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After a
Dark Year ...



THANK YOU FOR PRACTICING
SOCIAL DISTANCING



Signs of
Progress

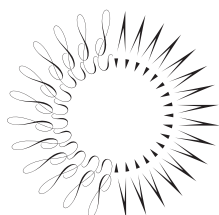


The pandemic has challenged the world, exposing shortcomings
and inspiring solutions—and the changes are far from over.

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The Pew Charitable Trusts



TIME CAPSULE

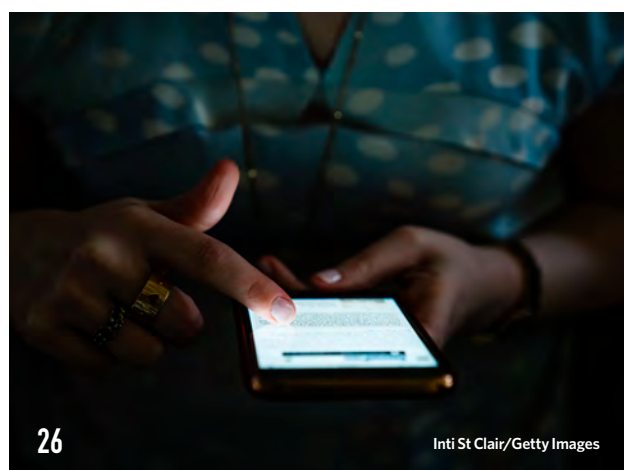
In 1990, The Pew Charitable Trusts established the Pew Latin American Fellows Program in the Biomedical Sciences. The program brings young scientists from Latin America to receive training in top-tier U.S. laboratories and to collaborate with American investigators. Then, with seed money to establish labs, the fellows take their skills and knowledge back to their home countries, where they continue their careers furthering scientific understanding in biology and medicine. In the three decades of the program, there have been 291 Latin American fellows.

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A Time for Renewal



Spring is the season of renewal. We see it in warmer weather. In extra hours of daylight. And in the cry to “play ball.” But spring 2021 offers a new perspective on renewal given the past year of lost friends and family, business closures, online schooling, delivered groceries, and separation from our loved ones.

Now that millions of us are receiving effective vaccines, an economic, cultural, and public health renewal appears within reach. But as we pass the one-year mark of the pandemic, there is much to be learned from how people acted, and reacted, when many aspects of daily life changed overnight. The Pew Research Center makes its contribution in a report summarizing its U.S. polling data from 2020.

In April 2020, majorities in both American political parties saw COVID-19 as a significant economic crisis. And there was widespread support for some government actions, such as banning travel and closing K-12 schools. But there were also partisan disagreements about how well President Donald Trump was handling the crisis, the accuracy of the media’s coverage of the pandemic, and whether state restrictions would be lifted too soon. As the year progressed, the number and intensity of these differences grew. In late July, 36% of Republicans said K-12 schools should be open five days a week compared with 6% of Democrats. And during the holiday season, Democrats were much more likely to cancel travel plans than Republicans.

The Center also took a close look at health and financial disparities tied to race and ethnicity. Between February and March of last year, the Center found that “90% of the total decrease in U.S. employment arose from positions that could not be teleworked”—jobs disproportionately held by minorities without a college degree. And much more troubling, the fatality rates from COVID-19 were significantly higher among Black, Asian, and Hispanic groups than among White Americans.

In short, the pandemic has laid bare foundational issues for the United States that can help inform an agenda for improvement as we move forward. That is also true for the world of arts and culture. The pandemic put into relief long-standing challenges for

many venerable institutions that have been seeing traditional audiences age and are seeking new ways to grow. Shut down by health restrictions, these artists and organizations suddenly had to use their creativity to reach audiences virtually.

The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage, along with other funders, commissioned a study on how to help cultural organizations survive. As you'll read in *Trust*, my colleagues there now plan to turn their attention to providing grants to specifically aid recovery and sustainability, including reimagining business models, rethinking how to engage audiences, and upgrading health and safety measures.

Many of us who have received the vaccine have felt a sense of renewal. For others, questions remain. The pandemic has prompted new—and often intense—conversations about the role of science and trust in health advice and data. In an interview in this issue, Rebecca Wurtz, a physician at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, discusses the science behind the vaccines, explains what effectiveness rates are, and says that for most people speaking “with a trusted health care provider about whether the vaccine is right for them will be the most persuasive and compelling” way to learn more.

Even as we renew many of the joys and activities from our pre-pandemic lives that have been sorely missed for a year, we can also be grateful that the pandemic opened the door to policies that research has shown will help us build a safer, healthier, and more prosperous future. It is certainly a time of immense change, but with renewal comes hope and promise.



Susan K. Urahn, *President and CEO*

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THE BIG PICTURE

Blue tansy and golden wildflowers blanket the Temblor Range in Carrizo Plain National Monument during a “super bloom” in 2017 when a long drought followed by a wet winter coaxed an abundance of wildflowers to blossom. Crowds flock to remote central California to see flower-covered hills so vibrant that they appear in satellite images. Communities and members of California’s congressional delegation have worked for more than a decade to protect more than 1 million acres of public space in the state, including the Carrizo Plain, to ensure a healthy ecosystem for visitors. For nearly three decades, Pew has supported land and river conservation throughout the American West that will safeguard the landscape for future generations.





Robyn Beck/AFP via Getty Images



A North Atlantic right whale dives in Canada's Gulf of St. Lawrence. Canadian officials have updated plans that can help reduce vessel strikes and other risks to the endangered species. *Nick Hawkins Photography*

Stronger Rules Needed to Save Endangered Right Whales

BY JOHN BRILEY

Migrating off the U.S. Southeast coast up to New England and the Canadian Maritimes, North Atlantic right whales pass through some of the world's busiest shipping lanes and most exploited commercial fishing grounds in the two countries. Vessel strikes and fishing gear entanglements frequently kill or severely injure these animals—which is why fewer than 400 of them remain.

To help this critically endangered species avoid extinction, the Canadian government in late February announced updated measures to reduce risks to right whales in national waters. Under the plan, which the government revises annually, its fisheries and maritime agencies will continue to use real-time visual and acoustic monitoring to dynamically manage whale presence—for example, by implementing vessel speed and fishing restrictions when right whales are detected. New for 2021 is the use of real-time assessments to inform decisions on whether to reopen areas to fishing or extend these limits.

To minimize the effect of closures on lobster and crab fishermen, Fisheries and Oceans Canada will continue to fund and permit the expanded use of ropeless fishing systems. This technology allows fishermen to remotely

trigger their gear to come to the surface with fewer or even none of the vertical lines in the water column that entangle whales.

Pew is encouraging Canada to invest in staffing, equipment, and other resources for marine mammal emergency response teams, which investigate injured or dead whales and provide vital scientific information to inform management. Pew is also asking the U.S. government to follow Canada's lead in taking swift, effective measures to reduce the risk of whale entanglement in U.S. waters and implement emergency fisheries closures.

The right whale population has declined by an estimated 100 animals since 2010, and today only 70 breeding females remain. That, coupled with increases in the deaths of females and injuries to their young, is pushing the species perilously close to extinction.

"The U.S. and Canada still have a chance to save North Atlantic right whales, but they must act quickly and decisively to do so," says Peter Baker, who directs Pew's ocean conservation work in Canada and New England. "Both governments should continue to raise the bar to help this imperiled species while it still has a chance to rebound."

First Dental Therapist in Maine

The first licensed dental therapist was hired in Maine in October, seven years after the state's law changed to allow this new category of dental professional. Claire Roesler, who has a master's in dental therapy from the University of Minnesota, works at the Penobscot Community Health Care's Dental Center in Bangor, which strives to increase access to health care for those who need it most.

Dental therapists are comparable to physician assistants in medicine and can undertake many of the most commonly needed dental procedures, such as fillings and placing temporary crowns, while freeing up dentists' time to focus on more complex procedures like root canals. Dental therapists can help expand the number of professionals able to provide dental care to underserved communities, and today more than 100 organizations across the country support the practice of dental therapy.

For nearly a decade, Pew has promoted dental therapy as a sensible way to increase access to oral health care for people in need and has also supported licensing, practice requirements, and training standards for therapists. "Experiences across the country continue to demonstrate that dental therapy is a cost-effective way to increase access to dental care, and state legislatures continue to pass laws with bipartisan support acknowledging as much," says Kristen Mizzi Angelone, senior manager for Pew's dental campaign. "Dental therapists are a common-sense solution to expanding dental care, particularly across rural and other underserved areas."

—Demetra Aposporos

News Use Grows on Social Media

As social media companies struggle to deal with misleading information on their platforms about the election, the COVID-19 pandemic, and more, a large portion of Americans continue to rely on these sites for news. About half of U.S. adults (53%) say they get news from social media "often" or "sometimes," and this use is spread out across a number of different sites, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted in September.

Among 11 social media sites asked about as a regular source of news, Facebook is at the top, with about a third (36%) of Americans getting news there regularly. YouTube comes next, with 23% of U.S. adults getting news there regularly. Twitter serves as a regular news source for 15% of U.S. adults.

Other social media sites are less likely to be regular sources of news. About 1 in 10 Americans or fewer report regularly getting news on Instagram (11%), Reddit (6%), Snapchat (4%), LinkedIn (4%), TikTok (3%), WhatsApp (3%), Tumblr (1%), and Twitch (1%).

These lower percentages for news use are in some cases related to the fact that fewer Americans report using them at all, compared with the shares who use Facebook and YouTube. Considering news users as a portion of a site's overall users, some sites stand out as being more "newsy" even if their total audience is relatively small. Twitter, for example, is used by 25% of U.S. adults, but over half of those users get news on the site regularly. And 42% of Reddit users get news regularly on the site, though it overall has a very small user base (15% of U.S. adults say they use Reddit). On the other hand, YouTube, though widely used, sees a smaller portion of its users turning to the site for news regularly (32%).

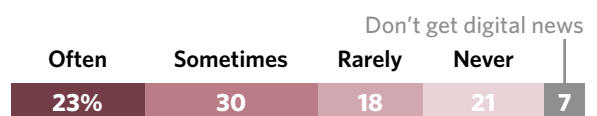
White adults make up a majority of the regular news users of Facebook and Reddit, but fewer than half of those who turn to Instagram for news. Black and Hispanic adults make up about a quarter of Instagram's regular news users (22% and 27%, respectively). People who regularly get news on Facebook are more likely to be women than men (63% vs. 35%), while two-thirds of Reddit's regular news users are men.

The majority of regular news users of many sites—YouTube, Twitter, Instagram, Reddit, and LinkedIn—are Democrats or lean Democratic. This may be related to the relatively young age profile of the news user base of these social media sites. No social media site in the study has regular news users who are more likely to be Republican or lean Republican.

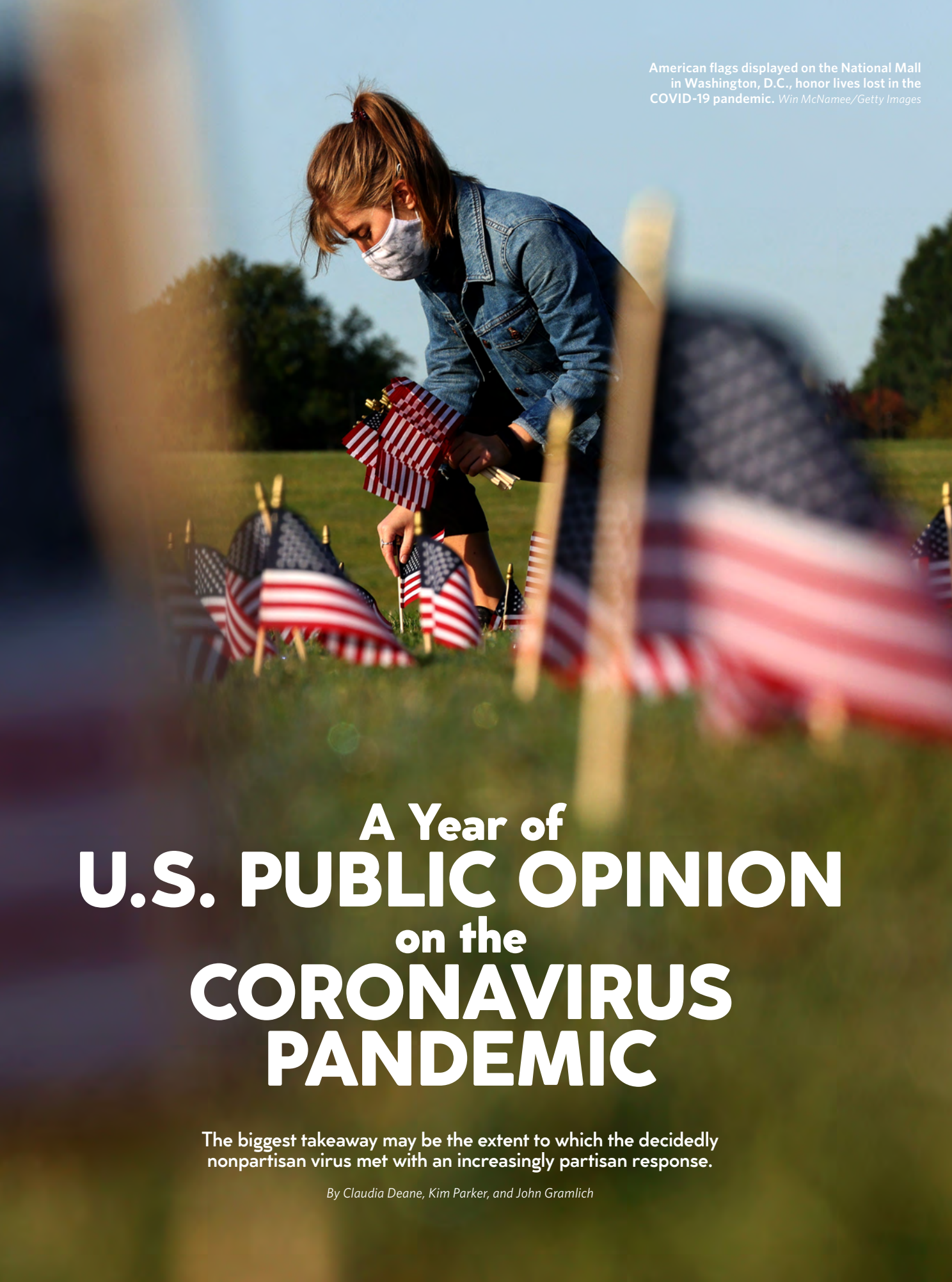
—Demetra Aposporos

About half of Americans get news on social media at least sometimes

% of U.S. adults who get news from social media...



Source: Pew Research Center

A woman with brown hair tied back, wearing a blue denim jacket and a white face mask, is crouching in a grassy field. She is holding several small American flags in her hands, and more flags are planted in the ground around her. The background is a soft-focus landscape with trees and a clear sky. The overall tone is somber and respectful.

American flags displayed on the National Mall
in Washington, D.C., honor lives lost in the
COVID-19 pandemic. *Win McNamee/Getty Images*

A Year of U.S. PUBLIC OPINION on the CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The biggest takeaway may be the extent to which the decidedly
nonpartisan virus met with an increasingly partisan response.

By Claudia Deane, Kim Parker, and John Gramlich

A year ago in March, state and local governments in the United States began urging residents to adjust their work, school, and social lives in response to the spread of a novel coronavirus first identified in China.

Americans could agree on a few things at that early stage of the U.S. outbreak. With restaurants, stores, and other public spaces around the country closing their doors, most saw COVID-19 as a serious economic threat to the nation. Most approved of their state and local officials' initial responses to the outbreak. And they generally had confidence in hospitals and medical centers to handle the needs of those stricken with the virus.

As the pandemic wore on, however, there was less and less common ground. Indeed, the biggest takeaway about U.S. public opinion in the first year of the coronavirus outbreak may be the extent to which the decidedly nonpartisan virus met with an increasingly partisan response. Democrats and Republicans disagreed over everything from eating out in restaurants to reopening schools, even as the actual impact of the pandemic fell along different fault lines, including race and ethnicity, income, age, and family structure. America's partisan divide stood out even by international standards: No country was as politically divided over its government's handling of the outbreak as the U.S. was in a 14-nation survey last summer.

As the COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S. extends into its second year—with more than 500,000 dead and major challenges to the nation's economy—the Pew Research Center looks back at some of the key patterns in public attitudes and experiences we observed in the first year of the crisis.

IN EARLY SURVEYS, A SIGN OF THINGS TO COME

Our first COVID-19 survey went into the field on March 10, 2020. We interviewed nearly 9,000 Americans over the course of the next seven days—a period that saw the World Health Organization declare the virus a pandemic; President Donald Trump declare a national emergency and ban travel to the U.S. from parts of Europe; and the White House advise Americans to avoid gatherings of more than 10 people.

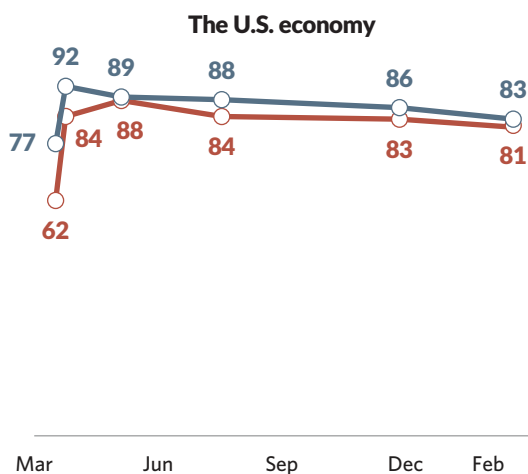
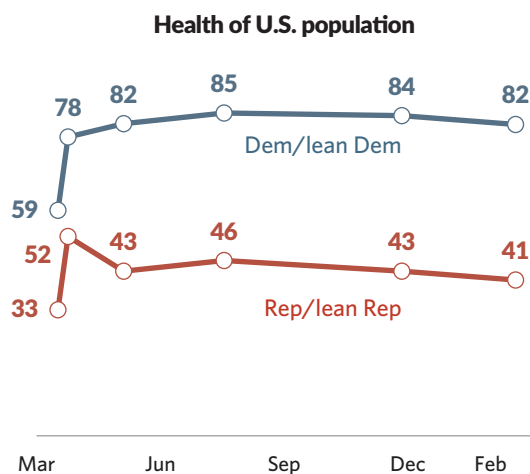
News about the virus was breaking so rapidly that public concern ticked up noticeably even within the week-long field period of our survey. By mid-March, all 50 states had reported coronavirus cases. By the end of the month, the U.S. had more cases than any other country, and a majority of Americans were under some kind of stay-at-home order.

There were already some indications of the partisan divide over the virus in that first sounding. While majorities in both parties anticipated the economic problems hurtling toward the nation, Democrats and Republicans differed sharply over whether the virus was a major threat to the health of the U.S. population. About 6 in 10 Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (59%) said it was, compared with only a third of Republicans and GOP-leaning independents. That 26-percentage-point gap would grow to around 40 points as spring turned to summer and then fall.

Other divides also became apparent in that first survey. They included heightened health concerns among Black and Hispanic Americans, as well

A year of wide political divisions over threat to public health from coronavirus outbreak

% of U.S. adults who say the coronavirus outbreak is a major threat to...



Source: Pew Research Center

as greater economic concerns among workers with lower incomes and less formal schooling. Both would become recurring themes throughout the pandemic and the severe recession it brought on.

Overall, our first polling on COVID-19 showed that the public had mixed expectations about how the outbreak would play out in the months ahead. That wasn't necessarily a surprise, given that most Americans had little or no experience with a pandemic. In mid-March, only around a third of U.S. adults (36%) expected the virus to pose a major threat to the day-to-day life of their community.

By late March and early April, the mood had clearly changed. Two-thirds of Americans—including majorities in both parties and across all major demographic groups—saw COVID-19 as a significant crisis at that time. Large majorities saw a recession or depression coming, predicted the pandemic would last more than six months, said the worst was still to come, and anticipated that there could be at least some disruptions to Americans' ability to vote in the presidential election in November. All of those things would turn out to be true.

A TRUST GAP OVER KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The arrival of a first-in-a-lifetime pandemic created a sudden need for average people to find and process large amounts of complicated and rapidly evolving information. Americans turned to many different sources for that information, but two commonly cited ones, the White House and the news media, brought out especially sharp partisan differences in attitudes.

In late March, views of how President Trump was handling the outbreak were already starkly split along party lines. Around 8 in 10 Republicans (83%) said the president was doing an excellent or good job, including 47% who said he was doing an excellent job. A nearly identical share of Democrats (81%) rated his response as only fair or poor, including 56% who said it was poor.

In early April, around two-thirds of Republicans (66%) said President Trump was quick to take the major steps needed in response to international reports of the outbreak; 92% of Democrats said he was too slow off the mark. In the same survey, 69% of Republicans said President Trump was accurately characterizing the severity of the COVID-19 situation; an even larger share of Democrats (77%) said he was making it seem better than it really was. Fall came, but the partisan divide remained: In early September, around 8 in 10 Republicans (79%) said the president was giving the country the right message on the virus; a bigger proportion of Democrats (90%) said he was delivering the wrong message.

If views were partisan when it came to the president, they were only slightly less so when it came to the news

media. In mid-March, 89% of all Americans said they were following news about the outbreak very or fairly closely. But Democrats were already much more likely than Republicans to say the media had covered the pandemic at least somewhat well (80% vs. 59%), while Republicans were more likely than Democrats to say the media had exaggerated the risks of the outbreak (76% vs. 49%).

As the pandemic continued, divisions over the media became more apparent. In late April, majorities of Democrats said the news coverage of the outbreak was getting them the information they needed (73%), was largely accurate (66%), worked for the benefit of the public (66%), and helped the country (63%). Fewer than half of Republicans agreed with each statement.

By September, around 8 in 10 Democrats (81%) continued to say the media were doing very or somewhat well covering the outbreak, but the proportion of Republicans who agreed had fallen below half (45%).

On many subjects related to the coronavirus, public attitudes differed not only by political party, but within each party, depending on where people turned for news and information. Republicans who relied on President Trump and the White House for COVID-19 news, for example, were consistently more likely than Republicans who turned elsewhere for news to rate the president's response highly—and the media's response poorly.

Meanwhile, with the perceived trustworthiness of information from both the White House and the media deeply divided along partisan lines, Americans expressed concerns about the proliferation of misinformation.

As early as mid-March, around half of Americans (48%) said they had seen at least some information about COVID-19 that seemed completely made up, on subjects ranging from the origin of the virus to its risks and potential cures. In early June, sizable shares in both parties—but especially Republicans—said they were finding it harder to tell what was true and what was false about the outbreak. And conspiracy theories began to gain a foothold: In the same June survey, a quarter of U.S. adults saw at least some truth in the theory that powerful people had intentionally planned the outbreak. Republicans were about twice as likely as Democrats (34% vs. 18%) to say the claim was probably or definitely true.

DIVISIONS OVER SHUTDOWNS, SOCIAL DISTANCING, AND MASKS

It may seem hard to believe today, but in late March 2020, there was strong bipartisan support for a variety of government-imposed shutdown measures. At the time, broad majorities in both parties supported restricting international travel to the U.S., canceling sports and entertainment events, closing K-12 schools, asking people

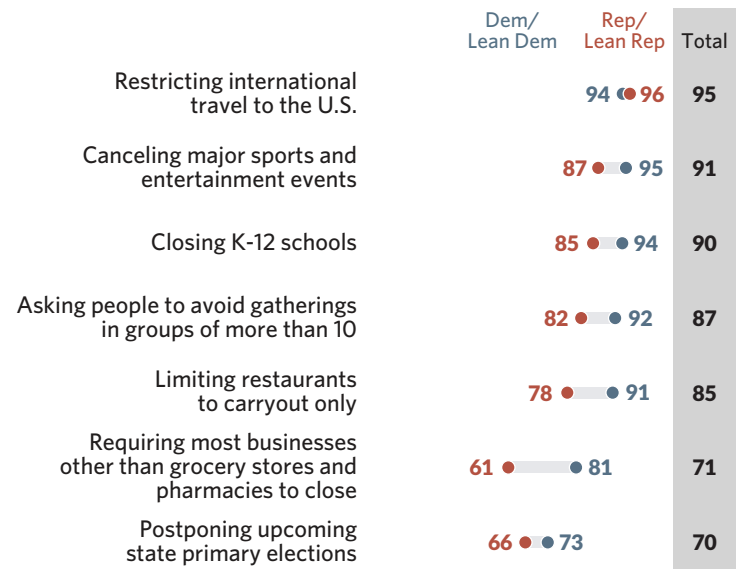
to avoid gatherings of more than 10 people, and halting indoor dining at restaurants.

The restrictions didn't always wear well over time, particularly as governors and other leaders tried to navigate both public health and economic considerations. By early April, around 8 in 10 Democrats (81%) said their greater concern was that state-level restrictions on public activity would be lifted too quickly, a view shared by only around half of Republicans (51%). That 30-point difference would grow to 40 points by early May.

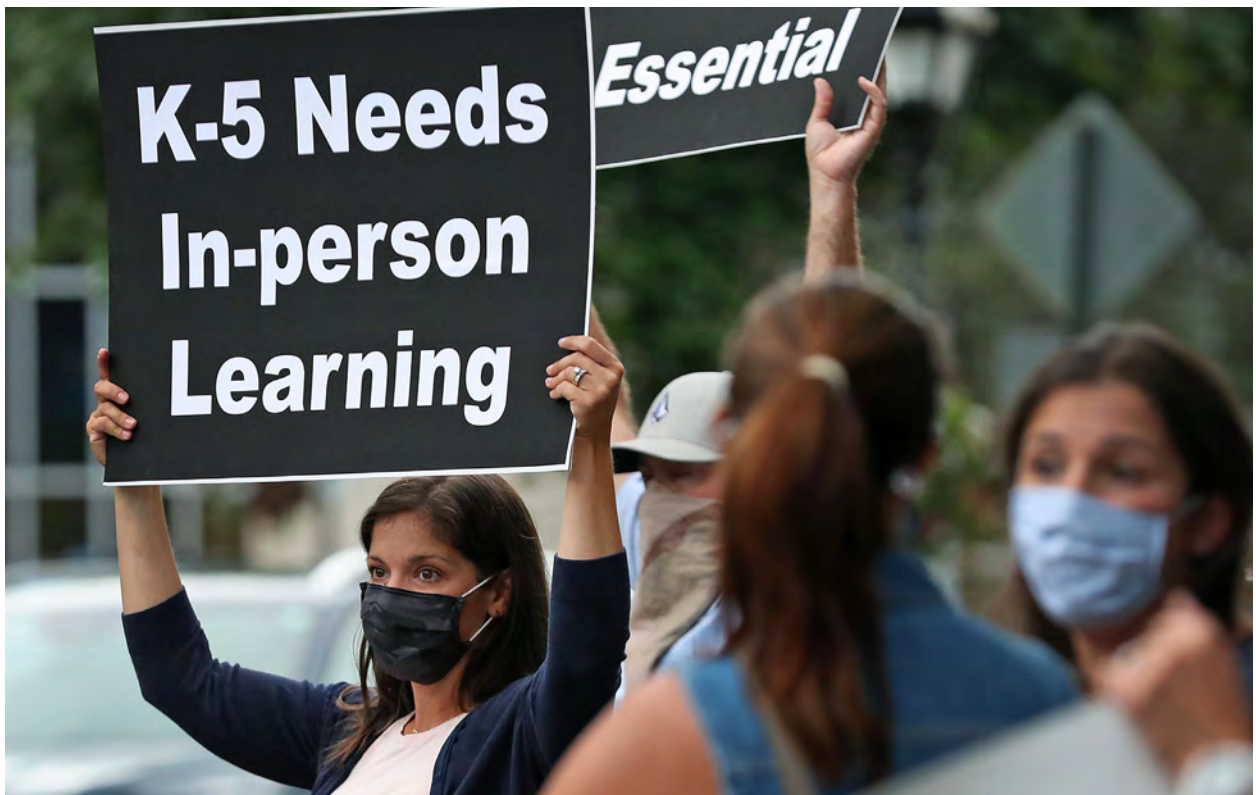
In addition to differences over government restrictions, Democrats were more likely than Republicans to say that social distancing—or even personal actions more broadly—made a big difference in slowing the outbreak. Around 7 in 10 Democrats (69%) said in early May that social distancing measures were helping reduce the spread of the virus a lot, compared with around half of Republicans (49%). In mid-June, 73% of Democrats said the actions of ordinary Americans affected the spread of the virus a great deal, compared with 44% of Republicans.

In first weeks of outbreak, bipartisan agreement on the necessity of travel restrictions, business closures

In March 2020, % saying each of the following has been a necessary step to address the coronavirus outbreak



Source: Pew Research Center



Parents advocate on the town common in Winchester, Massachusetts, for their children to return to school instead of learning online.

Jim Davis/The Boston Globe via Getty Images

Partisans also differed over the reasons behind the rising case counts in the summer of 2020. Most Republicans accepted President Trump's claim that the growing number of cases was primarily a result of increased testing, rather than a combination of testing and a real increase in infections. Eight in 10 Democrats pointed to more infections, not just more testing.

And then there was the subject of masks. While surveys consistently showed that a majority of Americans reported wearing masks in stores and other businesses, divisions by party stood out. In early June, 76% of Democrats said they had worn a mask in stores all or most of the time in the past month, compared with 53% of Republicans.

Mask-wearing became more widespread in both parties as time passed, particularly as President Trump donned a mask in public for the first time and the virus moved from more Democratic parts of the country to more Republican ones. But an analysis of volunteered survey responses in September underscored the ongoing differences in opinion over face coverings.

In the bigger picture, the disputes over shutdowns, social distancing, and masks pointed to partisan differences over whether the country should place greater emphasis on stopping the spread of the virus or on restarting the economy.

The vast majority of Democrats (94%) said in the summer that the more effective way to fix the economy was to reduce infections to a level where more people would feel comfortable going to stores, schools, and other workplaces. Republicans were divided: Half said, for the sake of the economy, these kinds of places should open up even without a significant reduction in infections.

FAR-REACHING CHANGES TO THE ROUTINES OF DAILY LIFE

Pandemic-related closures forced Americans to make wholesale changes in their everyday lives, from the way they attended religious services to the way they connected with friends and family, attended exercise classes, shopped for groceries, and much more. Many of these activities moved online—so much so that 53% of adults said in April that the internet had been essential to them during the first weeks of the outbreak.

Even personal living arrangements changed for a sizable share of the public: In a June survey, 22% of U.S. adults said they or someone they knew had moved because of the pandemic.

While people from all walks of life were personally affected, there were persistent partisan divides in Americans' comfort level with a range of daily activities. In the summer of 2020, Republicans were more likely than Democrats to say they were comfortable going out to the grocery store, visiting with family or friends inside their home, going to a hair salon or barbershop, eating

out in a restaurant, attending an indoor sports event or concert, and attending a crowded party. On some measures, Republicans became much more comfortable as the pandemic wore on, while Democrats remained more hesitant. In June, around two-thirds of Republicans (65%) said they would feel comfortable eating out at a restaurant, up from 29% in March, even as Democrats remained mostly uncomfortable with the idea.

Back-to-school season brought more partisan divides. In late July, 36% of Republicans but only 6% of Democrats said K-12 schools in their area should offer in-person classes five days a week; 41% of Democrats but only 13% of Republicans favored online classes five days a week. When asked about the factors local school districts should take into consideration when deciding whether to reopen, Democrats focused more on the possible health risks to students and teachers; Republicans focused more on the harms caused by the lack of in-person instruction, such as students falling behind and parents not being able to work with their children at home.

As the presidential election approached, Americans differed not only over whom they planned to vote for, but how they planned to cast their ballots. In a late summer survey, most registered voters who supported Joe Biden (58%) said they would vote by mail—taking advantage of an expansion of that option due to the pandemic—while roughly the same share of Trump supporters (60%) said they would vote in person on Election Day itself.

The holiday season brought further partisan divides. With health authorities cautioning against holiday travel, more than half of Americans (57%) said they had changed their Thanksgiving plans a great deal or some due to the pandemic. But Democrats were far more likely than Republicans to say they had done so (70% vs. 44%).

UNIQUE CHALLENGES FOR BLACK, HISPANIC, AND ASIAN AMERICANS

The pandemic didn't just expose partisan divides at nearly every turn. It also revealed stark racial and ethnic differences in health outcomes, financial duress, and personal experiences with discrimination.

More than half a million Americans died of COVID-19 in the first year of the outbreak alone, with the death toll sometimes exceeding 4,000 people a day. But fatality rates were much higher among Black, Hispanic, and other racial and ethnic minority groups than among White Americans. Not surprisingly, Black and Hispanic survey respondents were also consistently more likely than White adults to voice health concerns over the virus and to say they personally knew someone who had suffered serious health consequences because of it.

Already in April, around a quarter of Black Americans (27%) said they knew someone who had been hospitalized or died due to COVID-19. That figure would rise to 34% by May, 57% by August, 71% by November, and 78% by February 2021. By then, around three-quarters of Hispanic Americans (74%) also said they knew someone who had died or been hospitalized, even as White and Asian Americans remained less likely to say so.

The rapid development of new vaccines was welcome news in the fight against COVID-19, but one that highlighted additional racial and ethnic differences. In surveys in May, September, and November 2020 and February 2021, a majority of Americans said they would definitely or probably get a vaccine if one were available, but Black adults were consistently less likely than other adults to say this.

Besides the health disparities it exposed, the pandemic also led to greater financial hardship among Black and Hispanic adults, who were already more likely than other Americans (on average) to have lower incomes long before the outbreak began.

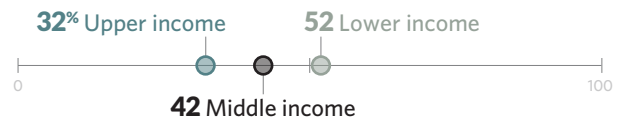
Hispanic Americans were especially affected by the downturn, often because they worked in the industries hit hardest by the recession. Just after the outbreak began in March, 49% of Hispanics—compared with 33% of Americans overall—said they or someone in their household had taken a pay cut or lost their job. By April, 61% of Hispanics—versus 43% of the overall public—said they or someone in their household had had one of these things happen to them.

Meanwhile, amid talk of the “China virus” from President Trump and others, discrimination became another cause for concern during the pandemic, especially for Asian and Black Americans. In June, around 4 in 10 Asian (39%) and Black (38%) adults

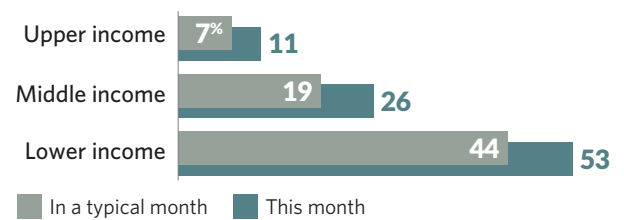
A month into outbreak, economic fallout was hitting lower-income adults harder

In April 2020, % saying...

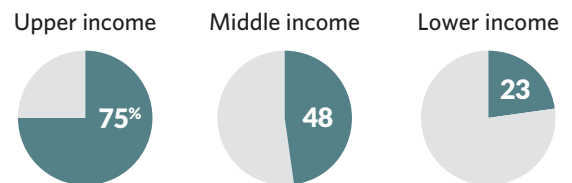
They or someone in their house had lost a job or taken a pay cut due to the coronavirus outbreak



They cannot pay all of their bills in full...



They have rainy day funds that would cover their expenses for three months in case of emergency



Source: Pew Research Center



Demonstrators march across New York's Brooklyn Bridge in April 2021 to protest anti-Asian hate crimes. Wang Ying/Xinhua via Getty Images

said people had acted as if they were uncomfortable around them because of their race or ethnicity since the outbreak began. Asian and Black adults were also more likely to say they had been subject to slurs or jokes and to worry that someone might threaten or physically attack them because of their race or ethnicity.

A RECESSION THAT HIT LOWER-INCOME WORKERS HARDEST

The recession brought on by COVID-19 arrived with exceptional speed and severity: Unemployment rose more quickly in the first three months of the pandemic than it did in two years of the Great Recession.

But the downturn did not affect all Americans equally. It had an especially hard impact on lower-income workers, who often worked in jobs that could not be done remotely. A Pew Research Center analysis found that 90% of the total decrease in U.S. employment between February and March of last year—2.6 million out of 2.9 million lost jobs—arose from positions that could not be teleworked.

By April, 52% of lower-income Americans said they or someone in their household had lost their job or taken a pay cut, compared with 42% of middle-income

adults and 32% of those in the upper income tier. That translated into greater difficulties paying bills: 53% of lower-income adults said they couldn't pay some of their bills that month, far higher than the proportion of middle- and upper-income Americans who said the same (26% and 11%, respectively).

Lower-income people were also much less likely to have emergency funds set aside to help them withstand the recession. While three-quarters of high-income Americans and around half (48%) of middle-income adults said in April that they had rainy day funds to cover three months of expenses, the same was true of only around a quarter (23%) of those in the lowest income tier.

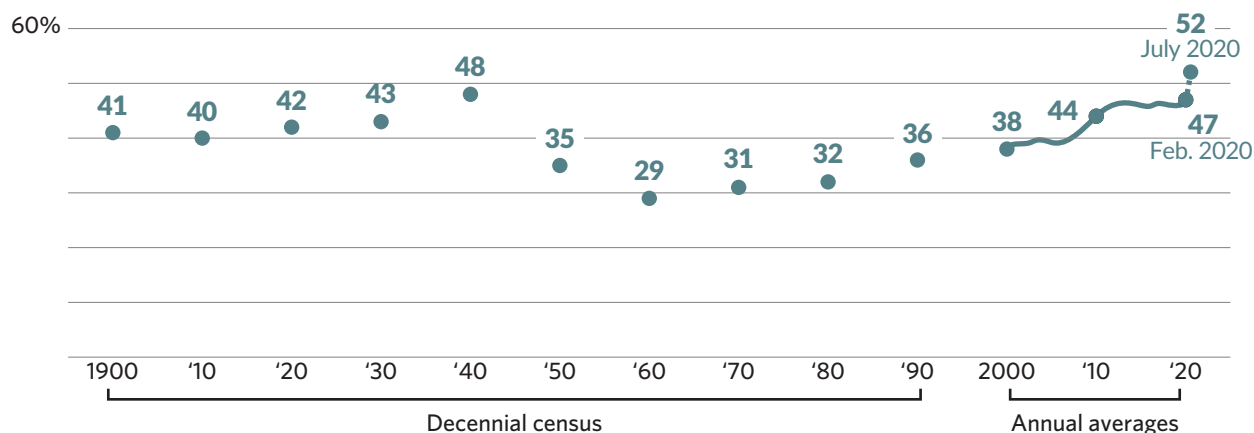
The stimulus checks that Congress approved in late March 2020 were an important relief measure—and one of the few policy steps that drew bipartisan support—but Americans didn't use the money in the same ways. A large majority (71%) of lower-income adults who said they were expecting a government payment said they would use most of the money to pay bills or for some other essential need. Upper-income Americans were more likely to say they would put the money into savings, use it to pay off debt, or do something else with it.



Young children at home means that many working parents juggle child care and job responsibilities while the pandemic keeps offices closed. Working mothers—particularly single moms—face a variety of difficulties fulfilling professional obligations while caring for kids unable to attend school or day care. *Charles Deluvio/Unsplash*

In July 2020, share of young adults living with a parent rose to levels not seen since the Great Depression era

% of 18- to 29-year-olds in U.S. living with a parent



Source: Pew Research Center

Many lower-income Americans turned to other sources of financial help. In an August survey, 44% said they had used money from their savings or retirement accounts to pay bills, while 35% said they had borrowed money from friends or family, 35% said they had gotten food from a food bank or similar organization, and 37% said they had received government food assistance. Middle- and higher-income adults were far less likely to take each of those steps.

Given these and many other challenges, it may not be a surprise that lower-income Americans were among the likeliest groups to report high levels of psychological distress during the pandemic.

DIFFICULTIES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE—AND PARENTS

Another clear dividing line in the pandemic was age. A March 2020 survey found that while older Americans worried more about the health effects of the virus, younger Americans expressed more concern about its economic consequences, particularly since many of them were employed in service-sector jobs that were at higher risk from virus-related layoffs.

By early April, those risks were borne out: More than half (54%) of Americans ages 18 to 29 said they or someone in their household had taken a pay cut or lost their job because of the outbreak, considerably higher than the proportion of all Americans who said the same thing (43%).

For those young adults who were enrolled in college, the pandemic profoundly affected their experience. And early evidence suggested that the financial fallout from the COVID-19 recession might derail some students' future plans to attend college: Applications for

admission and financial aid in 2021 declined, particularly among economically disadvantaged youth.

With many jobs disappearing and the college experience altered, the share of young adults who were neither employed nor enrolled in school soared in the first few months of the pandemic. Between March and June 2020, the share of 16- to 24-year-olds who were "disconnected" from both work and school rose from 12% to 28%, the highest rate ever recorded for the month of June.

The difficult landscape forced many young adults to move elsewhere. Those ages 18 to 29 were the most likely group to say they had permanently or temporarily moved due to the pandemic. In many cases, they went back to a parent's home: By July, a 52% majority of adults under the age of 30 were living with at least one parent, up from 47% in February and the highest percentage since the Great Depression.

While young people faced many challenges during the pandemic, so did parents. In April 2020, with schools around the country closed, roughly two-thirds (64%) of parents with children in elementary, middle, or high school said they were at least somewhat worried about their kids falling behind because of the disruptions caused by the outbreak. By October, even as some schools had returned to in-person learning, those concerns had not diminished. At both points in time, lower-income parents were much more worried than middle- and upper-income parents.

Working parents with young children at home faced particular difficulties as they tried to balance their own job responsibilities with their children in tow.

In the early stages of the outbreak, most working parents with kids younger than 12 at home (62%) said it was very or somewhat easy to handle child care

responsibilities under the new circumstances. That changed by the fall: In October, 52% of these parents said it was very or somewhat difficult to handle child care. Working moms were more likely than working dads to say it was hard to deal with these responsibilities. They were also more likely than working dads to face a variety of professional challenges during the outbreak, including feeling as though they couldn't give 100% at work because they were balancing their work and parenting duties.

Single moms, in particular, left the workforce in large numbers. Around two-thirds (67.4%) of unpartnered mothers with children younger than 18 at home were employed and on the job in September 2020, down from 76.1% a year earlier. That 9-point decrease was the biggest among all groups of parents, partnered or not, with especially sharp declines among Black and Hispanic single moms.

A PANDEMIC ELECTION, A CHANGE IN ADMINISTRATION, AND WHAT COMES NEXT

The coronavirus outbreak's effect on the 2020 presidential election would be hard to overstate. The pandemic changed the way tens of millions of Americans cast their ballots and almost certainly played a role in estimated turnout among eligible voters soaring to its highest level in 120 years. Every state and the District

of Columbia saw turnout rise from 2016 levels, with many of the biggest increases occurring in places that held their elections entirely or mostly by mail.

The pandemic loomed large as a voting issue, too, albeit one that starkly divided supporters of the two major candidates. In a survey a month before the election, 82% of Biden supporters said COVID-19 would be very important to their vote, a view shared by just 24% of Trump supporters. After the election, Biden supporters again overwhelmingly pointed to the outbreak—and, more specifically, President Trump's handling of it—as a major reason for their candidate's victory, even as few Trump supporters agreed (86% vs. 18%, respectively). Majorities in both camps did agree that the expanded availability of early and mail-in voting was a major reason for the outcome.

When Biden took over from Trump in January, he quickly struck a different tone on COVID-19, warning that the nation's death toll would climb in the months ahead and that the situation would "get worse before it gets better." The new president's first legislative priority was to try to push a \$1.9 trillion relief plan through Congress in response to the ongoing public health and economic crisis. He simultaneously vowed that his administration would deliver 100 million vaccinations in its first 100 days in office.

Surveys in early 2021 showed that Americans continued to see the pandemic as a pressing issue in the months ahead. In January, around 8 in 10 Americans—



James Lennox, a school IT specialist, gets a COVID-19 vaccination while sitting in his car in Farmington, Utah, in January—part of the state's campaign to vaccinate all teachers and school staff by the end of February. Rick Bowmer/Associated Press



The Coors Field baseball stadium in Denver, transforms into a drive-through vaccination site, one of 11 Major League Baseball ballparks to do so during the offseason. As of mid-April, more than 78 million people in the U.S. are fully vaccinated, about a quarter of the country's population. Chet Strange/AFP via Getty Images

including majorities in both parties—said strengthening the economy (80%) and dealing with the outbreak (78%) should be a top policy priority for President Biden and the new Congress, higher than the share who said the same about all other issues asked about in the survey. In early February, 7 in 10 adults—again including majorities of Democrats and Republicans—said reducing the spread of infectious diseases should be a top long-term foreign policy goal for the nation.

While the economy began to show some signs of recovery in early 2021, the lasting imprint of the COVID-19 recession was coming into clearer view. In January, about half of nonretired adults (51%) said the economic impact of the outbreak would make it harder for them to achieve their long-term financial goals. That included 62% of those living in a household that had experienced job or wage losses during the pandemic.

There were also signs of rising public dissatisfaction with some aspects of the nation's response to the outbreak. In mid-February, a declining share of Americans said public health officials and state and local elected officials were doing an excellent or good job responding to the outbreak, and around half (51%) said new variants of the coronavirus would lead to a major setback in the country's efforts to control the disease.

At the same time, Americans expressed optimism on other fronts, including in their views of the new administration and the growing availability of vaccines. More than half the public (56%) said in mid-February that President Biden's plans and policies would improve the

nation's response to the virus, and around three-quarters expected the national economy to improve a lot (51%) or a little (25%) if a large majority of Americans got the COVID-19 vaccine.

Willingness to get the vaccine was on the rise, too, including among people who had previously expressed much more skepticism. In the mid-February survey, around 7 in 10 Americans (69%) said they would definitely or probably get a vaccine or that they had already gotten at least the first dose. That was up from 60% who said they would definitely or probably get the vaccine in November 2020. A majority of Black Americans (61%) said they planned to get inoculated or had already been vaccinated, up from just 42% three months earlier.

Taken together, the data from the first year of the coronavirus outbreak underscored just how much personal experiences in the U.S. can vary by demographic factors including race and ethnicity, income, and age, and it exposed new partisan divisions in a country long known for its political polarization. These lessons and others loom large as the nation enters the second year of a pandemic that has profoundly changed Americans' lives.

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Claudia Deane is vice president for research, Kim Parker directs social trends research, and John Gramlich is a senior writer and editor at the Pew Research Center.



Philadelphia's Barnes Foundation houses one of the largest collections of modern European paintings anywhere in the world. The pandemic brought new challenges—and new innovations—to arts organizations throughout the city.

Michael Perez/The Barnes Foundation

Inspiration

Fueled by

Desperation



As Philadelphia's arts and cultural organizations respond to the pandemic and what will come after, the Pew Center for Arts & Heritage is stepping up to help.

By Tom Infield

As the pandemic took hold in March 2020, Opera Philadelphia shut off its stage lights and locked its doors and was forced to transform itself from a tradition-bound classical arts organization into an internet film producer.

With what President David B. Devan recalls as a combination of inspiration and desperation, the opera company commissioned four young, emerging composers to make short operas for its new digital channel. The instructions were open-ended. “We just gave them money, time, and cameras,” Devan says, “and they got to do what they wanted.”

The result was a critical success, generating sorely needed revenue while also helping break down barriers to opera production for women, minorities, and others—a goal that became paramount to the company amid the racial-injustice awakening and political upheaval that accompanied the pandemic.

Those were changes for the good that Opera Philadelphia might have been slower to adopt in normal times, Devan says. And although the company is not giving up on the standard opera repertoire anytime soon—it will stage a 90-minute concert version of Puccini’s beloved “Tosca” outdoors in May at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts—the new digital channel meant “we were able to give an opportunity to composers who hadn’t had the opportunity to be heard before in any substantial way,” Devan says. “They happened to be a lot of artists of color, as well as queer artists and women. There was this crazy, fantastic, creative alchemy happening.”

Those types of transformations that allow arts organizations to strengthen their roots and traditions while finding new ways to reach and grow audiences have always been a challenge, but the disruption from the pandemic put that struggle into new—and heightened—focus. In Philadelphia, The Pew Center for Arts & Heritage is determined to assist in this process. Along with the William Penn Foundation and other arts funders in the city and region, the Center commissioned a joint study on how to help organizations survive—and even thrive—in this time of crisis. Out of that study came a decision to restructure Pew’s arts grant-making strategy for 2021.

It will be essential: When museums and performing arts groups ceased operations, long-established sources of revenue—admission fees and ticket sales, museum-store receipts, food service, and special-event rentals—evaporated. Although loyal donors stepped up contributions, it wasn’t enough.

A report by the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, released one year into the pandemic in March 2021, found that the arts and cultural community in the Philadelphia region had lost \$371.7 million in total revenue. In a survey, 41% of responding organizations said they might not survive beyond fall 2021 unless their resources rebounded.

“I’m not confident that anytime soon we’re going to return to what we thought was normal,” says Maori Karmael Holmes, founder and CEO of BlackStar Projects, whose activities include the BlackStar Film Festival, an international showcase of films by artists of color. “I think it’s premature for anyone to make predictions about what happens to arts and culture when we just don’t know what is going to happen in our daily lives.”



Last May, in the early days of the pandemic, the Pew Center provided additional funding to its current grantees and Pew arts fellows to help them defray lost income, and in October it provided new grants to 29 projects, most of which included specific adaptations because of COVID-19 restrictions.

But the Center also quickly realized that a new approach was needed and turned to the new grant-making approach for 2021. It is suspending funding for programming and inviting 51 organizations that have received past Center project funding to apply for more broadly based grants to aid in recovery and sustainability while



Greeters direct cars at a BlackStar Film Festival event last August. To accommodate COVID-19 restrictions, the Philadelphia festival—an international showcase of films by artists of color from around the world—went mostly virtual, making its 80-plus movie selections available for streaming. *Daniel Jackson*



As part of the weeklong BlackStar festival, organizers held drive-in screenings in city parks for three films. *Daniel Jackson*

continuing its annual selection of 12 individual artists for unrestricted Pew fellowships in the arts. The decision on which organizations receive grant funding will be made this summer.

Paula Marincola, the Center's executive director, and Frazierita Klasen, the senior vice president overseeing Pew's work in Philadelphia, said in a joint statement in January that the best path forward appears to be for organizations to take a whole new look at almost everything they do.

This includes reimagining their business models, revising or updating their programming, rethinking their strategy for audience engagement, making sure their physical facilities are accessible, and upgrading their health and safety measures.


Organizations that do survive the pandemic might find themselves better prepared for a rapidly changing cultural environment. Many will emerge—indeed, are emerging now—as more flexible and inventive, more accessible to audiences, with both in-person and online programming of high quality.

Marincola says the arts “were already being challenged” before the pandemic. Performing arts companies and museums that counted on patrons to buy yearly memberships or season subscriptions were seeing some audience resistance to long-established revenue models.



At the same time, a generational clock is ticking: The segment of the population that is most interested in the classical arts—the symphony, the opera, the ballet—is growing ever older. Younger audiences accustomed to online music playlists and video-on-demand may be less willing to sit still in a performance hall for five acts of Shakespeare or four hours of Wagner. There may be good ways to attract younger audiences, but fresh thinking is required, arts leaders say.

“A museum director said last summer that the cultural community went to sleep on a Friday in the 20th century and woke up on a Monday in the 21st century,” Marincola says. “The pandemic made certain questions more urgent. Who is our audience? How do we leverage the way technology has changed how people consume culture? How do we respond to these challenges, rather than just go back to the old ways?”

“There is the cliché that every dark cloud has a silver lining,” Marincola says, “and I think that when the pandemic is over it will be shown to have had some beneficial effects. But it’s been difficult, very difficult.”



**"How do we
respond
to these
challenges,
rather than
just go back to
the old ways?"**



Ivan Henderson, vice president of programming at the African American Museum in Philadelphia, describes the pandemic's impact in Newtonian terms. It smashed the inertia of the museum world.

“Before the pandemic, we had never broadcast events, hosted virtual programs, or done much in the digital realm,” Henderson says. Now the African American Museum is rapidly working to connect with a public that expects to be able to view content online.

Adapting to change isn't always easy, Henderson says. For its Juneteenth celebration in 2020, commemorating the end of American slavery, the museum joined with other Philadelphia groups in a day-long series of online events. The quality was good, he says, but the duration was overload.

"What we learned," he says, "is that you don't do a four- or five-hour programming marathon. Virtual audiences need opportunities to drop in and out, and to choose which parts of the day they want to experience."

Christina Vassallo, executive director of the Fabric Workshop and Museum in Center City, says the appeal of digital programming has proved a revelation to arts leaders.

The museum, which is dedicated to the creation and presentation of contemporary art, was closed for 175 consecutive days starting in March 2020. Doors reopened in September, then closed again in November for 44 days. Amid this period, however, the online audience for the museum's educational programs and exhibitions grew to include participants from coast to coast, many of whom might never get a chance to visit Philadelphia.

"If you do an event over Zoom, anybody in the whole world can attend it, and we don't want to lose that when the pandemic is over," Vassallo says. "The trick will be

finding out how to make sure the experience is equally gratifying to people watching from their kitchen or living room and to people who are in our physical space."

The Barnes Foundation, one of the world's greatest art collections with works by Renoir, Matisse, and other revered artists, already had an international audience. But going virtual during the pandemic has had immense impact on its art education programs for adults and school-age children, says Thom Collins, the foundation's executive director and president.

"The statistics are really impressive," Collins says. "We have offered 46 new courses, and we have enrolled something close to 3,000 students. ... We have been able to take advantage of some positive upshots from all of this."

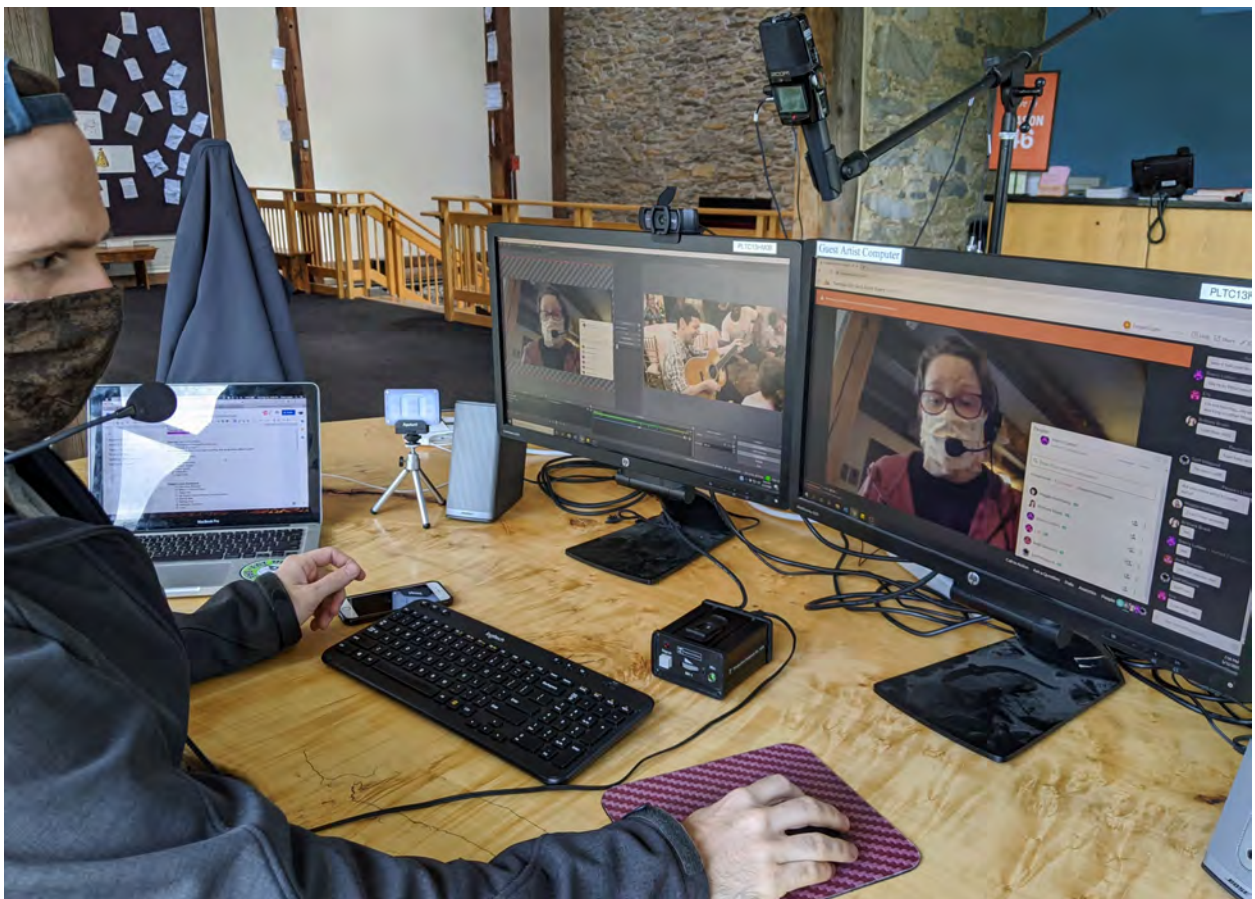
Collins says that what most impresses him is the high level of commitment that Barnes donors have shown to the institution. Other leaders of arts and cultural organizations say their experience has been much the same.

"We have loyal donors at the Barnes, but this has been a whole new level," Collins says. "People have gone above and beyond what they have done in the past. It is a real testament to the Philadelphia philanthropic community."

The Barnes was actually able to end the year with a small budget surplus, Collins says, adding: "My guess is that institutions of every size and every kind that went



After the African American Museum in Philadelphia closed to the public in March 2020, it created a Virtual Campus to help people explore the museum's exhibitions, programs, and resources. These online offerings will continue after the museum reopens to the public, in a limited capacity, in May. Gilbert Carrasquillo/Getty Images



A technician works behind the scenes on “Hootenanny at Home,” a streaming singalong created by People’s Light, a regional theater just outside of the city. One of the singalong’s featured musicians, David Lutken, is shown on a monitor playing guitar. *Courtesy of People’s Light*



Composer and pianist Courtney Bryan performs her work “Blessed,” the second of four digital commissions by Opera Philadelphia for its streaming platform. The complex piece, filmed and directed by Tiona Nekkia McClodden, touches on the isolation of the pandemic, the Gospel of Matthew, and the unrest that occurred in U.S. cities in 2020. *Tiona Nekkia McClodden*

into this pandemic relatively healthy will emerge from it relatively healthy. ... And then there will be institutions that are forced to merge, or rethink their service, or disappear. I wish it were not true, but how could it not be true? This has been devastating for so many institutions."



Institutional leaders report that although the audience may be on the sofa at home, rather than on red velvet chairs in an auditorium, it is more diverse in all sorts of ways and from a wider area.

"We have discovered that our digital work has broken down barriers that people felt in coming to us, whether these were physical barriers or geographic barriers or economic barriers," says Zak Berkman, producing director of People's Light, a regional theater in Malvern, Pennsylvania, 24 miles west of Philadelphia.

Berkman foresees a continuing need for social distancing once the worst of the pandemic is over. "Even after vaccinations," he says, "we anticipate that people will have some trepidation about being in one room with 200 or 300 people."

He hopes that longtime patrons who in the past expected the same seat for each play or stage show will agree with the theater's decision to go with open seating in the future—the better to regulate how many people can sit in each row or section.

The company has upgraded its heating and air-conditioning system. Making spaces safer and more accessible to a diverse array of people, including those with disabilities, has become a major post-pandemic goal at People's Light, Berkman says.

Other events of 2020, including racial injustice protests and increased activism in the transgender community, also highlighted the need for change, he says. People's Light hopes to reconfigure its backstage area and will eliminate dressing rooms marked for either men or women.

"The American theater needed a pause to reflect on what we have done well and what we have not done well," Berkman says. "We need to look at who we have harmed and who we can invite to be part of our work."



Even for organizations that have made a commitment to change, the process isn't always smooth. Doing any kind of programming amid the pandemic's requirements for social distancing has proved a challenge.

Composer and pianist Courtney Bryan has faced this directly in recent months.

She was one of the four artists selected to do digital-only productions for Opera Philadelphia. Once she settled down after the initial excitement, she says, she began to contemplate the logistical difficulty of collaborating with her filmmaker, Pew arts fellow Tiona Nekkia McClodden; sound designer, Rob Kaplowitz; and two singers, Janinah Burnett and Damian Norfleet.

"The fact that none of us could be in the same room at the same time affected how I wrote the music," Bryan says. "I did not want to write music that had to have two people singing together. Both of the vocalists live in New York. Tiona lives in Philadelphia, and I live in New Orleans."

The filmmaker shot the singers outdoors, standing silent and alone—one in a New York City park and the other at a lakeside. Their voices were recorded and overlaid in a studio. It gave the finished work an air of loneliness and isolation, which Bryan says she was shooting for.

The 22-minute opera is called "Blessed." It was hailed by David Patrick Stearns, the classical music critic of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, as a "distinguished" work with "a gorgeous Puccinian climax."

"Blessed" takes its theme from the Beatitudes in the Gospel of Matthew, which includes the verses "Blessed are the poor in spirit. ... Blessed are those who mourn. ... Blessed are the meek."

Bryan says she was thinking about the pandemic when she wrote the opera—the loneliness of dying with no friends or family in the hospital, the isolation of staying at home for days, weeks, and months. Bryan says she is not sure what the post-pandemic future holds for society as a whole or for the arts in particular.

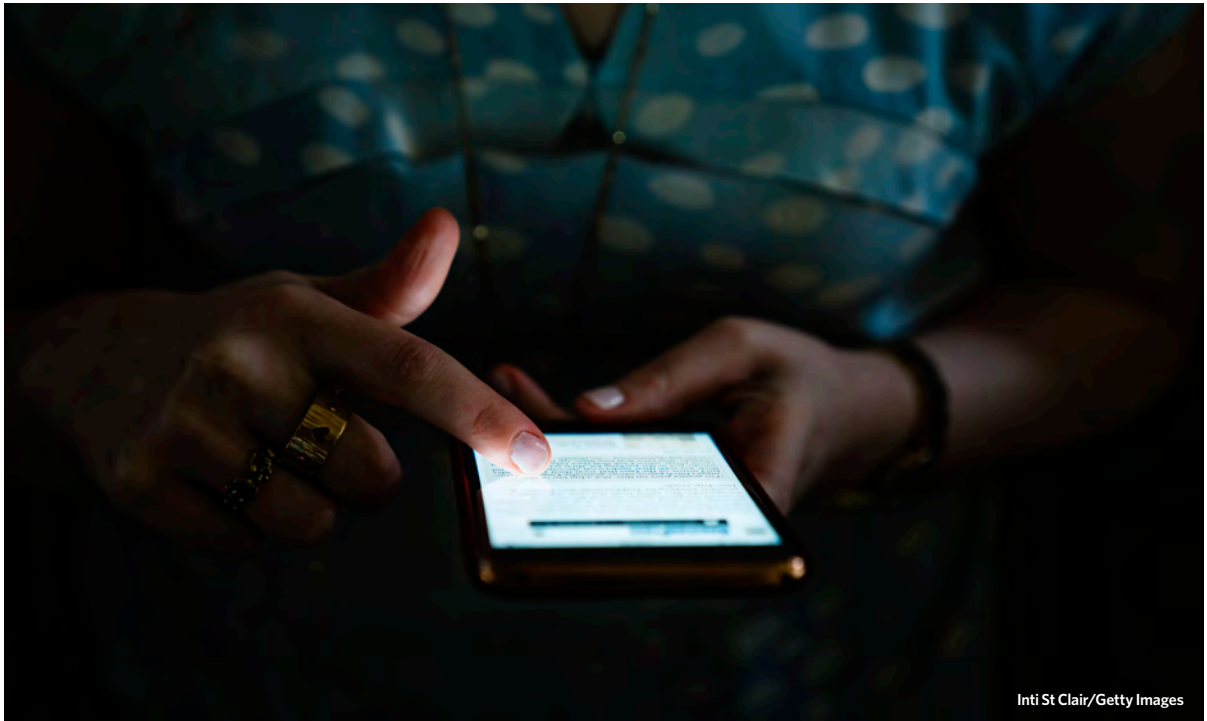
"My imagination is that things will never be like they were," she says.

At the Pew Center, Marincola agrees that the return to "normal" could take a long time and that there may be a new "normal." No matter what, she is hopeful.

"I don't think we are going to flip a switch and everything will be the same," she says. "But the arts are resilient, and I admire the way artists and the arts community have refused to give up or give in."



Tom Infield is a longtime Philadelphia journalist. He last wrote for Trust about Pew's Philadelphia research and policy initiative.



Inti St Clair/Getty Images

Online Harassment Isn't Growing— But It's Getting More Severe

4 in 10 Americans say they've experienced abuse while online, with a larger share facing sexual harassment and stalking.

BY SOPHIE BERTAZZO

Despite a steady rise in internet users and a near constant influx of new platforms for digital connection, the percentage of Americans who report experiencing online harassment hasn't increased in recent years.

But what has changed is the severity of that abuse.

A nationally representative survey of more than 10,000 U.S. adults conducted online in September 2020 by the Pew Research Center found that 41% of Americans have personally experienced some form of online harassment in at least one of six ways: offensive name-calling, purposeful embarrassment, stalking, physical threats, harassment over a sustained period of time, or sexual harassment.

That's about the same percentage as when the

Center last surveyed on the subject in 2017, but the new data shows that reports of the more severe actions, such as stalking and sexual harassment, are growing. "Online harassment overall may be not be growing, but it's becoming a more intense issue," says Emily Vogels, a research associate at the Center who led the survey. "In each category of more severe behaviors—physical threats, stalking, sustained harassment, and sexual harassment—the percentage of people who reported ever having each of these experiences either doubled or nearly doubled since we first asked about this topic in 2014."

The Center's first survey on this issue came in 2014, on the heels of Gamergate, a year-long harassment campaign conducted across online platforms such

as 4chan and Reddit targeting several women in the videogame industry. After the 2017 follow-up survey, Center researchers sought to understand how online harassment had evolved after the rise of the Me Too movement and in the lead-up to the 2020 election.

The latest findings show that roughly two-thirds of adults under 30 have experienced abuse online, with about half of young adults surveyed having experienced severe harassment. Seven in 10 lesbian, gay, or bisexual adults have experienced online abuse, with 51% targeted for more severe forms of abuse. Overall, men are somewhat more likely than women to say they have experienced any form of harassment online (43% versus 38%), but similar shares of men and women have faced more severe forms of online abuse.

And the study showed that women who experienced online harassment were more than twice as likely as men to say it was upsetting.

For Jessica Vitak, an associate professor at the University of Maryland's College of Information Studies and a former research intern with the Pew Internet Project, this data tracks with the trends she sees in her work: "In my research, looking primarily at women under 30, a significant percentage say they've experienced severe online harassment. The most disheartening thing I've found is that many women felt like being harassed online was just a part of being a woman online, because the behavior has been normalized."

Among women who have been harassed online, 47% cited gender as the reason, while 42% said it was due to politics. And, in fact, as partisan antipathy has grown in recent years, so has the number of people citing

their political beliefs as the primary reason for being harassed. In 2017, 35% of people who experienced online harassment said it was due to their political beliefs. In 2020, that number had jumped 15 percentage points, with fully half of all online harassment targets citing politics as the reason for the abuse. And 56% of White targets said their online harassment was for their political views.

But of these same White targets, only 17% said they were harassed due to their race or ethnicity—a figure that balloons to 54% of Black online harassment targets and 47% of Hispanic online harassment targets.

The constant introduction of new platforms and online spaces has created more spaces for people to be harassed. According to the Pew study, 41% said their most recent online harassment spanned at least two venues, including social media sites, online forums, email, texting apps, gaming sites, and dating apps.

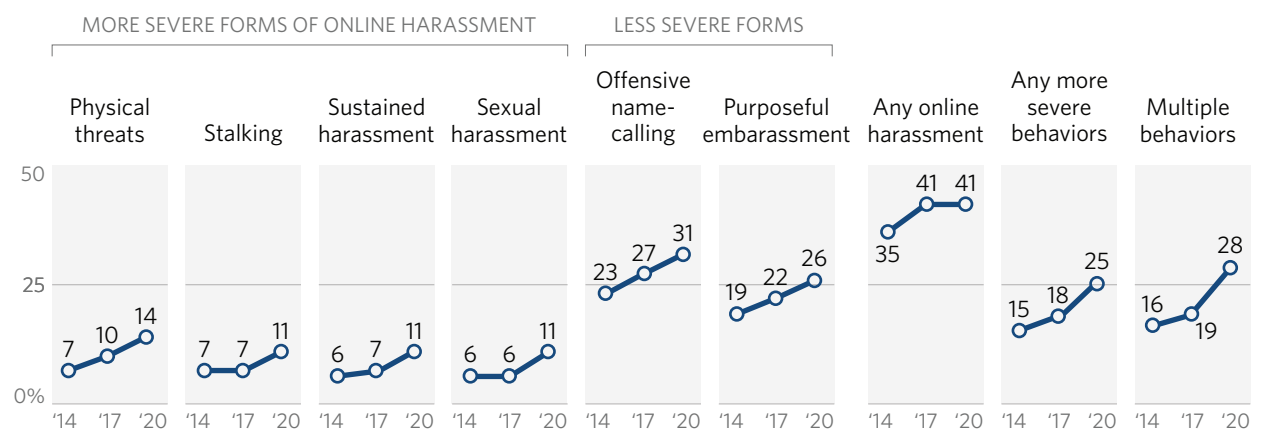
Three-quarters of individuals who were harassed said their most recent incident occurred on social media platforms, which facilitate anonymous interactions. "There's always this concern on social media that people are going to act in ways they wouldn't if it was tied to their real identity—with more aggressive and harassing language, for example," says Vitak. "This is what researchers call the online disinhibition effect."

When asked how they felt social media companies were addressing online harassment, survey respondents were critical.

"The majority of people feel like social media companies aren't doing a great job of handling online harassment," says Vogels. "This is not to say that people

Compared with 2017, a similar share of Americans has experienced any type of online harassment—but more severe encounters have become more common

% of U.S. adults who say they have personally experienced the following behaviors online



Source: Pew Research Center

think those who are being harassed should be able to sue—in fact, only a third of people say that targets of harassment should be able to sue the platform. Instead they see a variety of possible solutions as very effective, including banning users who harass others and making individuals reveal their real identities to sign up for social media accounts.”

In general, Black adults and women are more optimistic about the efficacy of tactics used by companies to address harassment than White adults and men, respectively. Around 6 in 10 Black adults believe social media companies proactively deleting harassing posts would be a very effective way to combat harassment, compared with only 36% of White respondents. Women are more likely than men to see temporary bans, permanent bans, proactive deletion of posts, and criminal charges as very effective.

Having social media platforms take steps to reduce harassment and to mitigate the negative consequences is one part of the solution, says Vitak. The addition of filters that remove incendiary language from a person’s feed, “nudging behaviors” that make users pause before posting by employing pop-ups that encourage positive actions, and other technological improvements could help—but they’re just Band-Aids.

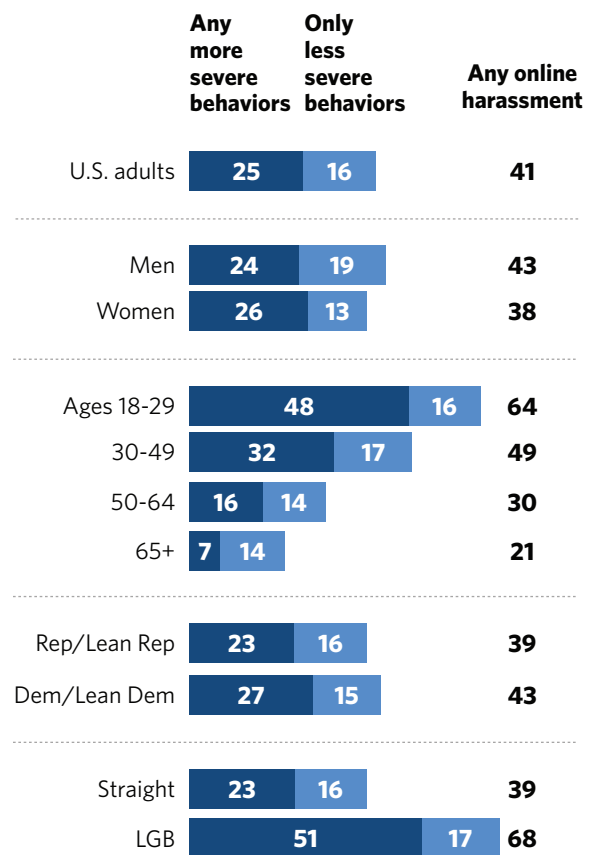
“We’re never going to be fully successful in stopping ‘bad’ behaviors online until it’s addressed as part of early education and people understand there are real-world, offline consequences to our actions online,” Vitak says. “We need to teach people at a young age what it means to be a good digital citizen.”

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Sophie Bertazzo is a staff writer for Trust.

Roughly two-thirds of adults under 30 have been harassed online

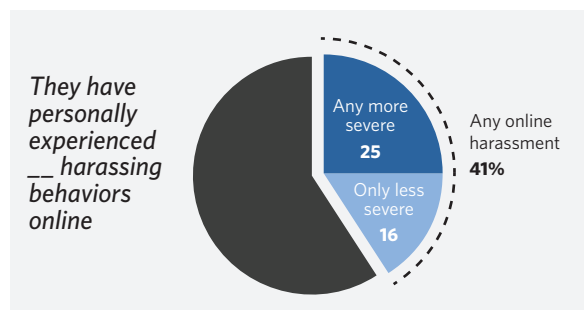
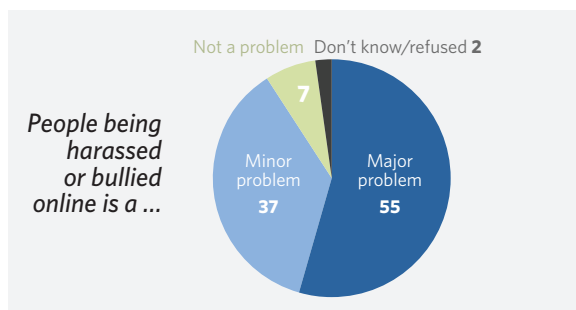
% of U.S. adults who say they have personally experienced ___ online



Source: Pew Research Center

Majority say online harassment is a major problem; 41% have personally experienced this, with more than half this group experiencing more severe behaviors

% of U.S. adults who say the following



Source: Pew Research Center

A Boost for Public Safety

An evaluation of Pew's public safety performance project shows how it helped propel reforms in the corrections field.

BY NICOLE TRENTACOSTE AND JOSH JOSEPH



Patrick Hendry/Unsplash

Louisiana once had the highest levels of incarcerated individuals confined within a prison or jail in the U.S., the country with the highest levels of incarceration in the world. Then, in 2016, Governor John Bel Edwards and state legislative and judicial branch leaders invited Pew to support a task force that would build consensus on a path to better public safety with lower incarceration levels. In 2017, the state passed and signed 10 laws that were projected to reduce the prison population by 10% over 10 years. By the end of 2018, Louisiana had reduced its prison population by 9% and its probation and parole population by 12% and had shifted \$30 million into a continuum of community-based services that promise a better return on the state's investment in public safety.

A recent evaluation—in which Pew hired external experts to examine its work and highlight successes and failures—found that reforms like these had helped propel the corrections field forward over the past 15

years. This evaluation reviewed Pew's public safety performance project (PSPP), which advances policies to protect public safety, ensure accountability, and

In the 15 years that Pew has engaged in justice reform work, public attention and support for these issues has grown significantly

control costs in both adult and juvenile sentencing and corrections. It found that PSPP and its partners had made decisive contributions to reform juvenile and criminal justice systems in states through sound data

and analysis, effective stakeholder engagement, and customized state technical assistance. In addition, this initiative effectively partnered with the federal government to scale state efforts and released research and publications that contributed to changes in the national conversation on justice issues.

History of Pew's public safety performance project

When PSPP launched in 2005, challenges in the corrections field were multiplying, and many state budgets were at a breaking point. The number of adults in state prisons had tripled since the early 1980s, and annual state spending on corrections had increased to \$55 billion over the same time frame. States were emerging from a major fiscal downturn that had brought severe spending cuts and were open to policies and programs other than incarceration that research showed could achieve a better return on public safety investments.

PSPP's approach involved core strategies that included reframing the criminal justice debate to move away from polarizing rhetoric (e.g., "tough" versus "soft" on crime) and toward alternatives grounded in data on fiscal discipline, public safety, and return on state investments in public safety. It also involved engaging and educating policymakers through partnerships with leading public-sector organizations; building and mobilizing support among key opinion influencers including policymakers, business leaders, and survivors of crime; and providing technical assistance to state-level working groups to develop recommendations for criminal justice reforms and help states adopt them. Technical assistance came mainly from Pew and two partners: the Council of State Governments Justice Center and the Crime and Justice Institute.

States reinvested 32% of savings from reforms into evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism

Pew's experiences working with states on criminal justice reform paved the way for its 2012 decision to expand efforts into the juvenile justice system, which faced similar challenges of high costs and poor results. Pew and its partners also engaged at the federal level to support funding and administration through the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, a public-private partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice to improve public safety through data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and policy development. In 2017, Pew began winding down its state work on adult prisons, exiting that work in March 2020.

It was then that Pew's evaluation and program learning team commissioned an independent review of PSPP to provide a fuller understanding of its accomplishments and related lessons to inform the initiative's ongoing work and to strengthen future efforts aiming to influence public debate and change policy.

Key achievements

The review found several key achievements, including:

- Thirty-six states adopted policies and practices that reformed their adult sentencing and corrections systems (29 states enacted comprehensive reform), and eight states adopted reforms of their juvenile justice systems.
- PSPP provided a marked return on investment: \$90 million in Pew funding along with \$132 million in federal funds led to reforms that states projected will yield savings of more than \$300 million from juvenile systems and at least \$2.1 billion from adult prisons. Major savings came from the closing of 40 adult and eight juvenile correctional facilities across states in which the project worked.
- States reinvested 32% of savings from reforms into evidence-based practices to reduce recidivism.

Contributions to state successes

The evaluation found that the support of Pew and its partners was key in helping to secure adult and juvenile justice reforms and contributed to achieving the project's overall results.

A major driver of success was a process of engaging and building trust with key constituencies via working groups. These groups were formed in each state at the invitation of the governor, chief justice, and legislative leaders and included representatives from the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of government, along with members from other professional and constituent groups (e.g., prosecution and defense attorneys, victims' rights groups, mental health professionals). They acted as deliberative bodies and became champions of reform. The working groups were charged with making recommendations on justice reform to their state leaders, including legislators, and needed to coalesce around a set of priorities, often within a tight six-month time frame.

The project's emphasis on using state-specific data to identify problems and solutions and its nonpartisan and research-based process were cornerstones in winning over skeptics and building support for justice reform. Analyses of state data revealed what was

driving incarceration rates in particular states, provided insights from each state's corrections system, offered stakeholders a rationale for change, and suggested a roadmap to follow.

The evaluation also found that PSPP's federal partnership helped to expand and deepen state-based efforts, specifically via the Justice Reinvestment Initiative, which has invested more than \$130 million in support to states pursuing reforms informed by data about their particular circumstances.

Shifting the national dialogue

From the outset, Pew recognized that its criminal justice reform work would benefit from enlisting bipartisan support on a national scale. A core effort of PSPP was to produce and disseminate research challenging the notion that locking more people up for longer periods increased public safety. Project research documented the high social and economic costs of incarceration and contrasted them with the relatively poor returns on investment for states in terms of public safety, through dozens of studies and hundreds of related fact sheets, issue briefs, videos, and opinion pieces.

36 states adopted policies and practices that reformed their adult sentencing and corrections systems, and eight states adopted juvenile reforms

In addition, PSPP worked with stakeholders across the political spectrum, including traditionally conservative and liberal groups, to help make a stronger and more politically viable case for reforms. This coalition included several right-of-center organizations that applied conservative principles (such as limited government, fiscal restraint, and the importance of family) to question the growth and overreach of the American corrections system. Allies had different messages, but were enlisted to participate in the larger policy change effort in various ways, including analyzing data, identifying promising policies, engaging and educating their constituents, and advocating for reforms.

The evaluation found that Pew had a decisive influence on the national dialogue. When Pew entered the field, research that targeted educated lay audiences and policymakers was not widely available, and resistance to reforms—from both sides of the aisle—was the norm. In the years that Pew has engaged in justice reform work, public attention and support for

these issues has grown significantly; the evaluation found that PSPP contributed to this shift. An example is the influence of Pew's report "One in 100: Behind Bars in America," which interviewees described as a "game changer" in bringing the need for justice reform to the political forefront nationally. In addition, PSPP's partnerships with key influencers—including conservatives, business leaders, and crime survivors—helped build a network of supporters whose opinions are sought out by legislators and executive branch officials.

The road ahead

Although the evaluation was quite positive, it also identified some challenges. For instance, it noted the importance of deeply engaging with staff at state justice agencies when developing reforms, because ongoing success depends on their day-to-day work. It also suggested enhancing some supports to help ensure that policy changes are implemented effectively, such as preparing oversight bodies to respond to criticism during the initial implementation period, before data on reforms is fully available. When Pew began PSPP in 2005, it saw the potential for the organization's research-based state policy work to sidestep ideological battles in the criminal justice debate and help people find common ground. The evaluation found a significant return on Pew's investment by recognizing PSPP's critical contributions to the field of criminal and juvenile justice reform. From conception to execution, the project's strategies have helped numerous states secure successful legislative changes under both Republican and Democratic state leadership. In the process, Pew and its partners have enabled states to reduce incarcerated populations and save billions of dollars in related costs, while maintaining high levels of public safety.

Yet, there is more work to be done. Criminal and juvenile justice issues have been elevated in the past year, particularly because of the physical health threats posed by the spread of COVID-19 in confined spaces, the fiscal health threats of an economic downturn, and broad-based calls for racial equity and attention to the significant racial disparities manifest in the justice system.

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Nicole Trentacoste is The Pew Charitable Trusts' director of evaluation and program learning, for which Josh Joseph is a senior officer. Jake Horowitz, director of Pew's public safety performance project, also contributed to this article.

Misinformation and the Coronavirus Vaccines

A board-certified infectious disease physician discusses the vaccines for COVID-19 and some people's reluctance to get vaccinated.



As of March of this year, more than 2½ million people have been lost to COVID-19, with more than half a million in the U.S. alone. Lives have been upended, masks have become part of our daily lives, and many of the long-term implications and effects of COVID-19 are still unknown.

But there is light at the end of the tunnel. Multiple vaccines have been developed and are being distributed, reducing virus transmission rates among key groups of people. But as recent surveys have shown, skepticism remains about the vaccines. According to the Pew Research Center, 30% of U.S. adults said they do not currently plan to get vaccinated.

The Pew Charitable Trusts spoke with Rebecca Wurtz, a physician and associate professor at the University of Minnesota School of Public Health, about recently approved vaccines and vaccine hesitancy. Her responses have been edited for clarity and length.

Let's talk about these COVID-19 vaccines. There are different effectiveness rates. What do those rates actually mean? Does it mean I should want one vaccine instead of the other?

All four of the vaccines have been shown to be extremely effective in clinical trials. And as the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are being rolled out, they're proving that their efficacy out in the real world is the same as they were in clinical trials. The difference of a few percentage points, even 10 percentage points in efficacy, is really irrelevant in our efforts to stop the outbreak and to protect individual people. They seem to all have extremely high rates of protecting against serious disease, which is really what we want.

When people hear the rate isn't 100%, they sometimes will say, "Well, then, why bother? I still have a chance of getting COVID." What should we say to the folks who are thinking that way?

None of our vaccines, the ones that we all got as kids, is 100% effective. They are all on the range of the efficacy of the vaccines that we're hearing about for COVID-19. And yet we don't have measles, we don't have polio in the United States. The reason to participate is that you yourself are very, very likely to be protected. But if you're not protected, if your neighbor is protected at a 95% rate, your chance goes down from 100% right there. So even if there's a small gap in your individual protection, if everyone around you is protected, then that makes you safer as well.

The other thing some people will hear is, "Well, I'm going to get the vaccine, but we still have to wear masks. And the world is not going to really change for a long time." Why is that?

There have been questions raised about whether or not someone could be infected, despite being vaccinated, and shed virus. Those concerns are theoretical; there's no data to support either shedding virus or not shedding virus following the vaccine. So, I think people are erring, at least at this moment, on the better side of caution of saying that we don't know yet. That data is being gathered; we will probably know within a couple of months.

I think there are also social norms that we should adhere to: We should wear masks out in public to prove that we agree that wearing masks is important. So, over time, we'll know better whether we need to wear masks after we've been effectively vaccinated.

It seems that an important part of advancing vaccine acceptance is better communicating to the public.

So much of medical and science communication is around a new medication for heart disease or for cancer. When a medical communicator, a science reporter, communicates that to an individual and the individual makes a choice with his or her health provider, they're making a choice for themselves and perhaps for their family. But communicating about public health, about communicable diseases in particular, influences people to make choices

that impact not only themselves but their family, their neighbors, their workplaces, their communities. So, it's a different challenge in terms of communicating about communicable diseases.

We get a flu shot every year; other vaccinations we get once, twice, in our lifetimes. Do we know what's going to happen with the COVID-19 vaccine—is this going to be something that is one and done? Or are we going to be getting a shot every year, like we do our flu shot?

We simply don't know. It's hard to remember that we've only been facing this pathogen in the United States for about a year, much shorter than the average cycle in which we deal with flu. So, it remains to be seen how long the immunity induced by the current vaccines persists and whether coronavirus can change in ways that mean that we need to re-up or modify the immunity each year.

A lot of media reports and discussions with scientists and researchers include talk of risk and uncertainties, and possible problems. Are those important for us to know, or are they cluttering up our basic understanding of what has happened?

There are lots of reasons why people are concerned about a vaccine, but it's usually not about efficacy, even though that's the number that we're putting out there. Right now, it's more about safety. And I think the perception—what people are weighing is the relative risk of the vaccine versus the disease it's going to prevent.

And the risks are negligible. In studies and now in actual rollout in tens of millions of people around the world, the risks have been essentially zero.

That's important—let's stay with that for a moment. Because you rightly say that, if people are concerned

about the vaccine, they are trying to weigh the risk of this shot in their arm versus getting the virus. Can you describe that scale?

If the vaccine were as dangerous as COVID, given the number of people who've gotten the vaccine by now, 40,000 people would have died from the vaccine. No one has died from the vaccine. [Note: this interview was conducted prior to a temporary pause in use of the Johnson and Johnson vaccine after at least one woman died from blood clots after being vaccinated.] And we know already that it's prevented tens of thousands of deaths around the world, let alone hundreds of thousands of cases. So, I think if we're weighing the risk of disease versus the risk of the vaccine, the conclusion is clear.

So, what should members of the public as they talk to a health care provider, read stories in the media, be paying attention to?

I think speaking with their individual provider about that person's recommendations is going to be more important than reading the competing and eye-grabbing columns in social media and in newspapers. What's in the media, it's based on press releases. We've been trying to manage this pandemic and this vaccine rollout using press releases on data on the vaccine trials. And it's been misleading and, frankly, alarming. And I think to speak with a trusted health care provider about whether the vaccine is right for them will be the most persuasive and compelling.



Listen to the full interview with Rebecca Wurtz on Pew's podcast, "After the Fact."



Mat Napo/Unsplash

Antarctic Penguins Compete With Commercial Fishing Fleets for Krill

New study of gentoo foraging routes finds a need for expanded marine protections

BY JOHNNY BRIGGS AND KATIE GRAY



Mike Hill/Getty Images



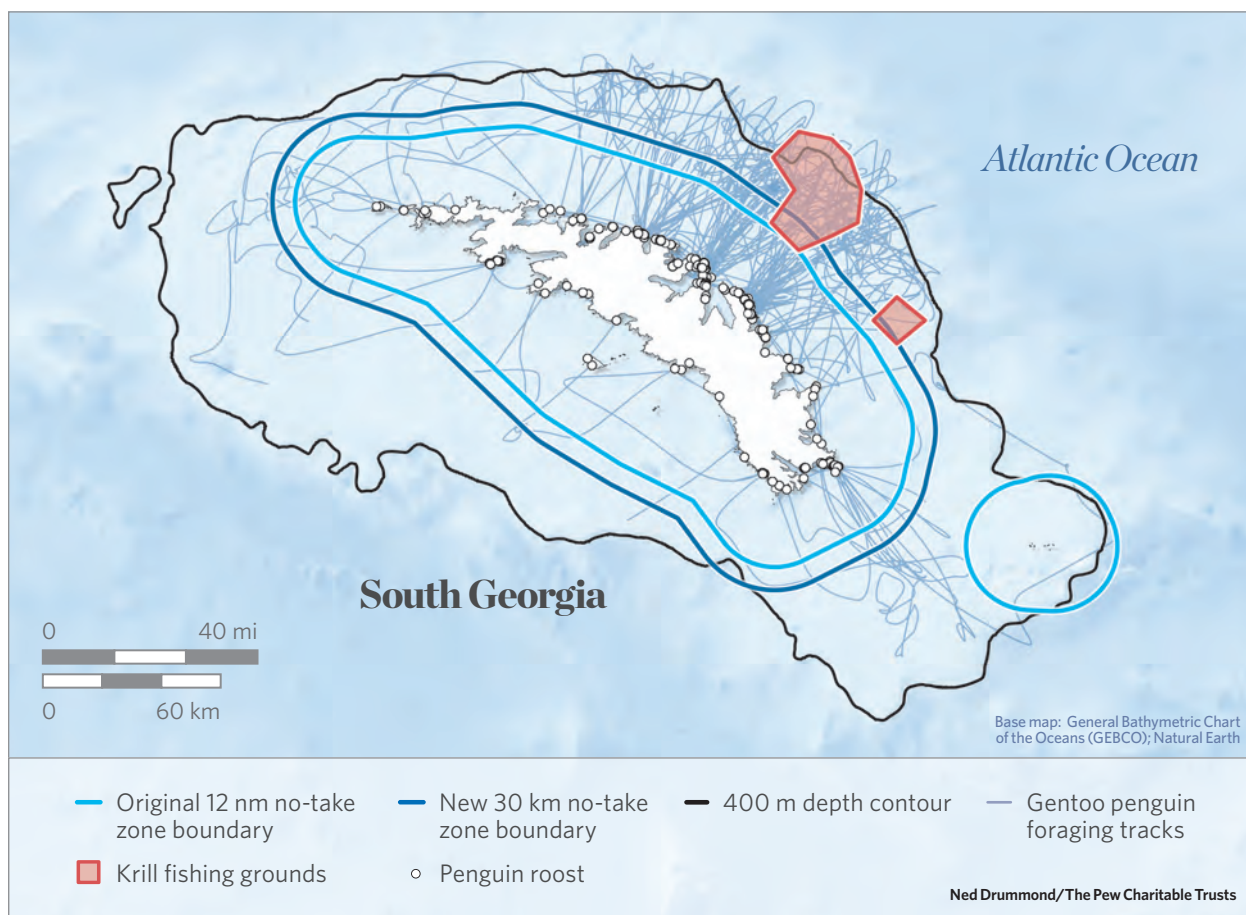
South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, located about 2,500 miles north of Antarctica, play an important role in the Antarctic ecosystem. These islands support one of the most diverse aggregations of seabirds and marine mammals on Earth, including 25% of the world's gentoo penguins.

However, a new study shows that this population of gentoo penguins could be under threat. The research found that over certain periods of the year, the penguins forage for food, such as krill, in the same

areas where an industrial krill fishery operates—an overlap that could carry negative consequences for the birds. The research was led by the British Antarctic Survey and published Jan. 13 in the peer-reviewed scientific journal *Diversity and Distributions*; it was funded in part by the Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy Project.

In 2018, the Government of South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands sought to review the efficacy of the 1 million-square-kilometer marine protected area (MPA) surrounding the islands and answer the question: “Do existing fisheries pose a threat to populations of predators, such as penguins, by directly competing for their food, such as krill?”

Scientists traveled to South Georgia for the study and equipped 16 gentoo penguins with satellite tracking devices that recorded their movements over a period of up to 76 days. The data showed where and when the penguins foraged within no-take zones of the MPA, which stretched 12 nautical miles from land, and within commercial fishing grounds for krill, which extend beyond these zones.



Source: British Antarctic Survey

Erratic lines on the map show the satellite-tracked routes that gentoo penguins traveled to forage; many of the lines extend to the continental shelf and into industrial krill fishing grounds, which are marked in red.

The tracking data showed that the gentoo penguins spent almost half their time foraging for food such as krill beyond that 12-mile no-fishing zone around South Georgia and demonstrated the potential for penguin colonies to overlap with international fishing fleets in their search for krill. The penguins' ability to meet their nutritional needs is already stressed by climate change: Inconsistent Antarctic temperatures are affecting krill abundance, which carries a direct impact for krill predators such as penguins.

The study began in 2018, and as a direct result of its initial findings, the local government extended the no-take zone around South Georgia in December 2018 from 12 nautical miles to 16.2 nautical miles—expanding protection for gentoo penguins and other predators by approximately 1,900 square miles.

Now that the full analysis has been completed, the scientists note that to fully protect the gentoo foraging areas observed, the no-take zone would need to be extended to 34 miles from shore—marked by the 400-meter depth contour line on the map. This depth represents the edge of the continental shelf, beyond

which gentoos rarely feed as ocean depths increase significantly. Scientists suggest that, if the government declines to pursue that option, officials consider periodic and temporary expansions of closed areas in the years that krill are scarce to enhance the protection of penguin foraging areas. This so-called flexible closure management framework should be preceded by additional research.

This study showed how satellite tagging of ocean predators such as penguins can be used to inform evidence-backed expansions of fully protected areas and reduce the risk of competition for prey between wildlife and commercial fishing operators. The Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy, as part of the Great British Oceans coalition, remains committed to fully protecting the waters surrounding the South Sandwich Islands.

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Johnny Briggs is a senior officer and Katie Gray is a senior associate working on the Pew Bertarelli Ocean Legacy Project's efforts in the U.K., based in London.

The Fact Tank is analysis and news about data from the writers and social scientists at the Pew Research Center. More is available at pewresearch.org/fact-tank

U.S. Senate Has Fewest Split Delegations Since Direct Elections Began

Reflecting the partisan polarization that has reshaped American politics over the past few decades, states' current Senate delegations are remarkably aligned with their presidential preferences.

BY DREW DESILVER



BackyardProduction/Getty Images

Only six states now have U.S. senators of different parties—the smallest number of split delegations since Americans started directly electing their senators more than a century ago, according to a Pew Research Center analysis.

The number of split Senate delegations has ratcheted downward since peaking at 27 in 1979-80. There were just nine split Senate delegations in the recently concluded 116th Congress, which tied the prior record low.

This analysis examines every Senate since the general election of 1914, the first one after ratification of the 17th Amendment, which provided for the direct election of senators.

From the beginning of our analysis until the late 1960s and early 1970s, the number of split Senate

delegations generally oscillated between 10 and 20. The count fell to nine in the closely divided 84th Congress (1955-56), in which Democrats held a 49-to-47 majority thanks to independent-turned-Democrat Wayne Morse of Oregon.

Politically divided delegations became more common in the 1960s and '70s, as decades-old patterns of state-level party dominance began to break down. By the 96th Congress of 1979-80, more than half the states (27) had split delegations; from 1973 through 1994, there were never fewer than 20 split delegations in the Senate.

Since then, however, the trend has been toward more and more single-party delegations, as partisanship has grown and many long-serving senators died or retired. It wasn't that long ago that

states like Arkansas, Louisiana, and Nebraska could send two Democratic senators to Washington, while Republicans could and did win in states like New York, Illinois, and Oregon.

In another reflection of the partisan polarization that has reshaped American politics over the past few decades, states' current Senate delegations are remarkably aligned with their presidential preferences.

In the current Congress, all 22 states with two Democratic senators went for Democratic nominee Joe Biden in the November election, and all 22 states with two Republican senators went for GOP incumbent Donald Trump. Three of the states with split Senate delegations—Montana, Ohio, and West Virginia—chose Trump, while the while the other two (Pennsylvania and Wisconsin) opted for Biden. (Two states, Maine and Nebraska, allocate their electoral votes by congressional district. Maine, which has a split Senate delegation, gave three of its four electoral votes to Biden and one to Trump. Nebraska, which has two Republican senators, gave four of its five electoral votes to Trump and one to Biden.)

The partisan divisions weren't always as clear-cut as they are today. Consider the 87th Congress, elected in 1960 and seated in 1961. Of the 25 unified Democratic Senate delegations, only 13 represented states that gave their electoral votes to John F. Kennedy the year before, while 10 were from states that had chosen Richard Nixon. (Mississippi chose an anti-Kennedy "unpledged Democratic" slate of electors, and Alabama chose a "mixed" slate of Kennedy and unpledged electors.) Of the 10 states represented by two Republican senators, three chose Kennedy for president instead

of Nixon. The 15 states with split delegations were split nine-to-six for Nixon.

Political scientists have explored the question of why a state's voters, whose party preferences and turnout behavior presumably don't change that much from one election cycle to another, would elect senators of different parties. One school of thought is that some voters deliberately seek to balance their state's delegation, though other researchers have not found support for that idea. Other researchers have focused on diverse electorates as predictors of split delegations, argued for candidate-specific factors (such as financing, campaigning skill, and the presence or absence of scandal), or tied the ebb and flow of split delegations to broader partisan realignments.

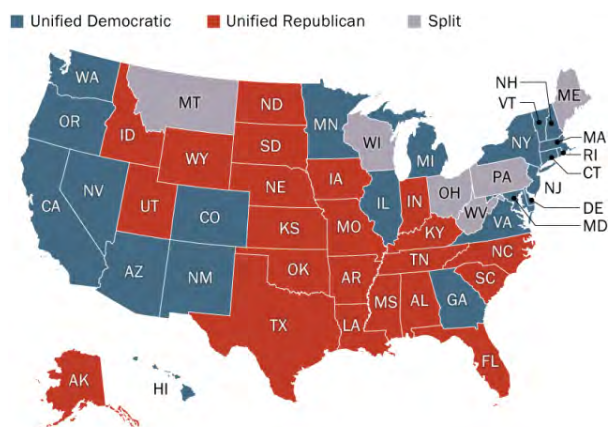
"The trend has been toward more and more single-party delegations, as partisanship has grown and many long-serving senators died or retired."

Whatever the explanation, several states have sent pairs of senators to Washington who were so ideologically disparate that their votes all but canceled each other out. Past examples include Minnesota's Paul Wellstone and Rod Grams, North Carolina's John Edwards and Jesse Helms, and California's Alan Cranston and S.I. Hayakawa (each Democrat and Republican, respectively). A few years back, the Capitol Hill publication *Roll Call* took a look at some of the Senate's "odd couples," awarding the top spot to Wisconsin's Ron Johnson (R) and Tammy Baldwin (D).

Having fewer split delegations in the Senate likely diminishes opportunities for bipartisan cooperation. Senators from different parties may disagree on everything else but can sometimes work together on matters of special interest to their state. In 2006, for example, Florida Senators Bill Nelson (D) and Mel Martinez (R) teamed up on a bill to prohibit offshore oil and gas drilling off the state's Gulf Coast. Last year, Montana Senators Steve Daines (R) and Jon Tester (D) collaborated on legislation to settle a decades-old water dispute between Indigenous tribes and the state and federal governments.

Most states send senators of the same party to Congress

Senate delegation by state, February 2021



Source: Pew Research Center

Drew DeSilver is a senior writer and editor at the Pew Research Center.

Stateline, an initiative of The Pew Charitable Trusts, is a team of veteran journalists who report and analyze trends in state policy with a focus on fiscal and economic issues, health care, demographics, and the business of government. More stories are available at pewtrusts.org/stateline.

States Debate Improvements to Unemployment Systems

BY SOPHIE QUINTON



City employees pass out unemployment applications in Hialeah, Florida, in April of last year. The printed forms were a necessity for people having difficulty accessing the state's unemployment website because of widespread demand from business closures and layoffs during the pandemic. *Joe Raedle/Getty Images*

When Floridians can't log in to their state's unemployment insurance website, or can't figure out why they've been denied benefits, or have been waiting weeks to be approved for benefits, they often end up calling state Representative Anna Eskamani.

Rep. Eskamani, a Democrat who represents part of central Florida, says that during the pandemic, her team has fielded questions from over 20,000 unemployed people from across the state. Once word got out that her team was available to help, even paying for a hotel room or medicine sometimes, she said, the calls and emails came flooding in.

"It's been almost a year of dealing with this broken unemployment system," Rep. Eskamani said. "It's been really, really bad."

Skyrocketing unemployment nationwide last spring revealed how ill-prepared states were to get aid to workers in an emergency. Now governors and lawmakers in many states have proposed fixing ancient computer systems or hiring more staff to process claims, and in some states, lawmakers have proposed increasing benefits and making them easier to access.

Although there's bipartisan support for tech upgrades, some Republicans don't support increasing benefits. In fact, Republican lawmakers in Maine and West Virginia have proposed cutting the amount of time people can stay on benefits when the statewide unemployment rate is low.

But as Florida's experience shows, the combination of public pressure and more federal money to spend could create room for Democrats and Republicans to compromise on changes to unemployment insurance systems.

Unemployment benefits are funded by taxing employers, and many Republicans and business groups don't want to raise business taxes. They also fear that better benefits could dissuade out-of-work people from looking for jobs.

"We're willing to discuss the max weekly benefit, just so long as we don't end up competing for employees with our own tax dollars," said Bill Herrle, executive director of the Florida chapter of the National Federation of Independent Business, an organization that advocates for independent business owners.

Some states have used federal coronavirus aid to replenish unemployment insurance trust funds and hold down business taxes. The latest federal relief package could be used in the same way, according to Andrew Stettner, a senior fellow at the Century Foundation, a left-leaning think tank.

The relief package also includes \$2 billion in grants to help states upgrade unemployment insurance technology. It extends federal support for unemployed workers by providing an additional \$300 to former

employees and \$100 per week to freelance and gig workers through Labor Day.

Some Florida Republicans back increasing benefits. "We have a moral obligation to provide enough to help meet some basic needs while they look for work," Florida state Senator Jason Brodeur (R) said in an email to *Stateline*. He proposed increasing the weekly benefit maximum from \$275 to \$375 a week, closer to the national average of \$387 a week.

In a move that could defuse tension over business tax increases, Florida legislative leaders have announced a plan to tax online sales to Floridians and spend the revenue on the unemployment insurance trust fund.

Florida state Senator Annette Taddeo, a Democrat who co-sponsored the sales tax bill as well as legislation that would increase unemployment benefits, said she's been invited to join a bipartisan Senate group focused on the unemployment insurance system.

Ideas coming out of that group "are not going to be perfect," she said. "But I just want us to do something."

A Broken System

When millions of people were laid off last spring, a crush of unemployment insurance claims swamped aging state systems—some still powered by 1950s-era computer code—and overwhelmed officials. Backlogs became the norm in every state, and payment processing slowed down further as state agencies were hit with major identity theft scams.

Unemployed workers faced hard-to-use websites, legal jargon, and strict eligibility requirements, and struggled to get overworked agency officials on the phone. In the latest twist in Florida's saga, residents are now struggling to get the tax forms they need to report unemployment benefits as income, Sen. Taddeo said. "And it's so frustrating."

Nationally, just 29% of unemployed workers received benefits in March 2020, according to an April analysis from the Pew Research Center. Rates were lowest in Arizona, Florida, and North Carolina, where 10% of unemployed workers or fewer received benefits.

Some state unemployment policies exclude whole categories of workers, such as gig workers and freelancers who don't have a traditional employer, and part-time workers who earn too little to qualify. Other workers are denied benefits because they didn't fill out paperwork correctly.

Some of Wisconsin's unemployment forms and the online portal are only available in English and unemployment paperwork must be completed online, although some workers don't read and write English well and lack consistent internet access, noted Victor Forberger, a Madison-based lawyer who specializes in unemployment insurance claims.

Wisconsin's labor department also has continued to painstakingly investigate workers' job histories and why they left prior jobs, Forberger said, a process other states paused during the public health emergency. But during the pandemic, Wisconsin joined other states in dropping requirements that claimants prove they're looking for new jobs.

Wisconsin officials blame eligibility requirements and old technology for payment delays. "Dealing with complex eligibility laws and outdated IT systems has led to substantial challenges over the past nine months," the agency's secretary-designee Amy Pechacek told legislators during a December hearing.

In many states, people who did get state benefits during the pandemic discovered they were barely enough to live on.

Kelly Johnson, a 48-year-old single mom of eight, started a Facebook group for unemployed Floridians last spring after she was furloughed from two jobs, as a manager at a gym and as a manager at a restaurant, then finally laid off from the restaurant.

It took her a week to get into the state system, Johnson said. And she found she qualified for just \$71 a week. "The biggest problem I see is that the benefits are too low," she said. "If they had been a bit higher, people wouldn't be facing the evictions and facing the car repossessions."

Johnson's benefits were based on her restaurant income, not her gym manager income, because the gym classified her as an independent contractor.

Congress gave workers a lifeline in March 2020 when it approved an additional \$600 per week for claimants, including gig workers. Those benefits expired in July, so the Trump administration instead created a program to send claimants an additional \$300 per week. Congress then reauthorized its program and began sending claimants an additional \$300 per week in December. That money was again approved in the \$1.9 trillion relief package President Joe Biden signed.

The multiple rounds of aid have been tough for states to speedily hand out, however. Donalyn Manion, a 55-year-old professor of graphic design in Kansas who was laid off last spring, said she's been struggling to make ends meet since December because she's received no state or federal benefits since then.

Manion said she's still eligible for benefits, but it's taken Kansas a long time to start distributing money that Congress approved in December. She qualifies for \$449 per week in state benefits, close to the \$503 maximum.

Manion said she's not low-income enough to qualify for food stamps or rental assistance. She's cut back

on expenses and is burning through her retirement savings. "It's hard," she said. "And I have to say, if you're not living it, you don't really understand it."

Labor department officials have said that the agency needs time to prepare its computer system to distribute the new aid.

Johnson and Manion have channeled their frustration into organizing workers online and getting involved in state and national advocacy groups such as the Center for Popular Democracy, a pro-worker group with offices in New York City and Washington, D.C. Johnson even ran (unsuccessfully) as a Democrat for the Florida House in November.

"Unemployment [aid] is supposed to be there to sustain you, not drive you down in the hole further and make you desperate," she said.

Seeking Solutions

Governors and legislators are looking for ways to improve unemployment insurance systems, starting with tech upgrades.

The Democratic governors of Wisconsin, Kansas, and New Jersey have proposed spending \$79 million, \$37.5 million and \$7.7 million on upgrades, respectively. Republican lawmakers in Florida have proposed spending \$73 million over two years to start fixing the state's website.

Florida's system was plagued by delays, overspending, and technical problems even before its launch in 2013. It'll cost \$244 million over five years to fix, according to a joint study by the state Department of Economic Opportunity and iSF, a consulting firm.

The department's executive director, Dane Eagle, compared the unemployment insurance system to an outdated cell phone during a March hearing. "We were issued an iPhone in 2013, we didn't do the updates or bother to get a new iPhone in that process, and we're still operating on older data," he said.

Florida processed more claims in 2020 than in the prior eight years combined, Eagle said. His agency has tried to patch things up and add capacity, installing 82 new servers and training hundreds of new call center workers, and is working with lawmakers on legislation that would require some tech upgrades.

In Wisconsin, the Republican-controlled legislature rejected Democratic Governor Tony Evers' proposal to improve technology but approved a bill, which the governor signed, that instructs the agency to seek out contractors first for the work.

"If we allocate \$80 million, like the governor asked for, the bids will be at least \$80 million," Republican state Senator Howard Marklein, co-chair of the Joint Committee on Finance, said in an email. "We need the administration to do the work, request proposals,

make a plan, and come back with actual bids so that we know the real cost to update this technology.”

Democrats in several states want to expand benefits or make them easier to access. A New Jersey bill would allow workers who earn as little as \$100 a week to qualify, for instance. A Minnesota bill would allow high school students to qualify. And in Florida, several Democrats and one Republican, Sen. Brodeur, have filed separate legislation that would increase benefit amounts.

“My concern, with my bill, is that we don’t just fix the website and think everything’s okay,” Sen. Taddeo said. She proposed increasing weekly benefits to a maximum of \$600, up from \$275, and a minimum of \$200, up from \$32, and allowing Floridians to claim benefits for at least 26 weeks.

Rep. Eskamani has proposed separate legislation increasing weekly benefits to between \$100 and \$500 for 26 weeks, adjusting how benefits are calculated, allowing people to qualify if they seek part-time work, and suspending work search requirements during an emergency, among other changes.

She said a strong unemployment system will be key to Florida’s economic recovery because better benefits help people keep food on the table and avoid homelessness. “A functioning unemployment system is

one of the best stimulus [policies] that a state can craft for its people,” she said.

Some Republicans in the state have said they don’t think low benefit amounts are a problem. “I don’t know the issue was amounts, it was access,” state Sen. Danny Burgess, chair of Florida’s Select Committee on Pandemic Preparedness and Response, recently told *The Palm Beach Post*.

But there could be room for compromise.

“I think all of us are more than happy to look at a different level of benefits,” said Republican state Representative Chip LaMarca.

Meanwhile, unemployment rates nationwide are falling as businesses reopen and companies anticipate the end of the pandemic. Johnson was called back to her restaurant job this week part-time and is planning to go, even though she’ll earn less money there than she would on expanded unemployment benefits.

“I’d rather keep my foot in the door and go back to work,” she said.

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Sophie Quinton is a staff writer for Stateline.

Volunteers load food boxes into cars at a distribution event at the Hope International Church near Orlando, Florida, last December. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, food banks in central Florida struggled to keep up with the needs of people facing food insecurity during the holiday season. Paul Hennessy/NurPhoto via Getty Images



How Much Do You Know About Digital Topics?

The Pew Research Center regularly surveys the public about their understanding of technology-related topics. The Center has found that Americans' ability to correctly answer questions on this subject varied greatly depending on the topic, term, or concept. Results from that polling appeared in the report "Americans and Digital Knowledge."

Rodion Kutsaev/Unsplash

1. If a website uses cookies, it means that the site ...

- a. Can see the content of all the files on the device you are using
- b. Is not a risk to infect your device with a computer virus
- c. Will automatically prompt you to update your web browser software if it is out of date
- d. Can track your visits and activity on the site

2. Which of the following is the largest source of revenue for most major social media platforms?

- a. Exclusive licensing deals with internet service providers and cellphone manufacturers
- b. Allowing companies to purchase advertisements on their platforms
- c. Hosting conferences for social media influencers
- d. Providing consulting services to corporate clients

3. When a website has a privacy policy, it means that the site ...

- a. Has created a contract between itself and its users about how it will use their data
- b. Will not share its users' personal information with third parties
- c. Adheres to federal guidelines about deceptive advertising practices
- d. Does not retain any personally identifying information about its users

4. What does it mean when a website has "https://" at the beginning of its URL, as opposed to "http://" without the "s"?

- a. Information entered into the site is encrypted
- b. The content on the site is safe for children
- c. The site is accessible only to people in certain countries
- d. The site has been verified as trustworthy

5. Where might someone encounter a phishing scam?

- a. In an email
- b. On social media
- c. In a text message
- d. On a website
- e. All of the above
- f. None of the above

6. Which two companies listed below are both owned by Facebook?

- a. Twitter and Instagram
- b. Snapchat and WhatsApp
- c. WhatsApp and Instagram
- d. Twitter and Snapchat

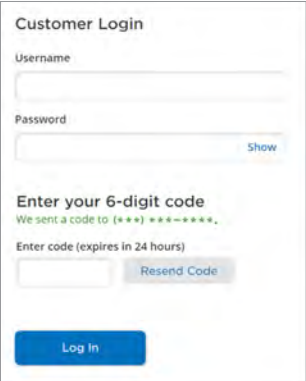


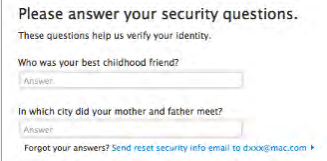
7. The term “net neutrality” describes the principle that ...

- a. Internet service providers should treat all traffic on their networks equally
- b. Social media platforms must give equal visibility to conservative and liberal points of view
- c. Online advertisers cannot post ads for housing or jobs that are visible only to people of a certain race
- d. The government cannot censor online speech

8. Many web browsers offer a feature known as “private browsing” or “incognito mode.” If someone opens a webpage on their computer at work using incognito mode, which of the following groups will NOT be able to see their online activities?

- a. The group that runs their company’s internal computer network
- b. Their company’s internet service provider
- c. A co-worker who uses the same computer
- d. The websites they visit while in private browsing mode

9. Websites and online services use a security process known as two-step or two-factor authentication. Which of the following images is an example of two-factor authentication?

- a. 
- b. 
- c. 
- d. 
- e. All of the above

10. Who is this technology leader?



- a. Jack Dorsey, co-founder of Twitter
- b. Sergey Brin, co-founder of Google
- c. Elon Musk, co-founder of Tesla
- d. Travis Kalanick, co-founder of Uber

Turn page for answers

Answers

1. **D:** Can track your visits and activity on the site
2. **B:** Allowing companies to purchase advertisements on their platforms
3. **A:** Has created a contract between itself and its users about how it will use their data
4. **A:** Information entered into the site is encrypted
5. **E:** All of the above. A majority of U.S. adults surveyed could correctly answer questions about phishing scams or website cookies.
6. **C:** WhatsApp and Instagram
7. **A:** Internet service providers should treat all traffic on their networks equally
8. **C:** A coworker who uses the same computer. Roughly half of those surveyed were unsure what private browsing does.
9. **A:** Just 28% of those surveyed could correctly identify an example of two-factor authentication, one of the most important ways to protect information on sensitive accounts.
10. **A:** Jack Dorsey, co-founder of Twitter

Customer Login

Username

Password [Show](#)

Enter your 6-digit code

We sent a code to: (***-**-****)

Enter code (expires in 24 hours)

[Resend Code](#)

[Log In](#)



Shahadat Rahman/Unsplash

Pew experts explore innovative ideas on the most critical subjects facing our world.

Employers Embrace Auto-IRAs

Surveys and early state implementation efforts show business support for retirement savings option.

BY JOHN SCOTT

Many employers that do not provide retirement benefits are signing up at the first opportunity for innovative state programs intended to help private sector workers save for their futures. In addition, responses to a survey in Oregon indicate that business owners see advantages for their employees in the state's new individual retirement account program.

These savings programs—known as auto-IRAs because eligible workers are enrolled automatically—are public-private partnerships with state oversight and private financial firm management. They operate at no cost to employers: If businesses do not sponsor a plan of their own, employees can make regular contributions from their paychecks, with the ability to opt out at any time.

Eight states—California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, New Jersey, Oregon, and Virginia—have adopted auto-IRA programs, and several others are considering them. Support among employers is a critical positive signal to policymakers weighing such initiatives.

Several indicators demonstrate significant receptivity among employers. In 2017, Pew surveyed small-business owners across the country, asking their opinion of a hypothetical auto-IRA program. Overall, 87% of those without their own company plan either somewhat or strongly supported such an initiative, with 27% stating that they would be very supportive.

That 2017 survey coincided with the start of the first state auto-IRA, OregonSaves, which now covers all private sector employers in the state that do not provide their own plans. Pew surveyed participating employers in 2019 and 2020 to assess how they experienced the initial registration and ongoing payroll contribution processes. Nearly 3 in 4 (73%) said they were either satisfied or neutral about the program.

OregonSaves does not charge businesses any participation fees, and 79% said they have not experienced any related out-of-pocket costs. Those that have faced additional costs said office supplies

and payroll processing time were the most common. Eighty percent also said they are hearing only “a little” or “no questions at all” from their employees about OregonSaves. One reason may be that workers are offered assistance directly from the program's client service team.

This positive reaction among employers to a no-cost retirement benefit can also be seen in California, where the Legislature approved an auto-IRA program known as CalSavers in 2016. The state had set a Sept. 30, 2020, deadline for larger employers—those with at least 100 employees—to register for CalSavers if they did not have a retirement plan of their own. As of Aug. 31, 2020, at least a month before the program's first enrollment deadline, 2,249 firms employing nearly 100,000 workers had enrolled. More than 700 companies had started processing payroll contributions, and the program had amassed over \$8.7 million in assets.

Why the demand? According to Pew's 2017 survey, many employers want to offer retirement benefits to their workers but say they cannot because of high startup costs and limited administrative capacity. Some said they see offering retirement benefits as a way to attract and retain workers, but 67% of those who supported auto-IRAs said they felt such a program simply “would help my employees.”

Of course, business owners aren't monolithic in their attitudes, and views on auto-IRAs run the gamut from strong backing to firm opposition. But it's clear from the work of Pew and others that there is significant small-business support for a public-private partnership that can help employers facilitate a benefit at no cost that helps workers build a secure retirement.

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John Scott is the director of The Pew Charitable Trusts' retirement savings project.

A Vision for Lasting Philanthropy

The Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, in partnership with Pew and on its own, seeks to conserve ecosystems for future generations.

BY DEMETRA APOSOROS

While many people have heard of “Moore’s Law,” which essentially states that the amount of raw computing power on a microchip will double every two years, fewer may be familiar with the man who came up with the original observation. Gordon Moore, a co-founder and former chairman emeritus of the Intel Corp., made that prediction in 1965, and his forecast for the pace of growth in technology would effectively become the model for the entire industry. The law has held true over more than half a century as it helped to drive an electronics revolution that produced increasingly faster, smarter, more powerful, and affordable products, from cellphones and computers to microwaves, thermostats, GPS tracking devices, and much more. In 2002, Moore received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from George W. Bush, who credited him with helping to “create our age of information.”

Yet a look back on Moore’s childhood shows that it began quietly, with hidden clues that he would grow up to help change the world with technology. As an introverted child living in Pescadero, California, located halfway between San Francisco and Santa Cruz, he enjoyed spending time in nature, especially around nearby Pescadero Creek, where he developed a lifelong love of fishing. He was introduced to chemistry when a neighbor’s son was given a chemistry set—with the two boys soon spending hours blowing things up. Hooked on science, he would go on to pursue a degree in chemistry, first at San Jose State University, where he would meet a journalism student named Betty Whitaker who would become his wife, and then at the University of California, Berkeley. He later earned a Ph.D. in chemistry, with a minor in physics, from the California Institute of Technology.

The great success of Gordon’s scientific career at Fairchild Semiconductor Laboratory and at Intel led the Moores, who married in 1950, to launch the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation in 2000, which, according to its website, aims to tackle “large, important issues at a scale where it can achieve significant and measurable impacts.” The foundation

also hopes to enact long-lasting change—the type that will touch many generations into the future. In 2012, the Moores also signed the Giving Pledge, a commitment by many of the world’s wealthiest individuals to give away the majority of their fortunes to philanthropic causes.

The foundation focuses on four areas: science, environmental conservation, patient care, and the San Francisco Bay Area, and each holds a personal interest for Betty or Gordon.

Having spent most of their lives around San Francisco Bay—Gordon’s family arrived in the state before the California Gold Rush, and Betty grew up on a fruit-and-nut ranch in the area that today is Silicon Valley—the couple became concerned with changes they were seeing happening around them over time, and so dedicated an arm of their foundation to conserving and enhancing the Bay Area’s special character so that future generations might enjoy it the way that they have. Patient care became a passion of Betty’s through her own experiences as both a patient and a caregiver, and a recognition of the importance of registered nurses. And science and the environment—well, those connections run deep.

Science, of course, framed Gordon’s long and storied career, and scientific inquiry underpins virtually all of the foundation’s work. “We believe in the inherent value of science and treasure the child-like sense of wonder that comes from finding out how the world works,” according to the foundation’s mission statement.

The couple’s science philanthropy began in earnest when they realized that the federal government was cutting back on basic scientific research—which they viewed as critical to other types of discovery—in the early 2000s. They felt this was an area where they could make an important difference and have since supported scores of projects including adaptive optics, which removes atmospheric distortion to create sharper images of space; the Event Horizon Telescope, which photographed a black hole for the first time; and SeaHawk, a nanosatellite that will

provide unique new views on the ocean's surface. Higher education, with its strong emphasis on fundamental science, has been another area of support.

Although the seed for Gordon's appreciation for the natural environment was planted in childhood, its roots grew deeper as he, Betty, and their young family spent time hiking, fishing, and enjoying other outdoor activities. Seeing natural environments begin to change would become a call to action. "We used to spend most of our vacations off in remote areas fishing, and it would be essentially jungle right up to the water's edge," Gordon explained in a 2015 interview. "Then we'd come back five years later and could see these remote places becoming high-rise hotels and golf courses. And that was something we thought that we could influence a bit."

The foundation's conservation work has touched many projects related to oceans and marine life, and has especially focused on improving the management of coastal ecosystems and reducing overfishing, an area where it first intersected with The Pew Charitable Trusts when both organizations helped to support the early years of Oceana. The international organization, launched in 2001, is dedicated to protecting and restoring the ocean on a global scale and achieving measurable change through specific, science-based campaigns with articulated goals and fixed deadlines. The foundation and Pew share that data-driven approach, along with focusing on big-picture issues and creating lasting change. This synergy was the basis for the Moore Foundation's support for Pew's international boreal conservation campaign, with its focus on efforts to protect globally important ecosystems while conserving salmon watersheds and strengthening the influence of First Nations and other communities in conservation decisions.

For the Moore Foundation, working with Pew has been a logical fit. "We believe that evidence and the types of rigorous inquiry that guide scientific exploration are key to achieving the outcomes we seek, which is why Pew is so well positioned as a partner," says Moore Foundation President Harvey Fineberg. "Pew's in-depth research and evidence-based approach to creating enduring change—particularly around safeguarding critical ecosystems and biodiversity—complement our desire to secure measurable and lasting gains for conservation."

Conserving ecosystem integrity was also behind the Moore Foundation's support of an innovative conservation model launched in Brazil's Amazon in 2002 called Amazon Region Protected Areas, or ARPA, which today has become the largest tropical conservation project in history, protecting an area over four times the size of California. Known as a "project finance for permanence," it leverages a patchwork of funding with a Wall Street mindset around investments



Gordon and Betty Moore sit on a bench at San Francisco's Presidio in 2001 during one of the first all-staff meetings of the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. *Susanna Frohman/San Jose Mercury News*

to secure the long-term conservation of critical areas—in the Amazon, this represents a place that helps stabilize the Earth's climate, harbors 1 in 10 known species, and is home to 30 million people. Such big-picture thinking illustrates the scale on which the foundation hopes to make a long-term difference for future generations.

"Gordon and Betty Moore long ago recognized the importance of healthy and resilient ecosystems for our planet," says Tom Dillon, a senior vice president who oversees Pew's environment portfolio. "They have worked extensively to protect these resources so that they may sustain both nature and people, and provide food, economic opportunities, and recreation for generations to come—including in visionary work in the Amazon. We are grateful to have had their support in protecting the health of North America's intertwined boreal forests and salmon ecosystems and look forward to continuing to work with them on lasting change. And we greatly appreciate their far-reaching leadership in championing a healthy ocean and host of natural environments around the globe."



For more information about philanthropic partnerships at Pew, please contact senior director Laura Lambert at 202-540-6598 or llambert@pewtrusts.org.

Demetra Aposporos is the senior editor of Trust.

Now Is the Time to Prepare for the Next Election Emergency

BY MICHAEL CAUDELL-FEAGAN AND CHARLES STEWART III



Voters wait to cast their presidential primary election ballots in Milwaukee on April 7, 2020. Kamil Krazaczynski/AFP via Getty Images

The 2020 election has rightly been judged as well-managed, despite the enormous challenges posed by casting and counting millions of votes in the midst of a deadly pandemic and national lockdown.

Election officials nationwide provided access to early voting and mail-in ballots and managed to keep poll workers and voters safe during an intense election with record turnout.

They did a remarkable job, but the outcome could have been much, much different.

Suppose the coronavirus had arrived on American shores not in February but in October. Suppose that instead of eight months for state and local election officials to plan for voting during the pandemic, they had only weeks.

That's essentially what happened in Wisconsin's presidential primary. Amid the first wave of the virus, the state proceeded with its scheduled April 7 primary. In Milwaukee, the state's largest city, intense fear of infection led thousands of poll workers

to decline to serve. Just four days before the primary, the city announced that only 4 percent of its polling locations would open, resulting in three-hour waits to vote and a significant drop in anticipated turnout.

Imagine if that had happened just four days before the November general election, with its huge voter turnout. Milwaukee would have had to funnel a quarter of a million voters through just five polling places—an impossible task. Instead, because the city had eight months to recover after the primary, Milwaukee accommodated 68 percent of its voters through early and mail voting. The city rallied to open 175 voting locations with pandemic protections for the 80,000 voters who cast their ballots in person on Nov. 3.

The lesson is clear: The nation needs to plan now for late-emerging problems and voting contingencies well before the next presidential election.

No one can predict or control when or how the next threat to an election may arise.

Our presidential election calendar is set in stone by the Constitution. Other nations can move their elections in response to a pandemic, natural disaster, or terrorist attack, and more than half of the scheduled elections around the world have been rescheduled during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the U.S., individual states may be able to cancel a primary or reschedule a state election, but the presidential election must take place on the first Tuesday in November.

Election officials started realizing last April that they had to make dramatic changes to meet that deadline. They shifted 40 million voters to mail ballots, bought millions of dollars' worth of new equipment to handle the mail volume, recruited hundreds of thousands of new poll workers, replaced tens of thousands of polling places that were lost to COVID-19 restrictions, bought expensive protective equipment for workers, and found ways to share up-to-date information on voting options and polling places.

The urgent need to act revealed a patchwork of solutions and a desperate scramble for funding. Governors exercised emergency authority in many states to adapt election laws and practices. Civic groups stepped in to create websites to recruit election workers. Retired election officials came forward to help local election offices. Social media companies created platforms to communicate trusted election information as COVID-19 forced rapid changes in mail-in ballot rules and voting locations.

The federal government eventually contributed \$400 million to help, but only after a political fight. Private contributions from individuals and philanthropies actually exceeded the federal funding. That was a crucial investment during a once-in-a-lifetime election, but it was hardly a model of how the most basic democratic institution should be funded in future crises.

All these laudable efforts succeeded only because officials had months to act. No one can predict or control when or how the next threat to an election may arise. The time to plan is now.

Election reform is on the agenda right now in Congress and in many state legislatures. The first bill introduced in the new Congress, H.R. 1, is a 791-page catalog of proposals long sought by the Democratic majority in the House of Representatives for voting rights, election administration, redistricting, government ethics, and campaign finance. But bipartisan compromise will be required for passage.

While H.R. 1 has a short section requiring states to publish emergency action plans, it does not create a comprehensive emergency management infrastructure for future elections. It should. The bill requires further fine-tuning to give election officials the flexibility they need to meet operational challenges in emergencies.

The federal government cannot act alone. State policymakers and election administrators play a pivotal role—and modernizing our election system will depend on reforms in states and localities. America's citizens deserve good-faith, nonpartisan cooperation among the local, state, and federal governments. Recent efforts to build trust between election officials and the federal government in the area of cybersecurity could serve as a model.

Election officials face challenges every year: bomb scares, no-show poll workers, blizzards, power outages, hurricanes, and more, usually regional in scope. In 2020, they faced and met a true national threat to a presidential election. Now is the time to focus on what they learned—and to prepare for the next crisis before it arrives.

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This was originally published in The Hill on March 3. Michael Caudell-Feagan is executive vice president and chief program officer of The Pew Charitable Trusts. Charles Stewart III heads the Election Data and Science Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

*The Pew Charitable Trusts applies a rigorous, analytical approach to **improve public policy**, **inform the public**, and **invigorate civic life**, as these recent accomplishments illustrate.*

IMPROVING PUBLIC POLICY



Penguins in Antarctica offer insights into Earth's southernmost continent; stable populations of the birds indicate a healthy environment. More than 60 of their natural habitats are proposed targets for conservation, designations that would offset the stresses of the rapidly warming polar region. *John B. Weller*

Pew-funded study identifies 63 marine Important Bird Areas

A Pew-funded study led by BirdLife International published in *Frontiers in Marine Science* identified 63 marine Important Bird Areas (mIBAs) for penguins throughout Antarctica. The study demonstrates that currently proposed marine protected areas will protect key habitat, including 80% of mIBAs identified, and underscores the scientific justification for marine protected areas in the Weddell Sea and the Antarctic Peninsula region. The study also examined krill fisheries data for the past 50 years and concluded that the fisheries may be competing directly with penguin colonies for food.



Trekkers take in sweeping views of Patagonia National Park, located in the southern end of Chile. *The Pew Charitable Trusts*

Chilean regional government approves Pew-backed investment for Patagonia National Park

In January, the regional government of Aysén, Chile, approved a \$5.4 million investment in infrastructure for Patagonia National Park. The funds will help improve trails and roads, and construct service buildings and a visitors' center. Construction will begin later this year and is a result of the Chilean protected areas administration agency's work, supported by the joint efforts of Pew and the Austral Patagonia Program of Universidad Austral de Chile. The move helps improve Patagonia's standards for protected areas, strengthening the ties between those areas and nearby communities that benefit from being near the park.

Pew helps bring state officials together to strengthen local governments

Since March 2020, Pew's state fiscal health project and Michigan State University have hosted five virtual meetings of the Government Fiscal Sustainability Workgroup, a collection of state officials who support local governments. Sustained by Pew funding, this group met annually and in person in prior years, but since the pandemic it has met more frequently to share information, experiences, practices, and ideas as officials contend with COVID-19's effects on local governments' finances. About 30 participants from 20 states have attended each meeting. Topics have included distributing federal relief funds, easing administrative requirements for local governments, and better assessing the fiscal vulnerability of localities to COVID-19. These meetings further the project's overarching goal of helping states advance sound, data-driven policies and practices that build fiscally well-managed states.

New Jersey reforms economic development tax incentives

In January, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy (D) signed legislation reauthorizing two business tax incentives to which the state has committed billions of dollars in recent years. The bill, which is consistent with recommendations from Pew's state fiscal health team, creates both annual and aggregate limits on costs from the Emerge and Aspire programs and requires a state college or university to evaluate their results regularly. Pew has counseled New Jersey policymakers since 2017 on assessing tax incentives' results and using fiscal protections such as caps to prevent the programs from costing more than expected or intended.



Mark Makela/Getty Images

United Nations body agrees to develop international transshipment guidelines

The Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) agreed in February to develop new international transshipment guidelines. Transshipment, the transfer of fish or other marine wildlife between vessels at sea or in port, is currently inadequately regulated, creating ample opportunities for illicit activities such as illegal fishing and trafficking of people and wildlife. Pew's international fisheries team worked with the FAO in advance of the meeting on a global transshipment report and reached out to COFI members to help them understand the need for transshipment monitoring and reporting guidelines.

Protections renewed for Arctic waters

President Joe Biden reinstated two conservation measures, originally put in place by the Obama administration but revoked by the Trump administration, that help protect Arctic waters and part of the Bering Sea. One action withdraws large areas of Arctic waters from oil and gas leasing, and the other re-establishes the 112 square-mile Northern Bering Sea Climate Resilience Area that provides a pathway for more than 70 federally recognized tribes in the region to exercise a role in decision-making regarding activities such as fishing, shipping, and oil spills in the northern Bering Sea. Pew and its partners supported efforts led by the region's Indigenous peoples to secure protection for these culturally and ecologically rich waters.

House of Representatives passes public lands and rivers legislation

In February, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bipartisan Protecting America's Wilderness and Public Lands Act. This Pew-supported package of conservation and economic recovery bills would safeguard public lands and rivers in Arizona, California, Colorado, Oregon, and Washington; ensure access to these places for millions of Americans; restore fish and wildlife habitat; and help to sustain local economies.

The measures in the package are supported by business owners, local elected officials, community leaders, veterans, scientists, conservationists, hunters and anglers, Native American tribes, and others who recognize the benefits of public lands and waters. Pew continues working toward passage of the legislation in the Senate.



Giant redwoods dwarf a visitor in Redwood National Park in Northern California. New legislation calls for programs that would help restore forests that contain the tallest trees on Earth. *Carmen Martinez Torrón/Getty Images*

Panel discusses what Philadelphia's small businesses need to survive and recover

Pew hosted a virtual panel in December to discuss the policies that Philadelphia's small and midsize businesses need to survive and recover from the pandemic. A Pew report, "Philadelphia's Small and Midsize Business Landscape," found that the sector underperformed in several ways when compared with similarly sized business sectors in other large cities—with less new business formation and density, as well as weaker overall financial health. Participants described the challenges that Philadelphia's small-business sector faced in 2020 as a result of the pandemic and offered insights about what is needed for the sector to recover, such as a more efficient city licensing and regulatory system, access to capital and banking services, a better opportunity to participate in city contracts and get paid in a timely fashion, and a deeper understanding among policymakers of the heterogeneity of small businesses, and their goals and needs.



Lexey Swall for The Pew Charitable Trusts

Bridgespan nonprofit leadership development program launches in Philadelphia

In February, global consulting firm The Bridgespan Group launched the first group of its Leading for Impact initiative in the Philadelphia region. The two-year program is designed to help nonprofit executive leadership teams improve their effectiveness and complete two projects that address their top institutional priorities. Pew and Harris Philanthropies—founded by Philadelphia 76ers managing partner Josh Harris and his wife, Marjorie—each provided a \$2 million grant to support the program. Funding from Pew and Harris also will enable Bridgespan to provide a 12- to 16-week online program for nonprofits with smaller budgets and limited staff capacity.

International views of biotechnology

A Pew Research Center international survey released in December found that a median of 63% of people across 20 publics say gene editing is a misuse—rather than an appropriate use—of technology. However, views on specific, potential instances of gene editing highlight the complex and contextual nature of public attitudes. Majorities say it would be appropriate to change a baby’s genetic characteristics to treat a serious disease that the baby would have at birth (median of 70%), and somewhat smaller shares, although still about half or more, say that using these techniques to reduce the risk of a serious disease that could occur over the course of the baby’s lifetime would be appropriate (60%). But a median of just 14% say it would be appropriate to change a baby’s genetic characteristics to make the baby more intelligent. A far larger share (median of 82%) would consider this to be a misuse of technology.



John Green/Bay Area News Group via Getty Images

Faith among Black Americans

The Pew Research Center released in February a study exploring the religious identities, beliefs, and practices of native-born and immigrant Black American adults. The report finds that Protestantism still dominates the Black American religious landscape: Two-thirds of Black Americans (66%) identify as Protestant, 6% identify as Catholic, and 3% identify with other Christian faiths, mostly Jehovah’s Witnesses. Another 3% belong to non-Christian faiths, most commonly Islam. In addition, about 1 in 5 Black Americans (21%) identify as atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular,” and this phenomenon is

increasing by generation: Roughly 3 in 10 Black Gen Zers (28%) and Millennials (33%) say they are religiously unaffiliated, compared with just 11% of Baby Boomers and 5% of those in the Silent Generation. Fully 60% of Black adults who go to religious services—whether every week or just a few times a year—say they attend religious services at places where most or all of the other attendees, as well as the senior clergy, are also Black. And one-third (33%) of Black Americans say historically Black congregations should preserve their traditional racial character.

COVID-19's effect on faith

The Pew Research Center released in January findings from a 14-country survey examining how the coronavirus outbreak has affected people's faith. The survey found that nearly 3 in 10 U.S. adults say the outbreak has boosted their faith, more than any other advanced economy included in the study. Just 10% of British adults report that their own faith is stronger as a result of the pandemic, and 14% think the faith of Britons overall has increased due to COVID-19. In Japan, 5% of people say religion now plays a stronger role in both their own lives and the lives of their fellow citizens. Majorities or pluralities in all the countries surveyed do not feel that religious faith has been strengthened by the pandemic. Generally, people in developed countries don't see much change in religious faith as a result of the pandemic.

Working parents struggle with child care during pandemic

The Pew Research Center published in January an analysis of the experiences of parents who are working part- or full-time during the coronavirus outbreak and have children younger than 18. The analysis found that 52% of parents with children younger than 12 in the household say it has been difficult to handle child care responsibilities during the pandemic, up from 38% who said so in March 2020. Both working mothers and fathers with children younger than 12 are more likely than they were earlier in the pandemic to say it's

been difficult to handle child care responsibilities. But as was the case in March, larger shares of mothers than fathers say this (57% vs. 47%). Among working parents who are married or cohabitating, child care responsibilities are more challenging for those who have a spouse or partner who is also employed. About half of these parents (53%) say handling child care has been difficult, compared with 42% of working parents who have a spouse or partner who is not employed.



Cavan Images/Getty Images

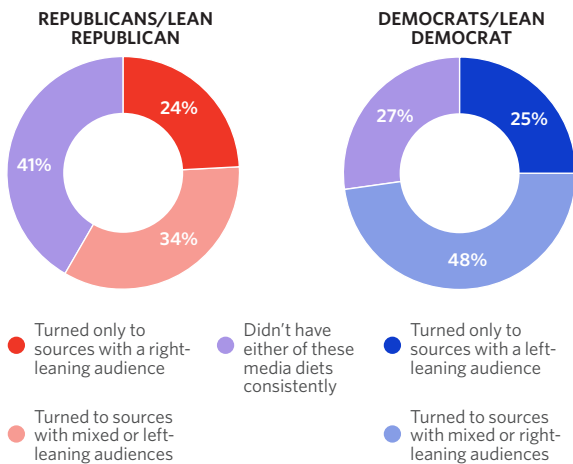
Two Different Fonts of Information

A Pew Research Center analysis found that in 2020, about a quarter of Republicans and Democrats consistently turned only to news outlets whose audiences aligned with them politically.



Minorities of partisans consistently relied only on news outlets whose audiences lean their way politically

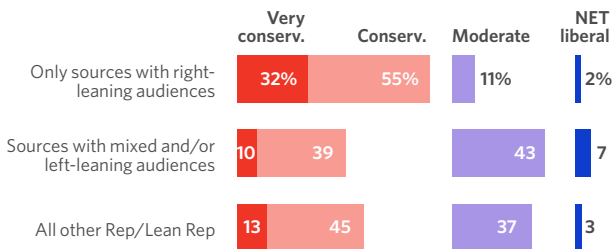
% who ___ for political and election news in **at least two out of three surveys** between November 2019 and November 2020



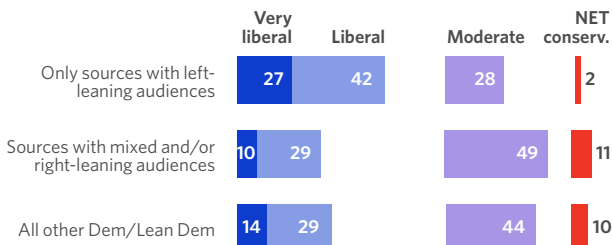
Republicans and Democrats who consistently turned only to news outlets with like-minded audiences are more ideological than others in their party

% who describe their political views as ...

Among Rep/Lean Rep who turned to ___ in at least two of three surveys



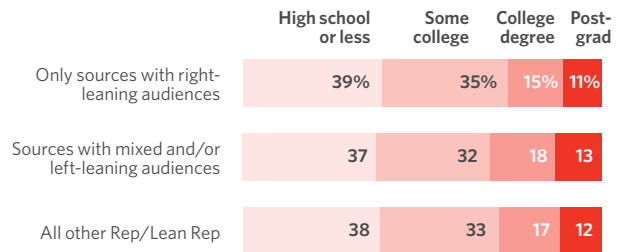
Among Dem/Lean Dem who turned to ___ in at least two of three surveys



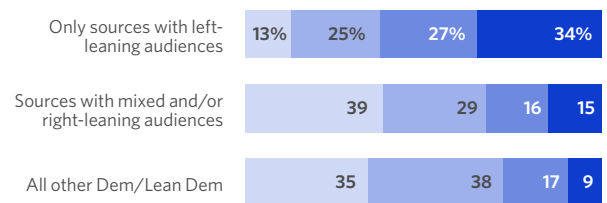
Democrats who consistently turned to news outlets with left-leaning audiences are much more highly educated

% whose education is ...

Among Rep/Lean Rep who turned to ___ in at least two of three surveys



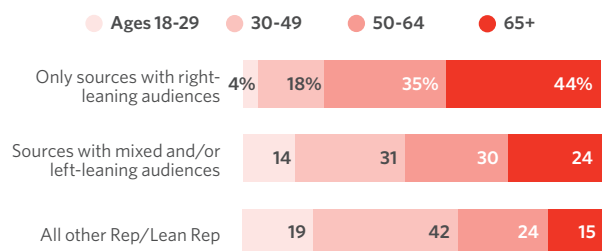
Among Dem/Lean Dem who turned to ___ in at least two of three surveys



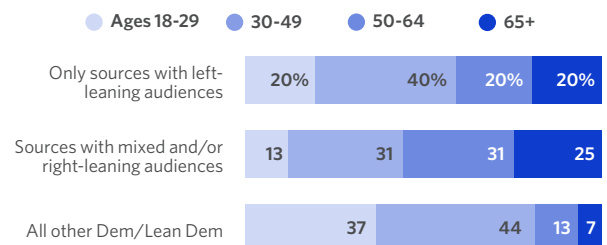
Among Republicans, those who consistently turned only to news outlets with like-minded audiences are far more likely to be 50 and older

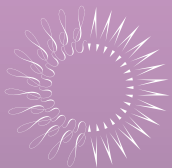
% of each group who are ...

Among Rep/Lean Rep who turned to ___ in at least two of three surveys



Among Dem/Lean Dem who turned to ___ in at least two of three surveys





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Mirrors extend the view of Samara Golden's mixed-media installation "Upstairs at Steve's" at Philadelphia's Fabric Workshop and Museum.

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