

# **Making Sense of U.S. Covid Responses**

**Theda Skocpol**

**Lecture 14. October 26, 2020**

## TODAY'S LECTURE

- **Dynamics of the U.S. Covid-19 pandemic**
- **Major economic and social impacts**
- **Mitigating effects of preexisting social policies and new relief legislation**
- **The US experience in cross-national perspective**
- **Political and sociocultural divides**
- **What next? The 2020 election and beyond**

**BREAKING**

## U.S. Breaks Record for New Virus Cases That Was Set in July

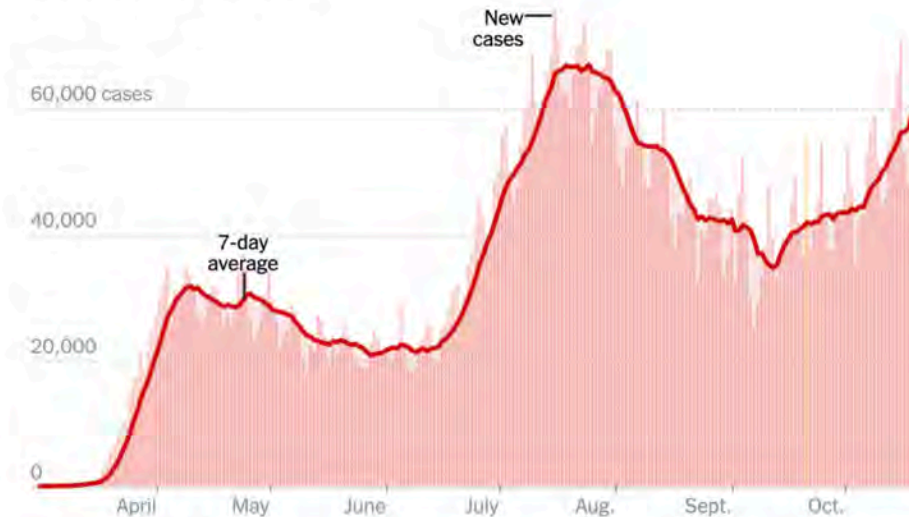
- The U.S. is in the midst of one of the most severe surges of the pandemic, reporting a higher number of cases than any day since July.
- Since the start of October, the rise has been steady and inexorable, with no plateau in sight. Experts warn of a further surge as cold weather sets in.

**LIVE**

### U.S. Virus Hospitalizations Up 40 Percent in the Last Month

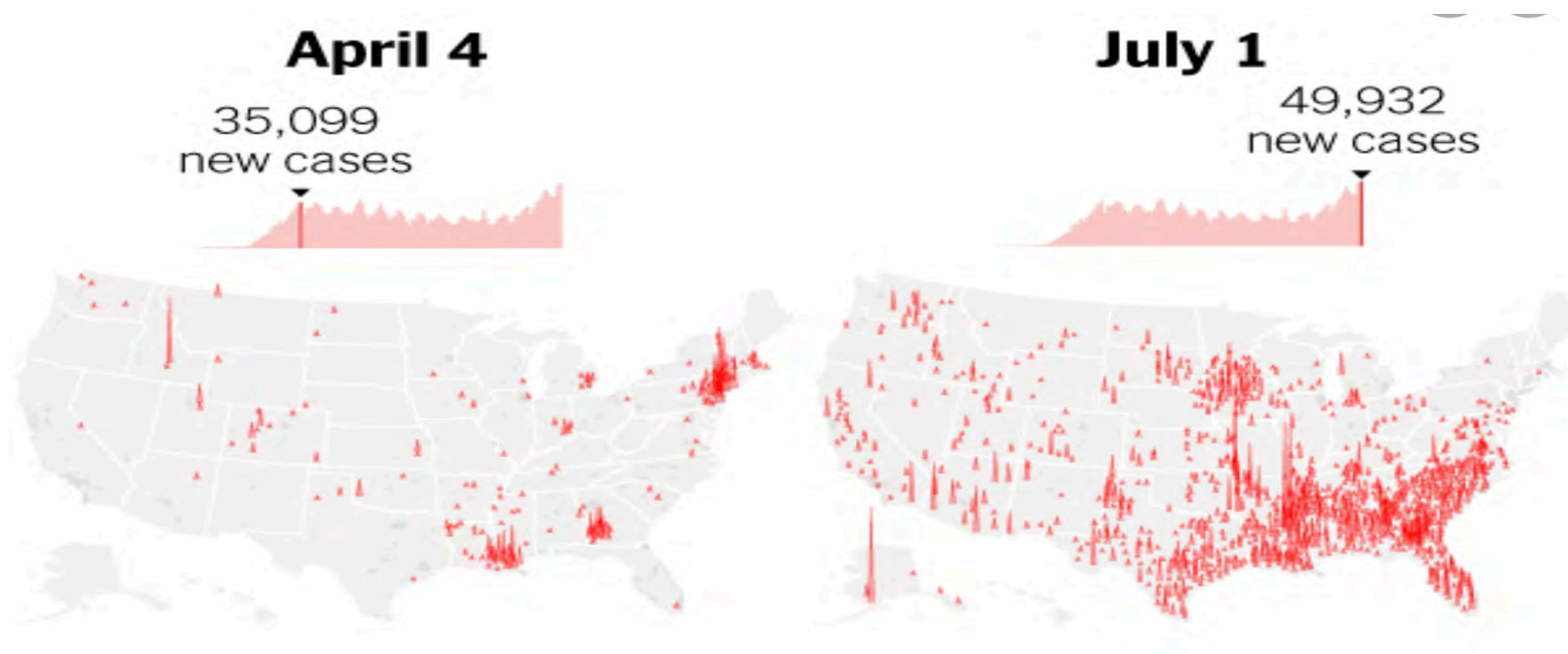
After pausing for safety concerns, AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson have resumed their U.S. vaccine trials. Here's the latest.

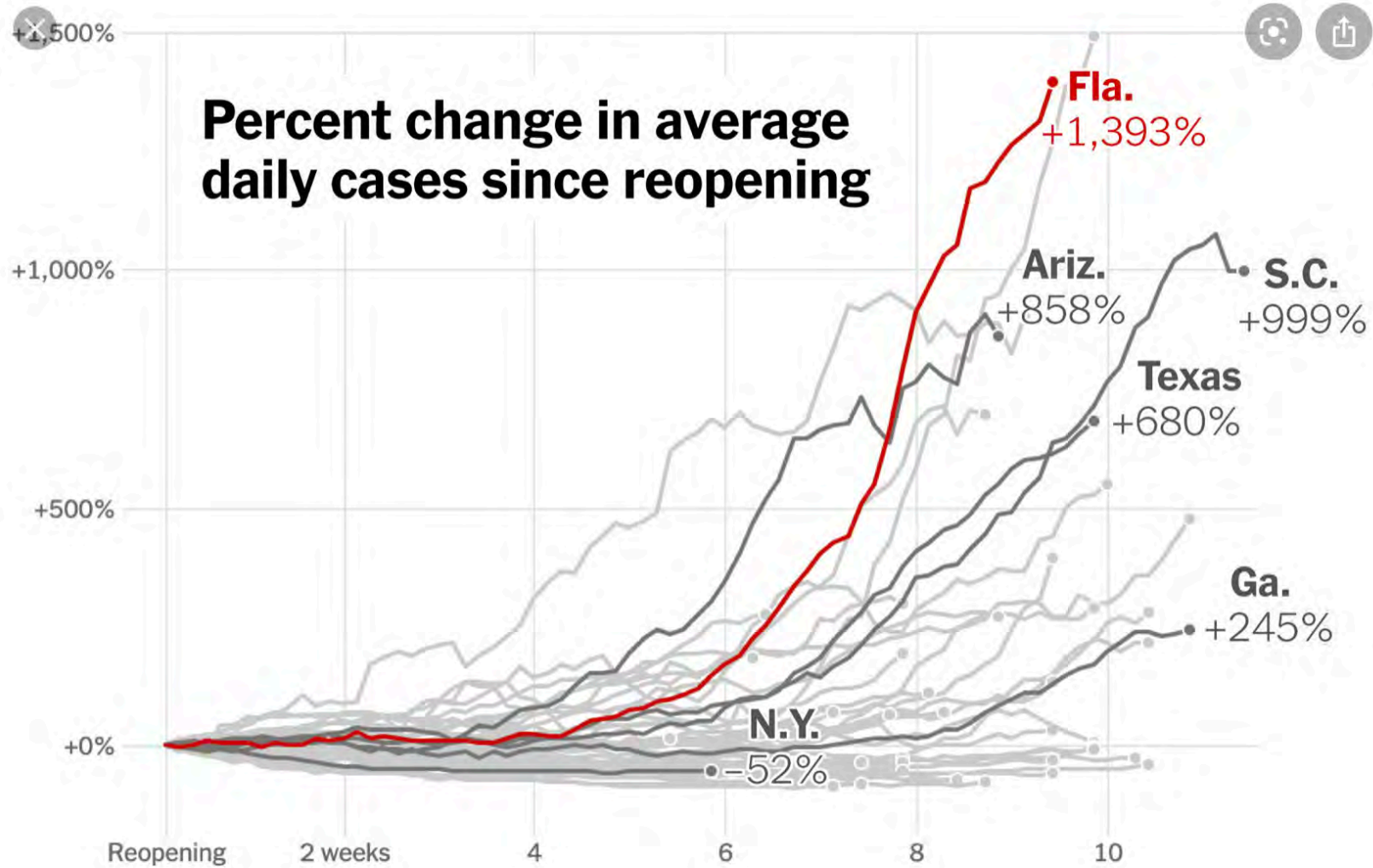
**New Reported Cases in the U.S.**



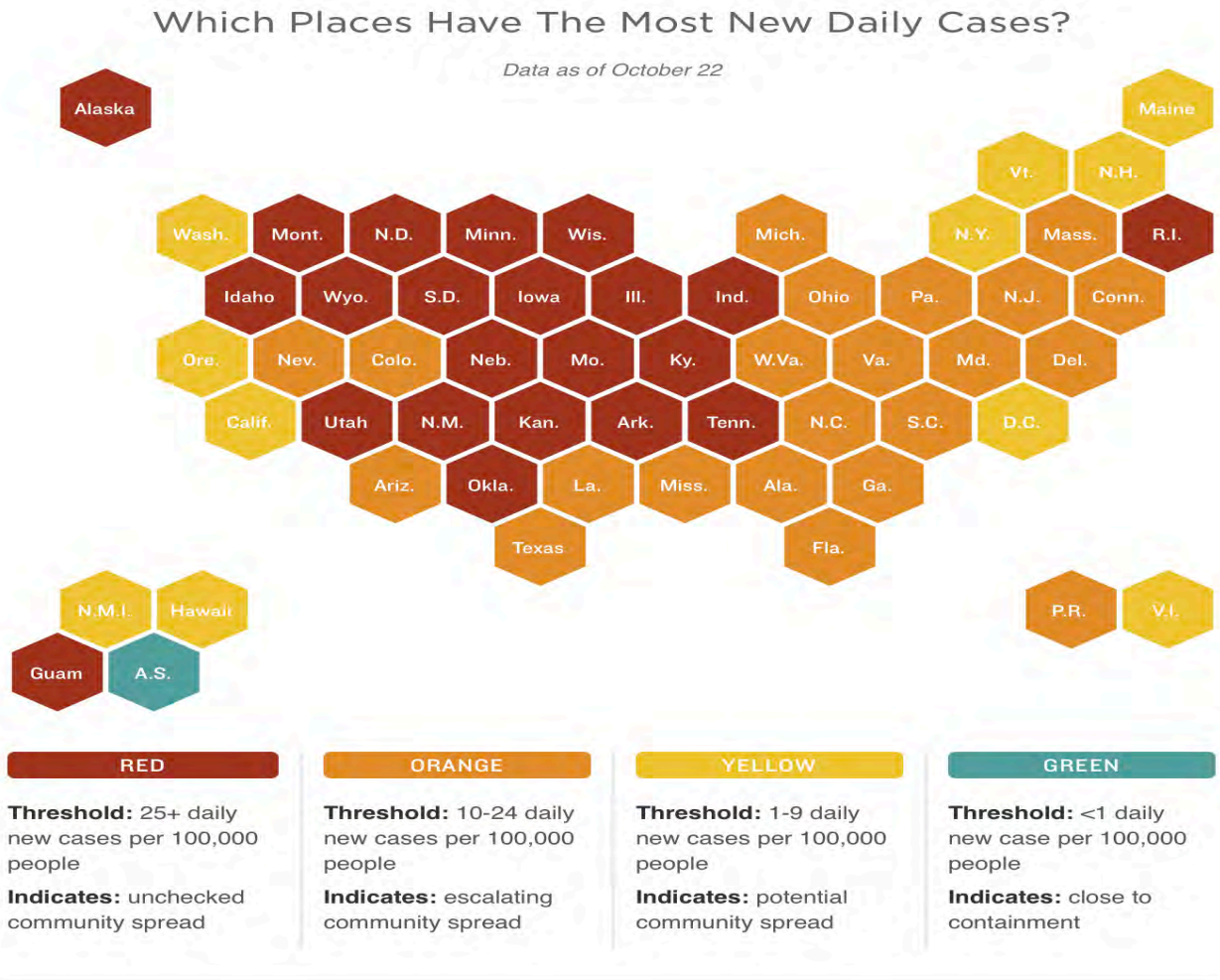
**85,000+ cases  
October 23**

The first U.S. peak was concentrated in a few cities, states – and was especially acute in New York city and surrounding areas. By summer, following hasty reopenings of public activities in many states, the pandemic spread most intensely into the South and Southwest.





The current autumn climb toward a third peak is very widespread across the United States, but especially intense in the upper Midwest and Plains states.

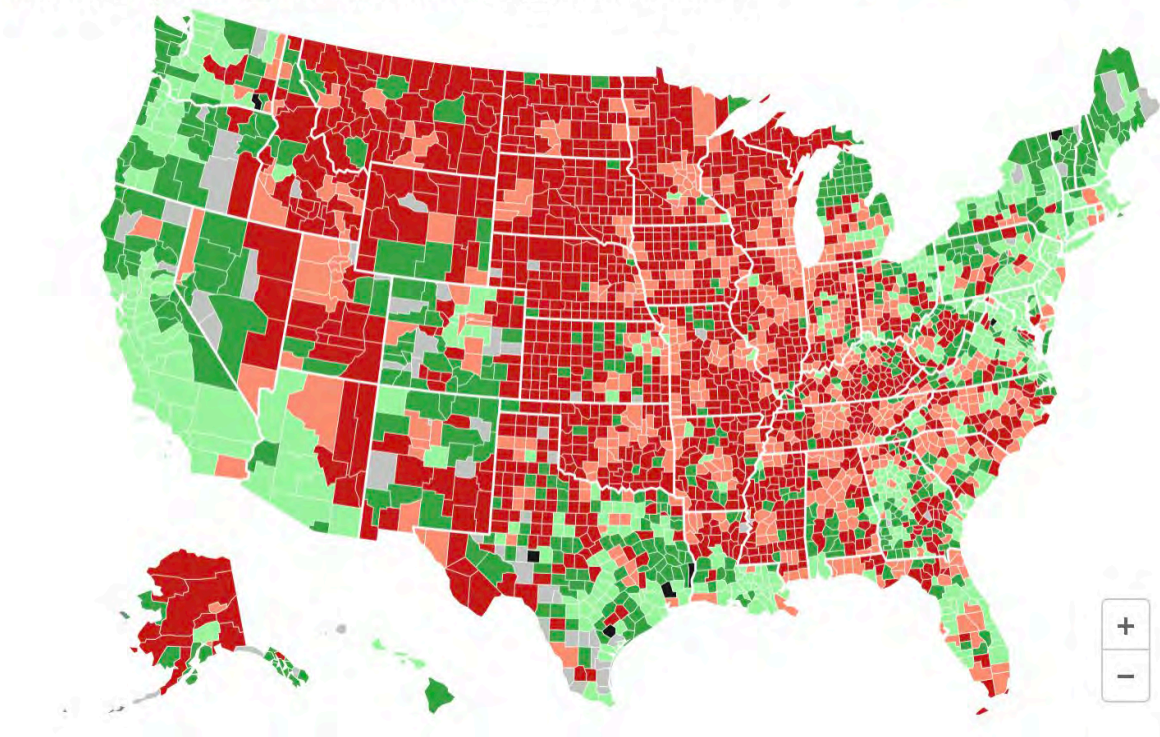




Red-zone counties have a one-week infection rate of 100 or more new cases per 100,000 population.

**New Cases over a Seven-Day Period**

■ Non-metro Red Zone ■ Metro Red Zone ■ Non-metro, New Infection Rate Below 100 per 100k ■ Metro, New Infection Rate Below 100 per 100k ■ Non-metro, No New Cases ■ Metro, No New Cases



Map: Daily Yonder #usafacts • Source: [USA Facts](#) • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

## “Rural Infections Break Record for Fourth Week”

Tim Murphy and Tim Marema, *Daily Yonder*, October 19, 2020.

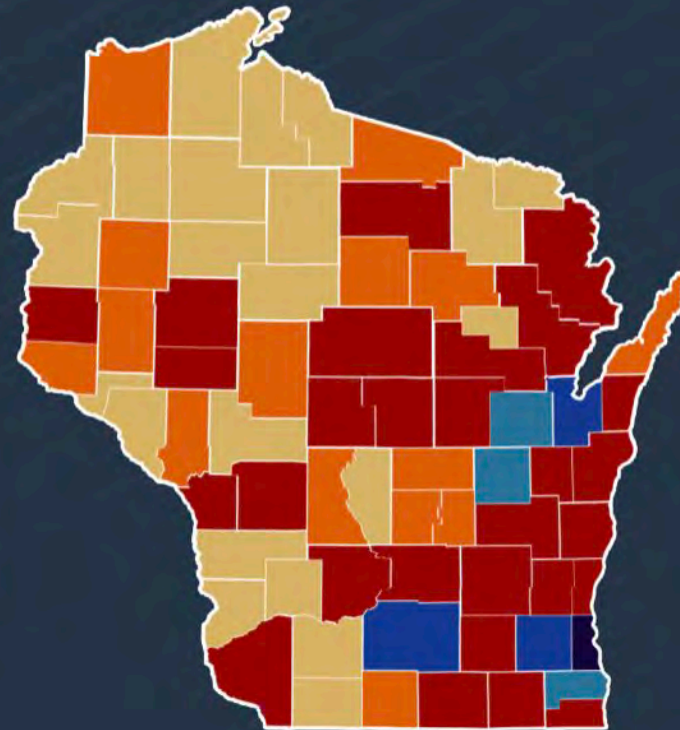
# WISCONSIN COVID-19 CASES

OCTOBER 23

**TOTAL  
CASES**  
**191,490**

**NEW  
CASES**  
**4,861**

**TOTAL  
DEATHS**  
**1,763**



Channel 3000, Madison, WI



## Wisconsin just saw the five deadliest days of the coronavirus pandemic so far

Sophie Carson Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Published 3:37 p.m. CT Oct. 23, 2020 | Updated 6:40 p.m. CT Oct. 23, 2020



U.S. Army specialist Riley Koehler hands a person a swab to collect a nasal sample at a federal COVID-19 surge testing site at ThedaCare Physicians-Neenah on Wednesday. Dan Powers/USA TODAY NETWORK-Wisconsin

Wisconsin's COVID-19 crisis continued to escalate Friday as the state reported 42 additional deaths due to the virus, and a state appeals court temporarily [blocked Gov. Tony Evers' limits on public gatherings and bar and restaurant capacity](#).

The last five days have been the deadliest of the pandemic in Wisconsin, with 145 deaths from the coronavirus between Monday and Friday.

The death toll now stands at 1,745. The seven-day average for daily deaths is 24; one month ago, it was four.

The quickly rising death toll is a direct result of the rise in cases weeks earlier, state health officials have said.

Because cases have continued to surge since then, hospitalization and death numbers will only get worse in coming weeks.

## Evening Briefing: Wisconsin reports more than 1,000 coronavirus patients hospitalized as state opens overflow facility at State Fair

### Evening Briefing

YOUR EVENING NEWS ROUND-UP

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14

Access the e-Edition: Exclusive, subscriber-only access to a digital replica of the newspaper.



## Wisconsin reports more than 1,000 coronavirus patients hospitalized...

Case counts and hospitalizations are more than double and triple what they were a month ago.

## MAJOR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

- **Low-income workers in hospitality and personal service industries hit especially hard**
- **Both 20%/80% and 1%/99% income and wealth gaps have grown**
- **Places and industries hit have proportionally more Blacks and Latinos**
- **Families with children suffering major deprivations (as well as disruptions of schooling)**
- **Generational links modified, at least temporarily**
- **Worrisome mental and behavioral health effects**

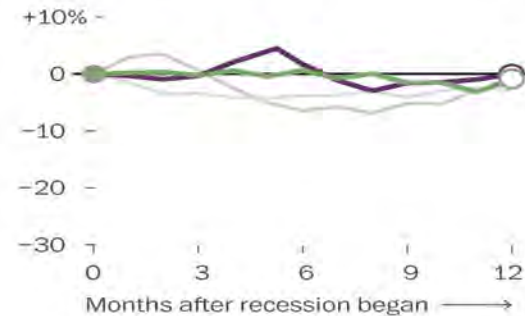
Forced shutdown of most of the U.S. economy in March-April led to huge job losses – especially for the lowest-earning workers and those providing services in high-income areas.

High earners were more likely to keep getting paid, but stopped patronizing many service businesses.

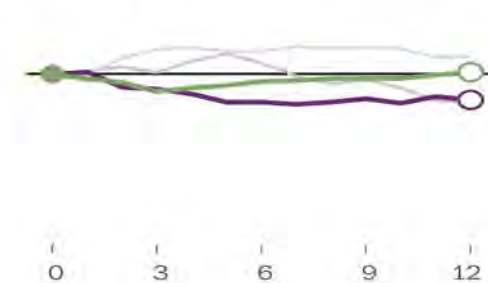
### The coronavirus crisis is different

Job growth (or loss) since each recession began, based on weekly earnings

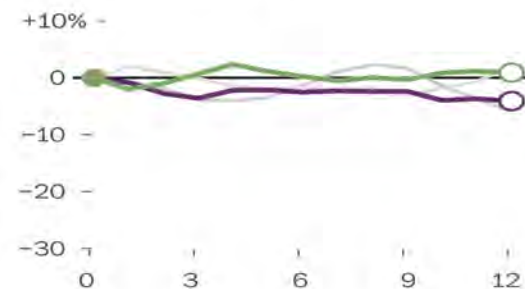
1990 recession



2001 recession



2008 recession



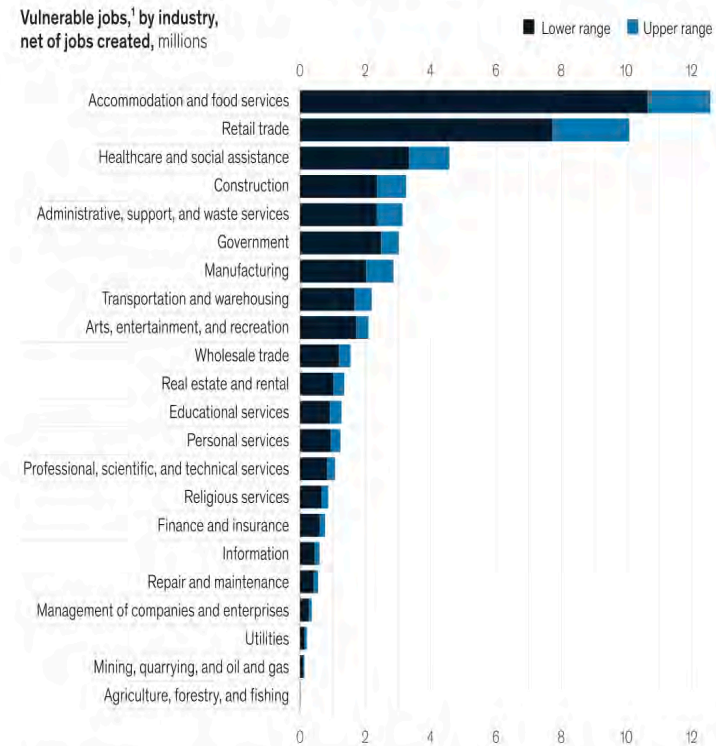
Coronavirus crisis



Notes: Based on a three-month average to show the trend in volatile data.

Source: Labor Department via IPUMS, with methodology assistance from Ernie Tedeschi of Evercore ISI  
THE WASHINGTON POST

Forty-four million to 57 million jobs are vulnerable in the short term, offset slightly by two to three million new jobs.

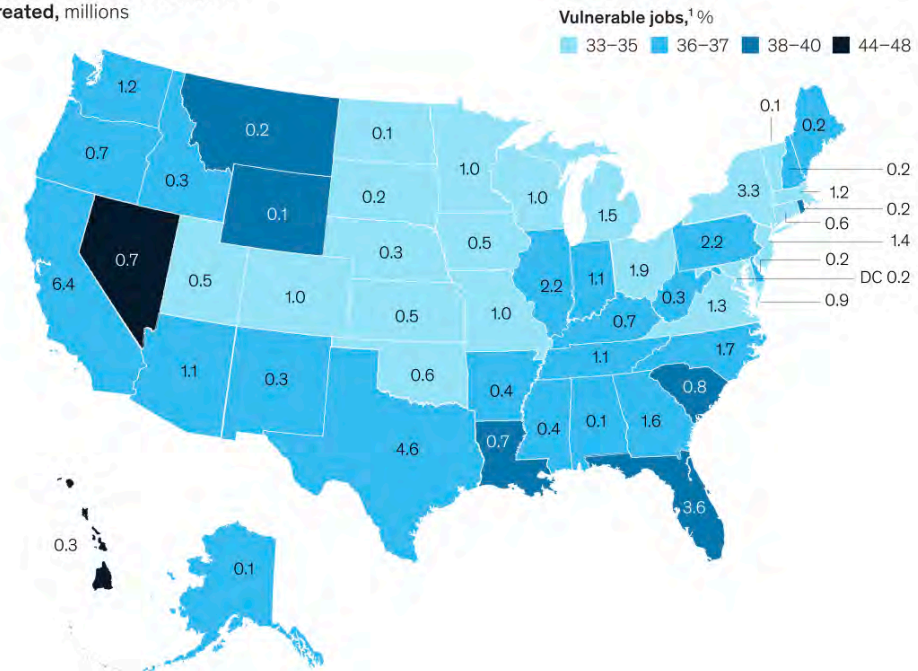


<sup>1</sup>"Vulnerable" jobs are subject to furloughs, layoffs, or being rendered unproductive (for example, workers kept on payroll but not working) during periods of high physical distancing.  
Source: LaborCube; McKinsey Global Institute analysis

Exhibit 4

The impact could be biggest in states with large tourism industries and more muted in agricultural and knowledge-economy states.

Vulnerable jobs,<sup>1</sup> net of jobs created, millions



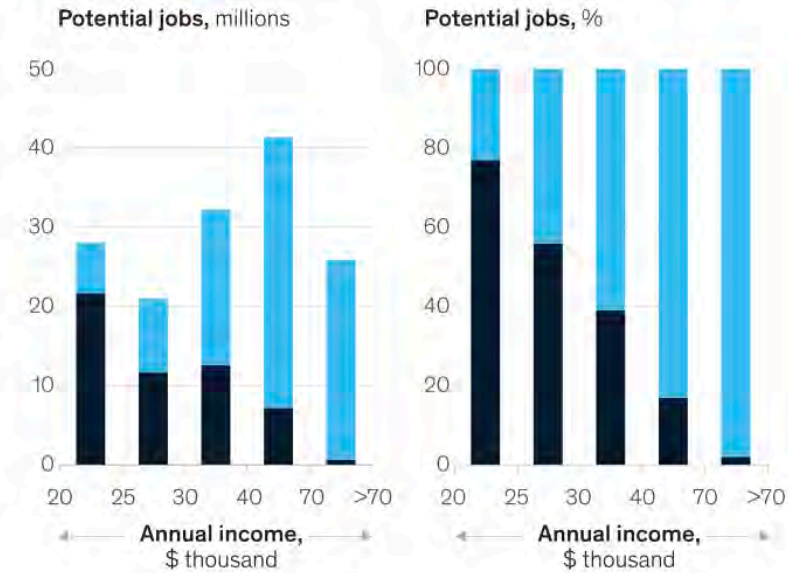
<sup>1</sup>"Vulnerable" jobs are subject to furloughs, layoffs, or being rendered unproductive (for example, workers kept on payroll but not working) during periods of high physical distancing.  
Source: LaborCube; McKinsey Global Institute analysis



## Eighty-six percent of vulnerable jobs paid less than \$40,000 a year.

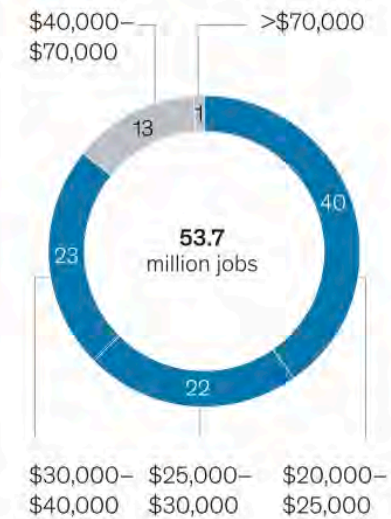
Level of job vulnerability,<sup>1</sup> by income band

■ Vulnerable jobs ■ Stable jobs



Vulnerable jobs by annual income band<sup>1</sup> %

■ ≤ \$40,000 ■ > \$40,000



Note: Data may not sum to 100, because of rounding.

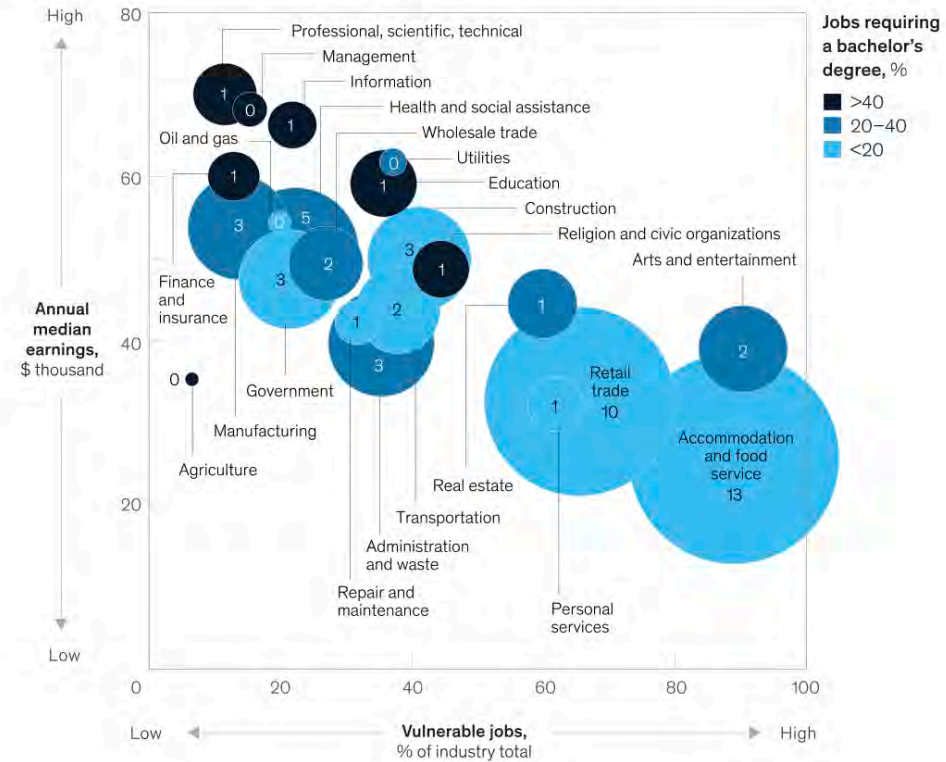
<sup>1</sup>"Vulnerable" jobs are subject to furloughs, layoffs, or being rendered unproductive (for example, workers kept on payroll but not working) during periods of high physical distancing.

Source: LaborCube; McKinsey Global Institute analysis



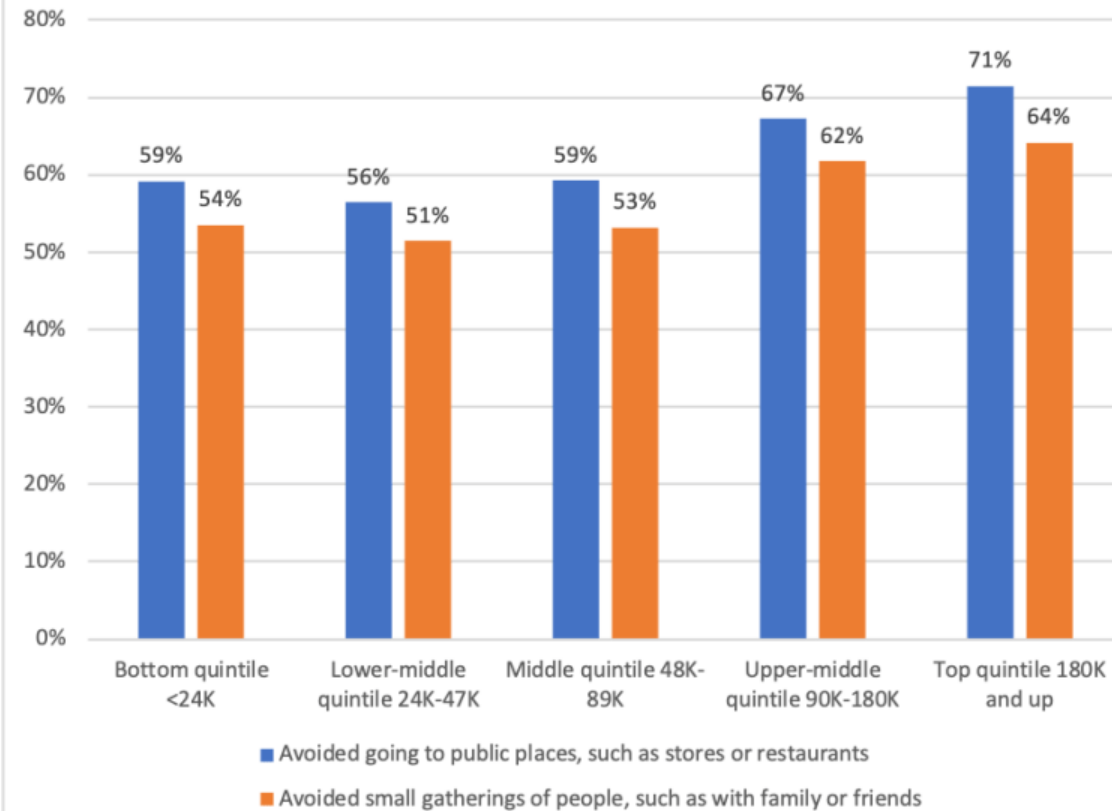
**Industries with the lowest wages and the lowest educational attainment are being hit hardest.**

**Vulnerable jobs,<sup>1</sup> by industry, earnings, and education, millions of people (circle size)**



<sup>1</sup>"Vulnerable" jobs are subject to furloughs, layoffs, or being rendered unproductive (eg, kept on payroll but not working) during periods of high physical distancing.

### Affluent social distancing more

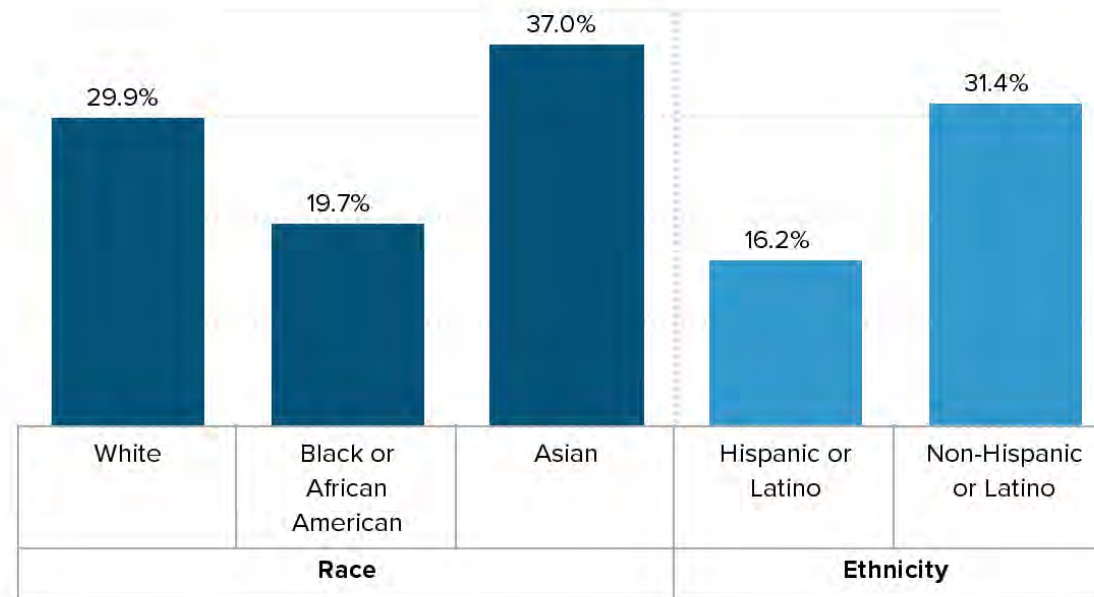


Source: Sample of 8572 randomly selected adults from the Gallup Panel, interviewed over the phone from March 16 to March 22, 2020.

BROOKINGS

## Less than one in five black workers and roughly one in six Hispanic workers are able to work from home

Share of workers who can telework, by race and ethnicity, 2017–2018



**Source:** U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, [Job Flexibilities and Work Schedules — 2017–2018 Data from the American Time Use Survey](#)

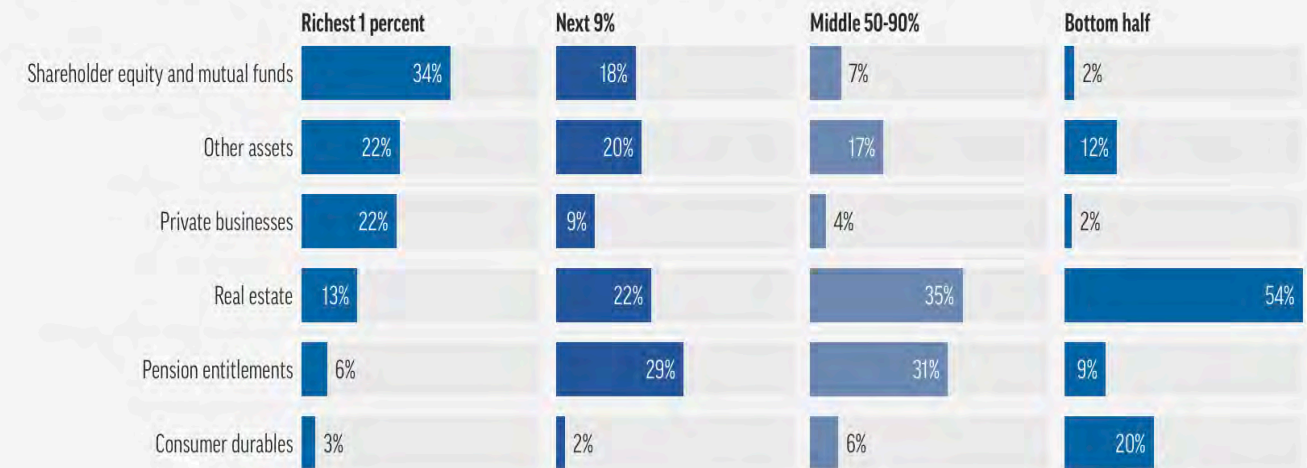


WASHINGTON (AP) — Americans' household wealth rebounded last quarter to a record high as the stock market quickly recovered from a pandemic-induced plunge in March. Yet the gains flowed mainly to the most affluent households even as tens of millions of people endured job losses and shrunken incomes.

## Top one percent has gotten wealthier – because their investment assets have gained value

### The share of wealth in the US and what the assets are

The richest 1% of Americans own 31% of the nation's wealth. And the richest one-tenth of Americans own more than two-thirds of the nation's wealth, according to Fed data through the end of March. Total wealth in the U.S. is here divided into four groups: The wealthiest 1%; the next 99% to 90%; the middle 50-90%; and the bottom half. The wealthiest benefit disproportionately from stock market gains.



Source: Board Of Governors Of The Federal Reserve System / data as of March 31, 2020

## Business Insider

### US billionaires' wealth grew by \$845 billion during the first six months of the pandemic

Saloni Sardana

🕒 Sep. 17, 2020, 05:39 PM



SHARE



Susan Walsh/AP; Joshua Roberts/Reuters; Axel Schmidt/Getty Images

- The wealth of 643 of US' richest billionaires rose from \$2.95 trillion to \$3.8 trillion between March 18 and September 15, a report by the Institute for Policy Studies and Americans for Tax Fairness said.
- This marks a 29% increase over those six months.
- Tesla founder Elon Musk's wealth increased by 273% in the period to \$92 billion.
- [Visit Business Insider's homepage for more stories.](#)



**FACTTANK**  
NEWS IN THE NUMBERS

[SEE ALL CORONAVIRUS RESEARCH >](#)

OCTOBER 22, 2020



## Fewer mothers and fathers in U.S. are working due to COVID-19 downturn; those at work have cut hours

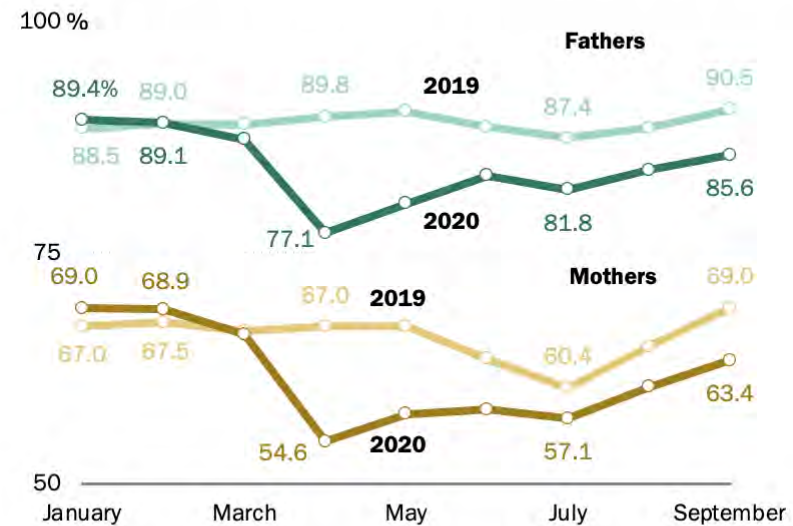
BY RAKESH KOCHHAR



Gerri Andre-Major passes her 2 1/2-week-old son, Maverick, to her husband, Mo Major, as their other children Max, 5, and Marley, 4, eat breakfast on March 26, 2020, in Mount Vernon, New York. Both parents lost their jobs due to the coronavirus pandemic. (John Moore/Getty Images)

## The COVID-19 downturn sharply decreased the shares of mothers and fathers at work in the U.S., and the recovery is incomplete for both

% of U.S. mothers and fathers with children at home who are employed and at work



Note: Estimates refer to women and men ages 16 and older with children younger than 18 at home and who were either the reference person in the survey or their partner, nonseasonally adjusted.

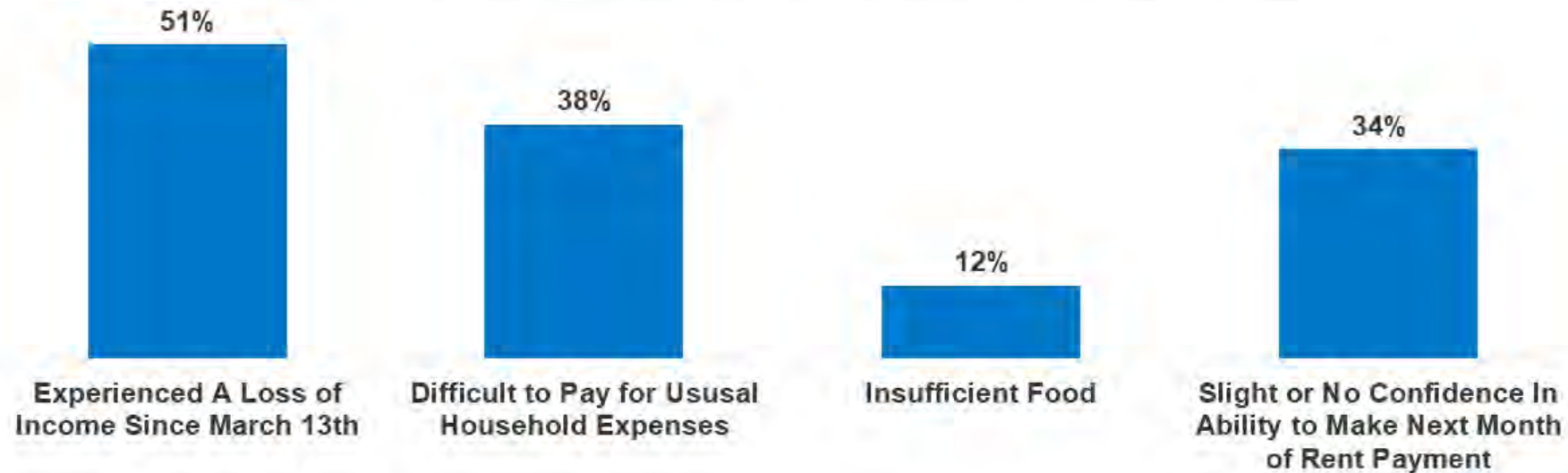
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2019 and 2020 Current Population Survey data.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

Figure 2

## Households with children report high rates of problems meeting basic needs during the pandemic.

Share of Adults in Households with Children Who Reported:



NOTES: Census Bureau Week 13 questionnaire defines "Usual Household Expenses" as food, rent or mortgage, car payments, medical expenses, student loans, and other expenses.

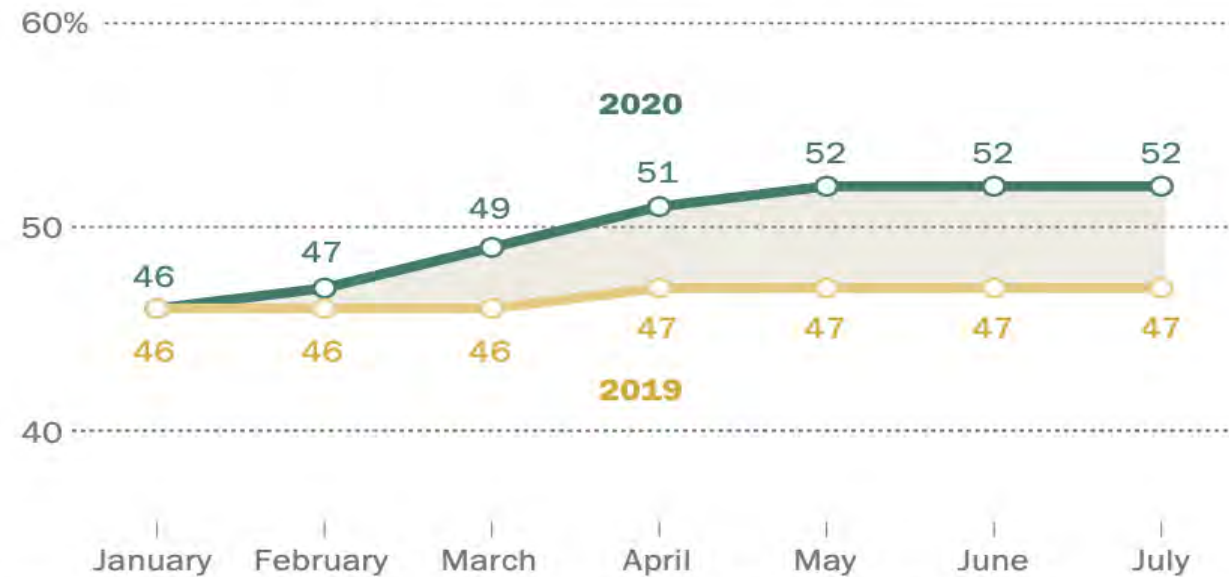
SOURCE: KFF Analysis of Week 13 of the Household Pulse Survey Summary Tables (August 19<sup>th</sup>-August 31<sup>st</sup>)



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## COVID-19 disruptions associated with a large increase in the share of young adults living with parent(s)

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



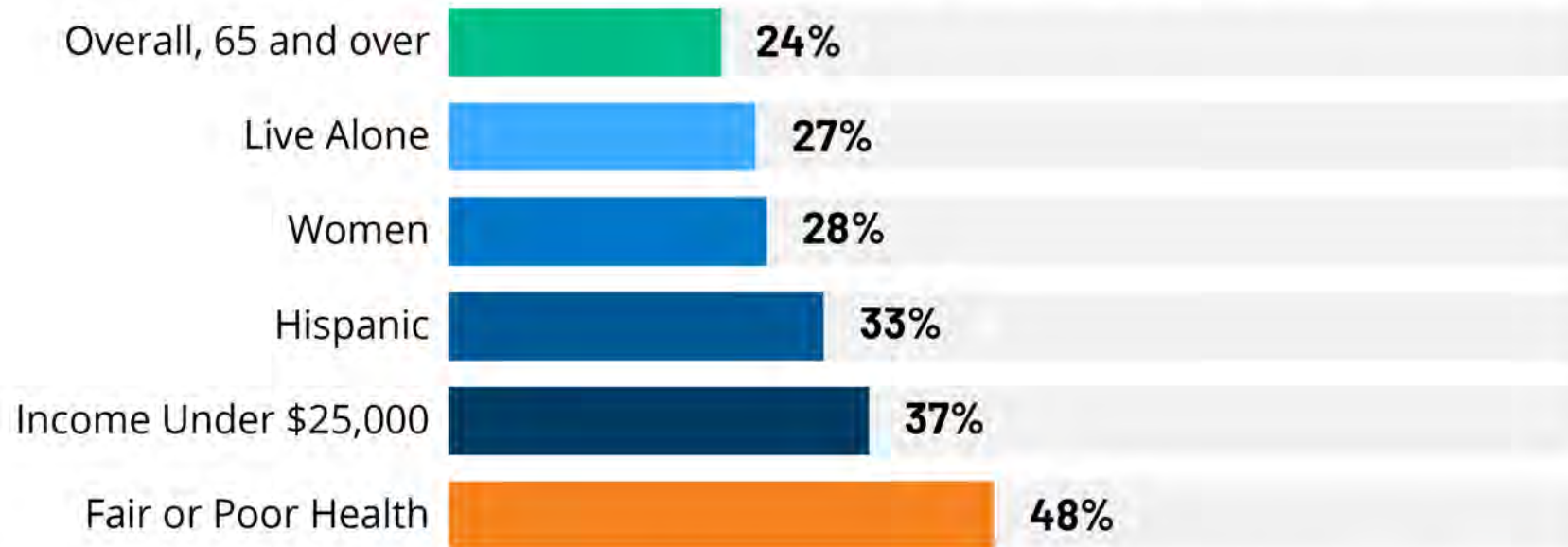
Note: "Living with a parent" refers to those who are residing with at least one parent in the household.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2019 and 2020 Current Population Survey monthly files.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

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## 1 in 4 Older Adults Reported Anxiety or Depression Amid the Coronavirus Pandemic, Higher Rates for Some Groups



NOTE: Analysis is among adults age 65 and older. Self-reported health status. Adults of Hispanic origin may be of any race, but are categorized as Hispanic for this analysis; All other groups are non-Hispanic.

SOURCE: KFF, "One in Four Older Adults Report Anxiety or Depression Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic," October 2020.

**KFF**

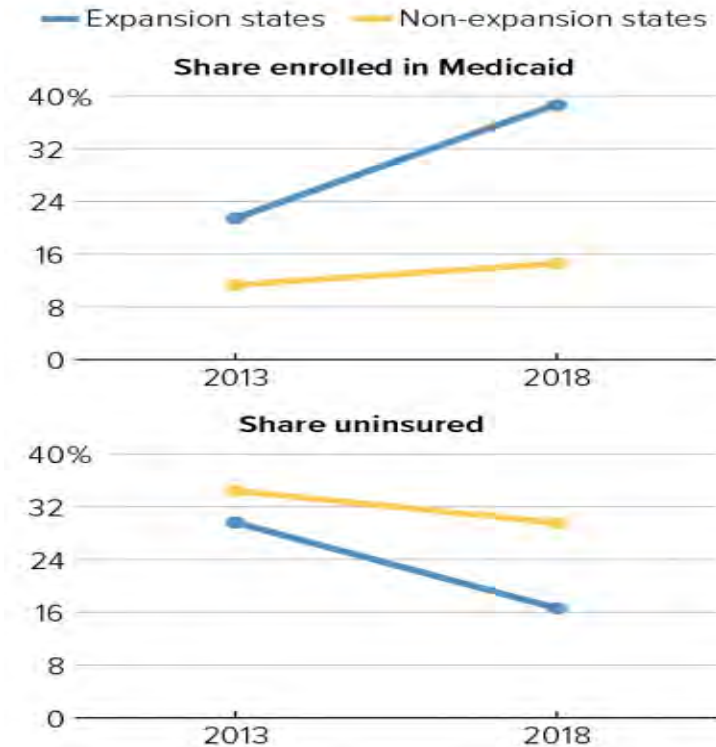
## **Mitigating effects of preexisting social policies and new relief legislation**



### Incomplete/slow help from preexisting programs:

- SNAP/Food Stamps vital, but not available to many undocumented workers.
- EITC helps only annually (thus in 2021).
- Meager assistance for housing, family leave.
- Unemployment benefits **do NOT grow automatically in downturns; are meager and slow to be delivered in many states.**
- Longstanding and ACA-expanded Medicaid a crucial lifeline for many without employer benefits – except for the undocumented and many citizens in non-expansion states.

### Medicaid Expansion Boosts Coverage for Low-Income Essential Workers



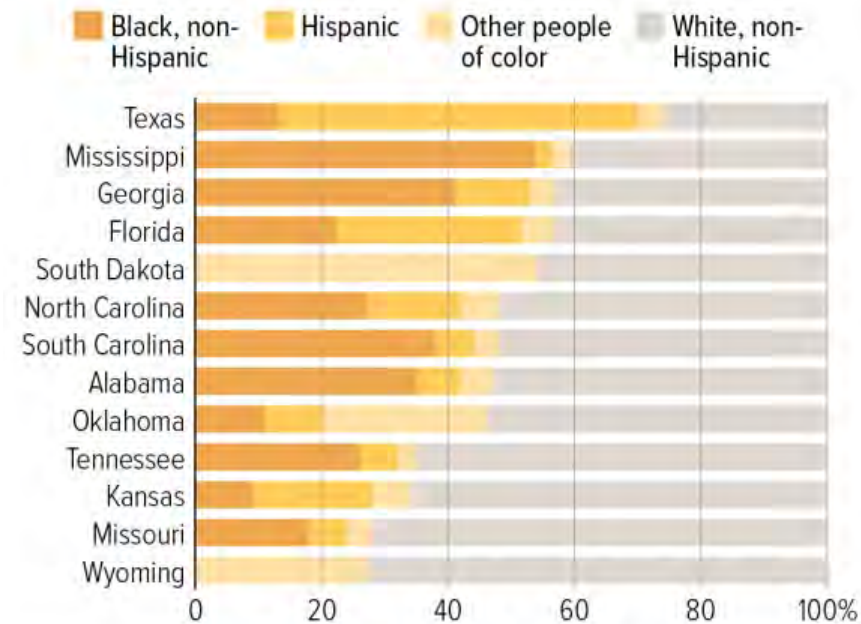
Note: "Low-income essential workers" refers to essential or front-line workers – those likely required to go to work despite stay-at-home orders – with incomes up to 200 percent of poverty. States can expand Medicaid coverage to low-income adults under the Affordable Care Act. Expansion took effect in 2014.

Source: CBPP analysis of Census Bureau data

States that have – so far – not expanded Medicaid to the include all poor and lower-middle-income people include higher proportions of Black and Hispanic residents, among the most hard-hit by the pandemic recession.

## Many Black, Hispanic People Would Benefit From Further State Medicaid Expansions

Share of uninsured adults who would become eligible for Medicaid, by race and ethnicity



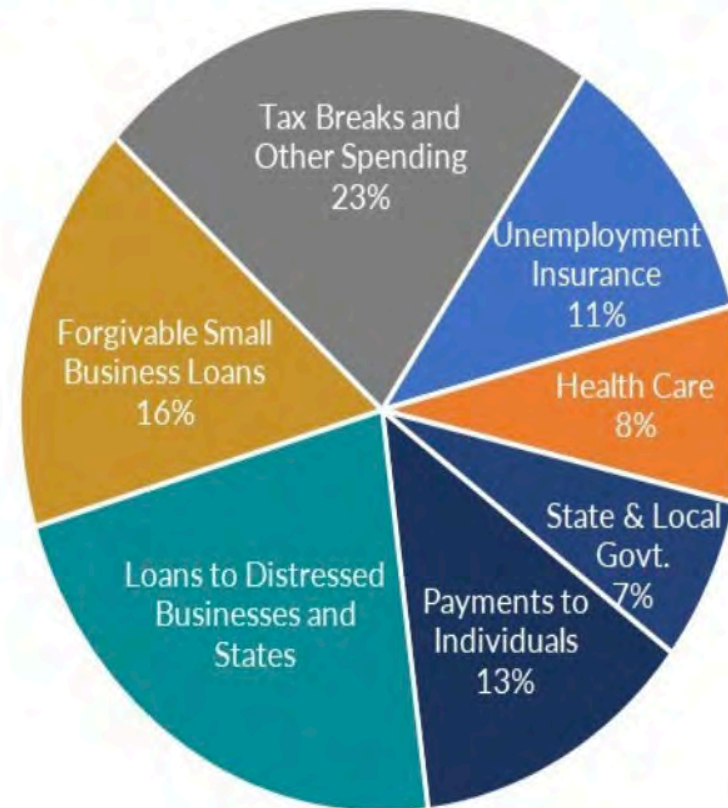
Note: Estimates by subgroup are not available for South Dakota and Wyoming, so the "other people of color" category represents all people of color, including Black and Hispanic people. Fifteen states have not implemented the Affordable Care Act's option to expand their Medicaid program to cover low-income adults.

Source: Kaiser Family Foundation based on 2018 Census Bureau data

Congress passed relief in March – temporarily boosting unemployment benefits, paid leave, & Medicaid and sending one-time checks to most families. Loans were extended to businesses, especially those that promised to maintain payrolls. Very limited aid to states and localities facing high costs.

Studies say benefit boosts and checks did the most, but expired July 31. Many business loans went to higher-end employers.

## CARES Act - Over \$2 Trillion of Relief

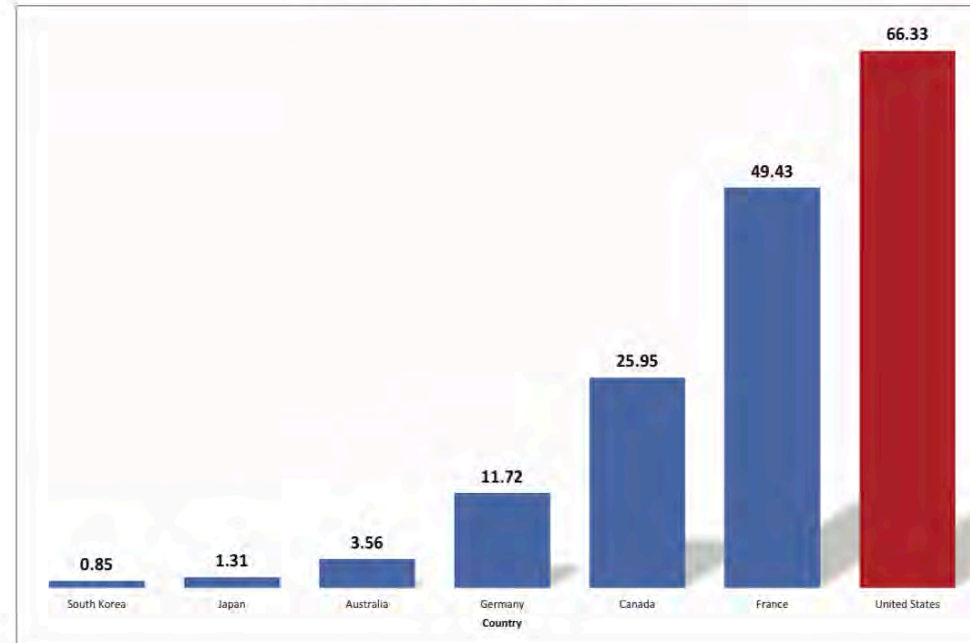


Source: PMFA, JP Morgan

# **The U.S. experience in cross-national perspective**

The United States has experienced high per capita case and death rates – and one study estimates 130,000 to 210,000 avoidable U.S. deaths so far.

Figure 1: Deaths per 100,000 Population



<sup>7</sup> Woolf SH, Chapman DA, Sabo RT, Weinberger DM, Hill L, Taylor DDH. Excess Deaths From COVID-19 and Other Causes, March-July 2020. JAMA. 2020 Oct 12. doi: [10.1001/jama.2020.19545](https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2020.19545). Epub ahead of print. PMID: 33044483.

<sup>8</sup> Excluding micro states of San Marino and Andorra

<sup>9</sup> <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/mortality>

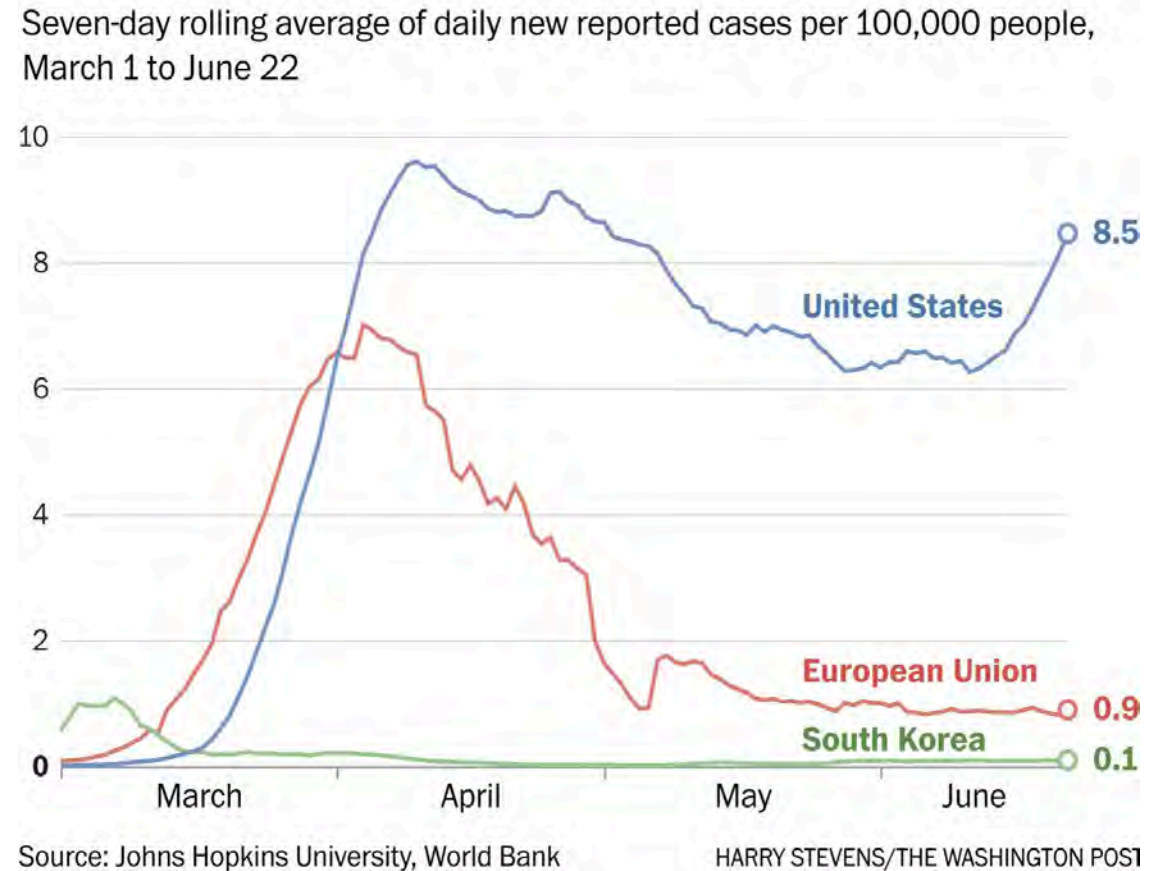
NATIONAL CENTER FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Source: “130,000-210,00 Avoidable Covid-19 Deaths – and Counting – in the U.S.,” by Irwin Redlener, Jeffrey D. Sachs, Sean Hansen, Nathaniel Hupert. October 21, 2020.



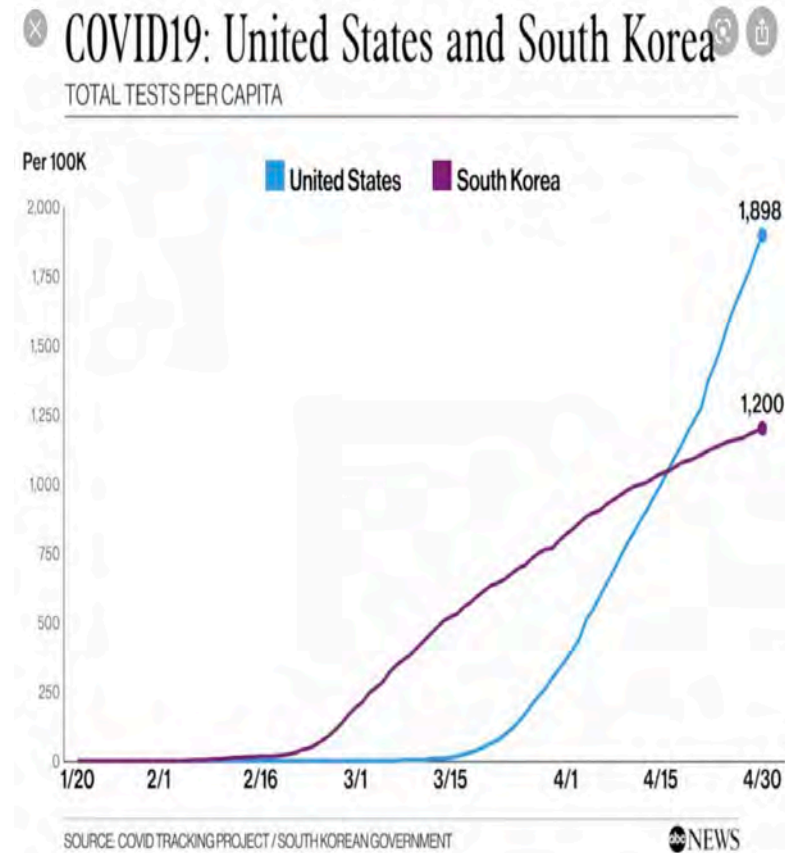
## Comparing South Korea and the United States

**Both nations officially identified their first case on the same day – January 20, 2020 – but South Korea reacted faster and gained control of spread without closing down its economy.**



## Factors explaining the U.S. versus South Korea

- **Learning from 2015 MERS pandemic, S. Korea mobilized public and private institutions to deploy tests with one to two weeks. U.S. Trump administration threw out Obama plans & lost a month, as President downplayed crisis, CDC botched first test, & FDA rules prevented deployment of private tests.**
- **Instead of closing economy, S. Korea used tests and advanced technologies to trace and isolate infected people and their contacts. U.S. had to use drastic closedowns instead.**
- **S. Korea took national approach shaped by public health experts. Trump administration did not take charge. After a short shut-down, President touted “reopening,” undercut public health advice, stoked partisan divisions, and left governors and mayors to deal with spread of infections.**

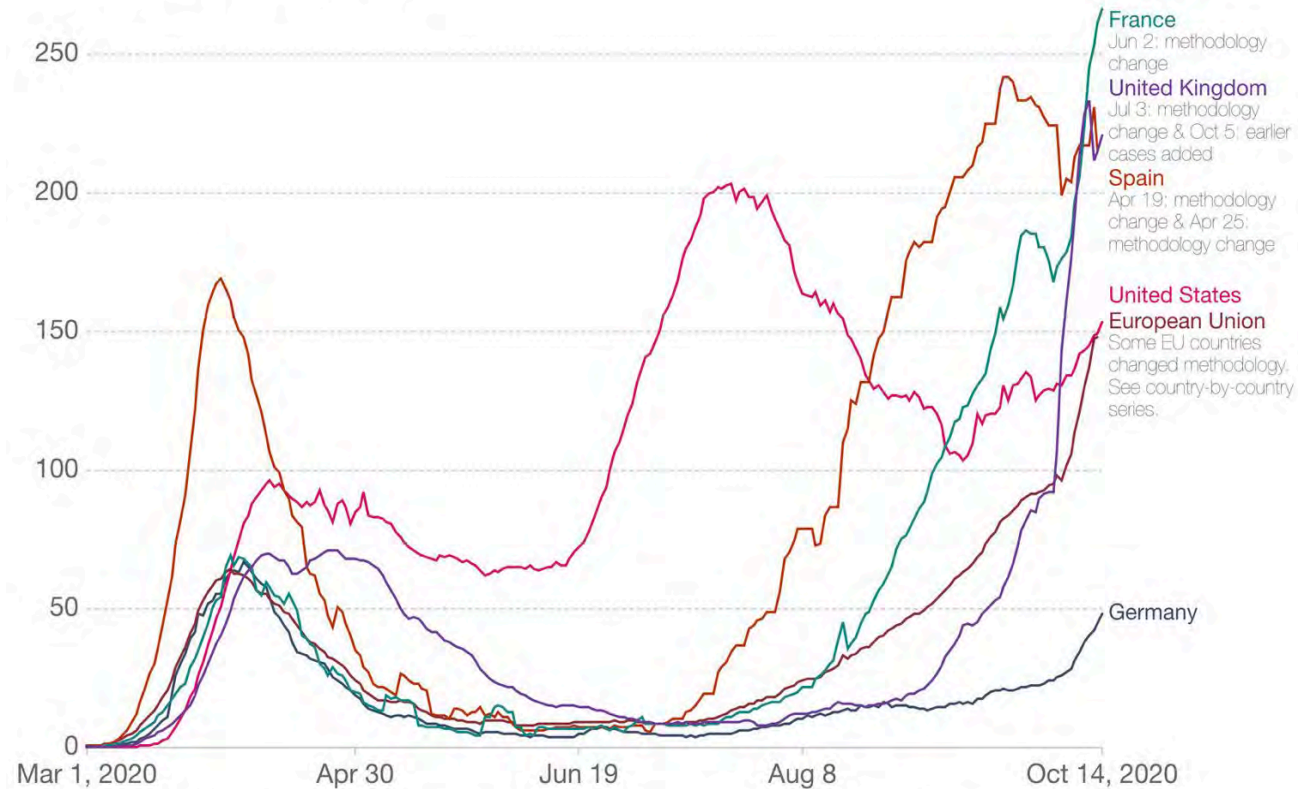


**Germany &  
the United  
States**  
-- may be an  
even more  
telling  
comparison of  
two large,  
federated  
Western  
democracies

## Daily new confirmed COVID-19 cases per million people

Shown is the rolling 7-day average. The number of confirmed cases is lower than the number of actual cases; the main reason for that is limited testing.

Our World  
in Data



Source: European CDC – Situation Update Worldwide – Last updated 14 October, 10:05 (London time)

CC BY

Our World in Data

## Factors explaining pandemic course in Germany & the United States

### GERMANY

- **LUCK:** First case self-identified early in a place with testing available. German cities not as connected as northern Italy.
- **LEARNING:** Public health officials acted quickly with data from home and abroad.
- **LOCAL & NATIONAL:** National goals and reporting, allowing adaptations by 16 states and 400 municipalities.
- **LISTENING TO SCIENTISTS:** Authorities at all levels took evolving advice from scientists.

### UNITED STATES

- With little early testing, virus spread nationwide from Europe via East Coast as well as from China via West Coast.
- CDC and Trump administration made early errors and self-corrected slowly.
- After brief national lock-down, Trump administration shifted responsibility to governors with weak national standards.
- Leading scientists have been sidelined, ridiculed, attacked in an increasingly partisan atmosphere.

*SOURCE:* Julia Belluz, "The 4 simple reasons Germany is managing Covid-19 better than its neighbors," VOX, October 15, 2020.

## The State of MAINE -- an Unusual U.S. Success Story

Maine has an older, relatively poor population and fewer than a third of residents with college degrees. In recent years, partisan and cultural divisions have increased. Nevertheless, Maine kept infections and deaths from ever spiraling out of control and currently maintains very low “test positivity.” This fall, the state has gradually reopened schools and the economy, including tourist services. [How did Maine do it?](#)

- Maine Democrats had won unified control of the governorship and both legislative chambers by 2018 – and Governor Janet Mills empowered Nirav Shah, Director of the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, to shape pandemic responses. He communicates constantly with the public.
- Maine planned and deploy equipment in January and February, long before first case on March 12.
- Maine instituted restrictions and limits on tourists much sooner than other states, including New York. During the summer, authorities resisted business pressures and reopened slowly, partially, and carefully. Maine residents have cut way back on unnecessary travel and contacts.
- The state developed its own testing program by spring – and took advantage of testing in tourist-sending states like Massachusetts (where many got tested to avoid 14-day quarantine in Maine).




Nationwide, to an almost unique degree among advanced industrial countries, US authorities failed to present clear information, unified recommendations or messages – and **drew the pandemic response into ongoing partisan and ideological battles, anchored in America's varied political and sociocultural geography.**

The New York Times

### *Study Finds 'Single Largest Driver' of Coronavirus Misinformation: Trump*

Cornell University researchers analyzing 38 million English-language articles about the pandemic found that President Trump was the largest driver of the "infodemic."



Mentions of President Trump made up nearly 38 percent of the overall online "misinformation conversation" about the virus, researchers said. : Erin Schaff/The New York Times

By Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Noah Weiland

Published Sept. 30, 2020 Updated Oct. 22, 2020, 10:05 a.m. ET

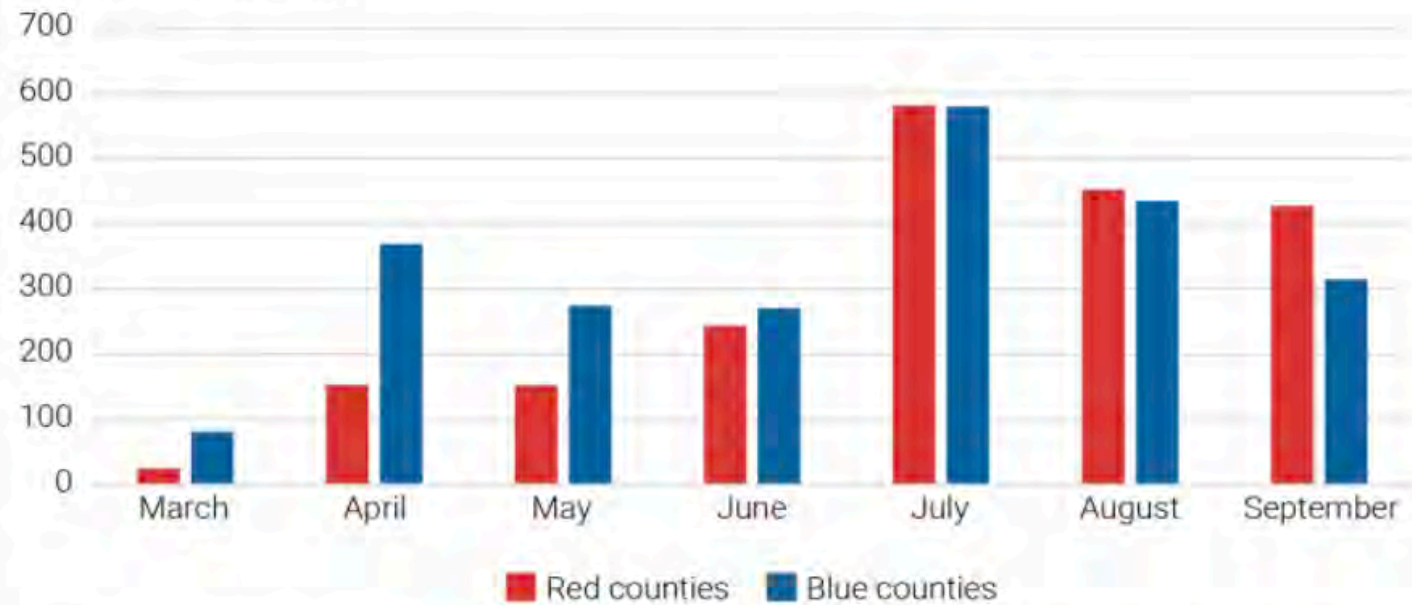
WASHINGTON — Of the flood of [misinformation](#), conspiracy theories and falsehoods seeding the internet on the coronavirus, one common thread stands out: President Trump.

That is the conclusion of [researchers at Cornell University](#) who analyzed 38 million articles about the pandemic in English-language media around the world. Mentions of Mr. Trump made up nearly 38 percent of the overall "misinformation conversation," making the president the largest driver of the "infodemic" — falsehoods involving the pandemic.

The uneven spread of Covid-19 infections across the country opened the door to early partisan politicization of the responses.

**Figure 3. Red and blue counties: New cases per 100,000 residents**

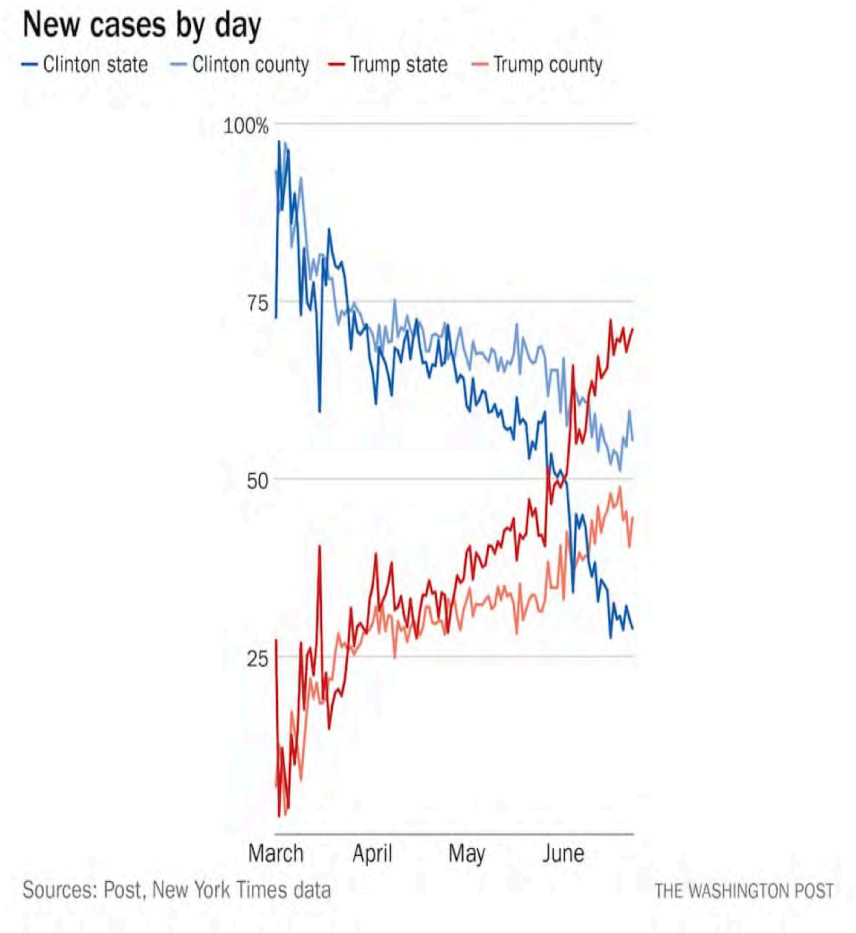
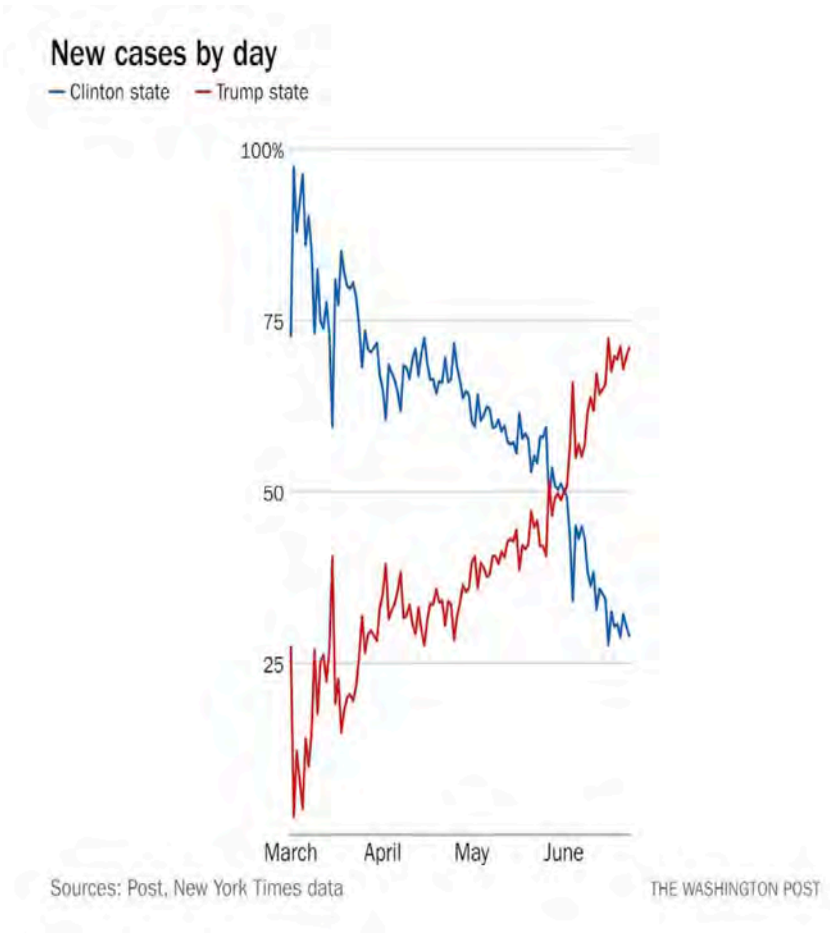
March through September



Source: William H Frey analysis of New York Times data for confirmed COVID-19 cases, 2019 Census population estimates, Red and Blue states represent those voting Republican and Democratic in the 2016 presidential election.

**B** Metropolitan Policy Program  
at BROOKINGS

Spread hit pro-Clinton states first, then pro-Clinton counties within Trump states...



By mid-April, President Trump and his political advisors had reportedly decided to leave strong public health measures to governors and mayors. The President would be free to champion economic re-openings and “freedom” for churches to resume in-person worship, and shift blame for restrictions to subnational officials – especially in “blue” states and cities.

President Trump tweeted calls for “liberation” of Michigan, Virginia, North Carolina, and other states with restrictions, encouraging Tea Party-like protests in state capitols and cities.



## ***‘You Have to Disobey’: Protesters Gather to Defy Stay-at-Home Orders***

As governors ponder reducing coronavirus restrictions, rallies largely spurred by talk radio and conservative social media reflect frustrations with limits on commerce.



People at the State Capitol in Lansing, Mich., protested against Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's stay-at-home order, designed to minimize the spread of the coronavirus. Matthew Dae Smith/Lansing State Journal, via Associated Press



**FOX NEWS soon  
announced  
“scheduled”  
reopening rallies**

POLITICS APRIL 21, 2020

## How Fox News Is Supercharging the Coronavirus Protests

*In 2009, the right-wing network helped build the tea party movement. It's happening again.*



**JEREMY SCHULMAN**

Senior News Editor

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Morning Mix

Tensions over restrictions spark violence and defiance among protesters as Trump pushes states to reopen



Protesters gather in Raleigh, N.C., on Tuesday to demand the state reopen more quickly. (Gerry Broome/AP)

**Protests in  
Raleigh, NC (left),  
Harrisburg, PA (right),  
& Denver, CO (bottom)**



ABC News

Anger mounts around nation amid continued closures

In Denver, hundreds gathered to protest, many without wearing masks or observing social distancing.

Watch

## Thousands protest at Capitol with calls to reopen Pa.'s economy

Logan Hullinger York Dispatch

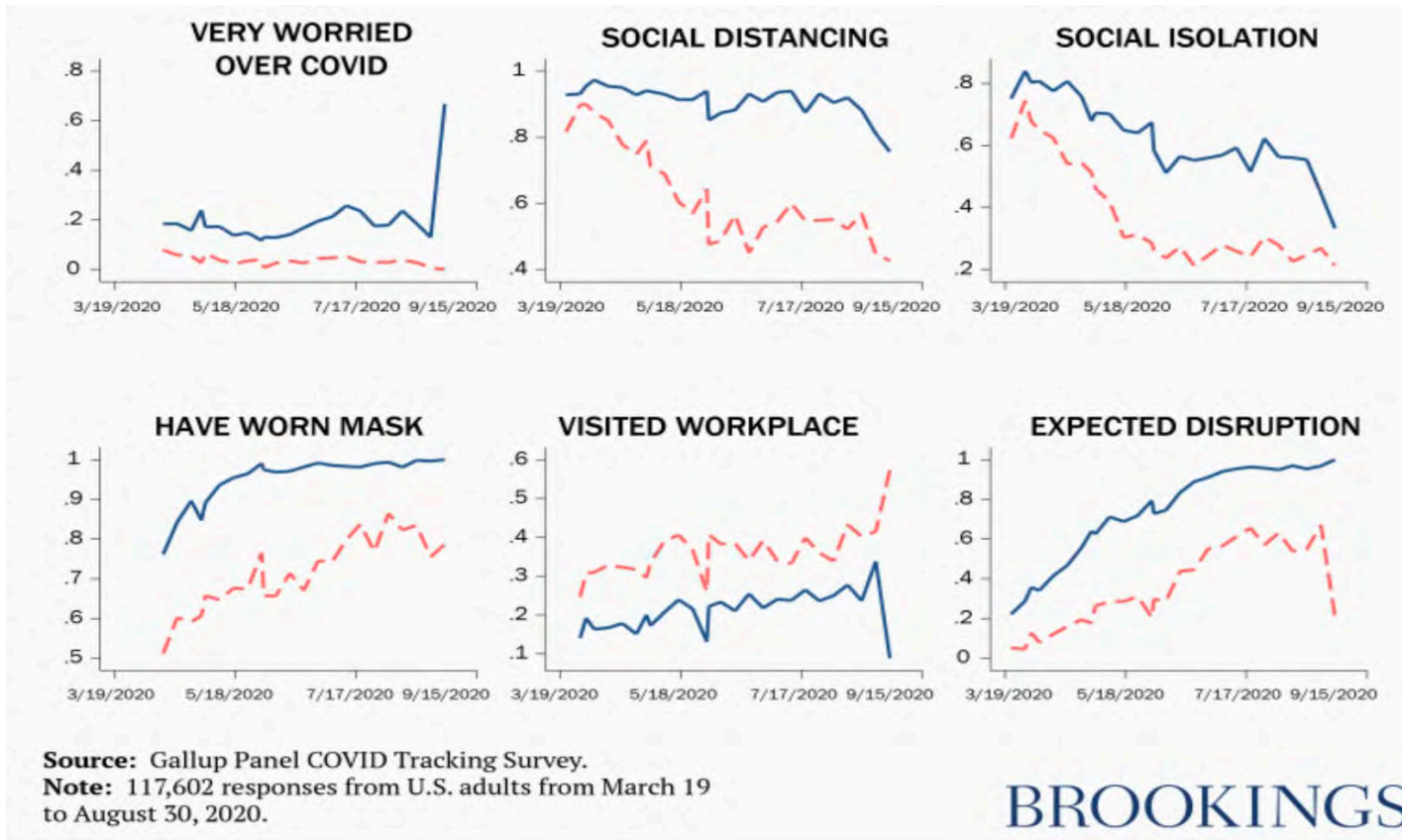
Published 3:31 p.m. ET Apr. 20, 2020 | Updated 9:09 a.m. ET Apr. 21, 2020



Thousands rally to reopen Pennsylvania in front of the Capitol Building in Harrisburg, Monday, April 20, 2020. John A. Pavoncello photo The York Dispatch

Thousands of Pennsylvanians flocked to the state Capitol on Monday to protest Gov. Tom Wolf's order to close non-life-sustaining businesses, an act of defiance in the face of Wolf's stay-at-home order and social distancing guidelines.

## Attitudes and behaviors about COVID-19 become bifurcated by party identification of respondents, March to August 2020

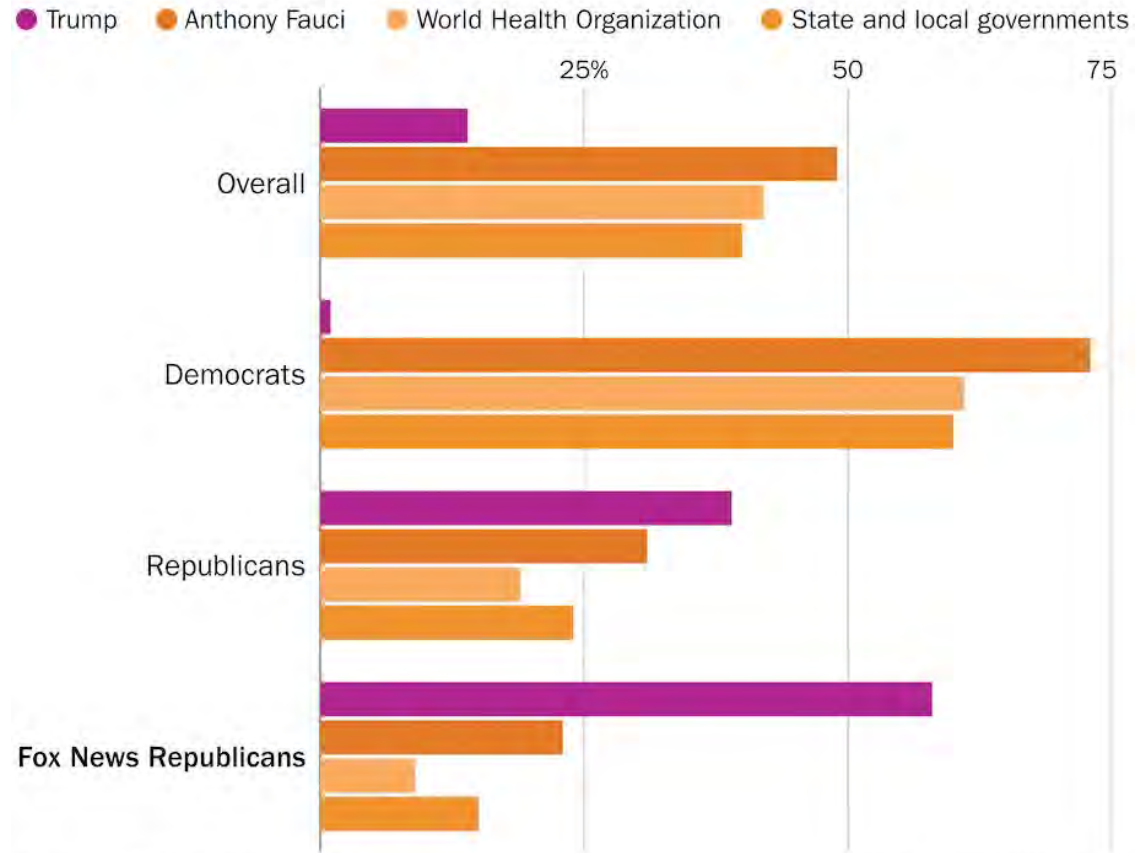


Red = Republicans

Blue = Democrats

Sources of trusted pandemic information have become strongly influence by partisanship and media viewership

### Trust for pandemic information



Source: PRRI, October 2020

THE WASHINGTON POST



## 63 seconds that shows why Trump politicizing mask-wearing is so, so destructive



Analysis by [Chris Cillizza](#), CNN Editor-at-large

Updated 3:04 PM ET, Fri September 11, 2020

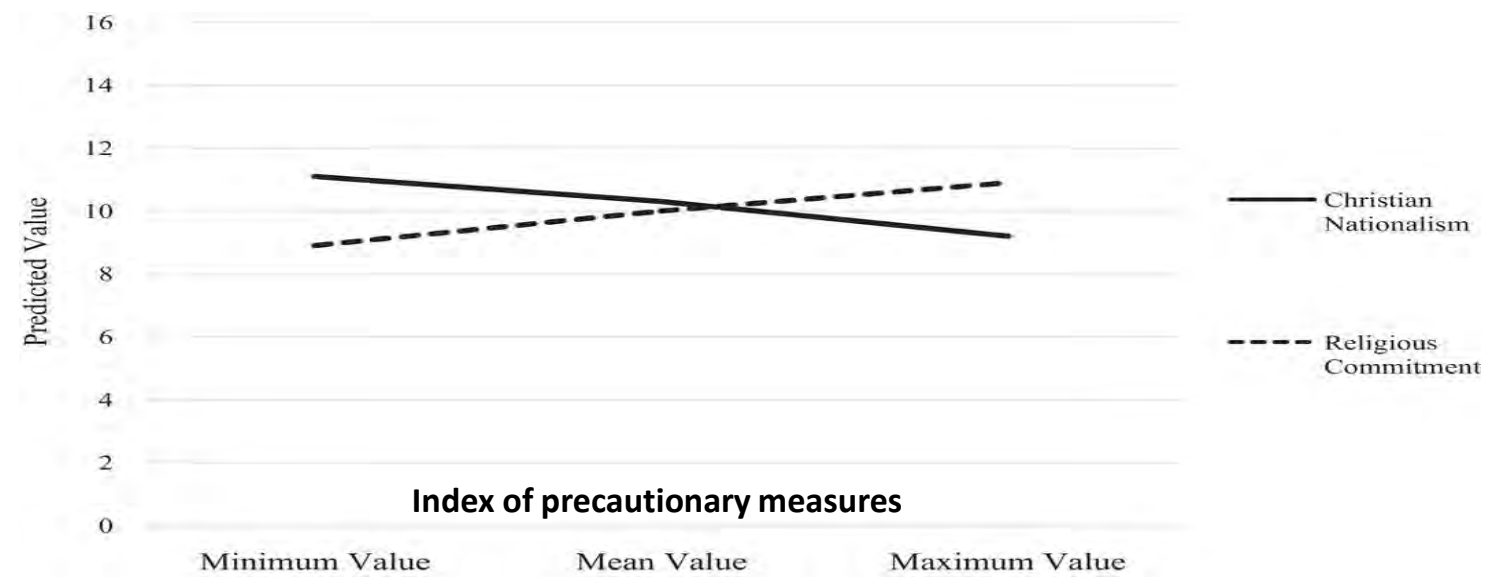


As CNN's Jim Acosta learned from interviews at a Freeland, Michigan rally, the President's messages about Covid-19 and masks get through to his supporters.

[play sound here]

# Culture Wars and COVID-19 Conduct: Christian Nationalism, Religiosity, and Americans' Behavior During the ... Pandemic

Not all religiously committed Americans resist precautionary measures such as masks. A recent study finds responses on the right driven in large part by a CHRISTIAN NATIONALIST “ideology that disregard to scientific expertise; a conception of Americans as God’s chosen and protected people; distrust for news media; and allegiance to Trump.”

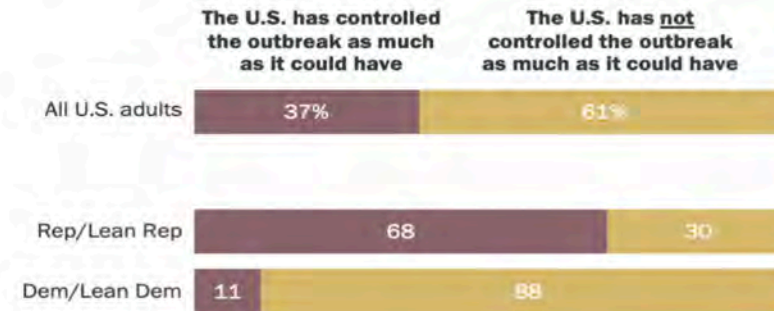




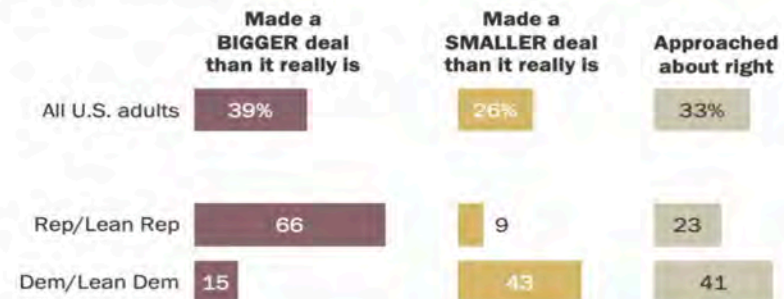
As the 2020 election approaches, partisan views are starkly divided on the severity of the pandemic and on the adequacy of the U.S. response ...

### Large party divides in views of severity of COVID-19 outbreak, adequacy of response

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



% of U.S. adults who say the coronavirus outbreak has been ...



Note: Respondents who did not give an answer not shown.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 31-Sept. 7, 2020.

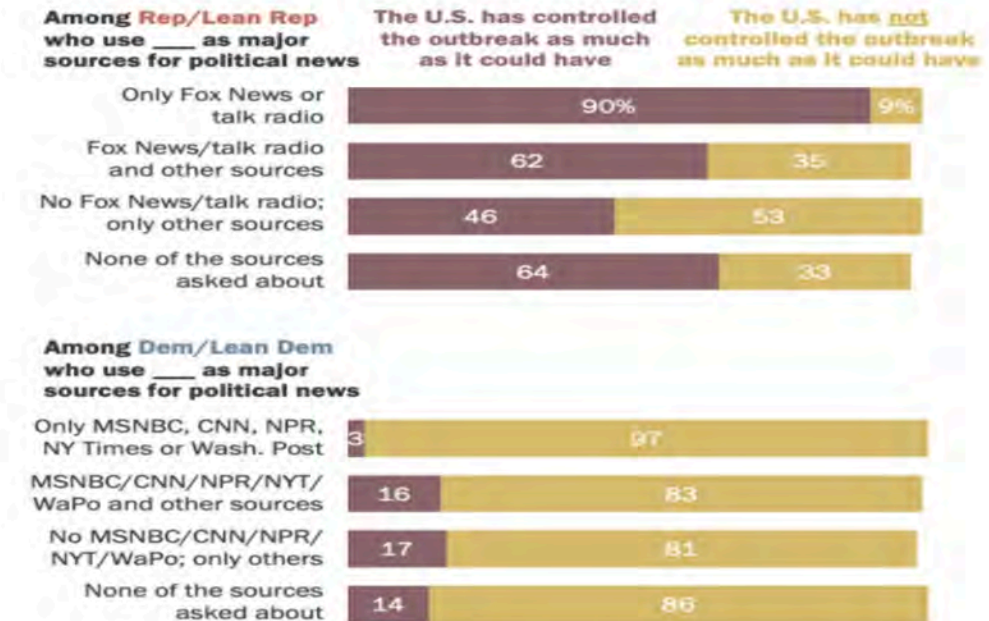
"Before Trump Tested Positive for Coronavirus, Republicans' Attention to Pandemic Had Sharply Declined"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Beyond religious differences and trust/distrust in Trump, Democrats and Republicans get their news from different outlets – that stress different pandemic realities

**Republicans who rely a lot on Fox News and/or talk radio overwhelmingly say U.S. could not have controlled the coronavirus outbreak any better**

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



Note: The Fox News cable channel and talk radio shows such as Sean Hannity or Rush Limbaugh have audiences that lean Republican and conservative. MSNBC, CNN, NPR, New York Times and Washington Post have audiences that lean Democratic and liberal. Sources whose audiences are more mixed include ABC, CBS or NBC network television news. Respondents who did not give an answer not shown. See Appendix for more details. Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 31-Sept. 7, 2020. "Before Trump Tested Positive for Coronavirus, Republicans' Attention to Pandemic Had Sharply Declined"

## Poll: The majority of Trump voters don't see Covid-19 as an important election issue

Only 24 percent of Trump supporters view the coronavirus as a “very important” issue in this year's election, compared to 82 percent of Biden supporters.

By Roge Karma | Oct 25, 2020, 12:20pm EDT

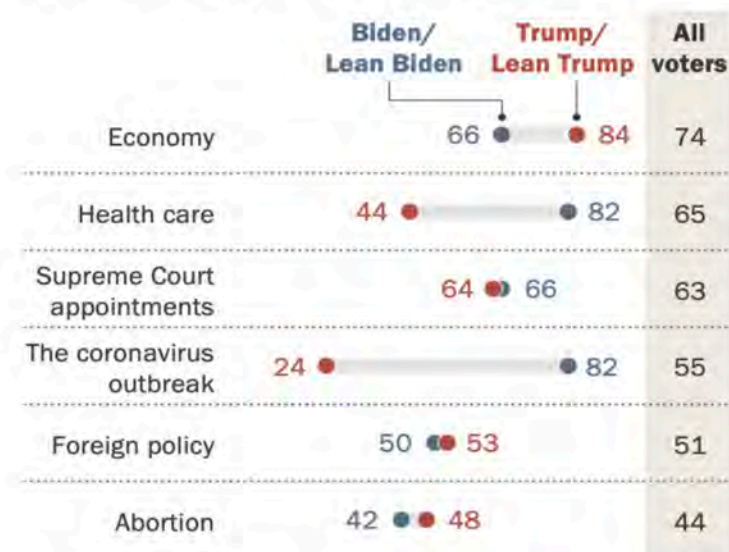
f t SHARE



President Donald Trump speaks to a mostly maskless crowd at his Make America Great Again rally in Erie, Pennsylvania, on October 20. | Saul Loeb/AFP via Getty Images

## Trump and Biden supporters differ over importance of the economy, health care – and particularly the coronavirus

% registered voters who say each is ‘very important’ to their vote in the 2020 presidential election



Note: Based on registered voters.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Oct. 6-12, 2020.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



# Trump's campaign made stops nationwide. Coronavirus cases surged in his wake in at least five places.

Erin Mansfield, Josh Salman and Dinah Voyles Pulver, USA TODAY | Updated 3 hours ago

As President Donald Trump jetted across the country [holding campaign rallies](#) during the past two months, he didn't just defy state orders and federal health guidelines. He left a trail of coronavirus outbreaks in his wake.

The president has participated in nearly three dozen rallies since mid-August, all but two at airport hangars. A USA TODAY analysis shows COVID-19 cases grew at a faster rate than before after at least five of those rallies in the following counties: Blue Earth, Minnesota; Lackawanna, Pennsylvania; Marathon, Wisconsin; Dauphin, Pennsylvania; and Beltrami, Minnesota.

Together, those counties saw 1,500 more new cases in the two weeks following Trump's rallies than the two weeks before – 9,647 cases, up from 8,069.



Beltrami,  
MN

## **WHAT NEXT?**

- **Likely many more infections, hospitalizations, deaths before vaccines are widely available, worldwide and in the USA.**
- **Presidential election will determine whether the US shifts to a more active national response (and cooperative international approach) to the still-raging pandemic.**
- **Economic and social effects are just beginning to unfold – and will likely reverberate for many years. Many jobs and work spaces may not return.**
- **Left to play out, pandemic effects will exacerbate cleavages: 1% versus rest; 20% versus 80%; metro versus non-metro; racial, ethnic, and gender divides.**
- **Will the US governmental and political system allow more equitable responses? Depends, in large part, on whether federal government gains a capacity for concerted actions.**



## For those who want to learn more (beyond our assigned readings)...

- Report on “130,000 – 210,000 Avoidable Covid-19 Deaths – and Counting – in the U.S.,” by Irwin Redlener, Jeffrey D. Sachs, Sean Hansen, and Nathaniel Hupert. National Center for Disaster Preparedness, Columbia University, October 21, 2020.
- “Totally Under Control” documentary film by Alex Gibney, released mid-October and available on HULU.
- “Soo Rin Kim, Dr. Tiffany Kung, and Dr. Mark Abdelmalek, “Trust, testing, and tracing: How South Korea Succeeded where the US stumbled in coronavirus response,” *ABC News*, May 1, 2020.
- Ellen Ruppel Shell, “How Straight Talk Helped One State [Maine] Control COVID,” *Scientific American*, October 16, 2020.
- Report on “Ten Facts about COVID-19 and the U.S. Economy,” by Lauren Bauer, Kristen Broady, Wendy Edelberg, and Jimmy O’Donnell. The Hamilton Project, September 2020.
- Robert A. Moffitt and James P. Ziliak, “Covid-19 and the U.S. Safety Net,” September 2020, prepared for Special Issue of *Fiscal Studies*.