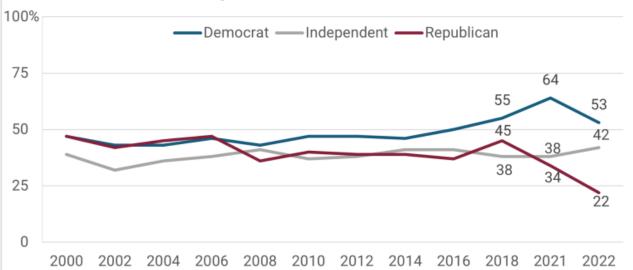
Trust in science has become a divided issue:

Large partisan gap on confidence in the scientific community remained as Republicans continued to lose trust.

Percent of adults who had a great deal of confidence



Question: [Scientific community] I am going to name some institutions in this country. As far as the people running these institutions are concerned, would you say you have a great deal of confidence, only some confidence, or hardly any confidence at all in them?

Source: General Social Survey, the latest conducted May 5 - December 20, 2022.



***NORC**

APNORC.org

- A definition of journalism: A set of transparent, independent procedures aimed at gathering, verifying & reporting truthful information to citizens in a democracy
- A definition of science: A set of transparent, independent procedures aimed at gathering & testing information to explain and understand phenomena in the natural world.

Why isn't news coverage of science more effective?

- Some journalists don't fully understand it
- Some journalists don't explain it well
- Some journalists assume it's unassailable
- Some journalists don't look at it critically
- Some journalists don't address public concerns

Even knowledgeable science reporters can have issues:

- They're not always great writers
- They sometimes use too much scientific jargon
- They're sometimes not critical enough
- They sometimes have a narrow point of view
- They're not experts on everything

Issues with audience beliefs about science:

- Science is an ongoing process not always well understood
- Continual testing and questioning existing research
- There is often no single, correct answer for all time
- New studies lead to reevaluating previous assumptions & practices
- Influencers can portray evolution as contradiction
- Can promote doubt about all science
- For uninvolved audience, simple (sometimes misguided) ideas are easier to grasp than complex realities
- This can be exploited in the digital age

General types of science coverage:

Outcome

- Just reports general conclusions of studies
- Little or nothing about how they were reached

Method

- Reports conclusions of studies in some depth
- Briefly touches on methods involved in arriving at results

Process

- Reports both conclusions and process in finding them
- Aims to enlighten reader

Connection to society

- Ties science topic directly to human activities
- Can involve political issues, health or environment policies, etc.

Scientist

- Focuses on people involved a scientist or group of scientists
- Can look at specific project or whole career

Problematic

- Questions outcomes or processes; sometimes science itself
- Can be valid if reporter has understanding of subject

Types of coverage

- Outcome
- Method
- Process
- Connection to society
- Scientist
- Problematic

Reporter Roles

- Disseminator
- Interpreter
- Watchdog
- Adversary
- Mobilizer

Scientific literacy:

- Basic definition public's general understanding of science
- Not high, especially among people without higher education
- How much should the average person know?
- Who decides this?
- Do journalists' attempts at education actually work?
- Heavy-handed treatment can backfire
- Politicized topics can make people dig their heels in
- What should journalists do?