 4% who say they have a great deal of confidence in these companies to do this.

Among Republicans, 23% have confidence in social media companies to determine what content should be removed; far greater shares say they have not too much (42%) or no confidence at all (34%) in companies to make this determination.

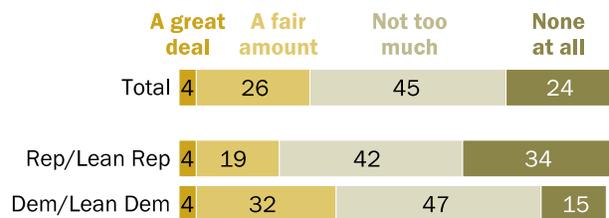
Democrats also largely lack confidence in social media companies to determine what content should be removed, though they are somewhat more likely than Republicans to express at least a fair amount of confidence (37%).

### Most think social media companies should remove offensive content; few are confident in companies to do so

% who say social media companies ...



% who have \_\_\_\_ (of) confidence in social media companies to determine what offensive content should be removed from their platforms



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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While majorities across demographic groups say social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms, there remain gender, age and racial differences in the shares who express this view.

Overall, women (72%) are more likely than men (59%) to say social media companies have this responsibility, and gender differences are in evident in both parties.

About six-in-ten Republican women (62%) say this, compared with about four-in-ten Republican men (43%). And Democratic women (79%) are modestly more likely than Democratic men (73%) to say social media companies have this responsibility.

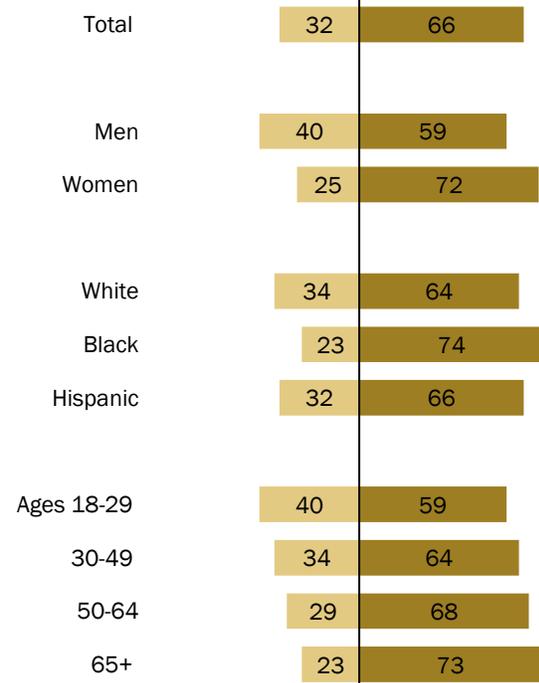
Blacks (74%) are more likely than whites (64%) and Hispanics (66%) to say social media companies should remove offensive content.

Older adults are also more likely than younger adults to say companies have this responsibility: About seven-in-ten of those older than 65 (73%) say social media companies should remove such content; by comparison, 59% of 18- to 29-year-olds say this.

### Gender, racial, age gaps over removing offensive content from social media

% who say social media companies ...

**Do NOT have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms**    **Have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms**



Notes: No answer responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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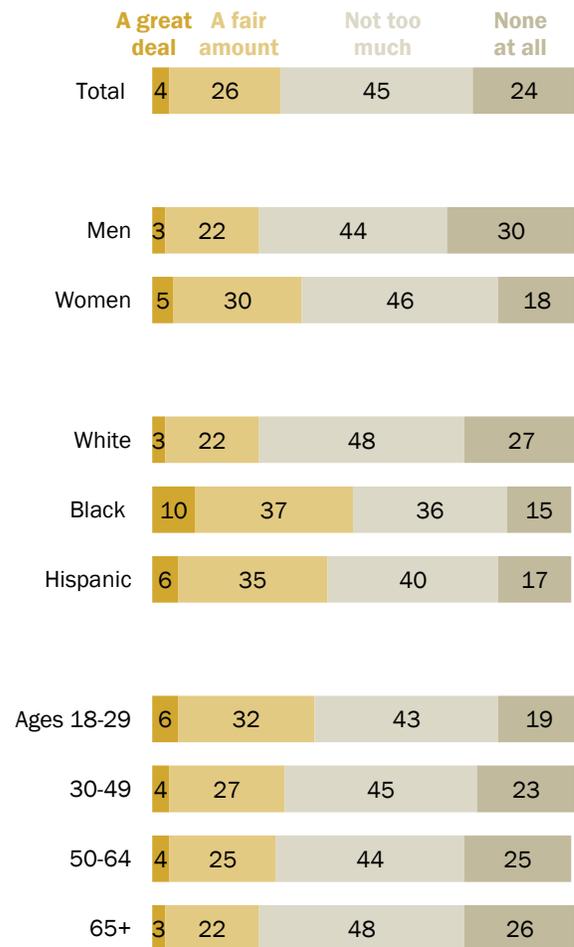
Women – who are more likely than men to say social media companies should remove offensive content – also have more confidence than men in these companies’ abilities to determine what content should be removed. Overall, 36% of women, compared with 25% of men, say they have at least a fair amount of confidence in companies to do this.

About half (48%) of black people express at least a fair amount of confidence in social media companies to determine what content should be removed, compared with just a quarter of whites. Four-in-ten Hispanics say they have at least a fair amount of confidence in companies to make this determination.

Although the youngest Americans are less likely than the oldest Americans to say social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content, they have more confidence than older Americans in these companies’ abilities to determine what content should be removed. Nearly four-in-ten 18- to 29-year-olds (38%) have a fair amount or great deal of confidence in social media companies to determine what content should be removed from their platforms, compared with just 24% of those ages 65 and older.

**Low confidence in social media companies to remove offensive content**

*% who have \_\_\_ (of) confidence in social media companies to determine what offensive content should be removed from their platforms*



Notes: No answer responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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Those who find it important for them personally to use language that other people do not find offensive are more likely to say that social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms.

Among those who say it is very important for them personally to use language that doesn't offend others, about three-quarters (77%) say social media companies are responsible for removing offensive content.

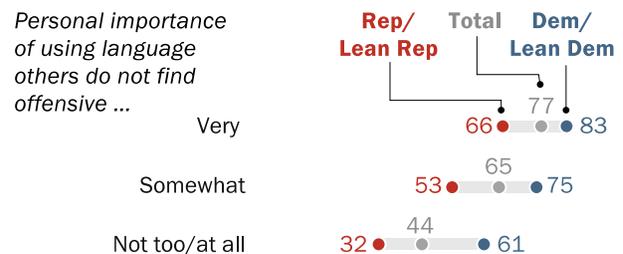
But among Americans who say it is not too or not at all important for them personally to use inoffensive language, fewer than half (44%) say social media companies have this responsibility.

The pattern holds within party, particularly among Republicans. Two-thirds of Republicans who say it is very important that they don't offend others say social media companies should remove offensive content. By contrast, a much smaller share of Republicans (32%) who place lower importance on using inoffensive language say social media companies should remove such content.

Among Democrats, 83% of those who say it is very important that their language doesn't offend others say social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content; a smaller majority (61%) of those who place little or no importance on using inoffensive language say the same.

### Views on social media companies removing offensive content tied to personal care with language

*% who say social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## 2. The bounds of political debate and criticism

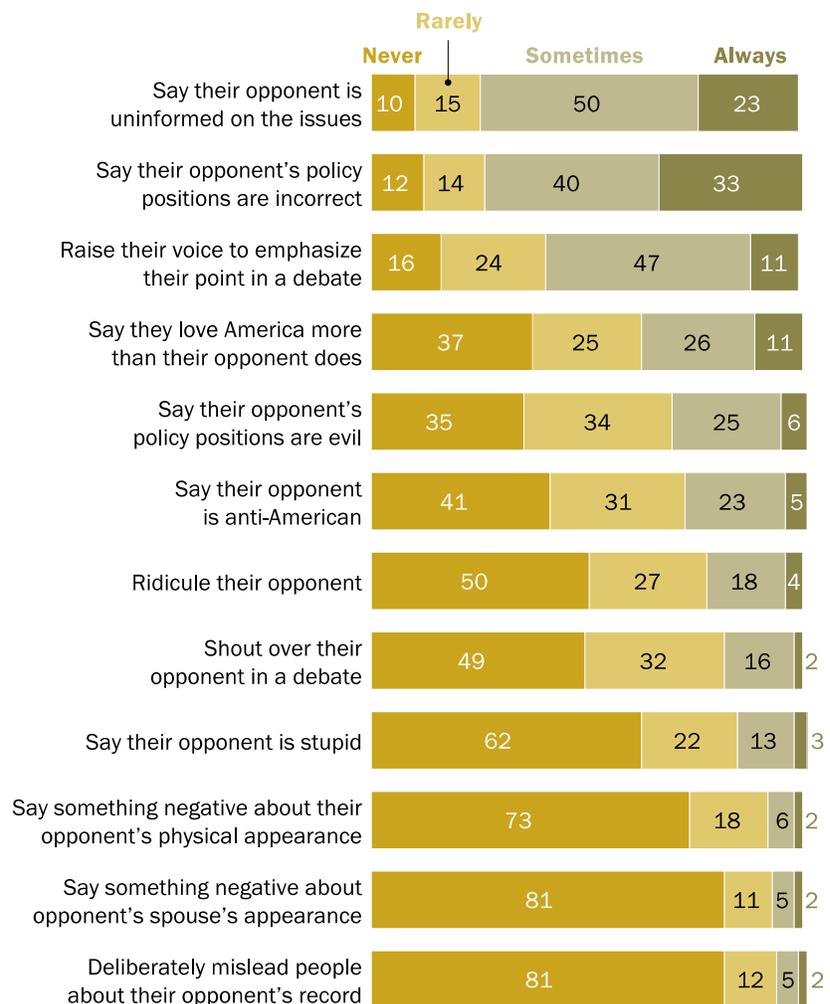
The public draws distinctions when it comes to the types of speech and behavior they deem acceptable from elected officials. Wide majorities of Americans say it is acceptable for elected officials to call their opponent uninformed on the issues and to raise their voice in a debate, but there is much lower tolerance for officials personally mocking their opponents or deliberately mischaracterizing their record.

Roughly three-quarters of Americans say it is at least sometimes acceptable to say their opponent's policy positions are incorrect (73%) or that their opponent is uninformed on the issues (74%). A narrow majority (58%) says it is at least sometimes acceptable for elected officials to raise their voice in a debate. Few see these behaviors as *never* acceptable.

But there are behaviors that overwhelming majorities say have no place in political discourse. About eight-in-ten (81%) say it is never acceptable to deliberately mislead people about an opponent's record or to say something negative about the physical appearance of an opponent's spouse (81%), while 73% say it is never acceptable to criticize their opponent's appearance – and nine-in-ten or more consider these behaviors at most *rarely* acceptable.

### What's out of bounds for elected officials?

% who say it is \_\_\_ acceptable for elected officials to ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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The public also generally views calling one's political opponent "stupid" as out of bounds: 62% say this is never acceptable, while an additional 22% say it is rarely acceptable. And about half of the public says it is never acceptable for an official to shout over their opponent in a debate (49%) or to ridicule an opponent (50%), with three-quarters or more saying these behaviors are no more than rarely acceptable.

However, public opinion is more mixed over the acceptability of calling an opponent's policy positions "evil" – while 35% say this is never acceptable and 34% say it is rarely acceptable, 31% say it is at least sometimes acceptable. Similarly, while 41% believe that it is never acceptable for an elected official to say their opponent is "anti-American," 31% say this is rarely acceptable and 27% say this is at least sometimes acceptable.

## Partisans differ over acceptability of some types of political criticism

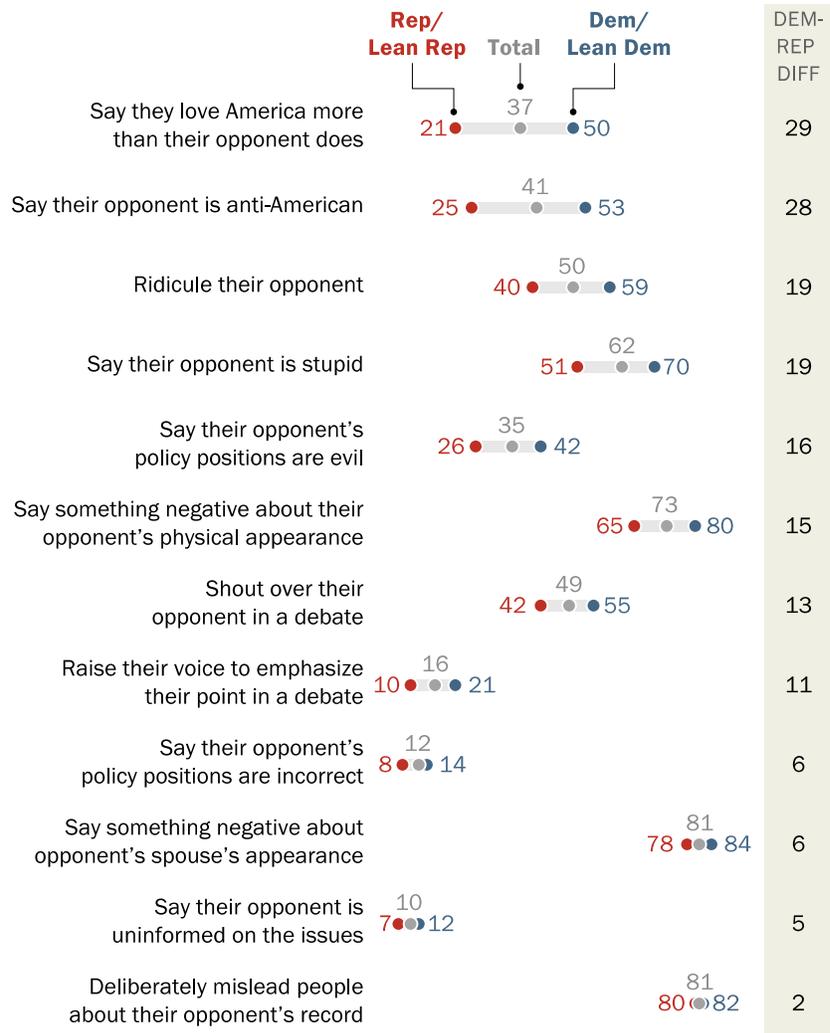
Democrats are more likely than Republicans to view a range of behaviors as out of bounds. And some of the largest partisan gaps are over whether it is acceptable for elected officials to call into question the patriotism of their political opponents.

About three-quarters of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (76%) say it is rarely or never acceptable for an elected official to say “they love America more than their opponent does,” including half who say this is never acceptable.

By comparison, 45% of Republicans and Republican leaners say it is rarely or never acceptable for an official to say they love America more than their opponent – including just 21% who consider this completely out of bounds in politics. The pattern of opinion about whether it is acceptable to call one’s opponent anti-American is nearly identical.

### Wide partisan divisions over whether calling opponents unpatriotic or stupid is ever acceptable

% who say it is **never** acceptable for elected officials to ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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There also are substantial partisan gaps in other areas, including the acceptability of ridiculing one’s opponent (59% of Democrats say this is never acceptable vs. 40% of Republicans), calling

them stupid (70% vs. 51%) or saying their policy positions are evil (42% vs. 26%). But Democrats and Republicans are in general agreement that deliberately misleading people about their opponent's record is out of bounds (82% of Democrats and 80% of Republicans say this is never acceptable), as is criticism of a spouse's appearance (84% of Democrats, 78% of Republicans say it's never acceptable).

## Insults are seen as more acceptable when your party is the instigator

Partisans also have different views of how acceptable these types of political insults are, depending on the partisanship of the political officials involved. For example, in the case of how acceptable it is to call an opponent's policy positions evil:

Asked about whether it's acceptable for an "elected official" to call their opponent's policy positions evil, 42% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say this is never acceptable, while 26% of Republicans and Republican leaners say the same.

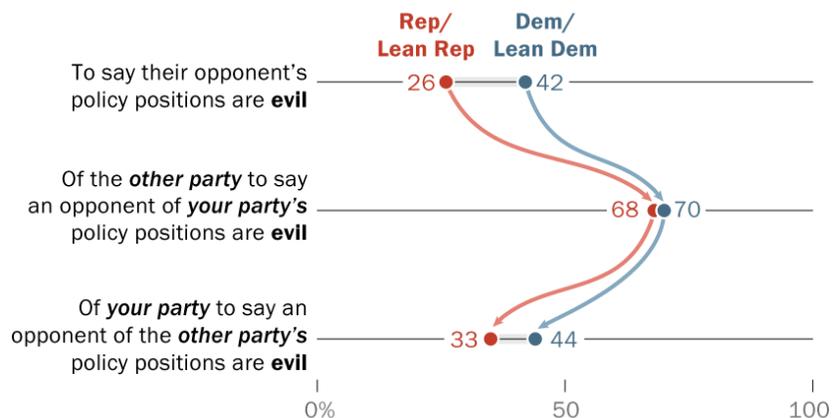
When Republicans are asked about a *Democratic* elected official behaving this way toward a *Republican* opponent, a far larger share – 68% – say it's never acceptable. A similar shift is seen among Democrats: 70% say it's never acceptable when a *Republican* says a *Democratic* opponent's policy positions are evil.

Both Republicans and Democrats are much less likely to view calling an opponent's positions evil as out of bounds when the person hurling the insult is a member of the party they support. For example, 68% of Republicans say it's never acceptable for a Democratic official to call a Republican opponent's positions "evil", but 33% say it's never OK for a Republican official to say this about a Democratic opponent.

Both Republicans and Democrats differ in their views of the acceptability of calling an opponent's policy positions evil depending on whether the insult is *coming from* or *being directed at* a politician of their party. Yet the swing in these views is greater among Republicans than Democrats – a pattern seen across several insults asked about in the survey.

### Democrats more likely than Republicans to say calling an opponent's positions 'evil' is unacceptable, but both set higher standard for other party than their own

% who say it is never acceptable for an elected official ...



Notes: Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three conditions when asked about an elected official: an elected official without party affiliation, a Republican elected official or a Democratic elected official. See topline for full question wording.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

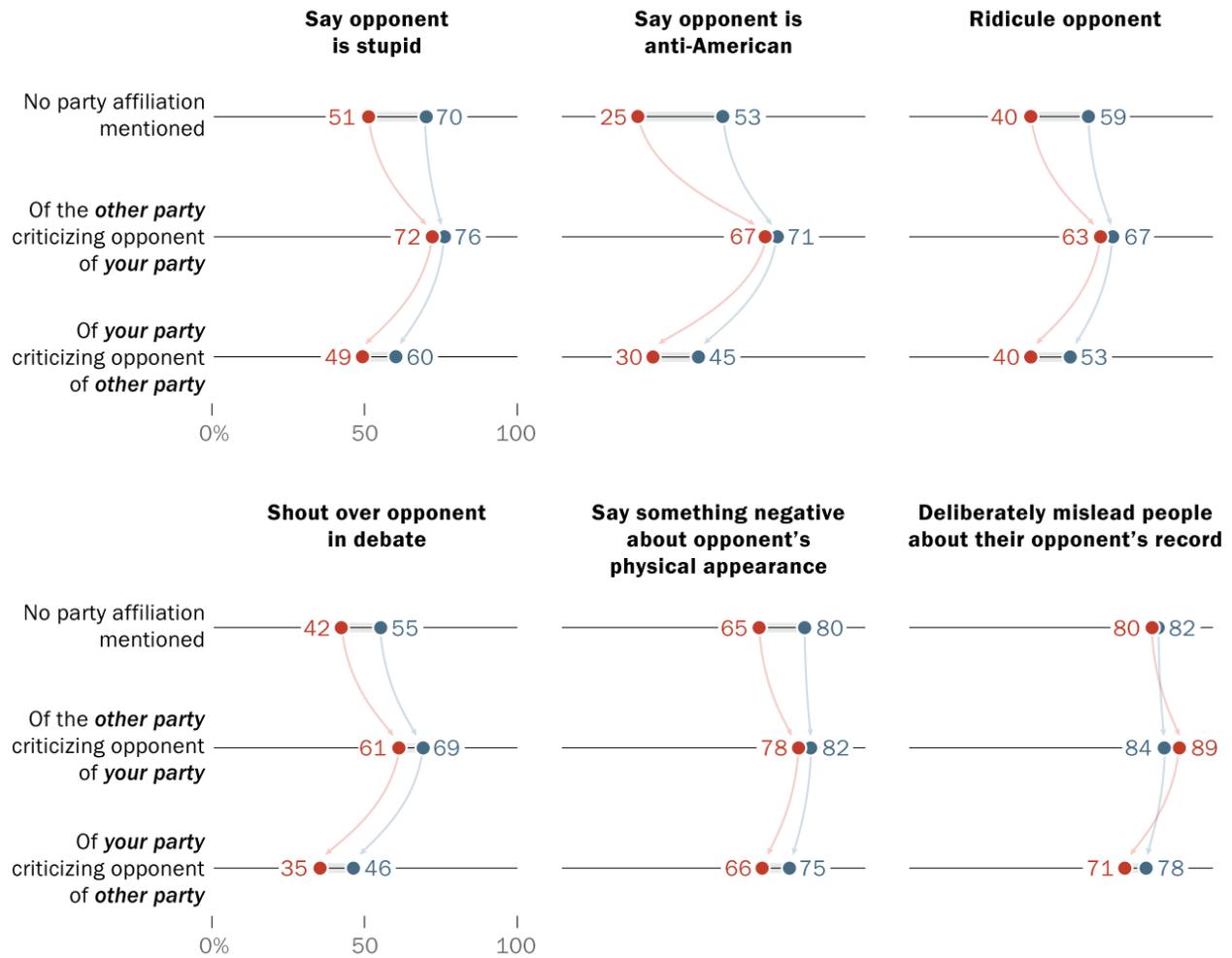
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## Partisans less likely to say insults are unacceptable if elected officials in *their* parties are the ones doing the insulting

% who say it is *never acceptable* for an elected official to ...

● Rep/Lean Rep

● Dem/Lean Dem



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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### 3. Trump’s impact on the tone of political debate, important characteristics for elected officials

A majority of Americans say that Donald Trump has had a negative impact on the tone of political debate in the United States.

Overall, 55% say that Trump has changed the tone and nature of political debate in the U.S. for the worse since entering politics; fewer than half as many (24%) say he has changed it for the better, and 20% say he has not changed it much either way.

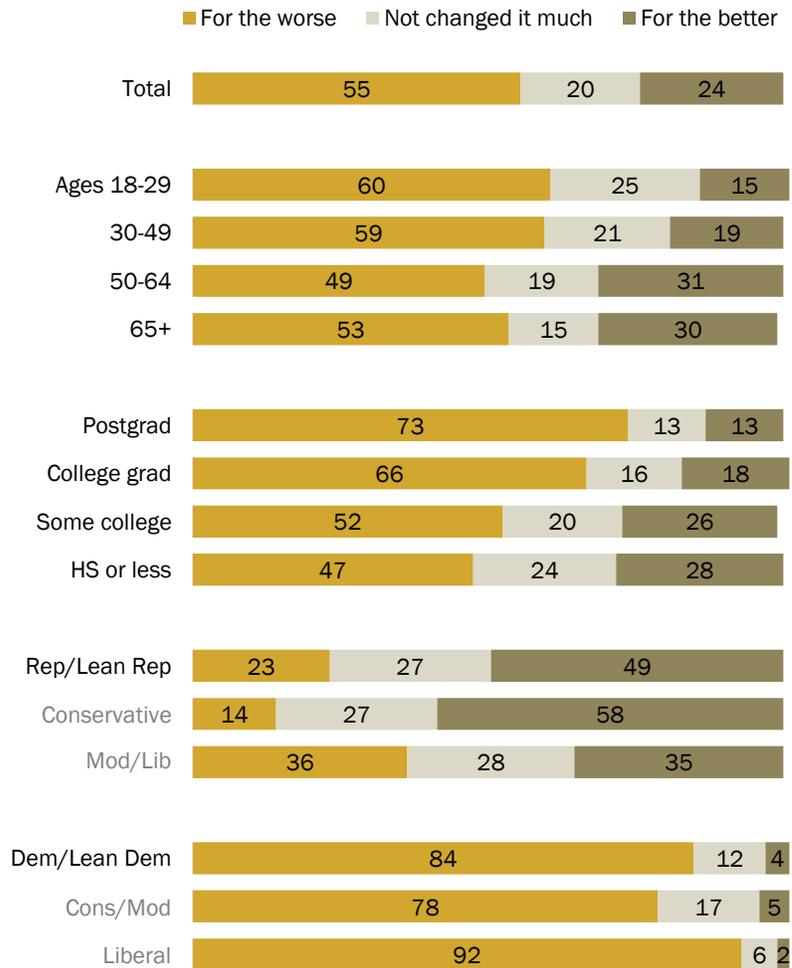
Democrats overwhelmingly say Trump has changed the tone of political debate for the worse. More than eight-in-ten Democrats and Democratic leaners (84%) say Trump has had a negative effect on political debate in this country, including 92% of liberal Democrats and 78% of conservative and moderate Democrats.

Republicans and Republican leaners are more divided in their views: 49% say Trump

has changed the tone of the debate for the better, while 23% say he has changed it for the worse and 27% say he hasn’t changed it much either way. A majority of conservative Republicans (58%)

#### Majority of public says Trump has changed the tone of political debate in the U.S. for the worse

*% who say Trump has changed the tone of political debate in the U.S. ...*



Note: No answer responses not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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think Trump has changed the tone of political debate for the better, compared with 35% of moderate and liberal Republicans.

Aside from the partisan differences on this question, there are significant divides by age and education. Those with higher levels of education are much more likely than those with lower levels to say that Trump has changed the tone of political debate for the worse. For instance, 73% of postgraduates say this compared with 47% of those with no college experience.

And adults younger than 50 (59%) are more likely than those 50 and older (51%) to say that Trump's impact on the tone of political debate in the U.S. has been negative.

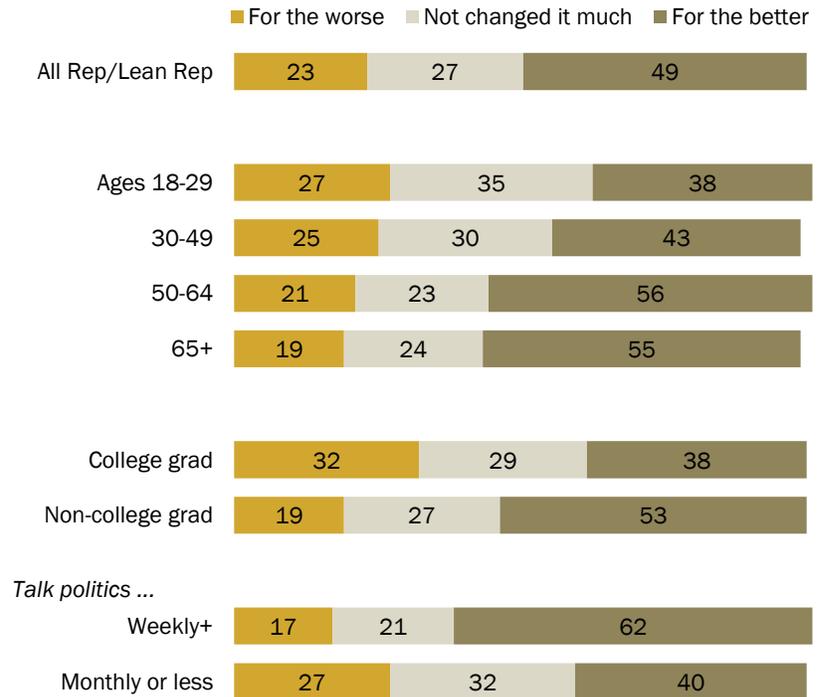
The differences among Republicans over Trump's impact on the tone of political debate extend beyond ideology.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, older adults and those without a college degree are significantly more likely than younger adults and those with a college degree to say Trump has changed the tone of political debate in the country for the better.

In addition, Republicans who say they talk about politics with others at least weekly are much more likely than those who talk politics less often to say Trump's impact on debate has been a positive one (62% vs. 40%).

### Among Republicans, age and educational differences in views of Trump's impact on tone of political debate

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, % who say Trump has changed tone of political debate in U.S. ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## Majorities say Trump's comments elicit concern, exhaustion, confusion

When asked about their reactions to the things Trump says, the public reports experiencing negative reactions more frequently than positive ones.

Out of a list of 15 possible reactions, “concerned” is the most frequently reported reaction to Trump’s comments. Overall, 76% say Trump’s comments often (48%) or sometimes (29%) make them feel concerned. Relatively few say Trump’s comments rarely (16%) or never (6%) make them feel concerned.

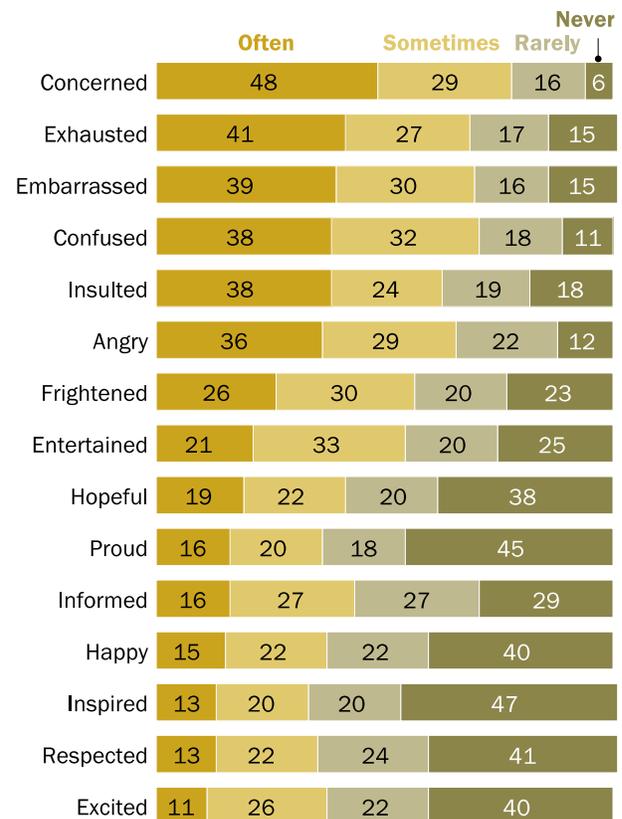
Other negative emotions also are widely experienced in response to Trump’s comments, including confusion (70% say this happens often or sometimes), embarrassment (69%), exhaustion (67%) and anger (65%).

Feeling entertained is the most frequent positive reaction to Trump’s comments: 54% say they often (21%) or sometimes (33%) feel entertained by what Trump says.

Fewer than half say Trump’s rhetoric at least sometimes makes them feel informed (43%), hopeful (41%), happy (37%), proud (36%) and other positive sentiments.

### Trump's comments elicit negative feelings more often than positive ones

% who say Trump's comments \_\_\_\_ make them feel ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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Large majorities of Democrats and Democratic leaners report that Trump's comments at least sometimes make them feel each of the seven negative emotions asked about in the survey. For example, 92% say they often or sometimes feel concerned by what Trump says and 89% often or sometimes feel exhausted by his rhetoric.

Conversely, majorities of Republicans and Republican leaners say they at least sometimes experience each of the eight positive emotions included in the survey in response to the things Trump says.

However, emotional reactions to Trump's rhetoric among Republicans and Democrats are not entirely parallel, with Democrats somewhat more likely to say they have negative reactions than Republicans are to say they have positive ones.

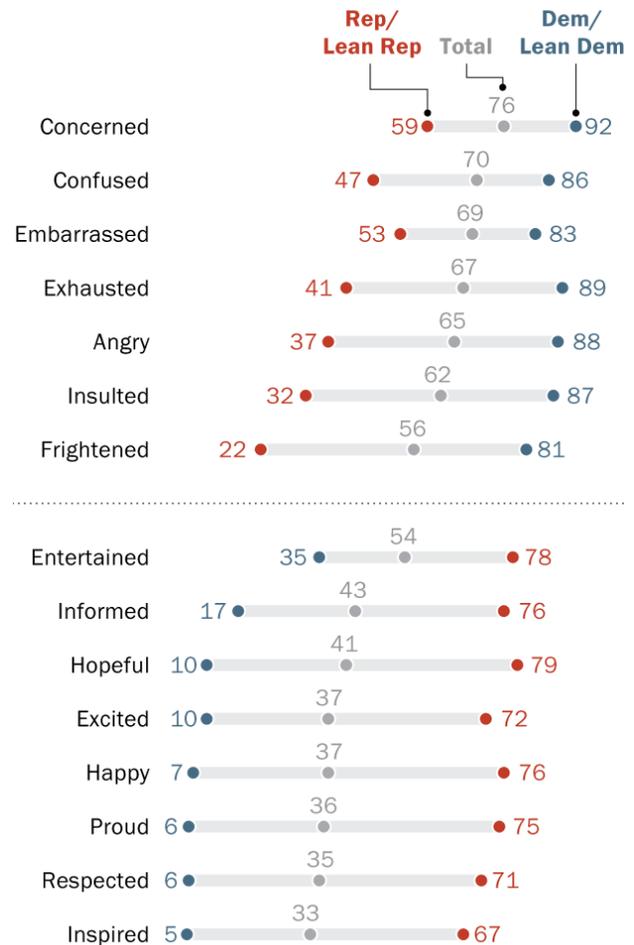
For instance, across the seven negative items, an average of 87% of Democrats say they often or sometimes feel this way because of Trump's comments. Across the eight positive items, an average of 74% of Republicans say they often or sometimes feel this.

In addition, significant shares of Republicans say Trump's comments make them feel negative emotions, at least sometimes. Overall, 59% of Republicans say the things Trump says often or sometimes make them feel concerned, 53% say his comments make them feel embarrassed and 47% say they feel confused. About a third of Republicans (32%) say they feel insulted by Trump's rhetoric, at least sometimes.

By contrast, relatively small shares of Democrats report feeling positive emotions in reaction to what Trump says. While 35% of Democrats say Trump's comments often or sometimes make them

## Wide partisan differences in reactions to the things Trump says

*% who say Trump's comments often/sometimes make them feel ...*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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feel entertained, fewer than two-in-ten say they often or sometimes experience any of the other positive emotions.

## Public says elected officials should avoid use of heated language

Americans believe there is a link between elected officials' use of heated or aggressive rhetoric and the possibility of violence against people and groups, and there is broad agreement that officials should avoid this type of language.

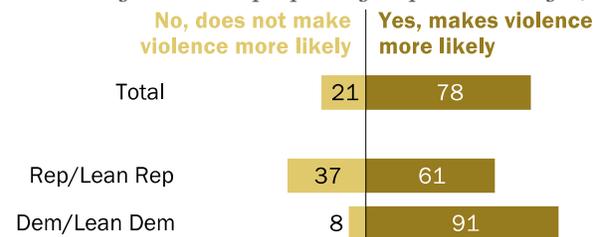
About eight-in-ten (78%) say that elected officials using heated or aggressive language to talk about certain people or groups makes violence against those people or groups more likely; far fewer (21%) say this type of language does not make violence more likely.

Majorities in both parties say there is a connection between the language officials use to talk about certain groups and the possibility of violence, but this view is more widely held among Democrats and Democratic leaners (91%) than among Republicans and Republican leaners (61%).

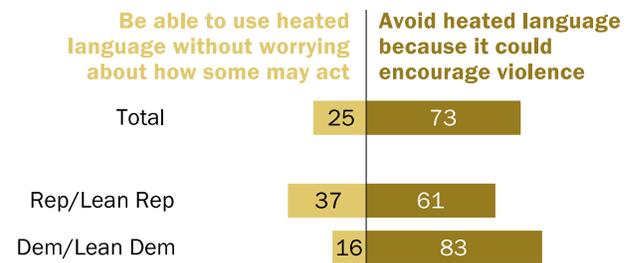
Consistent with this view, 73% of the public says elected officials should avoid heated or aggressive language because it could encourage some people to take violent action; 25% say that elected officials should be able to use heated or aggressive language to express themselves without worrying about whether some people may act on what they say. Among Democrats, 83% say elected officials should avoid the use of heated language because of the possibility that it could encourage violence; a narrower majority of Republicans (61%) also take this view.

### Sizable majority says 'heated' rhetoric by politicians raises risk of violence

*Do you think elected officials using heated or aggressive language to talk about certain people or groups makes violence against those people or groups more likely? (%)*



*% who say elected officials should ...*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## Honesty, knowledge highly valued in elected officials; narrower majorities say respect, willingness to compromise are very important

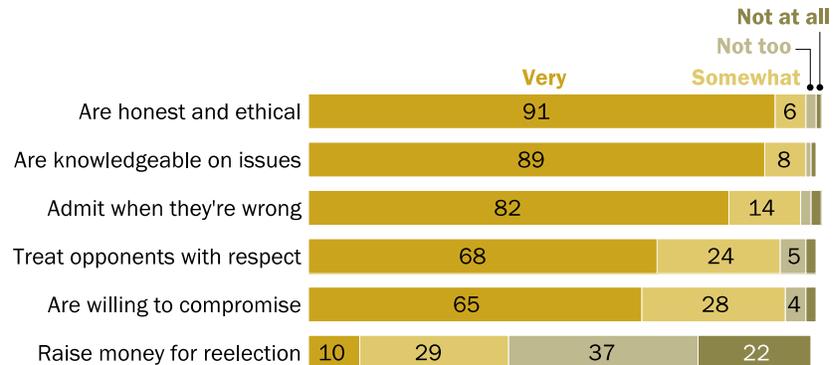
There is widespread agreement among the public that it is very important for elected officials to be honest and ethical (91%), to be knowledgeable on the issues (89%) and to admit when they are wrong (82%).

Roughly two-thirds say it is very important for elected officials to treat opponents with respect (68%) and to be willing to compromise with them (65%).

Among six traits included in the survey, only one – spending time raising money for reelection – is not identified as a valued trait for elected officials. Just 10% say it is very important that elected officials spend time raising money for reelection; 29% say this is somewhat important while a majority (59%) say this is not too or not at all important.

### Large majorities say it is very important that elected officials admit when they're wrong, are honest

% who say it is \_\_\_ important that elected officials ...



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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Some traits, such as honesty, are seen as universally important for elected officials across different contexts. However, views of the importance of other traits – notably, willingness to compromise with opponents and treating them with respect – vary depending on one’s own partisan affiliation and the party of the elected official.

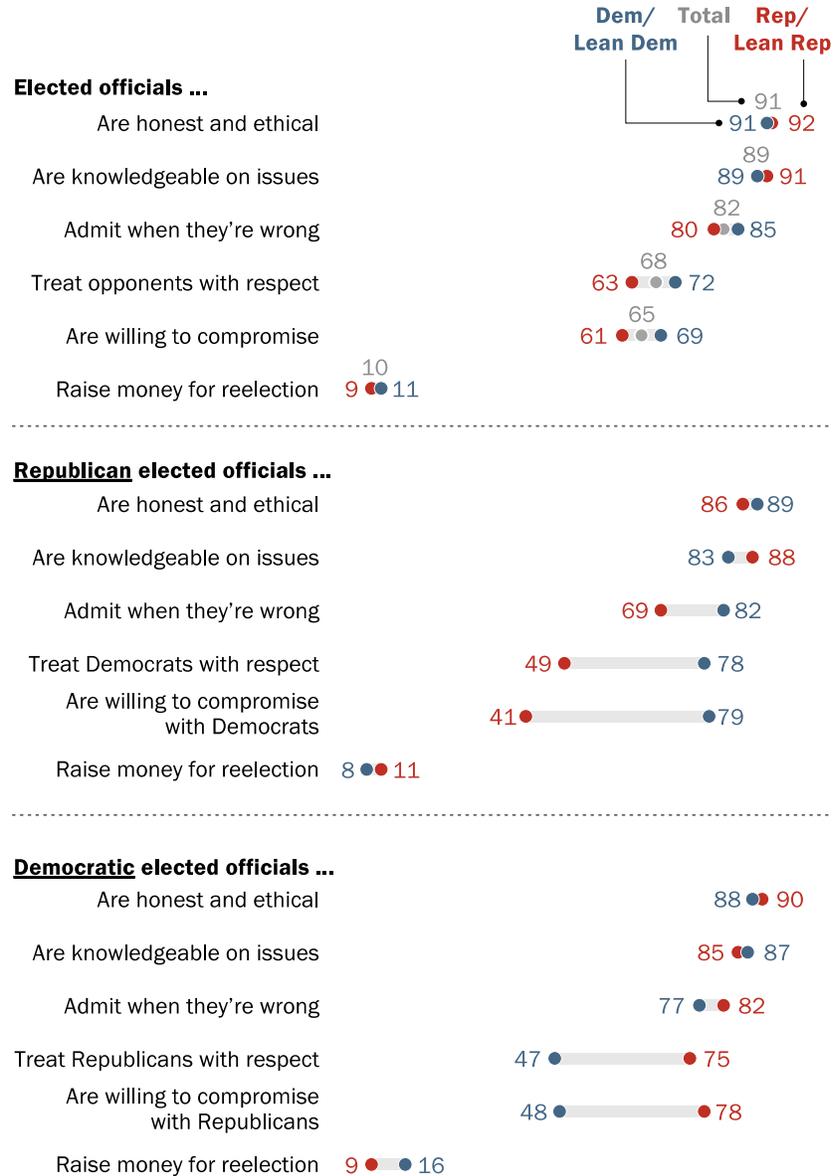
Among Americans overall, 68% say it is very important for elected officials to treat their political opponents with respect. Democrats (72%) are somewhat more likely than Republicans (63%) to highly value politicians treating opponents with respect. Similarly, there is a modest partisan divide between the shares of Democrats (69%) and Republicans (61%) who say it is very important for elected officials to be willing to compromise with their political opponents.

There are much more pronounced partisan gaps when respondents are asked specifically about *Republican* and *Democratic* elected officials.

Both Republicans and Democrats are far more likely to say it’s very important for the *other* party’s elected officials to be willing to compromise and to treat

### Republicans and Democrats prioritize ‘compromise’ and ‘respect,’ but less so in dealing with other party

% who say it is *very important* that ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

opponents with respect than it is for *their own* party's elected officials to behave this way.

Nearly eight-in-ten Democrats say it is very important for Republican elected officials to be willing to compromise with Democrats (79%) and to treat Democratic elected officials with respect (78%). However, far fewer value these behaviors when asked about their own party's elected officials: Just 48% of Democrats say it is very important for Democratic elected officials to be willing to compromise with Republicans, and 47% say the same about Democratic officials treating Republican officials with respect.

A similar dynamic is seen among Republicans. While 78% of Republicans say it is very important for Democratic elected officials to be willing to compromise with Republicans, only 41% feel it is very important for members of their own party be open to compromise with Democrats. Similarly, Republicans are far more likely to say Democratic officials should treat their Republican opponents with respect (75%) than to say Republican elected officials should be respectful toward their Democratic opponents (49%).

## 4. The public's level of comfort talking politics and Trump

Americans are much more cautious about talking politics with others than discussing a range of other subjects, including the weather and sports.

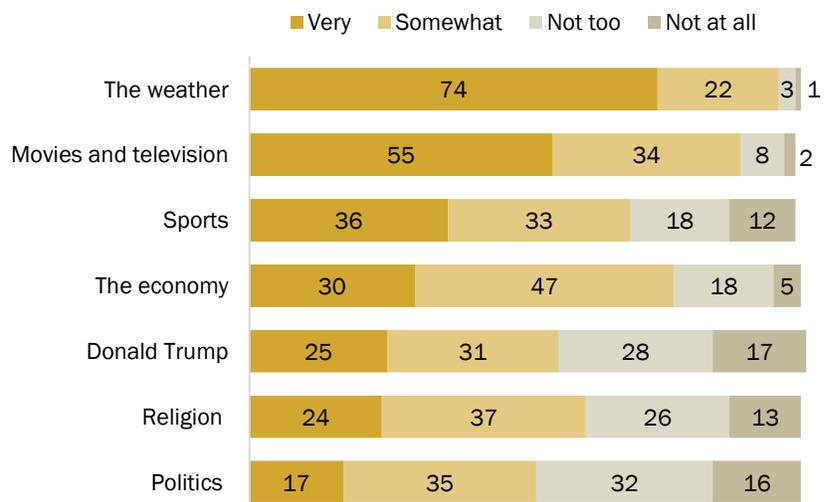
Comfort with talking about the weather is near universal: 95% of the public says that they would be either very (74%) or somewhat (22%) comfortable talking about the weather with someone they don't know well. Sizable majorities also say they would be very or somewhat comfortable talking about movies and television (90%), the economy (77%) and sports (69%).

The public is less comfortable talking about politics, religion and Donald Trump. Overall, 55% say they would feel at least somewhat comfortable talking about Trump with someone they do not know well; just 25% say they would feel very comfortable doing this. Public comfort talking about religion is similar: 60% would be at least somewhat comfortable discussing this subject, but only about a quarter (24%) would feel very comfortable.

Talking politics ranks even lower on the public's comfort list. Just 17% say they would be very comfortable talking politics with someone they don't know well; another 35% say they would feel somewhat comfortable.

### Many say they would be uncomfortable discussing politics with someone they don't know well

*% who say they would feel \_\_\_ comfortable talking about each of the following with someone they do not know well*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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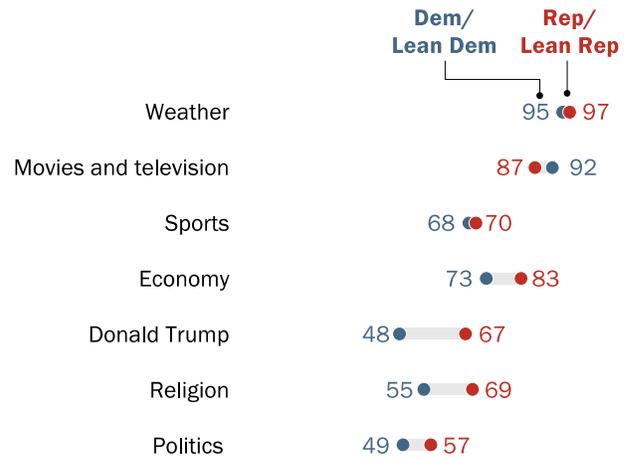
Partisans express similar levels of comfort discussing topics like the weather, sports and entertainment, but Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say they are comfortable talking about Donald Trump, the economy and religion.

Two-thirds of Republicans and Republican leaners (67%) say they would be very or somewhat comfortable talking about Trump with someone they don't know well, while only about half of Democrats and Democratic leaners (48%) say this.

Republicans also are more likely than Democrats to say they would feel comfortable talking about the economy (83% vs. 73%), religion (69% vs. 55%) and politics (57% vs. 49%).

## Republicans more comfortable than Democrats discussing Donald Trump

*% who say they would feel **very or somewhat** comfortable discussing each of the following with someone they do not know well*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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## Half say it is stressful to talk politics with people they disagree with

When it comes to political conversations with those they disagree with, the public is split in their reactions: Half say talking politics with people they disagree with is generally stressful and frustrating, while about as many (48%) say it is interesting and informative.

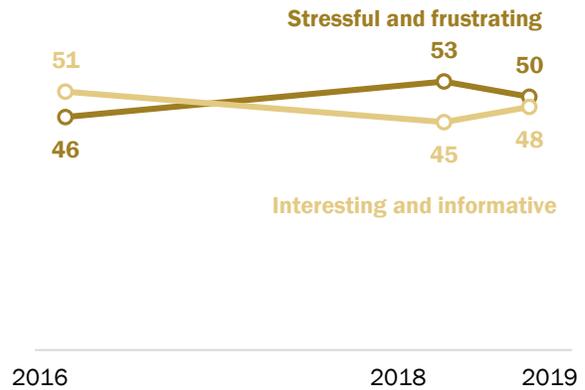
Democrats and Democratic leaners (53%) are slightly more likely than Republicans and Republican leaners (47%) to say political conversations with people they disagree with are stressful and frustrating. The share of Democrats who find these conversations stressful is higher than it was in the spring of 2016 – prior to Donald Trump’s election – when 45% said this. Views among Republicans have changed little over the past several years.

Liberal Democrats are especially likely to say they find political conversations with people they disagree with frustrating: 63% say this, compared with 44% of conservative and moderate Democrats.

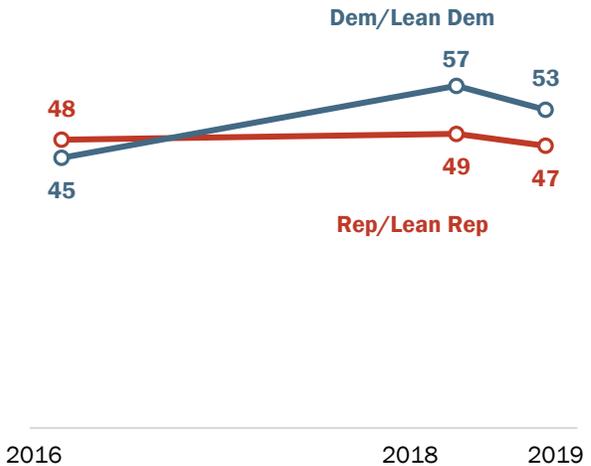
There also is an ideological divide in these views among Republicans: Conservatives (52%) are more likely than moderates and liberals (39%) to find talking politics with people they disagree with to be stressful and frustrating.

### Many find it is stressful to talk politics with people they disagree with

*% who say that talking about politics with people they disagree with is generally ...*



*% who say that talking about politics with people they disagree with is generally stressful and frustrating*



Note: No answer responses not shown.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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## Offering your views on politics – and Trump – over dinner

When asked to think about being at a small dinner with strangers who disagree with them about Donald Trump, Americans who approve of his job performance are more likely to say they would share their own views about him than are those who disapprove.

Nearly six-in-ten adults who approve of Donald Trump's job performance (57%) say they would share their views about the president at a small dinner where the other guests are talking about how they really dislike Trump. Only about four-in-ten of those who disapprove of Trump (43%) say they would be likely to share their views in a scenario where people at the table were talking about how they really like Trump.

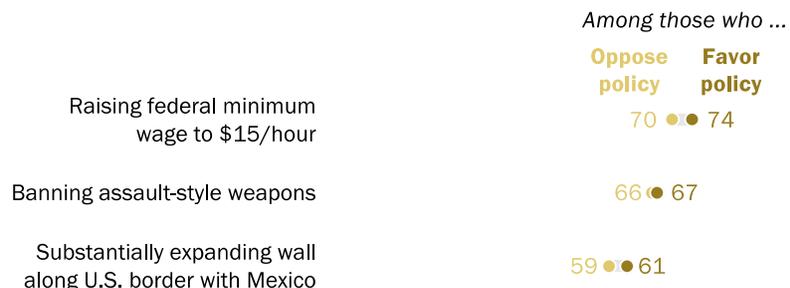
Similar dinner party scenarios were asked about for three other political topics (*note: each respondent was only*

*asked about one scenario*). However, for these other topics – minimum wage, gun policy and a border wall with Mexico – there is no gap by issue position in the shares who would volunteer their views. For instance, 74% of those who favor raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour and 70% who oppose this say they would voice their opinions to a group of dining companions who are expressing views opposite to their own.

In addition, for all three issue areas, clear majorities – regardless of their stance on the topic – say they would express their views at the dinner.

### Trump's supporters are more likely to say they would share their views with strangers who dislike him

% who would *share* their own views about each topic at a small dinner with people they have not met before who are expressing the opposing view



Notes: Respondents were randomly assigned a topic. See topline for full question wording. In Trump version, respondents were asked about a scenario where guests were discussing their like or dislike of Trump.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## A survey experiment: Sharing political views with strangers who disagree

This survey included an experiment that asked respondents whether they would be likely to share their views on various political topics when at a small dinner with people they do not know who disagree with them. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of four topics: A quarter of respondents were asked about raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour, a quarter about expanding the wall on the U.S.-Mexico border, a quarter about their views on an assault weapons ban and a quarter about views of Donald Trump.

### Intro (all)

Imagine a situation where a friend invites you to a small dinner with people you have never met before.

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they ...

### Randomly assigned one:

#### Minimum wage

**If favors raising minimum wage to \$15:**

oppose raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

**If opposes raising minimum wage to \$15:**

favor raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

#### Border wall

**If favors expanding the wall:**

oppose expanding the wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.

**If opposes expanding the wall:**

favor expanding the wall on the U.S.-Mexico border.

#### Assault-style-weapons ban

**If favors banning assault-style weapons:**

oppose banning assault-style weapons.

**If opposes banning assault-style weapons:**

favor banning assault-style weapons.

#### Donald Trump

**If approves of Trump's handling of job as president:**

really dislike Donald Trump.

**If disapproves of Trump's handling of job as president:**

really like Donald Trump.

Would you be more likely to ... **[Response options in random order]**

- 1 Share your own views
- 2 Avoid sharing your own views

Comfort with conflict is strongly associated with people's willingness to express their opposing views about Trump and other political topics in a dinner party setting (see appendix for more details on the comfort with conflict scale).

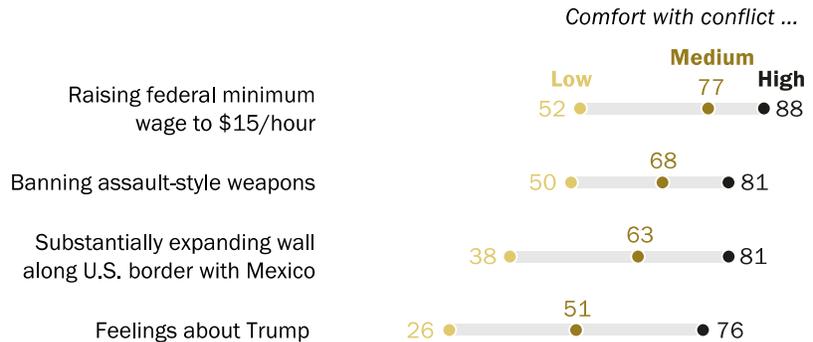
Only about a quarter (26%) of those who score low on a three-question scale measuring comfort with conflict would share their views about Trump over dinner with people who disagree with them. By contrast, 51% of those who fall in the middle of the scale and 76% of those who have high comfort with conflict say they would share their own views about Trump with a group of dinner companions who are expressing the opposing view.

The association between comfort with conflict and willingness to share your own views in a small dinner setting holds across the three other issue areas, though it is especially pronounced in the scenario about views of Trump.

Trump is a particularly difficult dinner conversation topic for those who are least comfortable with conflict: Among those with low comfort with conflict, just 26% would share their views about Trump to a table taking the opposing position. By comparison, 38% of those with low conflict comfort would share their views on the border wall, while about half would share their views about assault-style weapons (50%) or the federal minimum wage (52%). Among those who are most comfortable with conflict, there are more modest differences in willingness to share views in each of these scenarios.

### Those less comfortable with conflict more reluctant to express their views to a group with opposing opinions

% who would *share* their own views about each topic at a small dinner with people they have not met before who are expressing the opposing view



Notes: Respondents were randomly assigned a topic. See topline for full question wording. In Trump version, respondents were asked about a scenario where guests were discussing their like or dislike of Trump. See appendix for details on comfort with conflict scale.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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People’s willingness to share their views about Trump varies depending on the partisan makeup of the places where they live.

Trump approvers who live in counties that Trump won by wide margins over Hillary Clinton in 2016 are more likely than Trump approvers who live in more politically mixed places or in counties that Clinton won by wide margins to say they would share their views over dinner with a group of people who don’t like the president. There is a similar – but inverse – pattern in the willingness of those who disapprove of Trump to speak up among a group of people who like Trump.

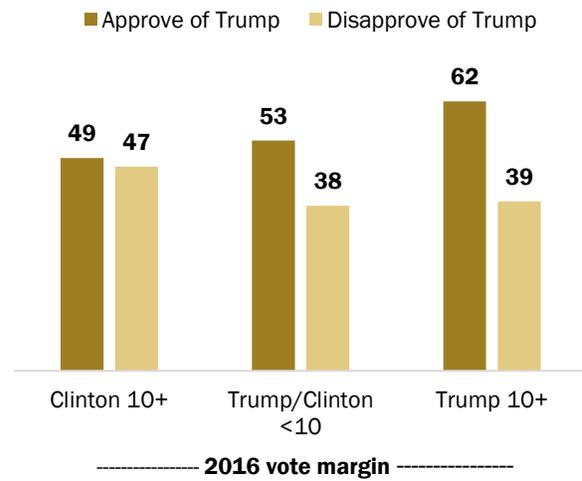
About six-in-ten Trump approvers living in counties that Trump won by 10 percentage points or more in 2016 (62%) say they would share their views about the president at a small dinner where people at the table are having a conversation about how they really dislike Trump. By comparison, about half of Trump approvers who live in places where the election was decided by less than 10 points (53%) or in places that Clinton won by more than 10 points (49%) say they would share their views in this situation.

This general pattern also is seen among those who disapprove of Trump: 49% of Trump disapprovers who live in counties Clinton won by at least 10 points would share their views of the president at a small dinner where people at the table are having a conversation about how much they like Trump, while 38% of disapprovers who live in counties that were decided by less than 10 points and 39% of disapprovers who live in counties that Trump won by at least 10 points say they would share their own views.

As a result, in counties that Trump won by 10 percentage points or more, there is a 23 percentage point gap between the share of Trump approvers (62%) and disapprovers (39%) who would express their views of the president at a dinner with those who disagree with them. By comparison,

### Trump approvers more willing to share views in counties he won decisively

% who would *share* their own views about Trump at a small dinner with people they have not met before who are expressing the opposing view



Notes: See topline for full question wording. Respondents were given a scenario where guests were discussing their like or dislike of Trump. 2016 vote margin is the county-level percentage-point difference among those who voted for either of the two major party candidates. See appendix for details.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019. 2016 vote data from Dave Leip’s Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections.

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in counties that Clinton won by at least 10 points, Trump approvers (49%) and Trump disapprovers (47%) are about equally likely to say they would share their views if they were in this situation.

## Why would you participate in – or avoid – contentious discussions about Trump?

When those who say they would share their views at a small dinner with people whose views of the president differ from their own are asked why they would share, about four-in-ten Trump disapprovers (39%) and a similar share of Trump approvers (35%) say they would do so because it's important to for others to know where they stand.

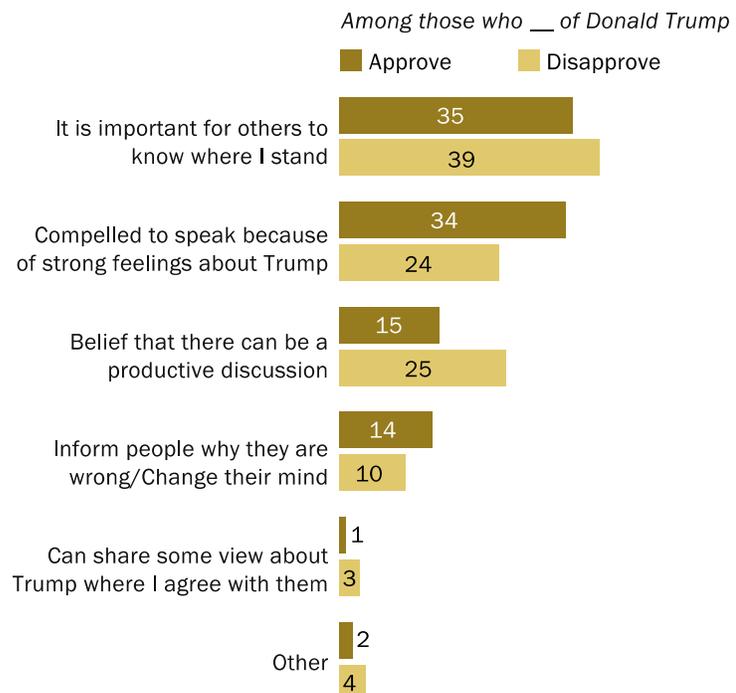
Strongly held views about the president are also mentioned by sizable shares in both groups as a reason they would speak up, though Trump approvers are more likely than disapprovers to say this: 34% of Trump approvers who would share their views in these circumstances cite positive views or praise of Trump as the reason why they would participate in the conversation, while about a quarter of Trump disapprovers who would do so (24%) mention deeply negative or strong criticism of Trump as a reason.

Among those who would share their views, 25% of Trump disapprovers and 15% of Trump approvers explain that they would do so because the conversation might be productive.

Relatively few people who would engage in a conversation about Trump with people who have a different view of him than they do would do so in the expectation that they could change others' minds about him (10% of disapprovers and 14% of approvers who say they would share their views

### Reasons for sharing personal views of Trump with strangers who disagree

Among those who say they *would share their views* about Donald Trump at a small dinner with people they have not met before who have the opposing view, % who mention \_\_\_\_ as a reason why [OPEN-END]



Notes: Based on those who say they would share their own views about Trump. Open-ended question. Responses offered by at least 1% overall shown here. See topline for full set of responses. Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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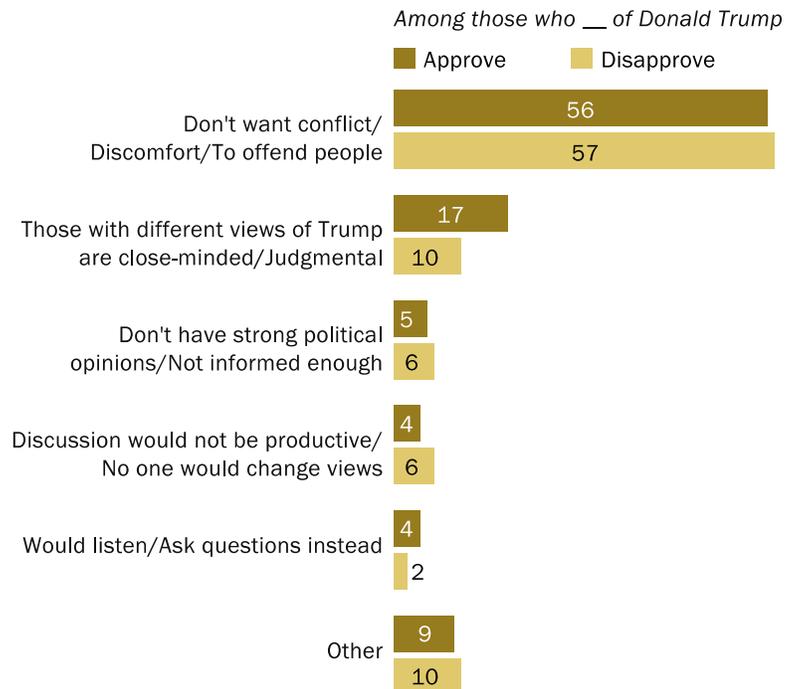
cite this as a reason).

The most common reasons given for *not* sharing personal views of Trump at a dinner with strangers who feel differently is a desire to avoid confrontation or discomfort: More than half of those who say they would avoid sharing their views about Trump mention something along these lines as a reason why, with similar shares of Trump approvers (56%) and disapprovers (57%) saying this.

Though less common a response, 10% of Trump disapprovers who would not share their views and 17% of approvers who would not share their views cite a criticism of those who have different opinions of the president than their own – particularly a sense that these groups are closed-minded or judgmental – as their reason for keeping their opinions to themselves.

## Reasons for not sharing personal views of Trump with strangers who disagree

Among those who say they **would avoid sharing their views** about Donald Trump at a small dinner with people they have not met before who have the opposing view, % who mention \_\_\_ as a reason why [OPEN-END]



Notes: Based on those who say they would avoid sharing their own views about Trump. Open-ended question. Responses offered by at least 2% overall shown here. See topline for full set of responses. Total may exceed 100% because of multiple responses. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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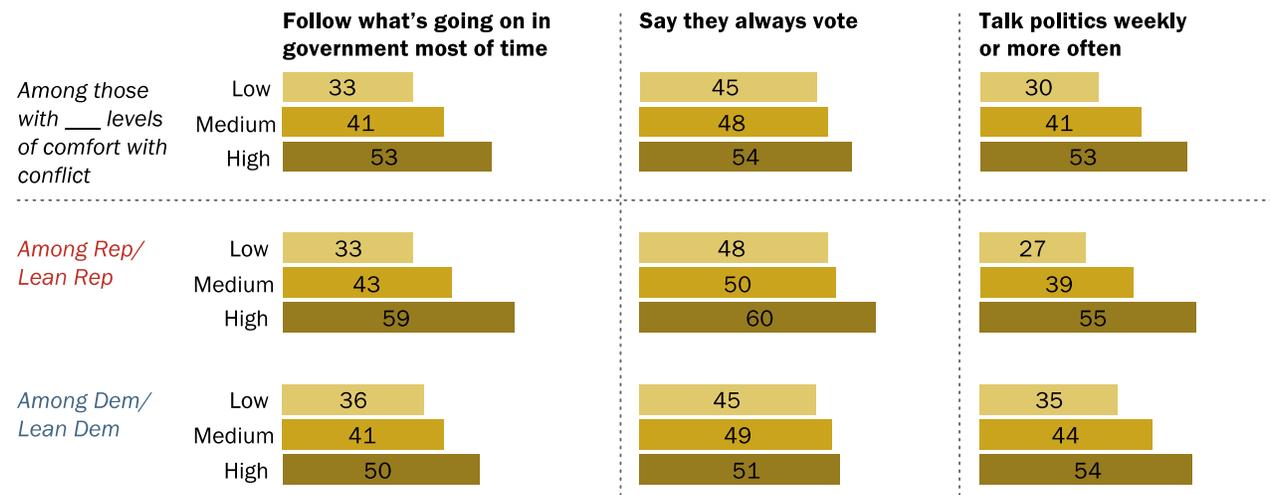
## Those most comfortable with conflict more likely to be politically engaged

Comfort with conflict is associated with many attitudes about discourse and politics, including the willingness to share views of Trump in social settings. (*See appendix for more details on the comfort with conflict scale.*)

Those with higher levels of comfort with conflict are among the most active in politics. They are more likely than groups who are less comfortable with conflict to say they follow what's going on in government most of the time, to say they always vote and to talk about politics frequently.

### Comfort with conflict highly correlated with political engagement

% in each group who ...



Note: See appendix for full details on comfort with conflict scale.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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For instance, over half of Democrats and Republicans with high levels of comfort with conflict say they talk politics weekly or more often (55% and 54%, respectively). Smaller shares of those with low levels of comfort with conflict say they talk politics weekly or more.

Comfort with conflict is also predictive of some other views about political discourse. For example, Republicans and Democrats with high levels of comfort with conflict are also more comfortable talking about politics with someone they do not know well. And they are more likely to say that political conversations with those who hold opposing views are interesting and informative rather than stressful and frustrating.

## Most say they don't enjoy seeing political opponents get caught up in scandals

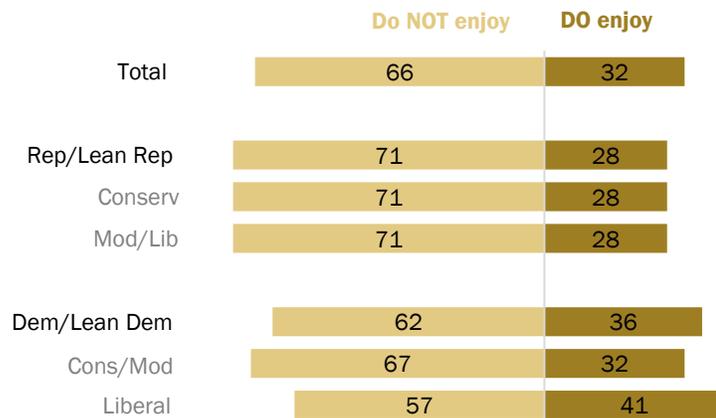
About two-thirds of Americans (66%) say that they do not enjoy seeing elected officials they dislike getting caught up in scandals or facing personal setbacks, while 32% say they enjoy this.

Though enjoyment at watching politicians they dislike face scandals is a minority position in both parties, Democrats (36%) are somewhat more likely than Republicans (28%) to say they enjoy this.

And among Democrats, liberals (41%) are more likely than conservative and moderate (32%) Democrats say they enjoy seeing political opponents face personal setbacks. There are no ideological differences among Republicans in these views.

### Majorities of Republicans and Democrats say they don't enjoy seeing political opponents face scandals

*% who say that when it comes to elected officials they dislike, they \_\_\_\_ seeing them get caught up in scandals or face personal setbacks*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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In both parties, men are more likely than women to say they enjoy it when elected officials they dislike face setbacks. Among Democrats, 43% of men and 31% of women say they like it when politicians they dislike get caught up in scandals or face setbacks; among Republicans, 33% of men and 22% of women say the same.

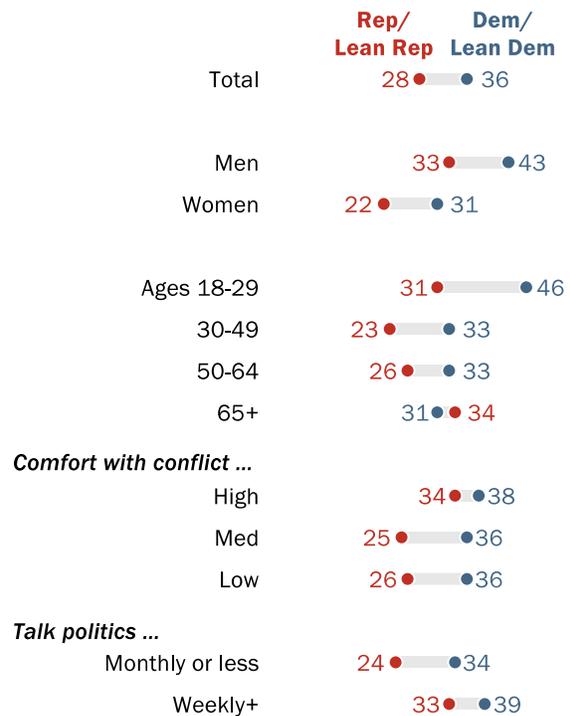
Democrats ages 18 to 29 are especially likely to say they enjoy seeing elected officials they dislike get caught up in scandals and face personal setbacks: 46% Democrats say this, compared with about a third of Democrats in older age groups.

Republicans who express higher levels of comfort with conflict are more likely than those with lower levels of comfort to say they enjoy when opposition faces personal setbacks. Among Democrats, there are no significant differences in these views by comfort with conflict.

Within both parties, those who talk politics frequently are somewhat more likely than those who talk politics less often to enjoy seeing officials they dislike face setbacks.

### Younger Dems more likely than others to say they enjoy seeing politicians they dislike get caught up in scandals

*% who say they enjoy it when elected officials they dislike get caught up in scandals/face personal setbacks*



Note: See appendix for full details on comfort with conflict scale. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## 5. The personal side of speech and expression

A large share of Americans say it is important to them personally to use language that does not cause offense, and an even larger majority say they are confident that the language they use is not offensive to other people.

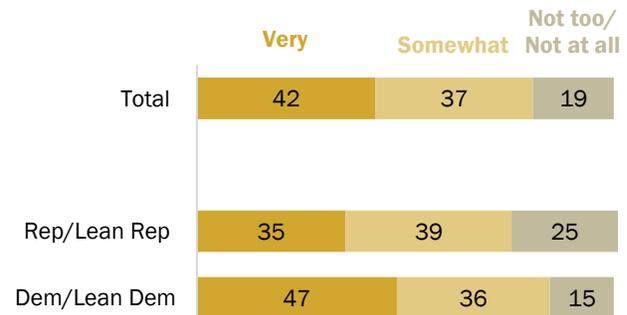
About eight-in-ten (79%) say it is very (42%) or somewhat (37%) important to them personally to use language that other people do not find offensive. Relatively few (19%) say this is not too or not at all important to them.

Large majorities of both Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (83%) and Republicans and Republican leaners (74%) say it is very or somewhat important that they do not use language that others find offensive. But Democrats are more likely to say this is *very* important (47% vs. 35%).

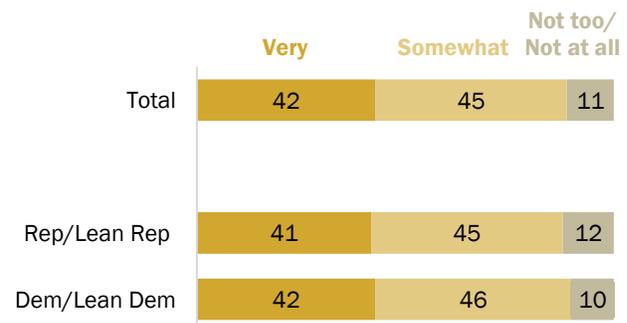
Americans are broadly confident that they do not use offensive language: Nearly nine-in-ten adults say they are very (42%) or somewhat (45%) confident that the language they use is not offensive to other people. Comparable majorities of Republicans and Democrats say they are at least somewhat confident that the language they use is not offensive to other people (87% and 88%, respectively).

### Most are confident that the language they use is not offensive to others

% who say it is \_\_\_ **important** to them personally to use language other people do not find offensive



% who say they are \_\_\_ **confident** the language they use is not offensive to other people



Note: No answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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There are notable demographic differences when it comes to views on the personal use of offensive language.

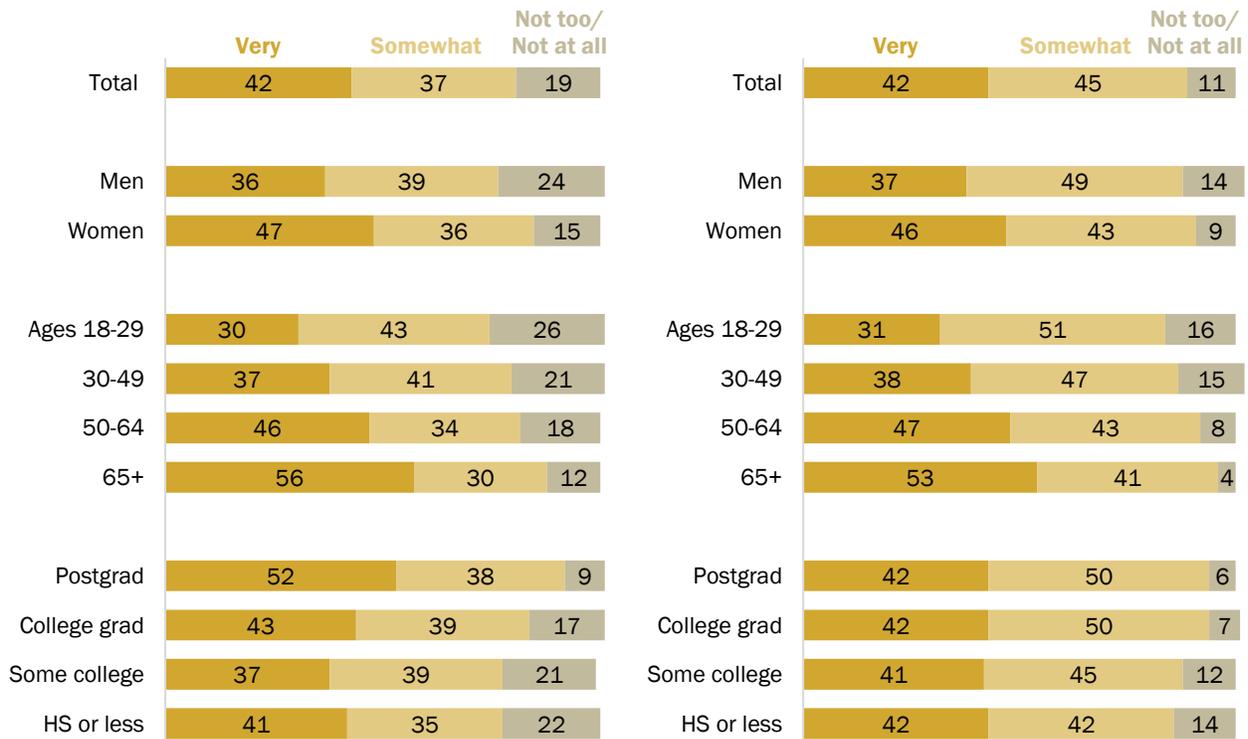
Women, older adults and those with a postgraduate degree are especially likely to place high importance on using language that is not offensive to others. Women and older adults also tend to express higher confidence that the language they use is not offensive.

Almost half of women (47%) say it is very important to them personally to not use offensive language. Slightly more than a third of men (36%) say the same. There is a similar gap between the shares of women (46%) and men (37%) who say they are very confident that their own language is not offensive.

### Women, older adults place greater importance on not using offensive language

% who say it is \_\_\_ **important** to them personally to use language other people do not find offensive

% who say they are \_\_\_ **confident** the language they use is not offensive to other people



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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Among those ages 65 and older, 56% say it is very important for them personally to not use offensive language. By contrast, just 30% of those ages 18 to 29 say this is very important to them personally. Older adults also are more confident than younger adults that the language they use is not offensive to others: 53% of those 65 and older and 47% of those 50 to 64 say they are very confident that the language they use is not offensive; this compares with 38% of those ages 30 to 49 and just 31% of those 18 to 29.

Higher levels of education also are associated with greater concern over not using offensive language. About half of those with a postgraduate degree (52%) say it is very important to them not to use language others find offensive, compared with 43% of those who have a college degree, 37% of those with some college experience and 41% of those who have a high school diploma or less education. There are only slight educational differences in the shares saying they are very confident that they use language that is not offensive to others.

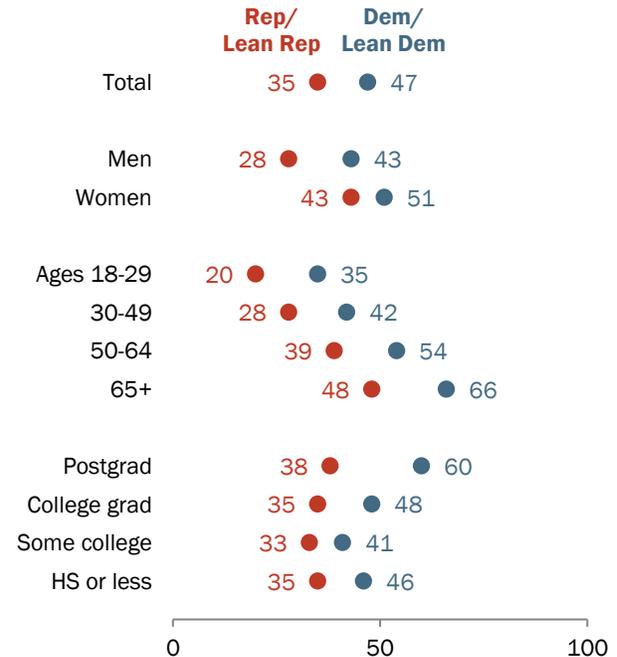
Within both political parties, there is a gender gap over the importance of using inoffensive language. Republican men (28%) are significantly less likely than Republican women (43%) to say it is very important to them personally to use language that is not offensive. And Democratic men (43%) prioritize this less than Democratic women (51%).

Younger Republicans and Democrats are both less likely than older adults in their respective parties to say it is very important to use language that other people do not find offensive. The size of the partisan gap is largely consistent across age groups, with Democrats expressing greater concern about this than Republicans.

Among Democrats, those with a postgraduate degree are significantly more likely than those with lower levels of education to say it is very important to them personally to use language other people do not find offensive. By contrast, there are no meaningful differences among Republicans by levels of educational attainment.

## Gender, age divides in both parties over not using language others find offensive

% who say it is *very important* to them personally to use language other people do not find offensive



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## Have people changed how they discuss sensitive conversation topics?

When it comes to conversations around subjects like race, gender and religion, a narrow majority (55%) say they have not really changed how they talk about these subjects, while 45% say they are more careful with the language they use now than they used to be.

On balance, Republicans are more likely to say they have not really changed how they talk about these subjects (61%) than to say they are now more careful with the language they use (39%).

By contrast, Democrats are evenly split in their views. Half say they are more careful now than they used to be, while an identical share say they have not really changed how they talk about these subjects.

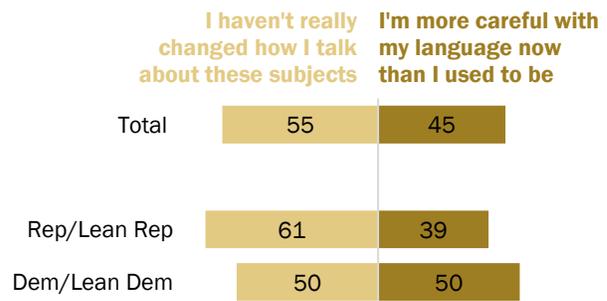
Younger adults are more likely than older adults to say they are more careful with the language they use to talk about subjects like race, gender and religion than they used to be.

Among adults ages 18 to 29, 52% say they are more careful with the language they use now, compared with 43% of adults ages 30 and older.

While there is no significant gender gap overall, Democratic men are more likely than Democratic women to say they are now more careful with the language they use when they talk about these subjects (54% vs. 46%, respectively). There are no differences between the views of Republican men and women.

### Majority of Republicans say they haven't changed how they talk about subjects like race, gender and religion

*Thinking about conversations you have around subjects like race, gender and religion, which describes you better? (%)*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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## Race, education differences in feeling ‘unfairly judged’ for language use

Overall, 35% of adults say they often (7%) or sometimes (28%) feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use to express themselves. A larger share (64%) say they rarely (38%) or never (25%) feel unfairly judged by others because of how they express themselves.

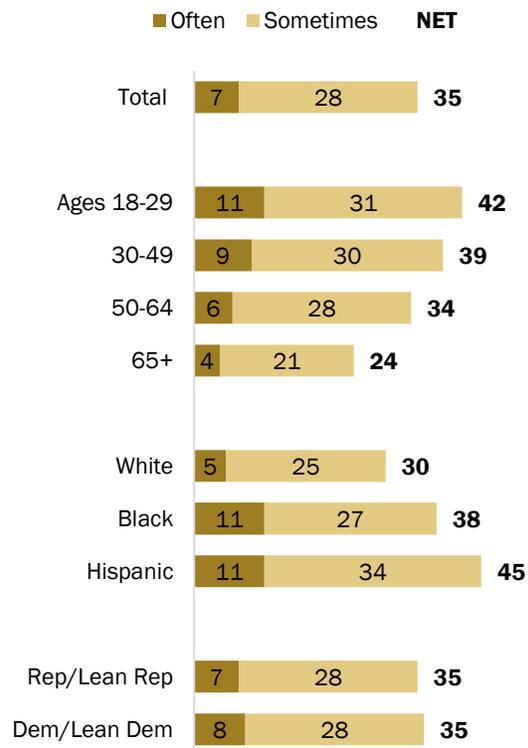
While there are differences in these perceptions by age and race, there are no differences based on partisanship.

Roughly four-in-ten of those ages 18 to 29 (42%) and ages 30 to 49 (39%) say they often or sometimes feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use to express themselves. Among those ages 50 to 64, 34% report feeling this way and just 24% of those 65 and older say they often or sometimes feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use.

Hispanics (45%) and black people (38%) are significantly more likely than whites (30%) to say they feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use to express themselves.

### Younger people, nonwhites more likely to feel judged for the language they use

*% who say they \_\_\_ feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use to express themselves*



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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Among adults overall, those without a college degree (38%) are more likely than those who have graduated from college (29%) to say they often or sometimes feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use to express themselves.

This education pattern is present among both whites and blacks. Among whites, 34% of those without a college degree say they often or sometimes feel unfairly judged because of the language they use to express themselves, compared with 23% of those who have graduated from college.

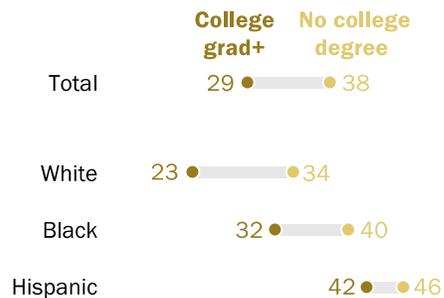
Similarly, black adults without a college degree are more likely than those who have graduated from college to say they at least sometimes feel unfairly judged by others because of how they express themselves (40% vs. 32%).

There are no significant differences among Hispanics on this question by level of educational attainment.

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### Those with lower levels of education are more likely to feel unfairly judged

*% who say they **often or sometimes** feel unfairly judged by others because of the language they use to express themselves*



Note: Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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Overall, 36% of adults say that when they are around people with different racial and ethnic backgrounds than their own, they often (6%) or sometimes (30%) feel the need to change the way they express themselves. A majority of the public says they rarely (37%) or never (26%) feel the need to change how they interact with others of different racial backgrounds.

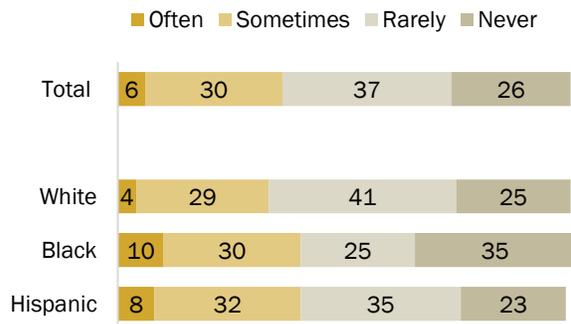
There are significant differences in these views by race and ethnicity. Four-in-ten blacks and Hispanics say they often or sometimes feel the need to change the way they express themselves around people with different racial and ethnic backgrounds than their own; a somewhat smaller share of whites (33%) says the same.

There is little overall difference in these views by level of educational attainment. However, black adults with a college degree are significantly more likely than blacks without a college degree to say they feel the need to change the way they express themselves when they are around those with different racial backgrounds than their own (48% vs. 37%).

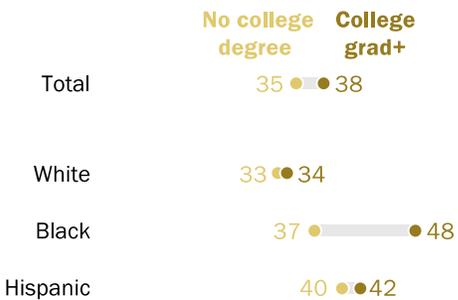
This education pattern among black people can also be seen in the share who say they *never* feel the need to change the way they express themselves around people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Overall, 44% of blacks with a high school diploma or less education say they *never* feel the need to change the way they express themselves around people of different racial and ethnic backgrounds; blacks who have some college experience but no four-year degree (32%), or who have a four-year college or postgraduate degree (20%), are much less likely to say they never have to change the way they express themselves.

**Nearly half of black college grads say they need to change the language they use when around other races**

*When you are around people with different racial and ethnic backgrounds, how often do you feel you need to change the way you express yourself? (%)*



*% who say they often or sometimes feel the need to change the way they express themselves around people with different racial and ethnic backgrounds*



Note: No answer responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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## 6. The challenge of knowing what's offensive

Majorities of the public say there is not agreement in the country over what is considered sexist (65%) or racist (61%) language; and about half (48%) say it is hard to know what other people might find offensive.

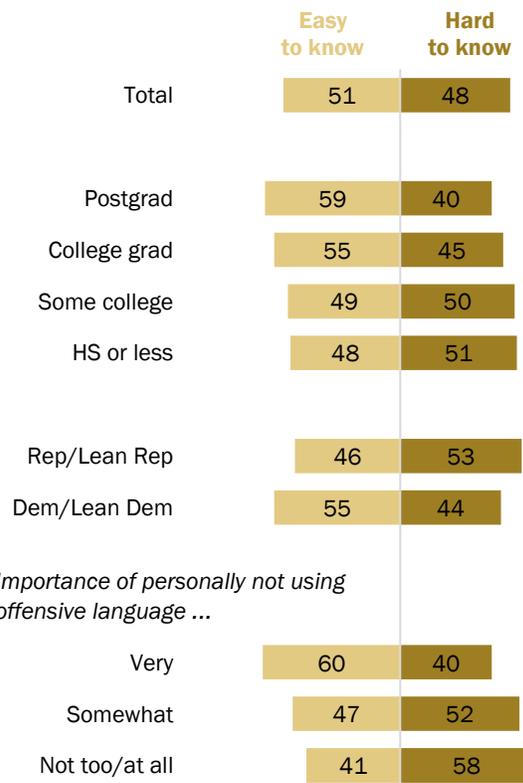
There's a modest partisan divide over whether it's easy or hard to know what others might find offensive. Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are somewhat more likely to say it's hard (53%) than easy (46%) to know what other people might find offensive. By contrast, a narrow majority of Democrats and Democratic leaners (55%) say it's easy to know what others might find offensive; 44% say it's hard to know.

Postgraduates (59% to 40%) and college graduates (55% to 45%) are more likely to say it's easy than hard to know what other people would find offensive. Those with some college experience or no more than a high school diploma are about evenly divided over how easy it is to know what others find offensive. Democrats with higher levels of education are more likely than less-educated Democrats to say it's easy to know what others might find offensive. Among Republicans, there are no significant differences in views by level of education.

Six-in-ten of those who say it's very important to them personally to use language that other people do not find offensive say it's easy to know what people would be offended by. Smaller shares of those who say it's somewhat (47%) or not too or not at all important (41%) to them personally to use inoffensive language say it's easy to know what others find offensive.

### Postgraduates say it's 'easy' to know what others might find offensive

% who say it is \_\_\_ what others might find offensive



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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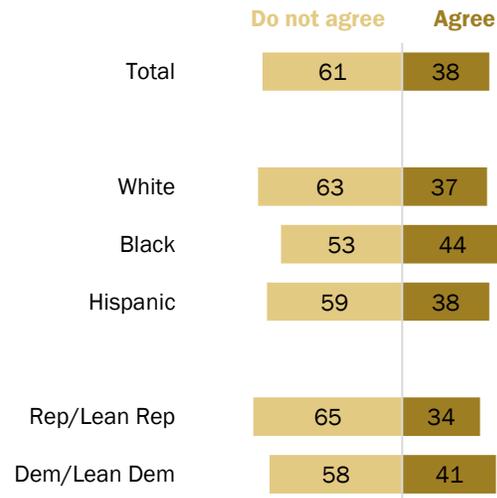
By 61% to 38%, more Americans say people generally do not agree over what is considered racist language.

Black people are somewhat more likely than whites and Hispanics to say people agree about what is considered racist language. Still, just 44% of blacks say that people generally agree on what is considered to be racist language, while 53% say people do not agree on this. Majorities of whites (63%) and Hispanics (59%) say people do not agree on this.

Among Republicans and Republican leaners, 65% say people generally do not agree over the definition of racist language; 58% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say the same.

## Most do not think people in the country agree on what is considered racist

*% who say people generally \_\_\_ about what is considered to be **racist** language*



Notes: No answer responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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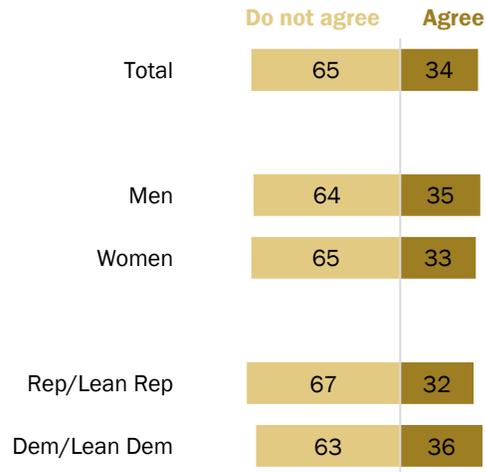
Similar to views on what constitutes racist language, just 34% say people agree on what is considered to be sexist language; a far larger share (65%) says people do not agree about this.

There is no gender gap in views on this question: 65% of women and 64% of men say people generally do not agree over what sexist language is.

Among partisan groups, 67% of Republicans and Republican leaners and 63% of Democrats and Democratic leaners say people do not generally agree over what constitutes sexist language.

## Both men and women say people do not agree on what is sexist language

*% who say people generally \_\_\_ about what is considered to be **sexist** language*



Note: No answer responses not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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There are large partisan and racial differences when it comes to views on the care people should take with language and how quick people are to take offense.

When asked to choose which statement better describes their views, 60% say that too many people are easily offended these days over the language that others use; a smaller share (39%) says people need to be more careful about the language they use to avoid offending people with different backgrounds.

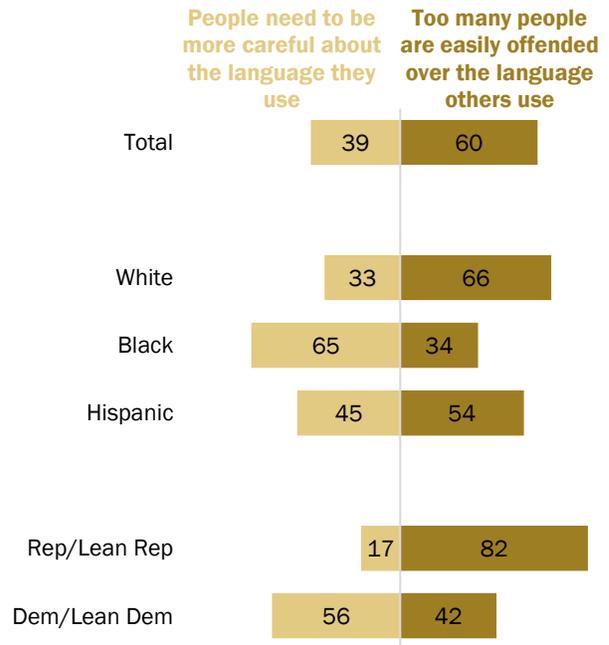
Views among whites and blacks are nearly the opposite of each other. About two-thirds of blacks (65%) say that people need to be more careful about the language they use to avoid offending others; 34% say that too many people are easily offended over language these days. Among whites, views are the reverse: 66% say that too many people are easily offended over the language others use, compared with 33% who say people should be more careful with their language. Among Hispanics, 54% say people are too easily offended, while 45% say people should be more careful with their language.

There is a wide partisan gap on this question. A large majority of Republicans and Republican leaners (82%) say people are too easily offended. By contrast, Democrats and Democratic leaners are more likely to say that people should be more careful with their language to avoid causing offense (56%) than to say that people are too easily offended over the language others use (42%).

Among Democrats, blacks are substantially more likely than whites to say that people need to be more careful with their language. About two-thirds (67%) of black Democrats say this, compared with 55% of white Democrats.

## Majority of public says that people are too easily offended by language

% who say ...



Notes: No answer responses not shown. Whites and blacks include only those who are not Hispanic; Hispanics are of any race. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019.

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Scott Keeter, senior survey advisor, and Claudia Deane, vice president of research, also gave valuable feedback on this project. We also would like to thank our external advisers: Jonathan Chait and Diana Mutz, each of whom generously gave us advice and counsel as we developed the study. While their contributions were invaluable, Pew Research Center is solely responsible for the interpretation and reporting of the data.

## Methodology

### The American Trends Panel survey methodology

The American Trends Panel (ATP), created by Pew Research Center, is a nationally representative panel of randomly selected U.S. adults. Panelists participate via self-administered web surveys. Panelists who do not have internet access at home are provided with a tablet and wireless internet connection. The panel is being managed by Ipsos.

Data in this report are drawn from the panel wave conducted April 29-May 13, 2019. A total of 10,170 panelists responded out of 13,476 who were sampled, for a response rate of 75%. This does not include 8 panelists who were removed from the data due to extremely high rates of refusal or straightlining. The cumulative response rate accounting for nonresponse to the recruitment surveys and attrition is 3.4%. The break-off rate among panelists who logged onto the survey and completed at least one item is 1%. The margin of sampling error for the full sample of 10,170 respondents is plus or minus 1.5 percentage points.

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#### American Trends Panel recruitment surveys

Recruitment Dates	Mode	Invited	Joined	Active panelists remaining
Jan. 23 to March 16, 2014	Landline/ cell RDD	9,809	5,338	2,507
Aug. 27 to Oct. 4, 2015	Landline/ cell RDD	6,004	2,976	1,465
April 25 to June 4, 2017	Landline/ cell RDD	3,905	1,628	802
Aug. 8 to Oct. 31, 2018	ABS/web	9,396	8,778	8,702
	<b>Total</b>	<b>29,114</b>	<b>18,720</b>	<b>13,476</b>

Note: Approximately once per year, panelists who have not participated in multiple consecutive waves or who did not complete an annual profiling survey are removed from the panel. Panelists also become inactive if they ask to be removed from the panel.

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The ATP was created in 2014, with the first cohort of panelists invited to join the panel at the end of a large, national, landline and cellphone random-digit-dial survey that was conducted in both English and Spanish. Two additional recruitments were conducted using the same method in 2015 and 2017, respectively. Across these three surveys, a total of 19,718 adults were invited to join the ATP, of which 9,942 agreed to participate.

In August 2018, the ATP switched from telephone to address-based recruitment. Invitations were sent to a random, address-based sample (ABS) of households selected from the U.S. Postal Service's Delivery Sequence File. In each household, the adult with the next birthday was asked to go online to complete a survey, at the end of which they were invited to join the panel. For a random half-sample of invitations, households without internet access were instructed to return a

postcard. These households were contacted by telephone and sent a tablet if they agreed to participate. A total of 9,396 were invited to join the panel, and 8,778 agreed to join the panel and completed an initial profile survey. Of the 18,720 individuals who have ever joined the ATP, 13,493 remained active panelists and continued to receive survey invitations at the time this survey was conducted.

The U.S. Postal Service’s Delivery Sequence File has been estimated to cover somewhere between the low 90% to 98% of the population.<sup>1</sup>

## Weighting

The ATP data were weighted in a multistep process that begins with a base weight incorporating the respondents’ original survey selection probability and the fact that in 2014 and 2017 some respondents were subsampled for invitation to the panel. The next step in the weighting uses an iterative technique that aligns the sample to population benchmarks on the dimensions listed in the accompanying table.

Sampling errors and statistical-significance tests take into account the effect of weighting. Interviews are conducted in both English and Spanish, but the American Trends Panel’s Hispanic sample is predominantly U.S. born and English speaking.

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

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## Weighting dimensions

Variable	Benchmark source
Gender	2017 American Community Survey
Age	
Education	
Race/Hispanic origin	2018 CPS March Supplement
Hispanic nativity	
Home internet access	
Region x Metropolitan status	2017 CPS Volunteering and Civic Life Supplement
Volunteerism	
Voter registration	2016 CPS Voting and Registration Supplement
Party affiliation	Average of the three most recent Pew Research Center telephone surveys.

Note: Estimates from the ACS are based on non-institutionalized adults. Voter registration is calculated using procedures from Hur, Achen (2013) and rescaled to include the total US adult population.

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<sup>1</sup> “AAPOR Report: Address-based Sampling” (2016). AAPOR Task Force on Address-based Sampling.

The following table shows the unweighted sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Unweighted sample size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	10,170	1.5 percentage points
Half sample	At least 5,075	2.1 percentage points
Quarter sample	At least 2,527	2.9 percentage points
Republican/Lean Republican	4,220	2.2 percentage points
Half sample	At least 2,080	3.1 percentage points
Quarter sample	At least 1,037	4.4 percentage points
Democrat/Lean Democrat	5,675	2.0 percentage points
Half sample	At least 2,811	2.9 percentage points
Quarter sample	At least 1,402	3.9 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

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## Appendix: Measures and scales

### County-level 2016 vote classification

Respondents' county-level 2016 vote share is used throughout this analysis. Counties were classified according to the proportion of the two-party vote (i.e., excluding third party candidate vote totals from the denominator), using county vote totals found in [Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections](#). For instance, *Trump by 10+* counties are those where Donald Trump received more than 55% of the two-party vote, while *Clinton by 10+* counties are those where Hillary Clinton received more than 55% of the two-party vote.

Respondents are classified into their counties using their exact address if available (99.5% of respondents). For the 0.6% of panelists without an exact address on file, panelists were matched with whatever geographic information was available (in most cases ZIP code). The 23 respondents (0.2% of the total sample) living in Alaska were excluded from these analyses as county vote totals are not available in Alaska.

Overall, about four-in-ten (43%) Americans live in counties that Clinton won by 10 points or more in the 2016 election. A similar share (37%) lives in counties won by Trump by 10 points or more.

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#### Distribution of the population by county vote

% of Americans living in counties that went \_\_\_ in the 2016 election

	Clinton 10+	Trump/Clinton <10	Trump 10+
Total	43	20	37
Rep/Lean Rep	31	21	48
Dem/Lean Dem	52	20	27

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29-May 13, 2019. 2016 vote data from Dave Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections.

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## Comfort with conflict scale

To gauge comfort level with conflict, the survey included three questions. These items were recoded and combined into a scale that is referenced throughout this report.

Respondents were asked to place themselves on three separate scales. Adding the responses to these scales together results in a scale that ranges from 0 to 9. A respondent who answered “(1) Disagreements make me uncomfortable,” “(1) I don’t enjoy challenging others, even when they are wrong,” and “(1) I would rather go along with the group than risk creating conflict” would score at the minimum of the scale. A

respondent who selected “(4) Disagreements don’t really bother me that much,” “(4) I enjoy challenging the opinions of others,” and “(4) I would rather speak my mind, even if it risks creating conflict” would score at the maximum of the scale. Only 2% of the public scores at the minimum of the scale, and 10% of the public scores at the maximum.

---

### Conflict scale question wordings

*Where would you place yourself on the following scale?*

- |  |     |     |  |
|--|-----|-----|--|
| (1) Disagreements make me uncomfortable                                | (2) | (3) | (4) Disagreements don't really bother me that much                   |
| (1) I don't enjoy challenging others, even when they are wrong         | (2) | (3) | (4) I enjoy challenging the opinions of others                       |
| (1) I would rather go along with the group than risk creating conflict | (2) | (3) | (4) I would rather speak my mind, even if it risks creating conflict |

Notes: For the scale construction, each item was coded to run from 0 to 3 where higher values indicate higher comfort with conflict. Those who refused to place themselves on a scale were coded at the midpoint.

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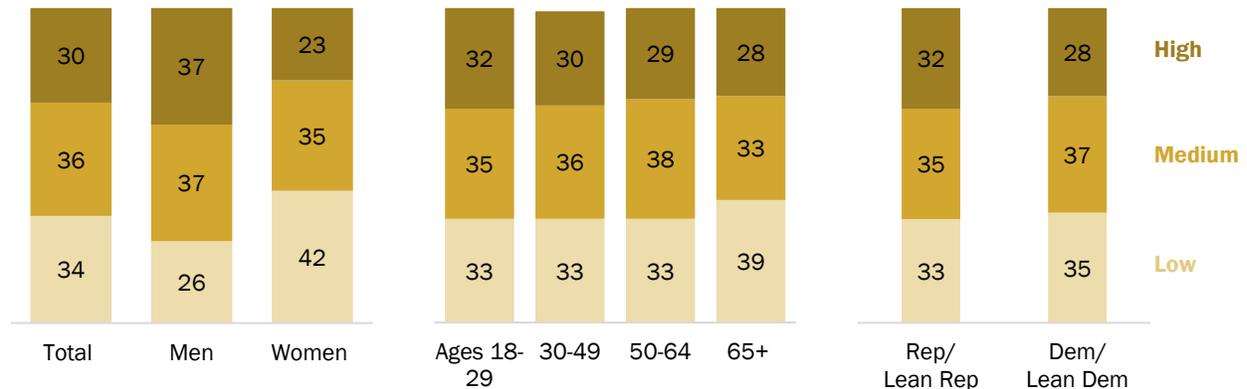
Respondents are classified into three roughly equally sized groups based on this full scale. Those who score 0 to 4 on the scale are considered “Low comfort with conflict” (34% of adults fall into this group). Those with scores higher than 4 and up to 6 are classified as “Medium comfort with conflict” (36% of adults), and those with scores higher than 6 (with a maximum score of 9) on the full scale are classified as “High comfort with conflict.”

Women are less likely than men to have high levels of comfort with conflict. A plurality of women (42%) fall into the lowest category on the comfort with conflict scale. About a quarter of women express high levels of comfort with conflict (23%) while significantly more men (37%) fall into this category.

There are only modest differences in comfort with conflict across age groups, with those 65 years and older somewhat more likely to fall into the low end of the scale than those in other age groups.

### Comfort with conflict by gender, age, partisanship

*% in each group who express \_\_\_ levels of comfort with conflict*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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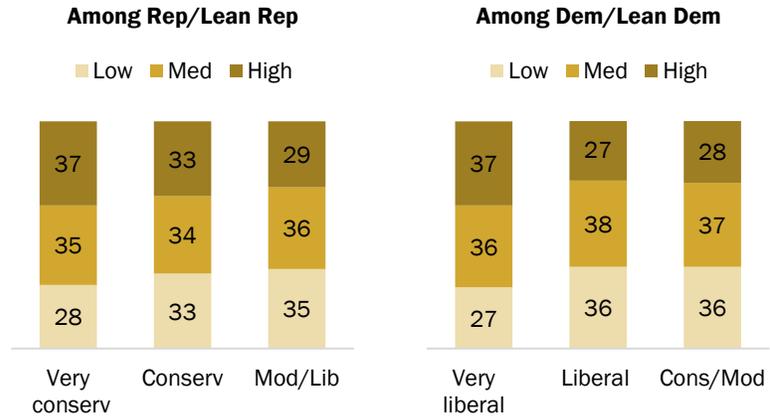
Partisan differences also are modest. Among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, 33% express low levels of comfort with conflict, 35% have a medium level of comfort, while 32% have a high level of comfort with conflict. Democrats and Democratic leaners are slightly less likely than Republicans to fall on the high end of the scale (28% do so).

There are significant ideological differences within each party. Republicans who say they are “very” conservative ideologically (37%) are more likely to score high on the scale of comfort with conflict than Republicans who say they are moderate or liberal (29%).

The pattern is similar among Democrats: A greater share of very liberal Democrats (37%) than liberal (27%) or conservative and moderate Democrats (28%) have high comfort with conflict.

## Political ideology and comfort with conflict

% in each group who express \_\_\_ levels of comfort with conflict ...



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted April 29–May 13, 2019.

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## Partisan framing survey experiments

This report includes two batteries of questions about “elected officials” (the importance for elected officials to have certain traits and acceptable behavior for elected officials) in which random subsamples of respondents were asked the same questions either with or without partisan descriptions of elected officials. Respondents were randomly assigned to receive only *one* version of the questions in each case. This type of survey experiment allows analysts to examine the way responses among a group (e.g., the public as a whole, partisan groups, etc.) vary depending on differences in question wording.

In both survey experiments, a random quarter of respondents was asked about Democratic elected officials, while a different random quarter of respondents was asked about Republican officials. The remaining half of respondents were asked about “elected officials” without specifying any partisanship. See chapters 2 and 3 for the analysis of these questions.

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## Summary of partisan framing survey experiments

### Experiment 1 - Acceptable behavior for elected officials

**Half of respondents:** “How often, if ever, is it acceptable for elected officials to...”

**A quarter of respondents:** “How often, if ever, is it acceptable for Democratic elected officials to...”

**A quarter of respondents:** “How often, if ever, is it acceptable for Republican elected officials to...”

### Experiment 2 – Importance for elected officials to have certain traits

**Half of respondents:** How important is it to you that elected officials...

**A quarter of respondents:** How important is it to you that Democratic elected officials...

**A quarter of respondents:** How important is it to you that Republican elected officials...

**2019 PEW RESEARCH CENTER'S AMERICAN TRENDS PANEL  
WAVE 48 MAY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
APRIL 29-MAY 13, 2019  
N=10,170**

**ASK ALL:**

POL1DT Do you approve or disapprove of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president?

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	40	59	1
Feb 4-17, 2019	38	61	1
Nov 7-13, 2018	41	58	1
Sep 24-Oct 7, 2018	38	61	2
Jul 30-Aug 12, 2018	40	59	2
Jan 29-Feb 13, 2018	38	60	2
Aug 8-21, 2017	36	63	1
Apr 4-18, 2017	39	61	1
Feb 28-Mar 12, 2017 <sup>2</sup>	44	56	1

**ASK IF ANSWERED POL1DT (POL1DT=1,2) [N=10,064]:**

POL1DTSTR Do you **[IF POL1DT=1: approve; IF POL1DT=2: disapprove]** of the way Donald Trump is handling his job as president...

**BASED ON TOTAL:**

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>		Jul 30- Aug 12 <u>2018</u>	Jan 29- Feb 13 <u>2018</u>	Aug 8-21 <u>2017</u>	Apr 4-18 <u>2017</u>	Feb 28- Mar 12 <u>2017</u> <sup>1</sup>
40	NET Approve	40	38	36	39	44
29	Very strongly	31	29	26	27	30
10	Not so strongly	9	9	10	12	13
*	No answer	*	*	*	*	*
59	NET Disapprove	59	60	63	61	56
48	Very strongly	48	48	49	45	43
10	Not so strongly	10	12	13	15	12
*	No answer	*	*	*	*	*
1	No answer	2	2	1	1	1

<sup>2</sup> The W24.5 Mode Study survey was administered by web and phone. Results reported here are from web mode only.

**ASK ALL:**  
CONVOFFThinking about a conversation you might have with someone you don't know that well, how comfortable would you feel discussing... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	Very <u>comfortable</u>	Somewhat <u>comfortable</u>	Not too <u>comfortable</u>	Not at all <u>comfortable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
<b>ASK FORMS 1 AND 3 ONLY [N=5,076]:</b>					
a. Politics					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	17	35	32	16	*
<b>ASK FORMS 2 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,094]:</b>					
b. Donald Trump					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	25	31	28	17	1
<b>ASK ALL:</b>					
c. The economy					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	30	47	18	5	1
d. Religion					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	24	37	26	13	*
e. The weather					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	74	22	3	1	*
f. Sports					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	36	33	18	12	*
g. Movies and television					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	55	34	8	2	*

**ASK FORMS 2 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,094]:**DTTONE Since entering politics, has Donald Trump changed the tone and nature of political debate in the United States... **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 AND 2 WITH OPTION 3 ALWAYS LAST]**

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>	
24	For the better
55	For the worse
20	Not changed it much either way
1	No answer

**ASK FORMS 1 AND 3 ONLY [N=5,076]:**POLD\_ALL Over the last several years, would you say the tone and nature of political debate in this country has... **[RANDOMIZE OPTIONS 1 AND 2 WITH OPTION 3 ALWAYS LAST]**

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>	
85	Become more negative
3	Become more positive
12	Not changed much
*	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

FOLGOV

Would you say you follow what is going on in government and public affairs...

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>		Jan 29- Feb 13 <u>2018</u>	Sep 27- Oct 10 <u>2016</u>	Sep 9- Oct 3 <u>2014</u>
42	Most of the time	48	40	34
36	Some of the time	33	37	39
15	Only now and then	13	16	17
7	Hardly at all	6	7	11
*	No answer	*	1	0

**ASK ALL:**

OFTVOTE

How often would you say you vote?

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>		Jul 30- Aug 12 <u>2018</u>	Jan 29- Feb 13 <u>2018</u>	Sep 27- Oct 10 <u>2016</u>	Sep 9- Oct 3 <u>2014</u>
49	Always	43	46	43	35
25	Nearly always	28	26	26	27
9	Part of the time	12	10	11	11
16	Seldom	17	18	19	25
2	No answer	1	1	1	1

**RANDOMIZE FREQXP1 THRU FREQXP4****ASK ALL:**

FREQXP1

How often, if ever, do you feel unfairly judged by others because of the language you use to express yourself?

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>	
7	Often
28	Sometimes
38	Rarely
25	Never
1	No answer

**RANDOMIZE FREQXP1 THRU FREQXP4****ASK ALL:**

FREQXP2

When you are around people who have different racial and ethnic backgrounds than your own, how often, if ever, do you feel you have to change the way you express yourself?

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>	
6	Often
30	Sometimes
37	Rarely
26	Never
1	No answer

**RANDOMIZE FREQXP1 THRU FREQXP4****ASK ALL:**

FREQXP3      How often, if ever, do you laugh out loud at something you think is funny?

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

58	Often
34	Sometimes
6	Rarely
1	Never
2	No answer

**RANDOMIZE FREQXP1 THRU FREQXP4****ASK ALL:**

FREQXP4      How often, if ever, do you go out of your way to help someone you don't know well?

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

31	Often
56	Sometimes
11	Rarely
1	Never
2	No answer

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****RANDOMIZE TALKIMP AND TALKCONF****ASK ALL:**

TALKIMP      How important is it to you personally to use language that other people do not find offensive?

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

42	Very important
37	Somewhat important
14	Not too important
5	Not at all important
2	No answer

**RANDOMIZE TALKIMP AND TALKCONF****ASK ALL:**

TALKCONF      How confident are you that the language you use is not offensive to other people?

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

42	Very confident
45	Somewhat confident
8	Not too confident
3	Not at all confident
2	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

DT\_SAYS

Thinking about the things Donald Trump says, how often do his comments make you feel...

**[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Rarely</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,549]:</b>					
a. Inspired					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	13	20	20	47	*
b. Insulted					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	38	24	19	18	*
c. Exhausted					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	41	27	17	15	1
d. Respected					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	13	22	24	41	*
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=2,546]:</b>					
e. Entertained					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	21	33	20	25	1
f. Concerned					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	48	29	16	6	1
g. Hopeful					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	19	22	20	38	1
<b>ASK FORM 3 ONLY [N=2,527]:</b>					
h. Proud					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	16	20	18	45	1
i. Frightened					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	26	30	20	23	1
j. Confused					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	38	32	18	11	1
k. Happy					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	15	22	22	40	1
<b>ASK FORM 4 ONLY [N=2,548]:</b>					
l. Angry					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	36	29	22	12	1
m. Embarrassed					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	39	30	16	15	*
n. Informed					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	16	27	27	29	1
o. Excited					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	11	26	22	40	1

**ASK ALL:**

Now, thinking about the people you talk with, whether in person, over the phone, or online...

TALKPOL How often do you discuss government and politics with others?<sup>3</sup>

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>		Jan 29- Feb 13 <u>2018</u>	Mar 2-28 <u>2016</u>	Mar 19- Apr 29 <u>2014</u> <sup>4</sup>
10	Nearly every day	18	23	13
30	A few times a week	33	35	29
28	A few times a month	23	18	26
31	Less often	26	23	32
*	No answer	*	1	*

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,549]:**

MNWAGE Do you favor or oppose raising the federal minimum wage to \$15.00 an hour?

Apr 29- May 13 <u>2019</u>	
41	Strongly favor
26	Somewhat favor
18	Somewhat oppose
15	Strongly oppose
*	No answer

<sup>3</sup> Prior to May 2019, the question asked about people you talk with "in person, over the phone, or electronically"  
<sup>4</sup> In Wave 1 (Mar 19-Apr 29, 2014), 407 non- Internet panelists were surveyed by phone.

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=2,546]:**

WALL Do you favor or oppose substantially expanding the wall along the U.S. border with Mexico?

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

31	Strongly favor
15	Somewhat favor
17	Somewhat oppose
36	Strongly oppose
1	No answer

**PHONE TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:**

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
<i>Substantially expanding the wall along the U.S. border with Mexico</i>			
Jan 9-14, 2019	40	58	4
Jun 5-12, 2018	40	56	4
Jan 10-15, 2018	37	60	3
<i>Building a wall along the entire border with Mexico</i>			
Feb 7-12, 2017	35	62	3
Aug 9-16, 2016	36	61	3
Mar 17-26, 2016	34	62	4
<i>Building a fence along the entire border with Mexico</i>			
Mar 17-26, 2016	38	58	4
Sep 22-27, 2015	46	48	5
Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011 <sup>5</sup>	46	47	6
<i>Building a fence along 700 miles of the border with Mexico</i>			
January 2007	46	48	6
CNN: September 2006	54	44	2

**ASK FORM 3 ONLY [N=2,527]:**

GUNPRIORITYX Thinking about gun policy, do you favor or oppose banning assault-style weapons?

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

44	Strongly favor
18	Somewhat favor
15	Somewhat oppose
22	Strongly oppose
*	No answer

<sup>5</sup> In Sep 22-Oct 4, 2011, item was asked as part of a list.

**ASK ALL:**

INSTPCH

Thinking about each of the following places and organizations, in general, how open do you think they are to a wide range of opinions and viewpoints? **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Very open</u>	<u>Somewhat open</u>	<u>Not too open</u>	<u>Not at all open</u>	<u>No answer</u>
<b>ASK FORMS 1 AND 2 ONLY [N=5,095]:</b>					
Colleges and universities					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	25	43	19	12	1
<b>ASK FORMS 3 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,075]:</b>					
Community colleges					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	22	51	17	7	3
<b>ASK ALL:</b>					
K-12 public schools					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	12	49	29	8	2
d. Churches and religious organizations					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	10	38	38	13	1
Your local community					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	14	60	21	3	1

**ASK FORMS 1 AND 3 ONLY [N=5,076]:**

PERSTLK

Thinking about conversations you have around subjects like race, gender and religion, which describes you better? **[RANDOMIZE]**Apr 29-  
May 13  
201945  
55  
1I'm more careful with the language I use now than I used to be  
I haven't really changed how I talk about these subjects  
No answer**ASK FORMS 2 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,094]:**

KNOWOFNSE

Thinking about conversations and the language people use, in general, would you say... **[RANDOMIZE]**Apr 29-  
May 13  
201948  
51  
1It's hard to know what others might find offensive  
It's easy to know what others might find offensive  
No answer

**ASK ALL:**

NEWS\_PLATFORM

Now, thinking about your news habits, how often do you... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Often</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Hardly ever</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. Read any newspapers in print?					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	17	24	33	26	*
Jul 30-Aug 12, 2018	16	25	30	29	*
Aug 8-Aug 21, 2017	18	25	32	25	*
Jan 12-Feb 8, 2016	20	28	31	21	*
Aug 21-Sep 2, 2013	27	27	27	19	*

**NO ITEMS b.-e.**

f. Watch cable television news (such as CNN, The Fox News cable channel, or MSNBC)?					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	30	28	23	18	*
Jul 30-Aug 12, 2018	30	23	23	24	0
Aug 8-Aug 21, 2017	28	27	23	22	*
Jan 12-Feb 8, 2016	31	27	24	18	*
Aug 21-Sep 2, 2013	24	28	26	21	*
g. Get news from a social media site (such as Facebook, Twitter, or Snapchat)?					
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	26	28	20	24	*
Feb 19-Mar 4, 2019	25	29	21	24	*
Jul 30-Aug 12, 2018	20	27	21	32	0
Aug 8-Aug 21, 2017	20	27	20	33	0
Jan 12-Feb 8, 2016 <sup>6</sup>	18	26	18	38	*

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,549]:**

ENTERTAIND Over the last several years, would you say the tone and nature of political debate in this country has...

Apr 29- May 13 2019	
35	Become more entertaining
46	Become less entertaining
18	Not changed much
1	No answer

<sup>6</sup> In the Wave 14 January 2016 survey, this question item read "Get news from a social networking site (such as Facebook or Twitter)?".

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=2,546]:**

ISSUESD Over the last several years, would you say the tone and nature of political debate in this country has...

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

20	Become more focused on policy issues
60	Become less focused on policy issues
19	Not changed much
2	No answer

**ASK FORM 3 ONLY [N=2,527]:**

FACTSD Over the last several years, would you say the tone and nature of political debate in this country has...

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

8	Become more fact based
76	Become less fact based
15	Not changed much
1	No answer

**ASK FORM 4 ONLY [N=2,548]:**

RESPECTD Over the last several years, would you say the tone and nature of political debate in this country has...

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

2	Become more respectful
85	Become less respectful
12	Not changed much
*	No answer

**ASK FORMS 1 AND 2 ONLY [N=5,095]:**

POLINTOL1 Thinking about some groups of people...

In general, how comfortable do you think **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** are to freely and openly express their political views?

	<u>Very comfortable</u>	<u>Somewhat comfortable</u>	<u>Not too comfortable</u>	<u>Not at all comfortable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,549]:</b>					
a. Republicans in your community Apr 29-May 13, 2019	37	39	20	4	1
b. Democrats in your community Apr 29-May 13, 2019	40	43	13	3	1
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=2,546]:</b>					
c. Conservatives in your community Apr 29-May 13, 2019	30	45	18	5	2
d. Liberals in your community Apr 29-May 13, 2019	36	45	13	4	2

**ASK FORMS 3 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,075]:**

POLINTOL2 Thinking about some groups of people...

In general, how comfortable do you think **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** are to freely and openly express their political views?

	<u>Very comfortable</u>	<u>Somewhat comfortable</u>	<u>Not too comfortable</u>	<u>Not at all comfortable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
<b>ASK FORM 3 ONLY [N=2,527]:</b>					
a. Republicans in this country Apr 29-May 13, 2019	36	35	21	6	1
b. Democrats in this country Apr 29-May 13, 2019	48	36	12	3	1
<b>ASK FORM 4 ONLY [N=2,548]:</b>					
c. Conservatives in this country Apr 29-May 13, 2019	30	40	22	6	1
d. Liberals in this country Apr 29-May 13, 2019	45	37	13	4	1

**ASK ALL:**DECISION Which better describes your approach to solving problems... **[RANDOMIZE]**

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

84	I tend to carefully consider all possible options, even if it takes more time
15	I tend to look for a quick solution that meets my needs, even if I haven't considered all possible options
1	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

POLCRCT

Which statement comes closer to your own views — even if neither is exactly right?

	People need to be more careful about the language they use to avoid offending people with <u>different backgrounds</u>	Too many people are easily offended these days over the language that <u>others use</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Apr 29-May 13, 2019	39	60	1
Sep 24-Oct 7, 2018	41	58	1
Jan 29-Feb 13, 2018	45	55	*
Jun 7-Jul 5, 2016	39	59	2

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,549]:**

ELCTRAT1

How important is it to you that Republican elected officials... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Are honest and ethical Apr 29-May 13, 2019	87	7	3	2	1
Are knowledgeable about the issues Apr 29-May 13, 2019	85	10	3	2	1
c. Spend time raising money for reelection Apr 29-May 13, 2019	9	27	39	24	1
d. Are willing to make compromises with Democratic elected officials to solve important problems Apr 29-May 13, 2019	61	29	6	4	*
e. Treat Democratic elected officials with respect Apr 29-May 13, 2019	65	25	6	3	*
Admit when they're wrong Apr 29-May 13, 2019	76	18	3	2	*

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=2,546]:**ELCTRAT2 How important is it to you that Democratic elected officials... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. Are honest and ethical Apr 29-May 13, 2019	88	7	2	2	1
Are knowledgeable about the issues Apr 29-May 13, 2019	85	9	3	3	1
c. Spend time raising money for reelection Apr 29-May 13, 2019	13	27	35	24	1
d. Are willing to make compromises with Republican elected officials to solve important problems Apr 29-May 13, 2019	61	28	6	4	1
e. Treat Republican elected officials with respect Apr 29-May 13, 2019	60	28	7	4	1
Admit when they're wrong Apr 29-May 13, 2019	78	15	3	3	2

**ASK FORMS 3 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,075]:**ELCTRAT3 How important is it to you that elected officials... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Very important</u>	<u>Somewhat important</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Not at all important</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Are honest and ethical Apr 29-May 13, 2019	91	6	2	1	1
Are knowledgeable about the issues Apr 29-May 13, 2019	89	8	1	1	1
c. Spend time raising money for reelection Apr 29-May 13, 2019	10	29	37	22	1
d. Are willing to make compromises with their political opponents to solve important problems Apr 29-May 13, 2019	65	28	4	2	1
e. Treat their political opponents with respect Apr 29-May 13, 2019	68	24	5	2	1
Admit when they're wrong Apr 29-May 13, 2019	82	14	2	2	1

**ASK IF MNWAGE=1-4 AND FORM=1 [N=2,535]:**

DINNER1 Imagine a situation where a friend invites you to a small dinner with people you have never met before.

**[ASK IF FAVOR RAISING MINIMUM WAGE; MNWAGE=1,2] [N=1,706]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they oppose raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Would you be more likely to... **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES]**

**[ASK IF OPPOSE RAISING MINIMUM WAGE; MNWAGE=3,4] [N=829]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they favor raising the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour. Would you be more likely to... **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES]**

Apr 29-May 13, 2019

	Favor raising minimum <u>wage</u>	Oppose raising minimum <u>wage</u>	
<u>Total</u>			
73	74	70	Share your own views about raising the minimum wage
27	25	30	Avoid sharing your own views raising the minimum wage
*	1	*	No answer

**ASK IF WALL=1-4 AND FORM=2 [N=2,528]:**

DINNER2 Imagine a situation where a friend invites you to a small dinner with people you have never met before.

**[ASK IF FAVOR EXPANDING WALL; WALL=1,2] [N=1,115]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they oppose expanding the wall on the U.S.-Mexico border. Would you be more likely to... **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES]**

**[ASK IF OPPOSE EXPANDING WALL; WALL=3,4] [N=1,413]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they favor expanding the wall on the U.S.-Mexico border. Would you be more likely to... **[RANDOMIZE RESPONSES]**

Apr 29-May 13, 2019

	Favor expanding <u>wall</u>	Oppose expanding <u>wall</u>	
<u>Total</u>			
60	61	59	Share your own views about the border wall
40	39	41	Avoid sharing your own views the border wall
*	*	*	No answer

**ASK IF GUNPRIORITYX=1-4 AND FORM=3 [N=2,515]:**

DINNER3 Imagine a situation where a friend invites you to a small dinner with people you have never met before.

**[ASK IF SUPPORT BANNING ASSAULT WEAPONS; GUNPRIORITYX=1,2] [N=1,673]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they oppose banning assault-style weapons in the U.S. Would you be more likely to...

**[ASK IF OPOPOSE BANNING ASSAULT WEAPONS; GUNPRIORITYX=3,4] [N=842]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how much they favor a ban on assault-style weapons in the U.S. Would you be more likely to...

Apr 29-May 13, 2019

	Support banning assault-style weapons	Oppose banning assault-style weapons	
<u>Total</u>			
67	67	66	Share your own views about banning assault-style weapons
33	32	33	Avoid sharing your own views about banning assault-style weapons
1	1	1	No answer

**ASK IF POL1DT=1-2 AND FORM=4 [N=2,521]:**

DINNER4 Imagine a situation where a friend invites you to a small dinner with people you have never met before.

**[ASK IF DISAPPROVE OF DONALD TRUMP; POL1DT=2] [N=1,564]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how they really like Donald Trump. Would you be more likely to...

**[ASK IF APPROVE OF DONALD TRUMP; POL1DT=1] [N=957]:**

People at the table are having a conversation about how they really dislike Donald Trump. Would you be more likely to...

Apr 29-May 13, 2019

	Approve of Trump's job as president	Disapprove of Trump's job as president	
<u>Total</u>			
48	57	43	Share your own views about Donald Trump
51	43	57	Avoid sharing your own views about Donald Trump
*	1	*	No answer

**ASK IF DINNER4=1 [N=1,257]:**

WHYSHARE Why would you be more likely to share your own views about Donald Trump?

**AMONG THOSE WHO APPROVE OF DONALD TRUMP (POL1DT=1) [N=548]:**Apr 29-  
May 13,  
2019

35	It is important for others to know where I stand
34	Compelled by strong praise/positive views of Trump
15	Belief that there can be a productive conversation
14	Inform people why they are wrong/Change their mind
1	Share some negative view of Trump
2	Other
16	No answer

**AMONG THOSE WHO DISAPPROVE OF DONALD TRUMP (POL1DT=2) [N=709]:**Apr 29-  
May 13,  
2019

39	It is important for others to know where I stand
25	Belief that there can be a productive conversation
24	Compelled by strong criticism of Trump
10	Inform people why they are wrong/Change their mind
3	Share some positive view of Trump
4	Other
13	No answer

**ASK IF DINNER4=2 [N=1,255]:**

WHYAVOID Why would you be more likely to avoid sharing your own views about Donald Trump?

**AMONG THOSE WHO APPROVE OF DONALD TRUMP (POL1DT=1) [N=404]:**Apr 29-  
May 13,  
2019

56	<b>NET Don't want conflict/Discomfort</b>
25	Don't like conflict/confrontation/debate
17	Wouldn't talk politics with people I don't really know/at social functions
13	Don't want to offend/insult/make people angry
9	Sharing will make everyone/host uncomfortable/Don't want to ruin dinner
17	<b>NET Criticism of Trump opposers</b>
11	Trump opposers close minded/Other criticism of Trump opposers
7	Don't want to be judged for supporting Trump
5	Don't have strong political opinions/Not informed enough
4	The discussion would not be productive/No opinions would change
4	Would listen/ask questions instead
1	Can only say good things about Trump
9	Other
15	No answer

**AMONG THOSE WHO DISAPPROVE OF DONALD TRUMP (POL1DT=2) [N=851]:**Apr 29-  
May 13,  
2019

57	<b>NET Don't want conflict/Discomfort</b>
26	Don't like conflict/confrontation/debate
13	Wouldn't talk politics with people I don't really know/at social functions
13	Don't want to offend/insult/make people angry
11	Sharing will make everyone/host uncomfortable/Don't want to ruin dinner
10	Trump supporters close minded/Other criticism of Trump supporters
7	Can only say bad things about Trump
6	Don't have strong political opinions/Not informed enough
6	The discussion would not be productive/No opinions would change
2	Would listen/ask questions instead
10	Other
17	No answer

**ASK FORMS 2 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,094]:**PARTISAN2 In general, would you say... **[RANDOMIZE]**

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

32	I enjoy it when elected officials I dislike get caught up in scandals or face personal setbacks
66	Even when it comes to elected officials I dislike, I don't enjoy seeing them caught up in scandals or facing personal setbacks
2	No answer

**ADDITIONAL QUESTION HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK FORMS 1 AND 2 ONLY [N=5,095]:**HGSTNDRD Which comes closer to your view? Elected officials... **[RANDOMIZE]**

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

73	Should avoid heated or aggressive language because it could encourage some people to take violent action
25	Should be able to use heated or aggressive language to express themselves without worrying about whether some people may act on what they say
2	No answer

**ASK FORMS 3 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,075]:**

RHTVLNC1 Do you think elected officials using heated or aggressive language to talk about certain people or groups makes violence against those people or groups more likely?

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

78	Yes
21	No
2	No answer

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF CNFLCT1-CNFLCT3****ASK ALL:**

CNFLCT1        Where would you place yourself on the following scale?

**[FOR RANDOM 1/2 SAMPLE SHOW RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER BUT KEEPING THE NUMERIC CODES THE SAME (1 AT THE TOP AND 4 AT THE BOTTOM)]**

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

16	(1) Disagreements make me uncomfortable
25	(2)
29	(3)
27	(4) Disagreements don't really bother me that much
3	No answer

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF CNFLCT1-CNFLCT3****ASK ALL:**

CNFLCT2        Where would you place yourself on the following scale?

**[FOR RANDOM 1/2 SAMPLE SHOW RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER BUT KEEPING THE NUMERIC CODES THE SAME (1 AT THE TOP AND 4 AT THE BOTTOM)]**

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

22	(1) I enjoy challenging the opinions of others
33	(2)
28	(3)
14	(4) I don't enjoy challenging others, even when they are wrong
3	No answer

**RANDOMIZE ORDER OF CNFLCT1-CNFLCT3****ASK ALL:**

CNFLCT3        Where would you place yourself on the following scale?

**[FOR RANDOM 1/2 SAMPLE SHOW RESPONSE OPTIONS IN REVERSE ORDER BUT KEEPING THE NUMERIC CODES THE SAME (1 AT THE TOP AND 4 AT THE BOTTOM)]**

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

6	(1) I would rather go along with the group than risk creating conflict
18	(2)
40	(3)
33	(4) I would rather speak my mind, even if it risks creating conflict
3	No answer

**ADDITIONAL QUESTION HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK FORMS 3 AND 4 ONLY [N=5,075]:**CLRSOL Which comes closer to your own view... **[RANDOMIZE]**

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

46	There are clear solutions to most big issues facing the country today
52	Most big issues facing the country today don't have clear solutions
1	No answer

**PHONE TREND FOR COMPARISON**

	<i>There are clear solutions to most big issues facing the country today</i>	<i>Most big issues facing the country today don't have clear solutions</i>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <i>Both/Neither/DK/Ref</i>
Mar 7-14, 2018	44	54	2
Jun 27-Jul 9, 2017	41	56	3
Aug 9-16, 2016	44	52	3
Aug 27-Sep 13, 2015	41	56	3

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK FORMS 2 AND 3 ONLY [N=5,073]:**TALKDISA In your experience, when you talk about politics with people who you DISagree with, do you generally find it to be... **[RANDOMIZE]**

Apr 29-

May 13

2019

48	Interesting and informative
50	Stressful and frustrating
2	No answer

Sep 24-

Oct 7

2018

45
53
2

Mar 2-

Mar 28

2016

51
46
2

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=2,549]:**ACPTACT1 How often, if ever, is it acceptable for elected officials to... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Always acceptable</u>	<u>Sometimes acceptable</u>	<u>Rarely acceptable</u>	<u>Never acceptable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Say their opponent's policy positions are incorrect Apr 29-May 13, 2019	33	40	14	12	1
Say something negative about their opponent's physical appearance Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	6	18	73	1
Say their opponent is stupid Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	13	22	62	1
Raise their voice to emphasize their point in a debate Apr 29-May 13, 2019	11	47	24	16	1
e. Say their opponent is anti- American Apr 29-May 13, 2019	5	23	31	41	1
f. Deliberately mislead people about their opponent's record Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	5	12	81	1

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=2,546]:**ACPTACT2 How often, if ever, is it acceptable for elected officials to... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Always acceptable</u>	<u>Sometimes acceptable</u>	<u>Rarely acceptable</u>	<u>Never acceptable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. Say their opponent's policy positions are evil Apr 29-May 13, 2019	6	25	34	35	1
Say something negative about the physical appearance of their opponent's spouse Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	5	11	81	1
Say their opponent is uninformed on the issues Apr 29-May 13, 2019	23	50	15	10	1
Shout over their opponent in a debate Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	16	32	49	1
e. Say they love America more than their opponent does Apr 29-May 13, 2019	11	26	25	37	2
<b>NO ITEM f.</b>					
Deliberately mislead people about their opponent's record Apr 29-May 13, 2019	4	18	27	50	1

**ASK FORM 3 ONLY [N=2,527]:**ACPTACT3 How often, if ever, is it acceptable for Democratic elected officials to... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Always acceptable</u>	<u>Sometimes acceptable</u>	<u>Rarely acceptable</u>	<u>Never acceptable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
Say their Republican opponent's policy positions are evil Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	15	26	54	2
Say something negative about their Republican opponent's physical appearance Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	6	13	76	2
Say their Republican opponent is stupid Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	10	20	65	2
d. Shout over their Republican opponent in a debate Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	14	28	53	3
e. Say their Republican opponent is anti-American Apr 29-May 13, 2019	4	14	25	55	3
Deliberately mislead people about their Republican opponent's record Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	3	10	83	2
Ridicule their Republican opponent Apr 29-May 13, 2019	4	14	23	57	2

**ASK FORM 4 ONLY [N=2,548]:**ACPTACT4 How often, if ever, is it acceptable for Republican elected officials to... **[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Always acceptable</u>	<u>Sometimes acceptable</u>	<u>Rarely acceptable</u>	<u>Never acceptable</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. Say their Democratic opponent's policy positions are evil Apr 29-May 13, 2019	4	16	25	53	2
Say something negative about their Democratic opponent's physical appearance Apr 29-May 13, 2019	2	6	16	74	2
Say their Democratic opponent is stupid Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	10	21	64	2
Shout over their Democratic opponent in a debate Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	16	26	54	2
e. Say their Democratic opponent is anti-American Apr 29-May 13, 2019	4	18	23	53	2
Deliberately mislead people about their Democratic opponent's record Apr 29-May 13, 2019	1	6	14	78	2
Ridicule their Democratic opponent Apr 29-May 13, 2019	3	16	24	55	2

**ASK ALL:**

SPCHOFND

Do you think people in this country generally agree on what is considered to be...

**[RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>Yes, people generally agree</u>	<u>No, people do not generally agree</u>	<u>No answer</u>
a. Racist language Apr 29-May 13, 2019	38	61	2
b. Sexist language Apr 29-May 13, 2019	34	65	2

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ASK ALL:**

SCMREG

Thinking about the content posted on social media, which comes closer to your own view?

**[RANDOMIZE]**Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

66	Social media companies have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms
32	Social media companies do NOT have a responsibility to remove offensive content from their platforms
2	No answer

**ASK ALL:**

SCMREG2

How much confidence do you have in social media companies to determine what offensive content should be removed from their platforms?

Apr 29-  
May 13  
2019

4	A great deal of confidence
26	A fair amount of confidence
45	Not too much confidence
24	No confidence at all
1	No answer

**ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER  
MARCH 2019 POLITICAL SURVEY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
MARCH 20-25, 2019  
N=1,503**

**QUESTIONS 1-2, 10, 14, 20, 25, 33-34, 44, 47-50a-d, 54-58 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 3-9, 11-13, 15-18, 21-24, 26-32, 35-43, 45-46, 51-53, 59**

**QUESTIONS 19, 50e-f HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.60 And thinking about politics and elections, would you say that personally insulting political opponents is [READ; RANDOMIZE]?

Mar 20-25 2019		Mar 7-14 2018	(RVs) Oct 20-25 2016	Mar 17-26 2016
34	Sometimes fair game	31	43	31
63	Never fair game	68	54	67
1	Other/Depends (VOL.)	*	1	1
2	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	1	2	1

**QUESTIONS 61, 64-65, 70-71, 75-77 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 62-63, 72-74**

**QUESTIONS 66-69 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or independent?

**ASK IF INDEP/NO PREF/OTHER/DK/REF (PARTY=3,4,5,9):**

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	Republican	Democrat	Independent	(VOL.) No preference	(VOL.) Other party	(VOL.) DK/Ref	Lean Rep	Lean Dem
Mar 20-25, 2019	26	30	37	3	1	3	14	19
Jan 9-14, 2019	25	31	40	2	1	2	16	18
Sep 18-24, 2018	25	32	37	3	1	2	15	18
Jun 5-12, 2018	25	31	38	3	1	2	15	18
Apr 25-May 1, 2018	27	28	38	4	1	2	14	19
Mar 7-14, 2018	26	28	41	3	*	1	17	18
Jan 10-15, 2018	26	33	34	3	1	3	12	18
<b>Yearly Totals</b>								
2018	25.7	30.8	37.6	3.0	.8	2.0	14.7	18.3
2017	23.6	31.4	39.4	3.3	.6	1.7	15.8	18.7
2016	25.4	32.0	36.5	3.4	.5	2.2	14.6	17.0
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2015	23.7	30.4	40.1	3.6	.4	1.8	16.4	17.3
2014	23.2	31.5	39.5	3.1	.7	2.0	16.2	16.5
2013	23.9	32.1	38.3	2.9	.5	2.2	16.0	16.0
2012	24.7	32.6	36.4	3.1	.5	2.7	14.4	16.1
2011	24.3	32.3	37.4	3.1	.4	2.5	15.7	15.6
2010	25.2	32.7	35.2	3.6	.4	2.8	14.5	14.1
2009	23.9	34.4	35.1	3.4	.4	2.8	13.1	15.7
2008	25.7	36.0	31.5	3.6	.3	3.0	10.6	15.2
2007	25.3	32.9	34.1	4.3	.4	2.9	10.9	17.0

## PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED ...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)	Lean	Lean
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>No preference</u>	<u>Other party</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
2006	27.8	33.1	30.9	4.4	.3	3.4	10.5	15.1
2005	29.3	32.8	30.2	4.5	.3	2.8	10.3	14.9
2004	30.0	33.5	29.5	3.8	.4	3.0	11.7	13.4
2003	30.3	31.5	30.5	4.8	.5	2.5	12.0	12.6
2002	30.4	31.4	29.8	5.0	.7	2.7	12.4	11.6
2001	29.0	33.2	29.5	5.2	.6	2.6	11.9	11.6
2001 <i>Post-Sept 11</i>	30.9	31.8	27.9	5.2	.6	3.6	11.7	9.4
2001 <i>Pre-Sept 11</i>	27.3	34.4	30.9	5.1	.6	1.7	12.1	13.5
2000	28.0	33.4	29.1	5.5	.5	3.6	11.6	11.7
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.9	33.7	31.1	4.6	.4	2.3	11.6	13.1
1997	28.0	33.4	32.0	4.0	.4	2.3	12.2	14.1
1996	28.9	33.9	31.8	3.0	.4	2.0	12.1	14.9
1995	31.6	30.0	33.7	2.4	.6	1.3	15.1	13.5
1994	30.1	31.5	33.5	1.3	--	3.6	13.7	12.2
1993	27.4	33.6	34.2	4.4	1.5	2.9	11.5	14.9
1992	27.6	33.7	34.7	1.5	0	2.5	12.6	16.5
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	0	1.4	3.0	14.7	10.8
1990	30.9	33.2	29.3	1.2	1.9	3.4	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

Methodology and sample sizes for the survey of U.S. adults conducted March 20-25, 2019 available [here](#).