



AMERICA'S NEWS DIGEST

THE PATRIOT POST®

PRO DEO ET LIBERTATE ~ 1776

Conservatives Self-Cancel

Douglas Andrews

July 24, 2020

If you've bitten your tongue recently, you're not alone. Self-censorship is on the rise, and a comprehensive [survey](#) released by the libertarian Cato Institute shows us the extent of it.

If you thought things couldn't get any nastier than they were in the early days of Donald Trump's presidency — back when feminists were wearing weird pink hats and shouting obscenities, when washed-up songbirds were dreaming of blowing up the White House, and when Hillary Clinton was still blaming Macedonian content farms for her electoral ineptitude — you were wrong. The Cato survey says 62% of us now hold political views that we're afraid to share. In 2017, that number was four points lower.

“These fears cross partisan lines,” says Cato. “Majorities of Democrats (52%), independents (59%) and Republicans (77%) all agree they have political opinions they are afraid to share.” But look at those numbers: Barely half of Democrats are uneasy about expressing themselves, but more than three-fourths of Republicans are. If there were ever any doubt about which views were more generally acceptable, and which group was more tolerant, these numbers should put it to rest.

Even more disturbing, it seems that the further to the left one's views are, the more comfortable that person is about expressing them. As Cato continues, “Strong liberals stand out, however, as the only political group who feel they can express themselves. Nearly 6 in 10 (58%) of staunch liberals feel they can say what they believe.” Compare that to the corresponding number for strong conservatives: 23%.

Perhaps the survey's most disturbing finding, though, is the intolerance many of us have for campaign donations to the other political party. About one-fifth of Americans (22%) would support firing a business executive who donates to Joe Biden's campaign, while 31% would support firing an exec who donates to Donald Trump's reelection campaign. Even more telling: A full 50% of strong liberals would support firing a Trump donor.

Remind us again: Which group — liberals or conservatives — is seen as the meaner group, the more intolerant group? As we noted a couple of weeks ago, even those on the Left [are getting nervous](#) about being eaten by their own.

Clearly, then, many of us are uncomfortable discussing politics in the workplace, but what about talking to pollsters? If ever the conditions were right for self-censorship, it'd be right now. Regarding the 2016 election, there's a commonly held belief that an occasional "shy" Trump voter refused to share his electoral choice upon exiting the polls. If even one in 100 Trump voters is reluctant to do so this November, our exit polling will be skewed. But imagine if that shy share is one in 50, or one in 25.

"Any such reluctance has likely increased in the past four years," asserts Power Line's Paul Mirengoff, "given the 'cancel culture' and other efforts to demonize and ostracize conservatives. ... Between members of the public who don't want to talk to pollsters, or whom pollsters can't reach, and members who may be reluctant to talk honestly to them, we may need to take polls of the presidential race, and maybe other races too, with more grains of salt than usual."

If a sizable share of the 63 million Americans who voted for Donald Trump in 2016 have indeed been bullied into self-censorship, it'd serve leftists right to be brimming with confidence come Election Day only to have their victory parties ruined by a panel of slack-jawed talkingheads on Election Night.