



# Trends in Media Use and Polarization

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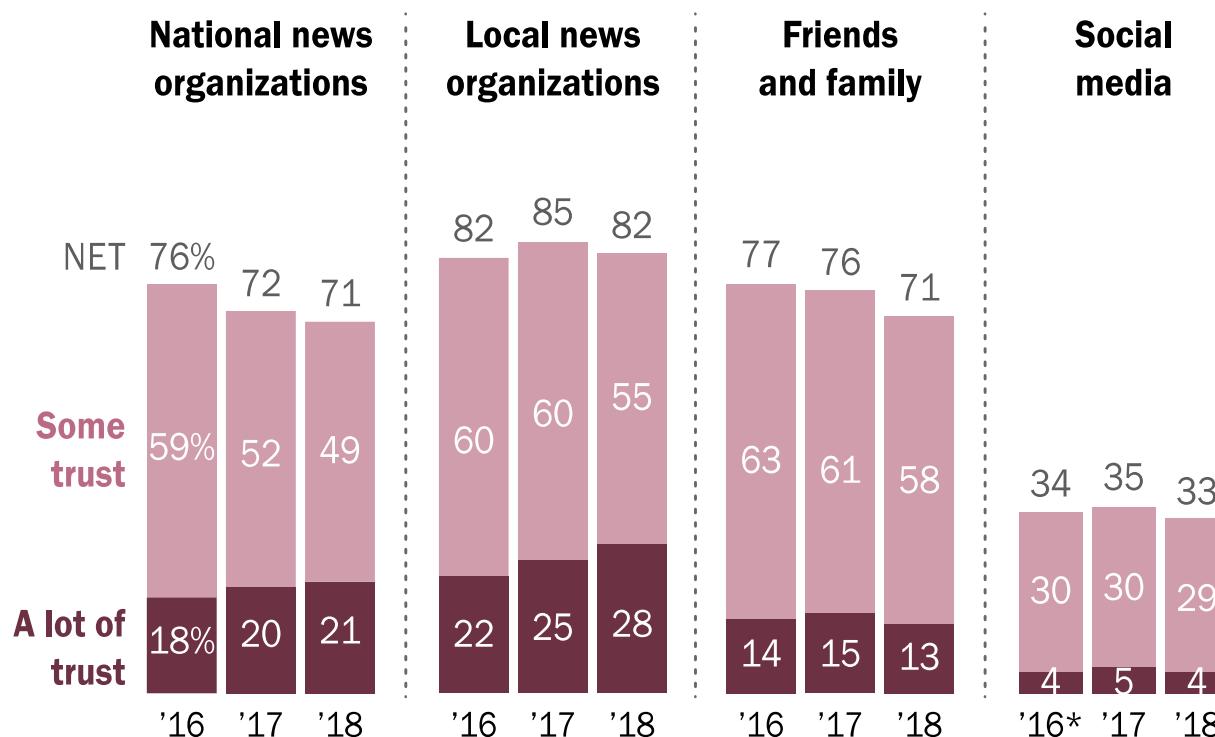
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# **MEDIA HABITS AND ATTITUDES IN A POLARIZED AGE**

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# Few Americans express high levels of trust in info from professional news organizations and social connections

*% of U.S. adults who say they have a lot or some trust in the information from ...*



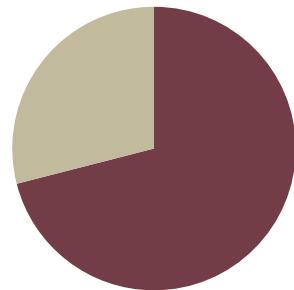
\* In 2016, trust of the information of social media was only asked of and based on web-using U.S. adults.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 22-March 4, 2018. For dates of other surveys see Methodology.

"Partisans Remain Sharply Divided in their Attitudes about the News Media"

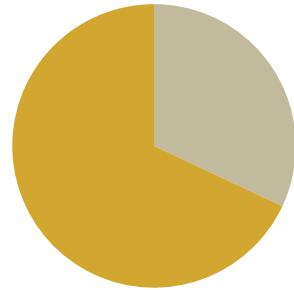
# Most Americans think their news will be accurate, but most also say news organizations cover up mistakes

*% of U.S. adults who say they ...*



71%

... typically go into a national news story expecting it will largely be accurate



68%

... think news organizations try to cover up their mistakes

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 22-March 4, 2018.

"Partisans Remain Sharply Divided in Their Attitudes About the News Media"

# More Americans feel disconnected than connected to news media

*% of U.S. adults who say news organizations ...*



*% of U.S. adults who say they \_\_\_\_ to the outlet they get most of their national news from*



Note: Percent who did not answer not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 22-March 4, 2018.

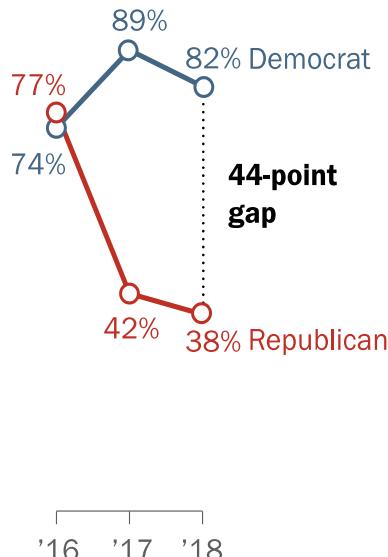
“Partisans Remain Sharply Divided in Their Attitudes About the News Media”

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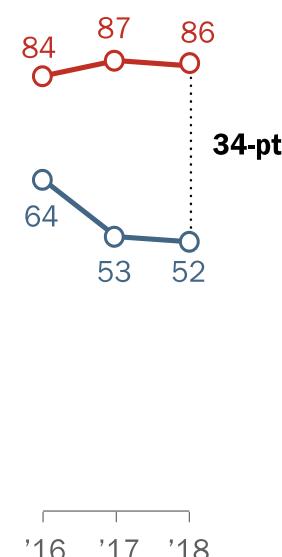
# Stark partisan divides remain in the American public's views of the news media

*% of U.S. adults who say ...*

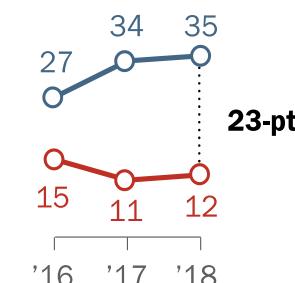
Media criticism of political leaders keeps them from doing things they shouldn't



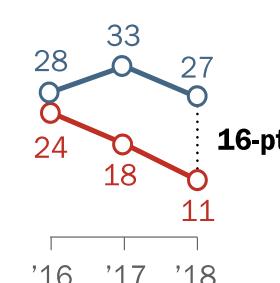
News organizations tend to favor one side



Information from national news organizations is very trustworthy



National news media do very well at keeping them informed



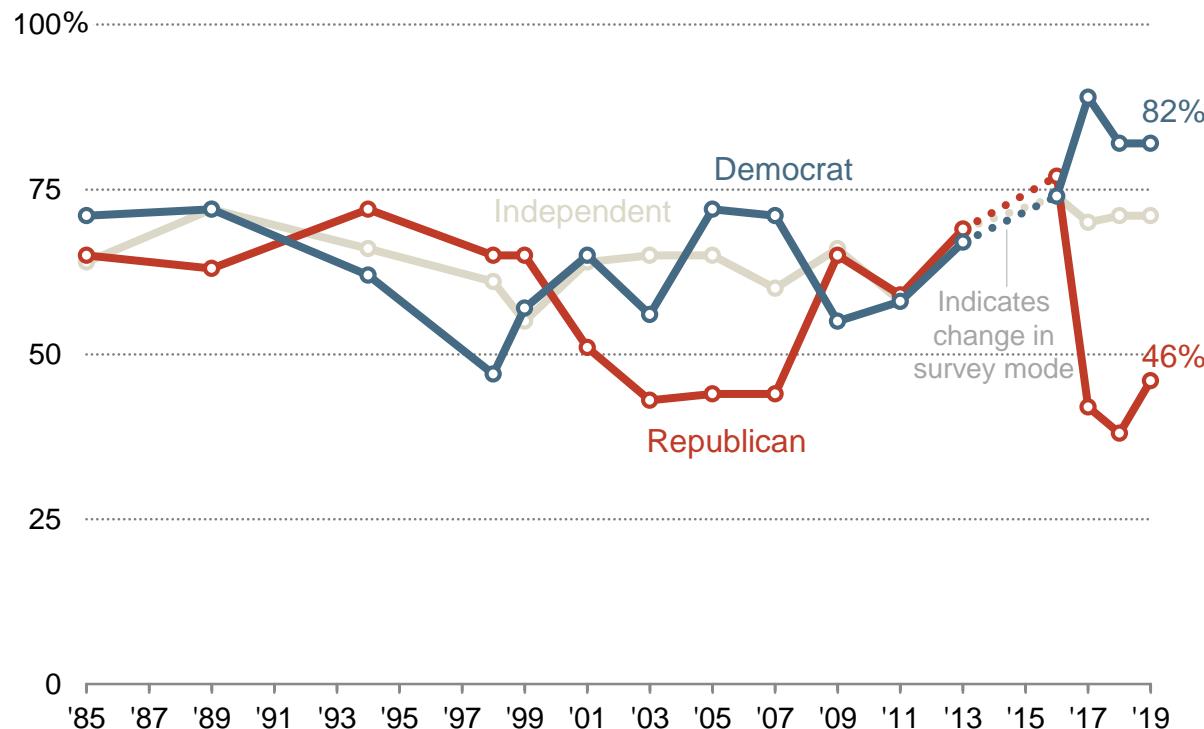
Note: Independents not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 22-March 4, 2018. For dates of other surveys see Methodology.

"Partisans Remain Sharply Divided in their Attitudes about the News Media"

# Partisan divides on news media's watchdog role are some of the largest ever measured

*% of U.S. adults who think that criticism from news organizations keeps political leaders from doing things that shouldn't be done*



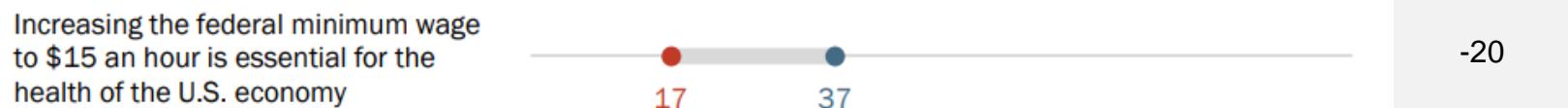
Note: Dotted line indicates a change in mode. Polls from 1985-2013 were conducted via phone. In 2016-2019, polls were conducted online.  
Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19-March 4, 2019.

# Republicans and Democrats more likely to see factual and opinion news statements as factual when they favor their side

*% who classified each **factual statement** as **factual***



*% who classified each **opinion statement** as **factual***



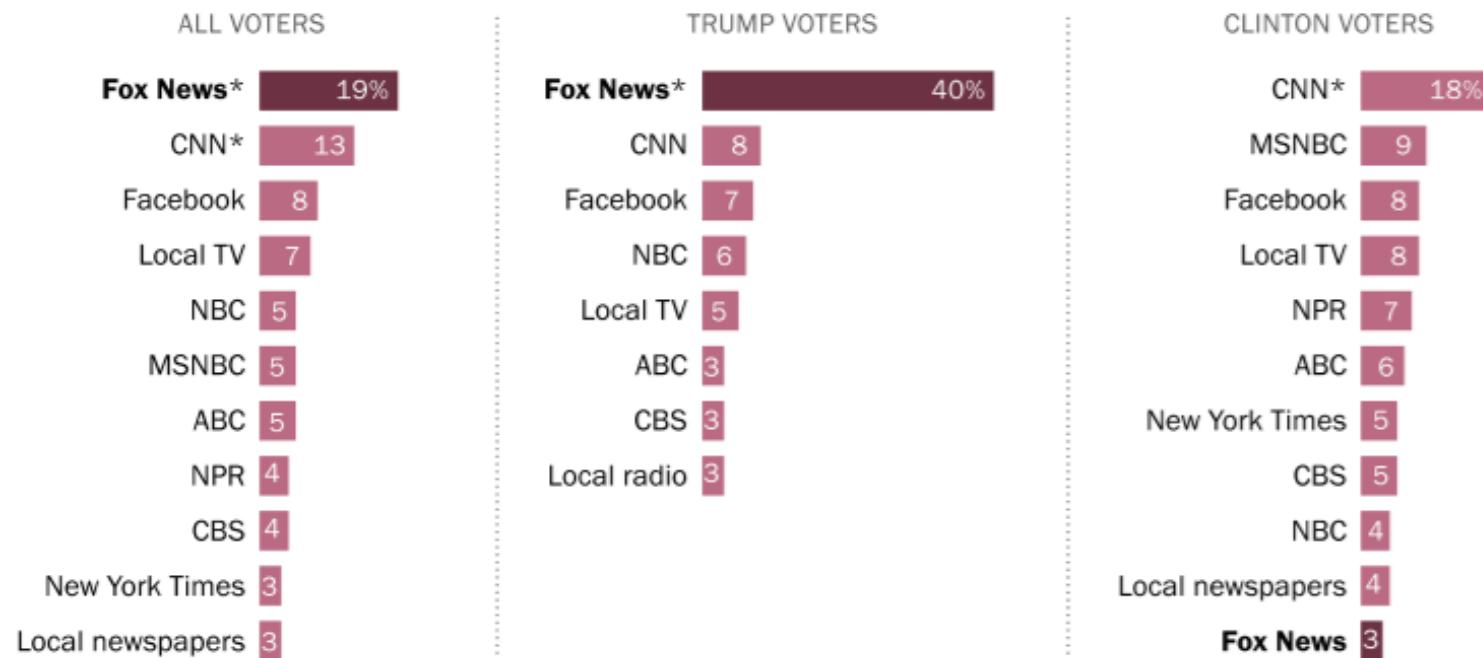
Note: Independents not shown. Republicans and Democrats significantly differ on all statements except for “Democracy is the greatest form of government.”

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 22-March 4, 2018.

“Distinguishing Between Factual and Opinion Statements in the News”

# Strong political divides in main source for election news

*% of voters who named \_\_\_\_ as their “main source” for news about the 2016 campaign*



\* Among this group of voters, this source was named at significantly higher rates than the source below it. Significance of other relationships provided upon request.

Note: Sources shown are only those that were named by at least 3% of each group. Results are based on open-ended questions, respondents could write in any source they chose.

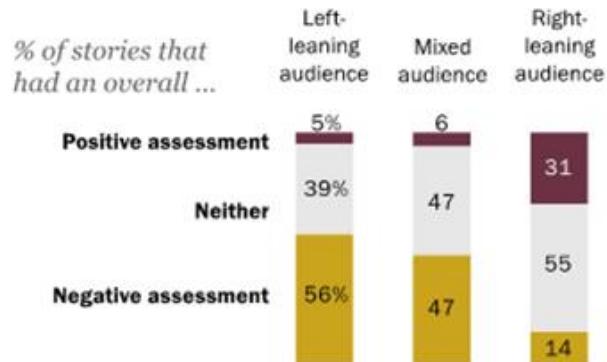
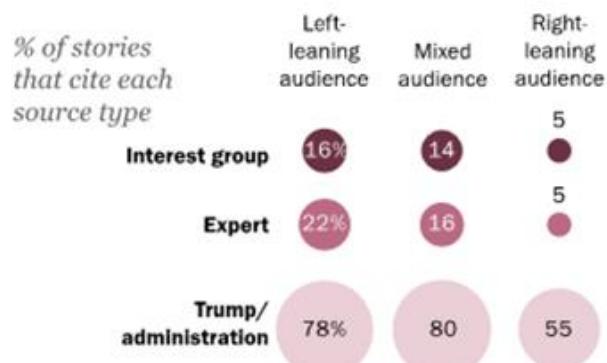
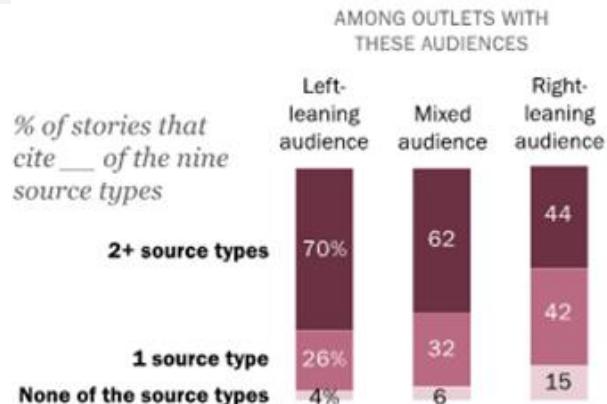
Source: Survey conducted Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 2016.

“Trump, Clinton Voters Divided in Their Main Source for Election News”

# And these divides matter in terms of the news Americans get

Note: Not all source types studied shown. Multiple source types may appear in one story. N=3,013 stories.  
 Source: Pew Research Center content analysis of news stories from national newspaper websites, radio, cable and network broadcasts and websites, and digital outlets about President Trump or his administration, Jan. 21-April 30, 2017 (Monday-Friday).

“Covering President Trump in a Polarized Media Environment”



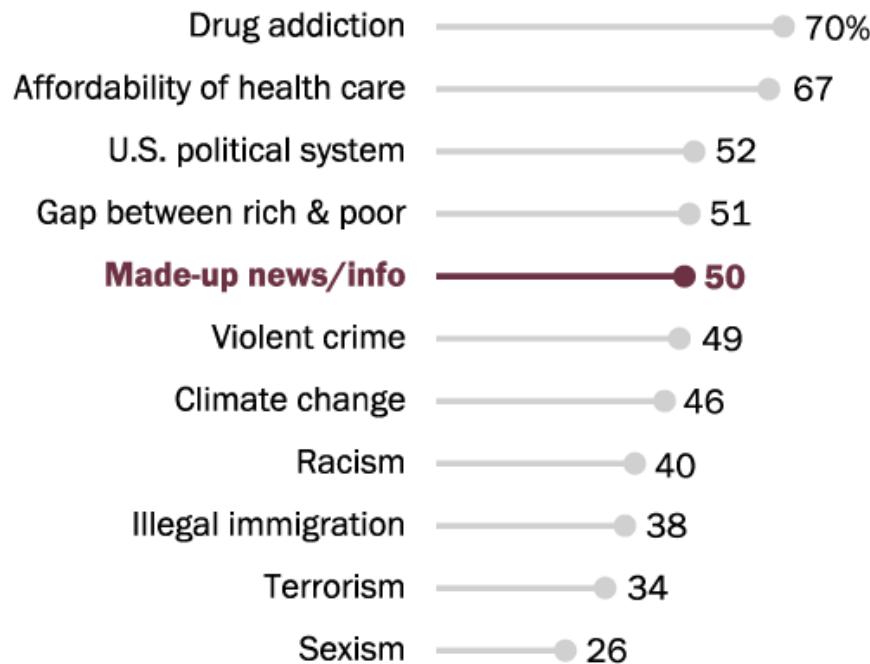
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## **MISINFORMATION AND MADE-UP NEWS**

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# Americans see made-up news as a bigger problem than other key issues

*% of U.S. adults who say \_\_ is a **very big problem** in the country today*



Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19-March 4, 2019.

“Many Americans Say Made-Up News is a Critical Problem That Needs to be Fixed”

# Americans see made up news as detrimental to the country's democratic system

*% of U.S. adults who say made-up news and information has a **big impact** on ...*

**68%** Americans' confidence in government

**54%** Americans' confidence in each other

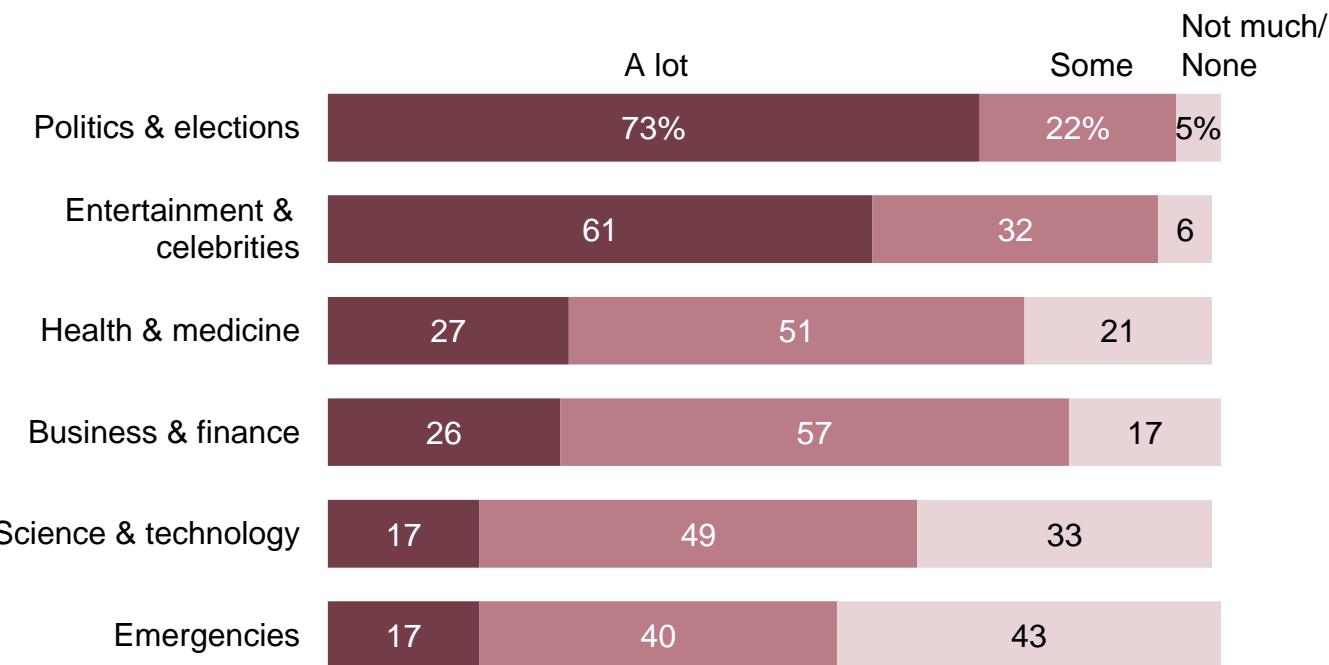
**51%** Political leaders' ability to get work done

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19-March 4, 2019.

"Many Americans Say Made-Up News is a Critical Problem That Needs to be Fixed"

# Roughly three-quarters say a lot of made-up news is created about politics and elections

*% of U.S. adults who think \_\_\_\_ of made-up news and information is created about each topic*



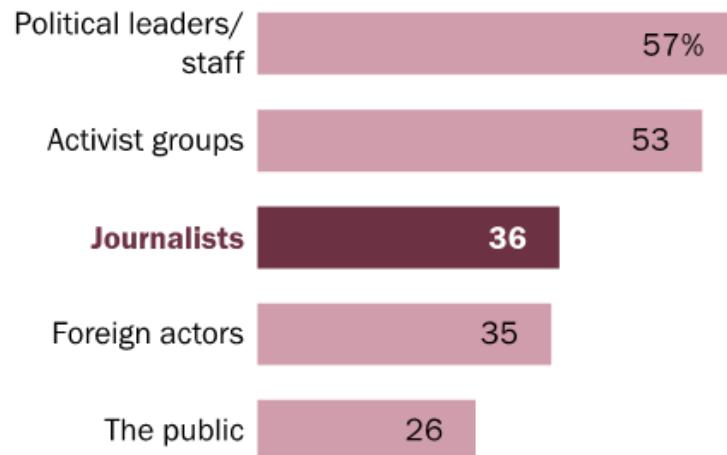
Note: Those who did not answer not shown.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19-March 4, 2019.

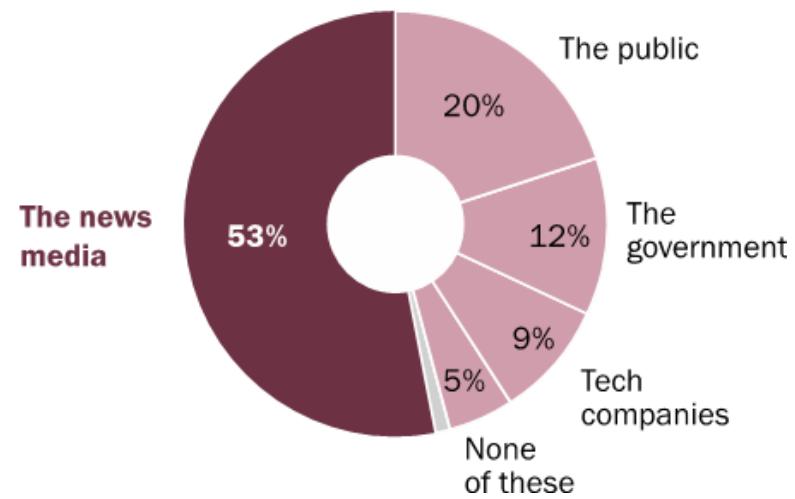
“Many Americans Say Made-Up News is a Critical Problem That Needs to be Fixed”

# Political actors blamed for creating made-up news and information, but Americans say the news media are most responsible for fixing it

*% of U.S. adults who say \_\_\_\_ create a lot of made-up news and information*



*% of U.S. adults who say \_\_\_\_ have the most responsibility in reducing the amount of made-up news and information*

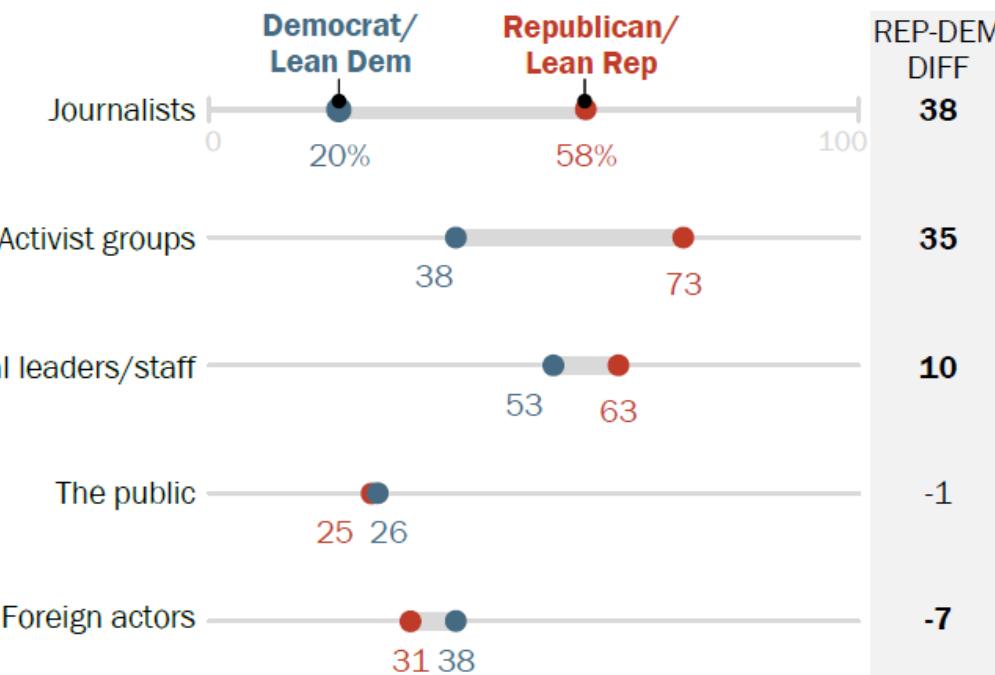


Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19-March 4, 2019.

“Many Americans Say Made-Up News is a Critical Problem That Needs to be Fixed”

# Republicans about three times as likely as Democrats to blame journalists for creating made-up news and information

*% of U.S. adults who say \_\_\_\_ create **a lot** of made-up news and information*



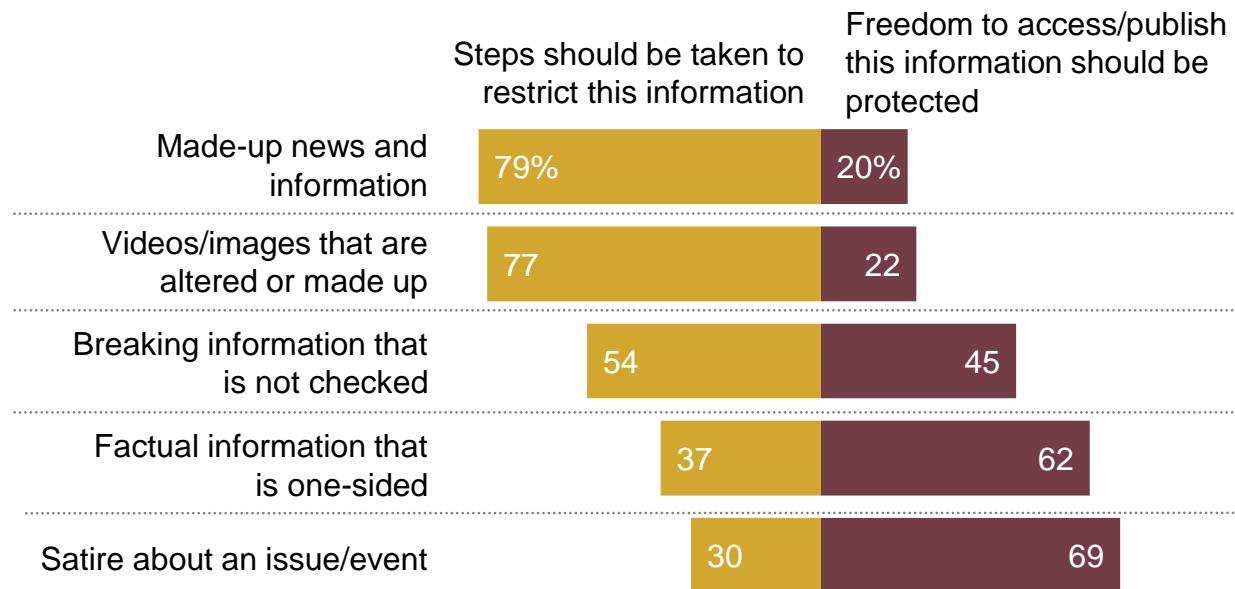
Note: Statistically significant differences are in **bold**.

Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19-March 4, 2019.

“Many Americans Say Made-Up News Is a Critical Problem That Needs To Be Fixed”

# Most Americans support restricting made-up news and videos

*% of U.S. adults who say ...*



Source: Survey conducted Feb. 19–March 4, 2019.

“Many Americans Say Made-Up News Is a Critical Problem That Needs To Be Fixed”

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# WHERE AMERICANS GET AND TRUST SCIENCE NEWS

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# Most Americans rely on general news outlets for science news, but a minority say they get the facts right about science

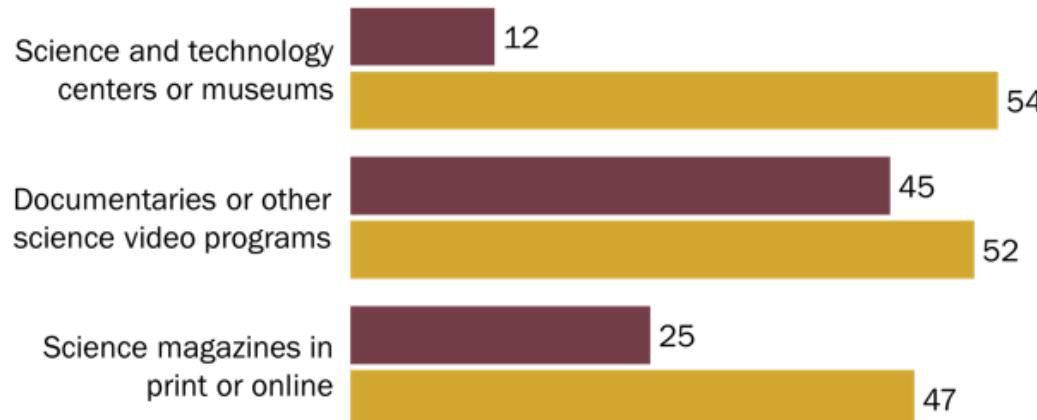
*% of U.S. adults who say ...*

- They regularly get their science news from each source type
- Each source type gets science facts right most of the time

## GENERAL NEWS SOURCES



## SPECIALTY SOURCES

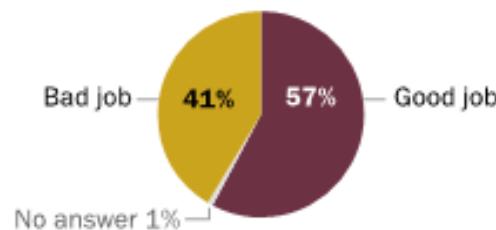


Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults May 30-June 12, 2017.

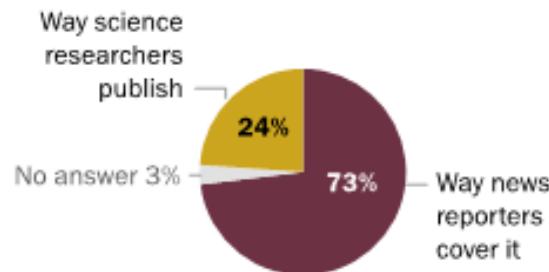
# Americans hold mixed evaluations of how the news media cover science and see problems in coverage stemming from a range of players, including the public itself

*% of U.S. adults who say the following*

**The news media do a \_\_ covering science**

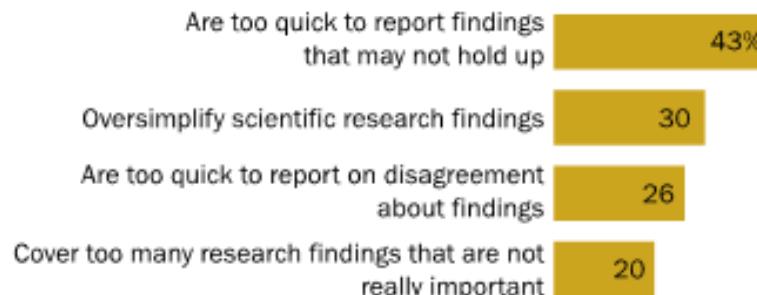


**The bigger problem with news about scientific research findings is the ...**

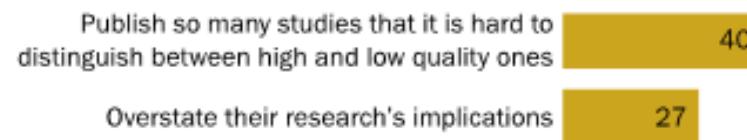


*% of U.S. adults who say each of the following is a big problem when it comes to news about scientific findings*

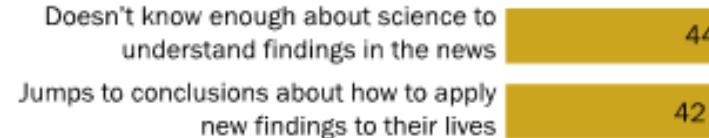
**The news media ...**



**Science researchers ...**



**The public ...**



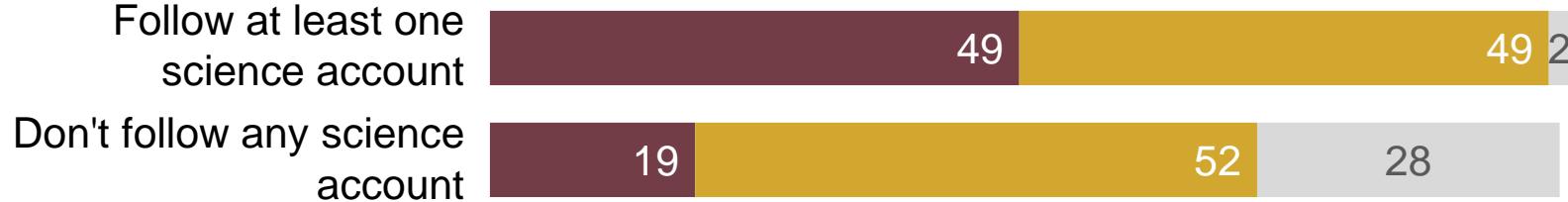
Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults May 30-June 12, 2017.

# Only about a quarter of social media users trust these platforms as a source of science news

*Social media users who say they \_\_\_ the posts they see about science*



*Among those who \_\_\_ on social media*



Pew Research Center survey of U.S. adults May 30-June 12, 2017.



# Thank you!

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