

U.S. Near Bottom in Public Trust of News Media

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According to the most extensive study ever done of the public's usages of, and trust in, the newsmedia in their country — a study that (in late January early February) scientifically sampled thousands of people in each one of 36 different industrialized countries — the United States scored #28, which was in the bottom 22% of all 36 nations, regarding the public's trust of the newsmedia.

However, the average American had a 53% level of trust in the news-sources he or she is relying on. The country with the highest level of trust in the newsmedia generally was Finland, where 61% of the population trust the nation's news media. Two countries were tied for the last place in trusting the media among the 36 nations surveyed, both scoring a 23% level of trust: Greece, and Korea. All of the countries that scored below the U.S. (in order increasingly less-trusting than America, down to the very bottom) were: Czech Republic, Hungary, Taiwan, France, Malaysia, Slovakia, and then, Greece and Korea tied at the bottom.

Those figures appear on page 21 of the 136-page study, [“Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2017”](#).

The surveys also asked respondents to rate themselves between far-left and far-right. The degree of political polarization in the United States, is shown on page 38, and turns out to be, by far — actually enormously — the highest polarization of all 36 countries. Whereas, in the other 35 countries, the residents reasonably constitute a nation where there is widespread political agreement (a coherent nation), the residents in the U.S. are more like a nation in ideological civil war. (Perhaps Ukraine, which wasn't surveyed, is even worse, and maybe that's why [it split apart right after the 2014 U.S. coup there.](#))

On page 103 of the Reuters Institute's report, is provided the details of the U.S. findings. This page shows that Americans whose main source of news is NPR are the farthest-left of all audiences, and that Americans whose main source of news is Fox News online (not the TV channel) are the farthest-right of all audiences. Among all 32 “News Brands” constituting the “Top Brands,” the only one that is anywhere near the political center (in its audience) is Yahoo! News. Only one among the 32 brands has an audience that rates itself to the right of center: Fox News online. Even the audience of the Fox News TV brand, rate themselves to the left of center. Apparently, more Americans are embarrassed at being categorized as rightists, than are embarrassed at being categorized as leftists. Maybe this has something to do with the phrase in America ‘political correctness’ being commonly associated with ‘liberal’ positions, and also helps explain ‘conservatives’ widespread contempt for ‘political correctness’. (Maybe Fox News on TV seems to them to be sufficiently ‘politically correct’ for them to be able to admit that it's their main news-source.)

The largest 26 news-audiences in the United States, as indicated in the Reuters study (p.103), are (from the largest on down) Local TV news, Fox News (TV), Regional or local newspaper, CNN, Huffington Post (online-only), NBC/MSNBC (miscategorized as being one not two), ABC, CBS, CNN online, Fox News online, New York Times online, local radio news, local TV news online, BuzzFeed News (online-only), BBC, Washington Post online, NPR, local newspaper online, NBC/MSNBC online, MSN (online-only), ABC online, BBC online, *New York Times* print, PBS, *USA Today*, and *Washington Post*.

[Alexa](#) shows the online right-wing news Breitbart as being #58 in the U.S., and [Huffington Post as being #66](#), but Breitbart scored in the Reuters survey as being #33 of all news sources, having a far smaller audience than did the #2-ranked online news site Huffington Post (which scored so high at Reuters). Perhaps that's because Breitbart is proudly 'politically incorrect' and maybe a result of this is that many of its users don't want to admit that it's their main news-source.

The farthest 'left' news-source amongst the 32 top media, NPR, is actually solidly neoconservative; and was gung-ho, in 2002 and up to the invasion in 2003, for Republican George W. Bush's push, to invade Iraq. National Public Radio invited many proponents (and almost no opponents) of invasion — such as [the Brookings Institution's Ken Pollack and Michael O'Hanlon](#), and the Bush Administration's own Eliot Cohen — onto their shows, arguing that it would be essential to invade Iraq. Furthermore, the Democratic Presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton, was among the most neoconservative politicians in America, but was clearly preferred by NPR against Donald Trump, who was panned by all neocons, [even by Republican ones](#), and who emerged as a neocon only after becoming President (though still not yet as much of a neocon as Hillary Clinton always was). And, for example, Eliot Cohen has been an invited 'expert' guest on NPR several times recently (such as [this](#) and [this](#) and [this](#) and [this](#) and [this](#)) talking against Trump, and against Trump's least-neocon Cabinet-member Rex Tillerson, using extremely disparaging terms against them, such as "probably the worst ever" and "reprehensible." When Democrats hear this 'liberal' news-outlet (NPR) lend its air waves to moralizing super-neocons attacking a Republican President for not being sufficiently neocon, then whatever is left of the left, in mainstream U.S. 'news'media, has become too small even to discern at all, other than perhaps a few liberal bumper-stickers, to place onto listeners' cars. But if this is liberal fascism, then is the conservative variety necessarily worse? So, America now is consumed now with one ethnic group attacking another — that's what this '[democracy](#)' is consumed by: distractions, and inter-ethnic conflicts. As if the voracious grabbing by the nation's super-rich and resultant soaring inequality of power in this country, isn't a problem that the poorer 99.99% of Americans could unite together against. But, after all, in America, 'liberal' and 'left' are now nothing more than bumper-stickers. They can always be heard at NPR. And, at some other 'news'media? Not so much. (And, apparently, not *at all* at Fox News online.)

*Investigative historian **Eric Zuesse** is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).*

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