



# Future of the First Amendment

## 2011 Survey of High School Students and Teachers

Commissioned by the

**John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**

Prepared by

**Dr. Kenneth Dautrich, The Pert Group**

Fourth in a Series

## About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Knight Foundation supports transformational ideas that promote quality journalism, advance media innovation, engage communities and foster the arts. We believe that democracy thrives when people and communities are informed and engaged.

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## Foreword

By *Eric Newton*

On Dec. 15, 1791, with the ratification of the Bill of Rights, the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was etched into our national history:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

The words do not change, but how we interpret them does. The First Amendment’s five fundamental freedoms – religion, speech, press, assembly and petition – are hotly debated. During the past 220 years, courts have interpreted these freedoms in landmark legal cases, setting the standards for freedom of expression for each new American generation.

If courts define the law, does public opinion about the First Amendment matter?

Jack Balkin, Knight Professor of Constitutional Law and the First Amendment at Yale Law School, studied the question in 2006 and concluded: yes, it does. Balkin found the Supreme Court’s decisions tend to reflect long-term changes in public attitudes – as true for First Amendment doctrine as it is for other parts of the Constitution.

As famed American Judge Learned Hand put it, more than a half-century earlier, in 1944: “I often wonder whether we do not rest our hopes too much upon constitutions, upon laws and upon courts. These are false hopes; believe me they are false hopes. Liberty lies in the hearts and minds of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it.”

Since young people represent the future of public opinion, they are the real overseers of the future of the First Amendment.

This study, the fourth in the Future of the First Amendment series commissioned by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, hopes to shed some light on that question.

In 2004, 2006, 2007 and now 2011, the foundation funded national surveys looking at what high school students know of and think about America’s constitutional rights to free expression. These studies have looked at how teachers, parents, the high school curriculum and the media influence student attitudes toward free expression rights in America.

The studies began after surveys of American adults conducted by the Freedom Forum showed that even modern-day support for the First Amendment is neither universal nor stable. In the wake of the 2001 terrorist attacks, support for the First Amendment plummeted. Suddenly, the nation was almost evenly split on the question of whether or not the First Amendment “goes too far in the rights it guarantees.” Not until 2004 did America’s support for the First Amendment return to pre-9/11 levels.

The surprising finding in the first Knight survey, in 2004, was that high school students tended to express little appreciation for the First Amendment. Nearly three-fourths said either they don't know how they feel about it or they take it for granted. That finding has remained distressingly constant over the years, despite the introduction of Constitution Day in the nation's schools that year, setting aside Sept. 17 for civics instruction. The 2006 study showed that despite increased teaching, more students thought the First Amendment, as a whole, goes too far in the rights it guarantees. Half the students in the 2007 study had never heard of Constitution Day.

Media use also was measured in 2007. Despite a popular belief that teens do not care about news, the study showed they do stay informed via digital media, and parents and peers had more influence than teachers on students' media choices. This year's survey confirms that finding.

This report presents the findings from a survey of 12,090 high school students and 900 high school teachers conducted in the spring of 2011. It is authored by Dr. Kenneth Dautrich, a senior researcher at The Pert Group. Dautrich, who is also a professor at the University of Connecticut, is author of *The Future of the First Amendment: Digital Media, Civic Education and Free Expression Rights in the Nations' High Schools*, a 2008 book analyzing the findings from the first three surveys. He has also written *The First Amendment and the Media in the Court of Public Opinion*, which explores the dynamics of public attitudes about free expression rights.

Since Dr. Dautrich's studies began, the dawning of a new digital age in communications has dramatically changed how people consume news and information. Internet news sources have proliferated, as have social networking sites, mobile technologies and many other digital media sources. The changing media and communications environment affects us all, but perhaps none more than those in their most formative years of learning – high school students.

This 2011 Future of the First Amendment study focuses in particular on how the emerging digital media environment influences student orientations regarding free expression rights.

*(Eric Newton, senior adviser to the president at the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, has collaborated with Dr. Dautrich on the four Future of the First Amendment surveys.)*

# SOCIAL MEDIA: GOOD FOR DEMOCRACY?

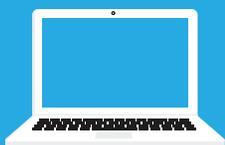
## The First Amendment's Five Fundamental Freedoms



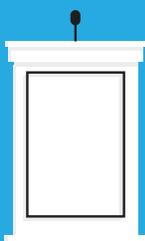
Religion



Speech



Press



Assembly

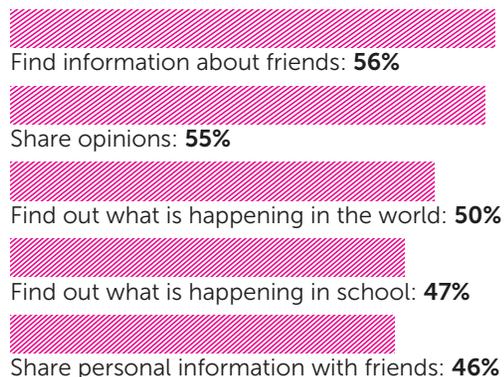


Petition

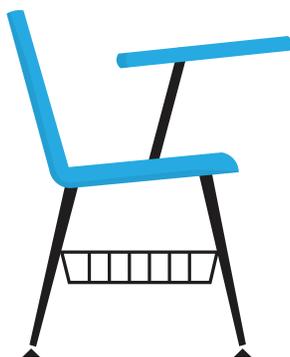
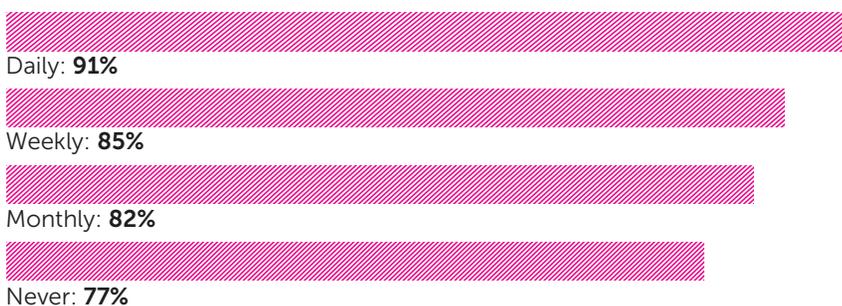
As social media use has grown in the United States, so has students' appreciation for the First Amendment, a Knight Foundation study finds.\*



### Students who report spending "a lot" or "some" time using social media to:



### Percent of students tolerating unpopular opinions according to frequency of use of social media:



### Classroom instruction on the First Amendment:

down 8 percent since 2007 despite its positive effects.



People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.



Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with offensive lyrics.



Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval.

To get news and information at least several times a week...

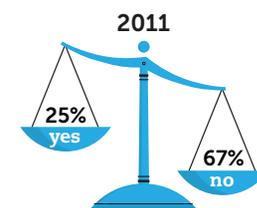
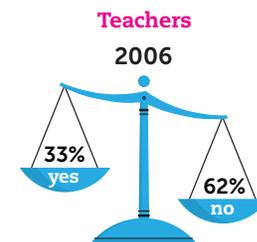
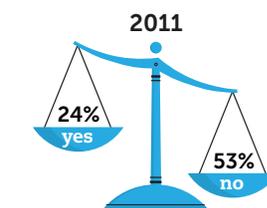
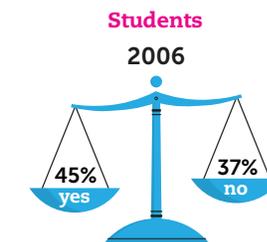


of students use the Internet. (up from 31 percent in 2006)



of students use social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr

### Does the First Amendment go too far in the rights it guarantees?



\*remaining respondents answered "Don't know"

Only 35 percent of teachers agree that high school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

More at [KnightFoundation.org](http://KnightFoundation.org)

\*Survey of 12,090 high school students and 900 high school teachers conducted spring 2011. Commissioned by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

# Executive Summary

## Key Findings

- 1. Social Media Use Is Related to First Amendment Support**
- 2. Student Use of Digital Media for News and Information Is Exploding**
- 3. Appreciation of First Amendment Rights Is Improving**
- 4. Classroom First Amendment Instruction Declines, Despite Its Positive Effects**
- 5. Most Teachers Don't Support Free Expression for Students**
- 6. Teachers Question the Impact of Social Media on Student Learning**
- 7. Most Teachers Feel that Digital Media Literacy Should Be Part of the School Curriculum**
- 8. Teachers and Students Have Different Digital News Habits**
- 9. For Written Stories, Digital Media Overtake Traditional Media as Preferred Source**
- 10. Newspapers and Television Regarded as Most Trusted News Sources by Students and Teachers; Majorities Question Veracity of Information on Social networks**

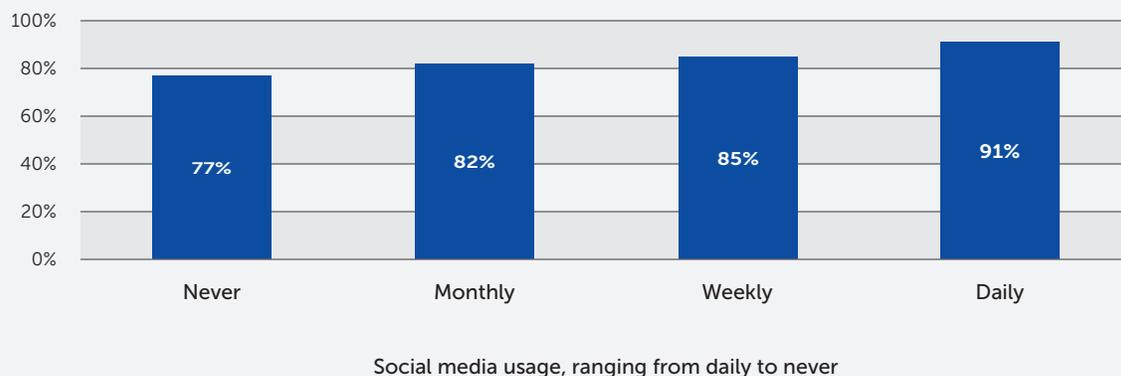
Details of the survey methodology may be found in the appendix to this report, along with the questionnaires used in the 2011 student and teacher surveys.

# Details of the Key Findings

## 1. Social Media Use Is Related to First Amendment Support

There is a clear, positive relationship between student use of social media – such as Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr – to get news and information and greater support for free expression rights. Though this study establishes the link between social media use and First Amendment support, its cause is open to debate. Does consuming news frequently on social media increase one’s appreciation for the First Amendment? Or is it the reverse: The more someone agrees with the First Amendment, the more likely they are to use social media for their news and information? Either way, there is a relationship between the two factors. As the graph below shows, fully 91 percent of students who use social networking daily to get news and information agree that “people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.” But only 77 percent of those who never use social networks to get news agree that unpopular opinions should be allowed.

**As Social Media Use Climbs, So Does Support for Free Expression**  
(percent tolerating unpopular opinions)

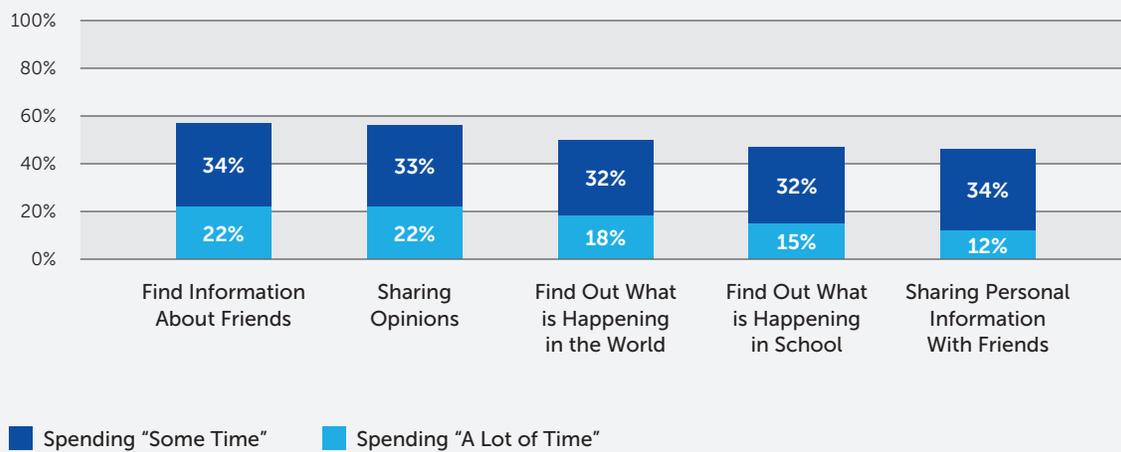


Even when other possible factors are controlled for, the relationship between social networking use and pro-First Amendment attitudes persists. A multivariate model examining the effects of social networking frequency on support for free expression of unpopular opinions finds an independent, statistically significant effect. The other factors that are controlled for that have a significant effect are student GPA (the higher the GPA, the greater the support) and grade in high school (the higher the grade, the greater the support). See the methodological appendix for a summary of the multivariate results.

Students' use of social networking is also related to other measures of support for the First Amendment. For example, 72 percent of daily social media users agree that students should be allowed to express opinions about teachers and administrators on Facebook without the risk of school discipline, only 56 percent of those who do not use social networks agree with this. Also, 43 percent of daily social media users say that people should be allowed to post videos without permission; only 29 percent of nonusers support this. In addition, while 74 percent of daily social media users say that musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that might be offensive, only 65 percent of nonusers agree.

And what do students use social media for? They spend a good deal of social media time seeking out news and information. Fifty percent spend at least some time finding out what is occurring in the world around them, and 47 percent spend at least some time seeking information about what is happening in their school. Fifty-five percent report spending at least some social network time sharing opinions and finding information about their friends. Forty-six percent spend at least some time sharing personal information with their friends.

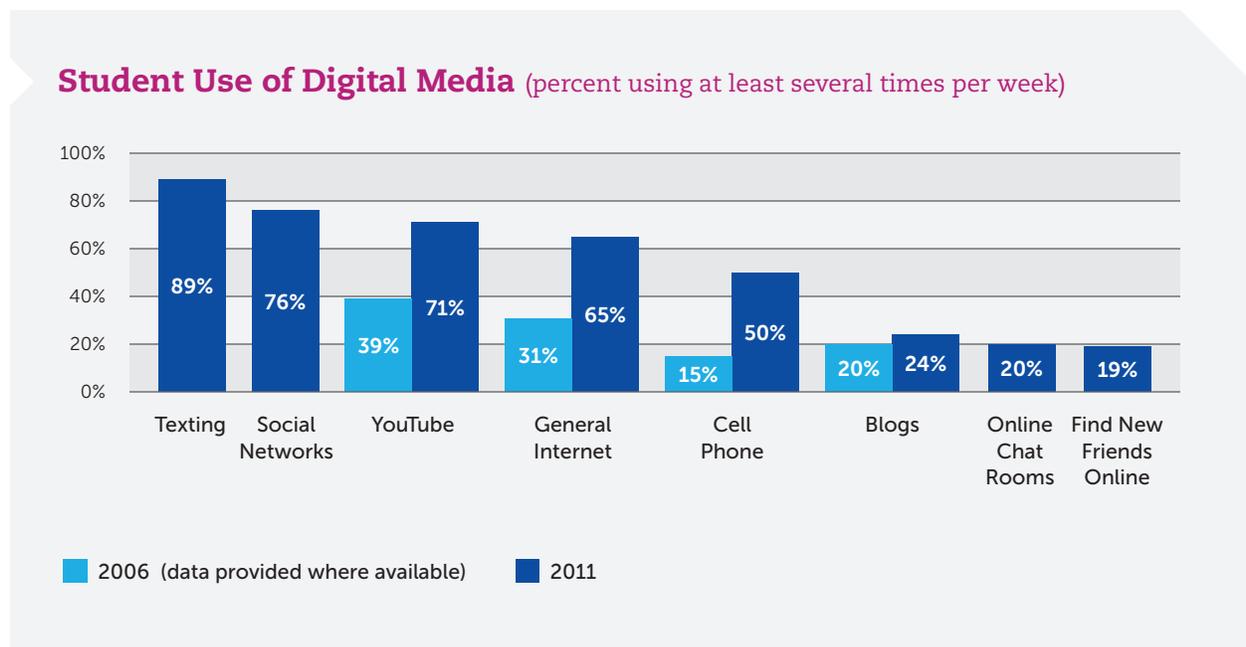
### Amount of Time Spent on Social Media Activities



## 2. Student Use of Digital Media for News and Information Is Exploding

High school students were using digital media to consume news and information at a rapidly increasing rate during the past five years. Current numbers:

- More than three-quarters of students use social media such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr at least several times a week to get news and information.
- Nearly two-thirds (65 percent) of the high school students surveyed say they get news and information from the Internet at least several times per week, up from 31 percent in 2006.
- Those using mobile devices such as iPhones and Blackberrys to get news and information at least several times a week have increased from 15 percent in 2006 to 50 percent in 2011.



The preceding chart details the types of student media usage. Lack of comparison data for 2006 indicates a question asked for the first time in 2011.

Highlights:

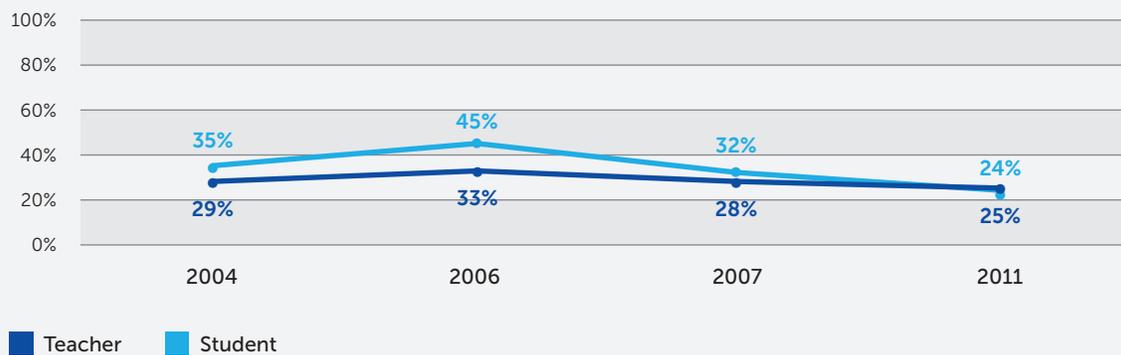
- Seventy-one percent now say they watch videos on websites, such as YouTube and Google Video, at least several times a week, up from 39 percent in 2006.
- The vast majority (89 percent) regularly use text messaging.
- Slightly more say they blog today compared to five years ago.
- When students are asked which digital media technology they use the most, nearly two-thirds (65 percent) say texting, followed by about one-third (32 percent) who say Facebook.

### 3. Appreciation of First Amendment Rights Is Improving

Today, both students and teachers are more appreciative of their First Amendment rights than they have been in past surveys. The number of students who believe that the First Amendment goes too far in protecting rights has declined from nearly half (45 percent) in 2006 to about a quarter (24 percent) in 2011. Among teachers this percentage has declined from 33 percent in 2006 to 25 percent.

#### Does the First Amendment Go Too Far in the Rights it Guarantees?

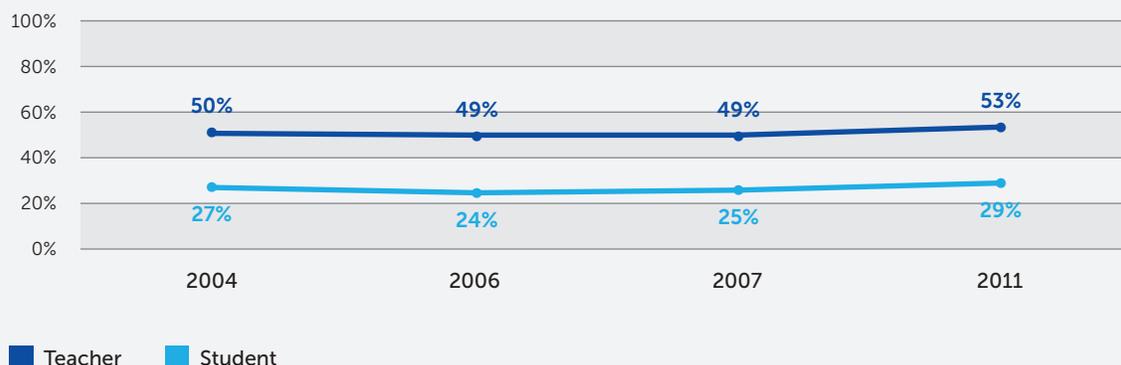
(percent answering yes)



More students and teachers in the United States are thinking about the rights guaranteed to them by the First Amendment. The survey asked whether students “think about” their First Amendment rights, take them “for granted” or “don’t know.” In 2011, 53 percent of teachers and 29 percent of students say they personally think about their First Amendment rights, the highest mark for both groups since 2004.

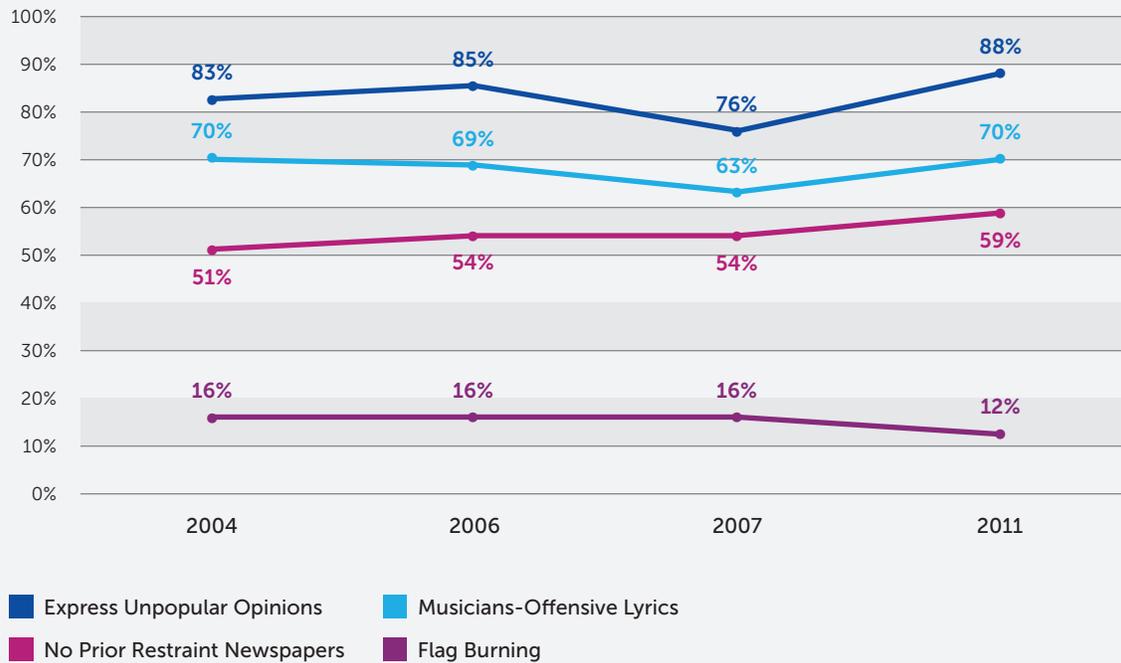
#### Do You Personally Think About Your First Amendment Rights?

(percent answering yes)



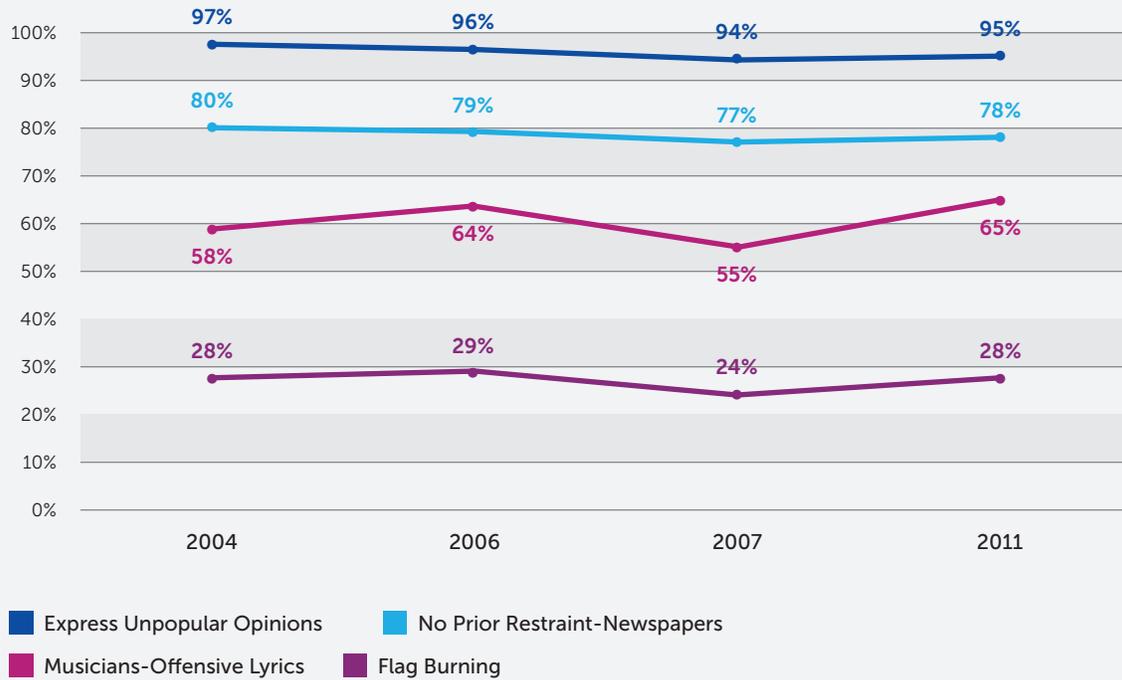
In addition, during the past few years there has been an increase in student support for several fundamental rights, such as “people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions” and “newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.”

### More High School Student Support for First Amendment Rights (except flag burning)



Among teachers, however, only one of those categories is higher than in 2004: the percentage agreeing that musicians should be allowed to sing songs with offensive lyrics.

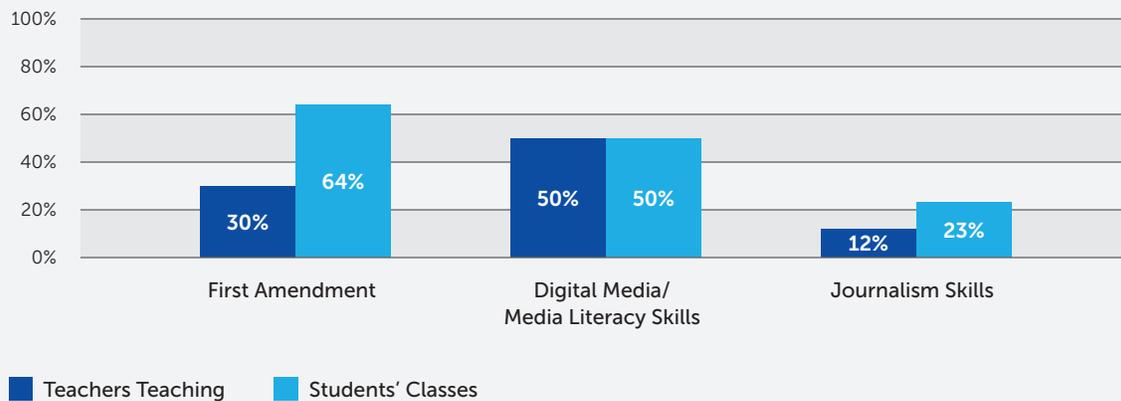
### Not as Much Change in Teacher Opinions on First Amendment Rights (except flag burning)



## 4. Classroom First Amendment Instruction Declines, Despite Its Positive Effects

Nearly two-thirds of the students surveyed (64 percent) have had classroom instruction on the First Amendment. This is an eight-point decline since our last survey in 2007. Half of all students say they have taken a class providing instruction on digital media and media literacy, and 23 percent say they have taken a class dealing with journalism skills.

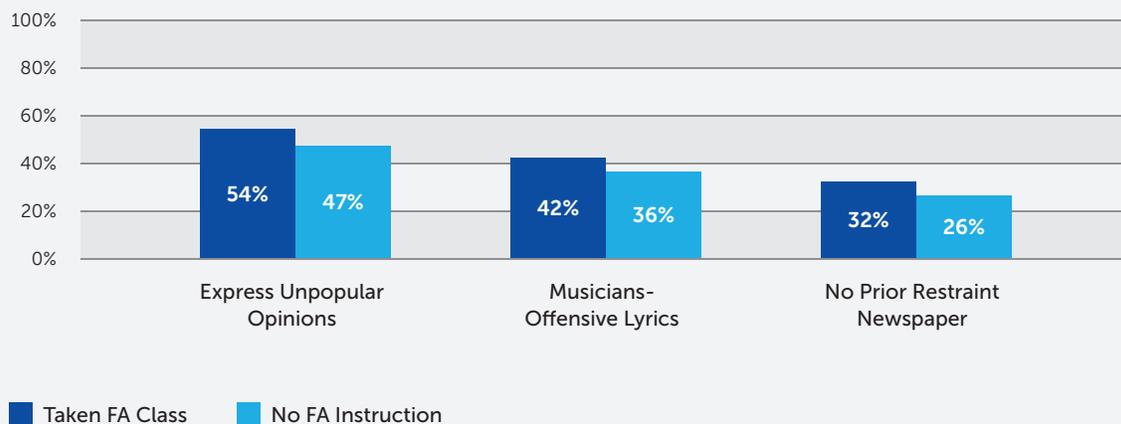
### What Teachers Say They're Teaching And Students Say They're Learning



Interestingly, students who have had First Amendment instruction tend to be more supportive of First Amendment rights – a finding consistent with past surveys. For example, students who have had First Amendment instruction are eight points more likely than students without such instruction to say that people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions; they are six points more likely to say that musicians should be allowed to sing songs with offensive lyrics and six points more likely to think that newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval (see graph below). These all represent statistically significant differences at the .05 level of confidence. And they strongly suggest that instruction on First Amendment concepts and issues has the positive effect of enhancing student appreciation for the rights so central to American democracy.

### Teaching the First Amendment Increases Support of Freedoms

(percent of students “Strongly Agreeing” with First Amendment Rights)



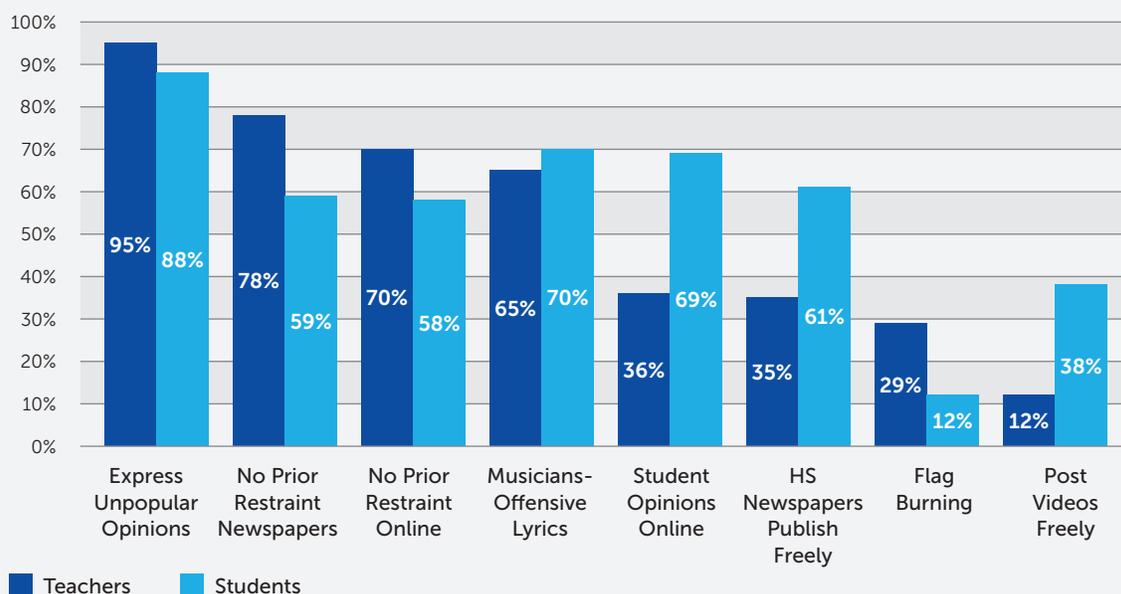
## 5. Most Teachers Don't Support Free Expression for Students

When it comes to freedom of expression in high school, students and teachers differ in their willingness to extend students' rights. For example:

- 61 percent of students, but only 35 percent of teachers, agree that “high school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.”
- 69 percent of students, but only 36 percent of teachers, agree that “students should be allowed to express their opinions about teachers and school administrators on Facebook without worrying about being punished at school for what they say.”

In general, however, the vast majority of both students (88 percent) and teachers (95 percent) agree that “people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.” Strong majorities of both students and teachers also agree that “musicians should be allowed to sing songs that others might find offensive,” that “newspapers should be allowed to freely publish without government approval of a story” and that “online web sites should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of the content.” Flag burning is unpopular with both groups. Only 29 percent of teachers agree that “people should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement” and a scant 12 percent of students agree. A difference comes in social media use: 38 percent of students, but only 12 percent of teachers, agree that “people should be allowed to post their own videos/pictures on the Internet without the permission of those who are in the videos/pictures.”

**Students vs. Teachers on Whether Existing Rights Should Be Allowed**  
(percent agreeing)

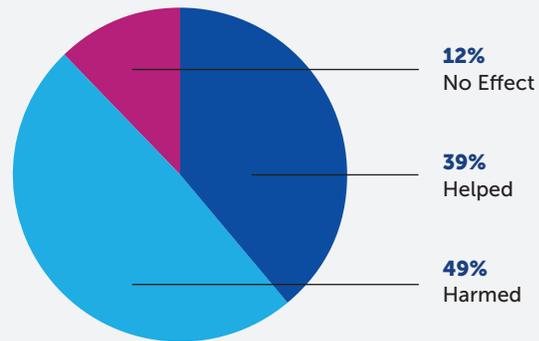


## 6. Teachers Question the Impact of Social Media on Student Learning

For the first time this year, the survey explored teachers' attitudes about social media. Teachers are more inclined to think that the emergence of the newest forms of digital media have harmed (49 percent) rather than helped (39 percent) student learning.

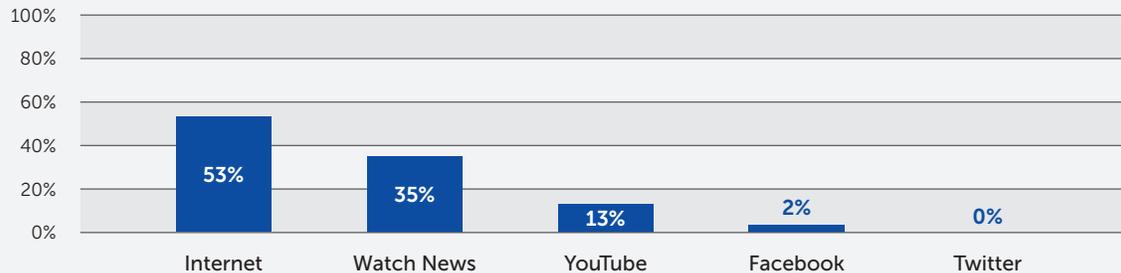
On the other hand, the percentage of teachers who now require students to use the Internet on a monthly basis to complete assignments has increased from 36 percent in 2007 to 53 percent in 2011. Similarly, the teachers surveyed are also more likely to require watching and/or reading news as part of their regular assignments.

### Many Teachers Think Social Media Harms Student Learning



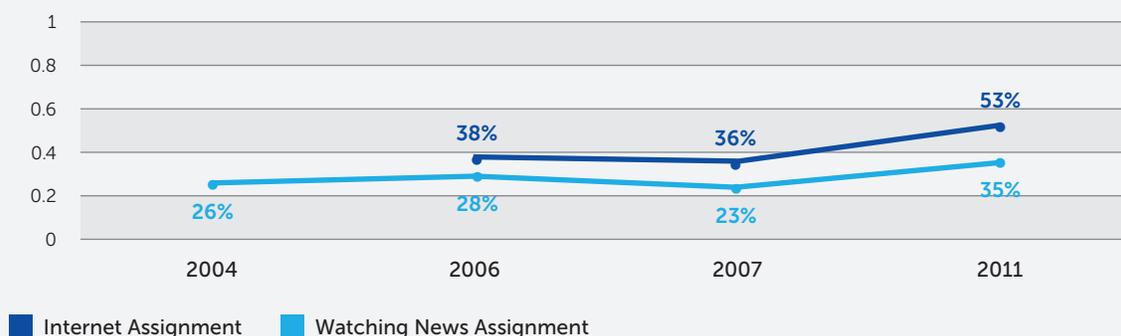
### Teacher Use of Media for Homework Assignments

(percent agreeing)



### Homework: More Internet and More News Assignments

(percent of high school teachers assigning)

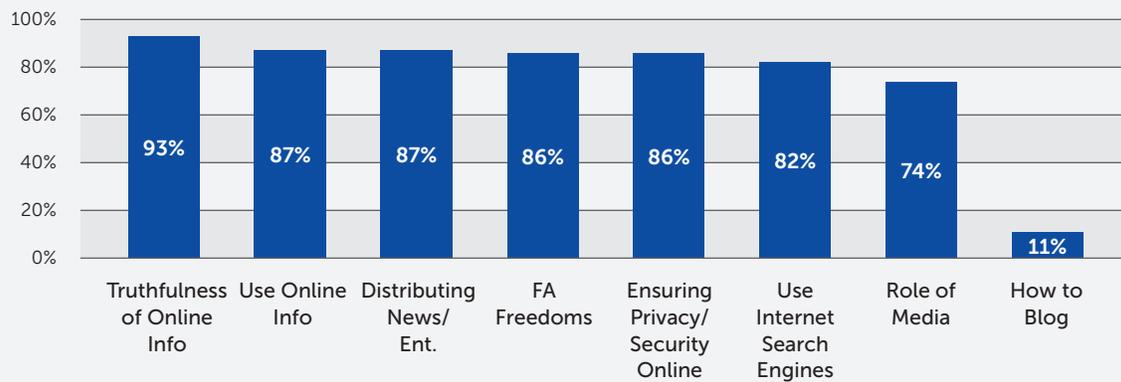


## 7. Most Teachers Feel that Digital Media Literacy Should Be Part of the School Curriculum

The vast majority (93 percent) of teachers feel that it is very important for high schools to teach students how to assess the truthfulness of information that they get online.

In the chart below, strong majorities also believe that schools should be teaching students how to distinguish between news and entertainment (87 percent) in media content, representing a 12-point increase since 2007. Teaching students how to use online information (87 percent), about First Amendment freedoms (86 percent), how to keep safe and protect privacy online (86 percent) and how to use Internet search engines. All are regarded as “very important” by more than four teachers in five.

### Teachers: It is “Very Important” for Students to Learn About...



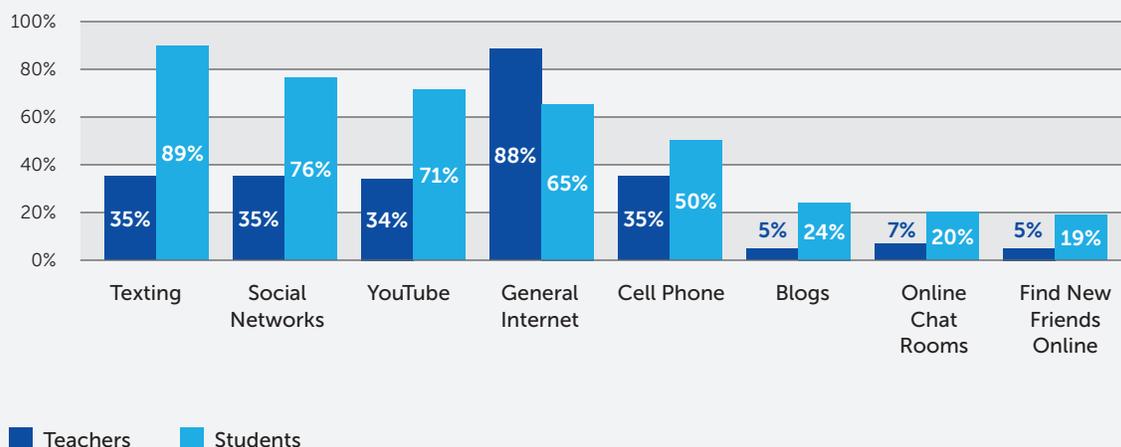
## 8. Teachers and Students Have Different Digital News Habits

When it comes to freedom of expression in high school, students and teachers differ in their willingness to extend students' rights. For example:

- Student use of the digital media for news varies significantly from the news and information consumption habits of their teachers:
- Teachers (88 percent) are significantly more likely than students (65 percent) to get news and information from Internet sources in general.
- Students (76 percent) are much more likely than teachers (35 percent) to consume news and information regularly from social networks, and from mobile devices (50 percent for students, 35 percent for teachers).
- Big gaps appear when the survey asks about sending text messages at least several times per week (89 percent of the students, 35 percent of the teachers) and watching videos online (71 percent of the students to 34 percent of the teachers).
- Students are also more likely than their teachers to post things online, find friends online and participate in online discussions.

### Digital Media Habits: Students vs. Teachers

(percent using at least several times per week)



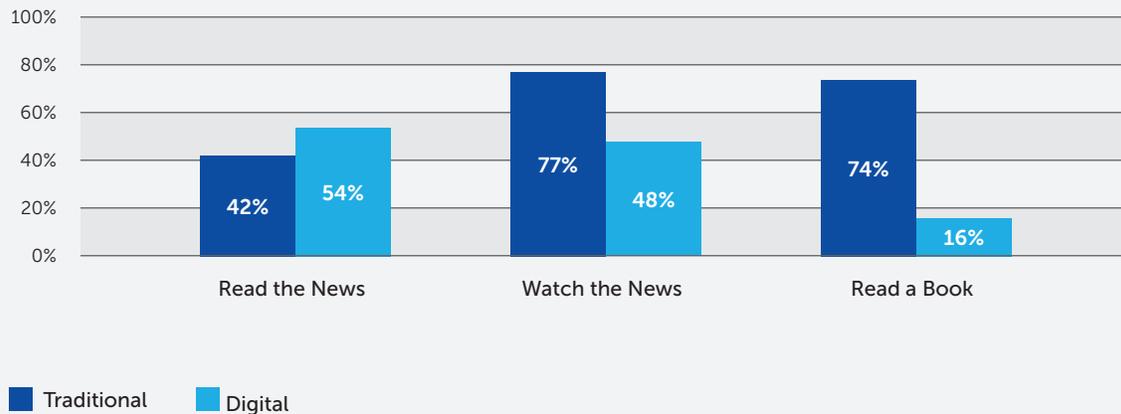
## 9. For Written Stories, Digital Media Overtake Traditional Media as Preferred Source

Reflecting national trends, students are more likely to go online to read news stories (54 percent say they do this daily) than they are to read a news article in print form (42 percent).

But students are still more likely to read from a printed book (74 percent report doing this daily) and watch video on TV news (77 percent daily) than they are to read from an electronic book (16 percent daily) or watch news videos online (48 percent) for news consumption. As broadband continues to increase, student digital viewing of video news may continue to increase.

### Student Use of Media: Traditional vs. Digital

(percent reporting daily consumption)



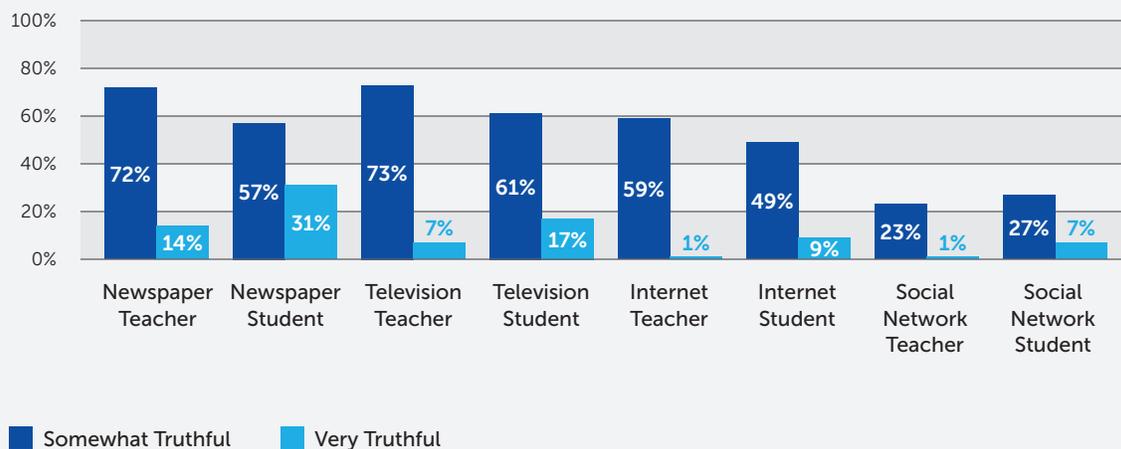
Also, while nearly all students (98 percent) say they have in-person conversations with friends every day, fully 81 percent have daily digital conversations with friends.

Interestingly, despite the large-scale student use of digital media, when students were asked whether they prefer to communicate with friends online or in person, an overwhelming majority (93 percent) prefer in-person conversations.

## 10. Newspapers and Television Regarded as Most Trusted News Sources by Students and Teachers; Majorities Question Veracity of Information on Social Networks

Both students and teachers think that the news and information they get in newspapers and on television is more truthful than what they get on the Internet, on social network sites in particular. Students, however, are more skeptical of traditional media than teachers. And the teachers surveyed were more skeptical about social media than students.

### Percent Who Believe Media Sources are “Somewhat Truthful” or “Very Truthful”



## Survey Methodology

This project was designed by Dr. Kenneth Dautrich, who is also responsible for the survey analysis and writing of this report.

This survey is the fourth in a series of surveys of high school students and teachers sponsored by Knight Foundation. Previous surveys were conducted in 2004, 2006 and 2007. The initial survey sampled over 300 high schools in the United States. For the 2006, 2007 and 2011 surveys, schools were randomly sampled from the schools that participated in the 2004 survey.

The overall design for conducting this project featured a multistage cluster sampling methodology.

Employing this technique produced a scientific, and thus generalizable, survey of both public and private high school students and teachers in the United States. This technique involved drawing a representative national sample of 50 high schools in the United States. Survey questions were vetted with high school educators and those familiar with media literacy.

For each of these 50 schools, a phone call was placed to the principal, asking if that school would be willing to participate in the project. Thirty-four principals agreed to have their schools participate— a high response rate of 68 percent, thus enhancing our confidence that the sample is highly representative. The principal coordinated the administration of surveys to all students and teachers in each school.

Copies of the surveys that were administered to students and teachers may be found in the appendix to this report.

The field period for the survey began in April 2011 and closed in June 2011.

In total, 12,090 students and 900 teachers completed the questionnaires.

For the student survey, the results are accurate to within a margin of plus or minus 1 percentage point, at the 95 percent level of confidence. For the teachers, the results are accurate to within a plus or minus 3.5 percentage points.

A discussion of a regression analysis is presented in finding number 1 of this report. The dependent variable in this analysis of the student data is question 6a (level of agreement/ disagreement with the statement “people should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.” Independent variables included in the analysis include Q2d, Q1, Q20, Q19, Q11b, and Q11c. The following table depicts the statistical significance, unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients for each of these independent variables:

Question	Significance Level	Unstandardized	Standardized
Q2d (frequency of social networking)	.000	.091	.116
Q1 (grade in high school)	.000	.083	.086
Q20 (high school GPA)	.000	.131	.113
Q19 (family financial situation)	.328	.013	.009
Q11b (number of print news stories read daily)	.138	.007	.007
Q11c (number of TV news reports viewed daily)	.816	.001	.003

## About the Author

Professor Ken Dautrich is a senior consultant at The Pert Group in Farmington, Conn. He teaches public opinion and public policy at the University of Connecticut.

His books include: *American Government: Historical, Popular and Global Perspectives* (Wadsworth, 2011), *The Future of the First Amendment* (Roman and Littlefield, 2008), *The First Amendment and the Media in the Court of Public Opinion* (Cambridge University Press, 2002) and *How the News Media Fail the American Voter* (Columbia University Press, 1999).

Dr. Dautrich founded and formerly directed the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut, and has been a senior research fellow at the Heldrich Center for Workforce Development at Rutgers University as well as a research fellow at the Media Studies Center at Columbia University.

His professional credits include a series of polls for TIME Magazine on the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections, election night poll analyst at NBC News and public broadcasting commentary on the presidential election process.

He has conducted an annual survey on the State of the First Amendment for the First Amendment Center since 1997.

His Ph.D. is from Rutgers University.

# 2011 High School Student Survey

## 1. What grade are you currently in?

	2004	2006	2007	2011
9th	29%	30%	29%	30%
10th	27%	27%	29%	28%
11th	23%	24%	27%	25%
12th	19%	18%	15%	18%

## 2. How often, if at all, do you do each of the following:

a. Get news and information from online or Internet sources in general?

	2006	2007	2011
Every day	11%	25%	33%
Several times a week	20%	28%	32%
About once a week	20%	20%	18%
Less than once a week	20%	18%	12%
Never	29%	10%	6%

b. Get news and information from mobile devices such as a cell phone, Blackberry or iPhone?

	2007	2011
Every day	8%	31%
Several times a week	7%	19%
About once a week	7%	11%
Less than once a week	11%	13%
Never	67%	27%

c. Watch videos on websites such as YouTube or Google Video?

	2007	2011
Every day	13%	34%
Several times a week	26%	37%
About once a week	19%	15%
Less than once a week	24%	11%
Never	18%	3%

d. Use online social networking (such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr) to get news and information?

2011	
Every day	56%
Several times a week	20%
About once a week	7%
Less than once a week	6%
Never	10%

e. Text message or go online to instant message?

2011	
Every day	78%
Several times a week	11%
About once a week	3%
Less than once a week	3%
Never	5%

f. Go online to participate in online discussions or chat groups?

2011	
Every day	10%
Several times a week	10%
About once a week	10%
Less than once a week	18%
Never	53%

g. Post messages or opinions to online columns or blogs that may be read by the general public?

	2006	2007	2011
Every day	9%	7%	13%
Several times a week	11%	10%	11%
About once a week	12%	11%	11%
Less than once a week	16%	20%	18%
Never	52%	54%	47%

h. Try to find new friends online through social networks?

	2011
Every day	10%
Several times a week	9%
About once a week	12%
Less than once a week	24%
Never	45%

3. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt with the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Yes	58%	72%	68%	64%
No	42%	28%	32%	36%

4. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt primarily with journalism skills?

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Yes	21%	26%	26%	23%
No	79%	74%	74%	77%

5. Have you ever taken classes in high school that dealt with digital or media literacy skills (such as how to use search engines, how to tell if online information is true, how to blog or how to use information that you find online)?

	2011
Yes	50%
No	50%

6. For each of the following statements, please indicate if you agree or disagree:

a. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	51%	52%	43%	52%
Mildly agree	32%	33%	33%	36%
Mildly disagree	5%	5%	8%	5%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	4%	1%
Don't know	10%	10%	12%	6%

b. Students should be allowed to express their opinions about teachers and school administrators on Facebook without worrying about being punished by teachers or school administrators for what they say.

	2011
Strongly agree	40%
Mildly agree	29%
Mildly disagree	17%
Strongly disagree	9%
Don't know	5%

c. People should be allowed to post their own videos/photographs on the Internet without anyone's permission, including those who are in the videos/pictures.

	2011
Strongly agree	13%
Mildly agree	25%
Mildly disagree	34%
Strongly disagree	22%
Don't know	6%

d. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	40%	37%	33%	39%
Mildly agree	30%	32%	30%	31%
Mildly disagree	14%	16%	15%	17%
Strongly disagree	7%	7%	9%	7%
Don't know	9%	8%	13%	6%

e. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	8%	7%	8%	6%
Mildly agree	8%	9%	8%	6%
Mildly disagree	11%	12%	12%	12%
Strongly disagree	63%	64%	60%	67%
Don't know	10%	8%	11%	9%

f. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	24%	26%	26%	30%
Mildly agree	27%	28%	28%	29%
Mildly disagree	22%	23%	21%	21%
Strongly disagree	14%	13%	11%	10%
Don't know	13%	10%	14%	10%

g. Online websites should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of the content.

	2011
Strongly agree	28%
Mildly agree	30%
Mildly disagree	21%
Strongly disagree	10%
Don't know	11%

h. High school students should be allowed to report on controversial issues in their student newspapers without the approval of school authorities.

	2011
Strongly agree	29%
Mildly agree	32%
Mildly disagree	20%
Strongly disagree	8%
Don't know	11%

**7. Which of the following do you spend the most time using?**

	2011
Facebook	32%
Twitter	1%
Tumblr	2%
Texting	64%

- 8. The First Amendment became part of the U.S Constitution more than 200 years ago. Here is what it says: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble; and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."**

Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, how do you feel about the following statement: **The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.**

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	12%	18%	12%	7%
Mildly agree	23%	27%	20%	17%
Mildly disagree	19%	16%	21%	22%
Strongly disagree	25%	21%	25%	31%
Don't know	21%	19%	21%	23%

- 9. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?**

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Personally think about	27%	24%	25%	29%
Take for granted	36%	42%	38%	38%
Don't know	37%	34%	36%	33%

**10. Following are a number of places where you may get information. Please indicate how truthful you think that news and information is from each source:**

a. Television

2011	
Very truthful	17%
Somewhat truthful	61%
Somewhat untruthful	18%
Very untruthful	5%

b. Newspapers

2011	
Very truthful	31%
Somewhat truthful	57%
Somewhat untruthful	8%
Very untruthful	3%

c. Social Networks (texting, Facebook, etc.)

2011	
Very truthful	7%
Somewhat truthful	27%
Somewhat untruthful	45%
Very untruthful	21%

d. Internet Websites

2011	
Very truthful	9%
Somewhat truthful	49%
Somewhat untruthful	34%
Very untruthful	7%

**11. In a typical day, how many times do you do each of the following:**

a. Read a news article online.

2011	
0 times a day	46%
1-2 times a day	43%
More than 3 times a day	11%

b. Read a news article in print.

2011	
0 times a day	59%
1-2 times a day	36%
More than 3 times a day	6%

c. Watched a video news story on TV.

2011	
0 times a day	23%
1-2 times a day	58%
More than 3 times a day	19%

d. Watched a video news story online.

2011	
0 times a day	52%
1-2 times a day	38%
More than 3 times a day	10%

e. Had a conversation with a friend in person.

2011	
0 times a day	2%
1-2 times a day	8%
More than 3 times a day	90%

f. Had a conversation with a friend online.

2011	
0 times a day	19%
1-2 times a day	33%
More than 3 times a day	48%

g. Read from a printed book.

2011	
0 times a day	26%
1-2 times a day	48%
More than 3 times a day	26%

h. Read from an electronic book.

2011	
0 times a day	84%
1-2 times a day	12%
More than 3 times a day	4%

**13. Would you prefer to talk to a friend online or in person?**

2011	
Online	7%
In person	93%

**14. When you are social networking online, about how much time do you spend doing each of the following:**

a. Sharing personal information with your friends.

2011	
A lot	12%
Some	34%
A little	36%
Never	18%

b. Surfing to find what my friends have been up to.

2011	
A lot	22%
Some	34%
A little	28%
Never	16%

c. Finding out what is going on in school.

2011	
A lot	15%
Some	32%
A little	31%
Never	23%

e. Sharing personal opinions.

2011	
A lot	22%
Some	33%
A little	30%
Never	16%

f. Finding out what is happening in the world.

2011	
A lot	18%
Some	32%
A little	32%
Never	19%

**15. How important is it for people to do the following things:**

a. Vote in elections.

	2011
Very important	69%
Somewhat important	23%
Not too important	5%
Not at all important	3%

b. Keep informed about what is happening in the news.

	2011
Very important	58%
Somewhat important	34%
Not too important	6%
Not at all important	2%

c. Volunteer time to help in the community.

	2011
Very important	51%
Somewhat important	38%
Not too important	8%
Not at all important	3%

**16. What is your gender?**

	2004	2006	2011
Male	50%	50%	52%
Female	50%	50%	48%

**17. Are you Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?**

	2004	2006	2011
Yes	15%	12%	11%
No	85%	88%	89%

### 18. What race are you?

	2004	2006	2011
White/Caucasian	68%	73%	73%
Black/African-American	14%	11%	13%
American Indian	2%	1%	3%
Asian	4%	3%	5%
Other	12%	12%	6%

### 19. What is your family's current financial situation?

	2004	2006	2011
Rich	5%	4%	3%
Upper income	23%	24%	21%
Middle income	59%	61%	60%
Lower income	10%	9%	13%
Poor	4%	2%	3%

### 20. Which of the following grades is closest to your current overall grade point average?

	2004	2006	2011
A	28%	30%	33%
B	42%	45%	41%
C	23%	21%	22%
D	4%	3%	4%
F	2%	1%	1%

# 2011 High School Teacher Survey

## 1. What subject(s) do you currently teach?

	2004	2006	2011
Art/music/drama	8%	8%	7%
English	21%	18%	18%
Foreign language	8%	8%	7%
History	11%	8%	8%
Journalism	2%	2%	1%
Math	17%	14%	18%
Physical education	6%	6%	7%
Physical sciences	14%	12%	10%
Psychology	2%	1%	1%
Social studies	12%	12%	13%
Special education	9%	10%	12%
Other	26%	25%	26%

## 2. How often, if at all do you do each of the following:

a. Get news and information from online or Internet sources in general?

	2011
Every day	61%
Several times a week	27%
About once a week	7%
Less than once a week	5%
Never	0%

b. Get news and information from mobile devices such as a cell phone, Blackberry or iPhone?

	2011
Every day	24%
Several times a week	11%
About once a week	5%
Less than once a week	8%
Never	52%

c. Watch videos on websites such as YouTube or Google Video?

2011	
Every day	10%
Several times a week	24%
About once a week	23%
Less than once a week	32%
Never	11%

d. Use online social networking (such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr) to get news and information?

2011	
Every day	23%
Several times a week	12%
About once a week	8%
Less than once a week	12%
Never	45%

e. Text message or go online to instant message?

2011	
Every day	24%
Several times a week	11%
About once a week	5%
Less than once a week	12%
Never	48%

f. Go online to participate in online discussions or chat groups?

2011	
Every day	3%
Several times a week	4%
About once a week	5%
Less than once a week	21%
Never	67%

g. Post messages or opinions to online columns or blogs that may be read by the general public?

2011	
Every day	2%
Several times a week	3%
About once a week	5%
Less than once a week	18%
Never	72%

h. Try to find new friends online through social networks?

2011	
Every day	1%
Several times a week	2%
About once a week	4%
Less than once a week	19%
Never	74%

3. Overall, how would you rate the job that the American educational system does in teaching students about First Amendment freedoms?

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Excellent	7%	6%	7%	6%
Good	46%	42%	40%	43%
Fair	29%	33%	36%	27%
Poor	7%	9%	8%	6%
Don't know	11%	10%	9%	17%

4. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt with the First Amendment?

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Yes	24%	29%	26%	30%
No	76%	71%	74%	71%

**5. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt with free press and free speech topics?**

2011	
Yes	35%
No	65%

**6. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt with religious freedoms?**

2011	
Yes	33%
No	67%

**7. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt with freedom of association or right to petition topics?**

2011	
Yes	22%
No	78%

**8. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt primarily with journalism skills?**

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Yes	7%	8%	12%	12%
No	93%	92%	88%	88%

**9. During the past year, have you taught any classes that dealt with digital or media literacy skills (such as how to use search engines, how to tell if online information is true, how to blog or how to use information that you find online)?**

2011	
Yes	50%
No	50%

**10. During the past year, how often did you require as part of an assignment that your students do the following:**

a. Read newspaper or watch television news?

	2004	2006	2007	2011
On a weekly basis	14%	17%	12%	22%
On a monthly basis	12%	11%	11%	13%
On a quarterly basis	17%	16%	20%	16%
Once per year	12%	11%	19%	12%
Never	44%	45%	38%	36%

b. Do research using the Internet?

	2006	2007	2011
On a weekly basis	12%	11%	28%
On a monthly basis	26%	25%	25%
On a quarterly basis	34%	29%	25%
Once per year	14%	18%	10%
Never	14%	17%	12%

c. Do research using Facebook?

	2011
On a weekly basis	2%
On a monthly basis	0%
On a quarterly basis	2%
Once per year	1%
Never	95%

d. Do research using Twitter?

	2011
On a weekly basis	0%
On a monthly basis	0%
On a quarterly basis	1%
Once per year	0%
Never	98%

e. Do research using YouTube?

2011	
On a weekly basis	4%
On a monthly basis	9%
On a quarterly basis	9%
Once per year	7%
Never	71%

**11. Overall, do you think that the emergence of social media has helped, harmed or had no effect on student learning in high school?**

2011	
Helped	39%
Harmed	49%
No effect	12%

**12. How important do you think it is that all students learn about each of the following in high school?**

a. The role of media in society.

2011	
Very important	74%
Somewhat important	25%
Not too important	2%
Not at all important	0%

b. First Amendment freedoms.

2011	
Very important	86%
Somewhat important	13%
Not too important	1%
Not at all important	0%

c. How to distinguish news from entertainment.

	2007	2011
Very important	75%	87%
Somewhat important	21%	11%
Not too important	2%	1%
Not at all important	1%	0%

d. How to use Internet search engines.

	2011
Very important	82%
Somewhat important	16%
Not too important	2%
Not at all important	1%

e. How to tell if online information is truthful.

	2011
Very important	93%
Somewhat important	6%
Not too important	0%
Not at all important	0%

f. How to use information that is found online.

	2011
Very important	87%
Somewhat important	12%
Not too important	0%
Not at all important	0%

g. How to blog.

	2011
Very important	11%
Somewhat important	32%
Not too important	42%
Not at all important	14%

h. How to ensure privacy and security when working online.

	2011
Very important	86%
Somewhat important	13%
Not too important	1%
Not at all important	0%

**13. The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 200 years ago. Here is what it says: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”**

**Based on your own feelings about the First Amendment, how do you feel about the following statement: The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees.**

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	9%	12%	8%	6%
Mildly agree	20%	21%	20%	19%
Mildly disagree	16%	12%	20%	18%
Strongly disagree	50%	50%	43%	49%
Don't know	5%	5%	8%	9%

**14. Are the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment something you personally think about or are they something you take for granted?**

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Personally think about	50%	49%	49%	53%
Take for granted	46%	47%	47%	42%
Don't know	4%	4%	5%	5%

**15. For each of the following statements, please indicate how much you agree or disagree:**

a. People should be allowed to express unpopular opinions.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	72%	75%	62%	65%
Mildly agree	25%	21%	32%	30%
Mildly disagree	2%	3%	3%	3%
Strongly disagree	1%	1%	2%	1%
Don't know	1%	0%	2%	2%

b. Students should be allowed to express their opinions about teachers and school administrators on Facebook without worrying about being punished by teachers or school administrators for what they say.

	2011
Strongly agree	12%
Mildly agree	24%
Mildly disagree	23%
Strongly disagree	38%
Don't know	4%

c. People should be allowed to post their own videos/photographs on the Internet without anyone's permission, including those who are in the videos/pictures.

	2011
Strongly agree	4%
Mildly agree	8%
Mildly disagree	22%
Strongly disagree	64%
Don't know	2%

d. Musicians should be allowed to sing songs with lyrics that others might find offensive.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	28%	35%	25%	32%
Mildly agree	30%	29%	30%	33%
Mildly disagree	19%	19%	21%	17%
Strongly disagree	21%	15%	22%	16%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%	2%

e. People should be allowed to burn or deface the American flag as a political statement.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	15%	16%	12%	16%
Mildly agree	13%	13%	12%	13%
Mildly disagree	11%	11%	11%	11%
Strongly disagree	59%	58%	61%	58%
Don't know	2%	2%	3%	3%

f. Newspapers should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of a story.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	53%	57%	49%	52%
Mildly agree	27%	22%	28%	26%
Mildly disagree	12%	13%	15%	11%
Strongly disagree	6%	7%	5%	8%
Don't know	2%	1%	3%	3%

g. Online websites should be allowed to publish freely without government approval of the content.

	2011
Strongly agree	40%
Mildly agree	30%
Mildly disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	10%
Don't know	4%

h. High school students should be allowed to report controversial issues in their student newspaper without the approval of school authorities.

	2004	2006	2007	2011
Strongly agree	13%	13%	12%	11%
Mildly agree	26%	27%	23%	24%
Mildly disagree	27%	28%	24%	29%
Strongly disagree	33%	31%	38%	33%
Don't know	1%	1%	3%	2%

**16. Following are a number of places where you may get information. Please indicate how truthful you think that the news and information is from each source.**

**a. Television**

<b>2011</b>	
Very truthful	7%
Somewhat truthful	73%
Somewhat untruthful	17%
Very untruthful	3%

**b. Newspapers**

<b>2011</b>	
Very truthful	14%
Somewhat truthful	72%
Somewhat untruthful	13%
Very untruthful	1%

**c. Social Networks (texting, Facebook, etc.)**

<b>2011</b>	
Very truthful	1%
Somewhat truthful	23%
Somewhat untruthful	50%
Very untruthful	27%

**d. Internet Websites**

<b>2011</b>	
Very truthful	1%
Somewhat truthful	59%
Somewhat untruthful	36%
Very untruthful	4%

**17. What is your gender?**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2011</b>
Male	42%	42%	42%
Female	58%	58%	58%

**18. For how many years have you been teaching at the high school level?**

	<b>2004</b>	<b>2011</b>
5 years or less	28%	24%
6-10 years	20%	21%
11-15 years	13%	19%
More than 15 years	39%	37%

*Note: Some columns do not add up to 100 percent because percentages of each answer were rounded off to the nearest whole number.*

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