

National Speech Index: January 2024 Topline Results

When it comes to whether people are able to freely express their views do you think things in America are heading in the RIGHT or WRONG direction?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Heading in the RIGHT direction	314	31
Heading in the WRONG direction	686	69

The First Amendment became part of the U.S. Constitution more than 225 years ago. This 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 thoughts about the First Amendment, can you tell us what you think about the following statement: "The First Amendment goes too far in the rights it guarantees."

Response	Frequency	Percent
Does not describe my thoughts at all	443	44
Slightly describes my thoughts	88	9
Somewhat describes my thoughts	165	17
Mostly describes my thoughts	158	16
Describes my thoughts completely	146	15

How secure do you think the right to freedom of speech is in America today?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Not at all secure	286	29
Somewhat secure	471	47
Very secure	176	18
Completely secure	67	7

Think specifically about your life and all the interactions you have had in the past month. How often have you watched what you said – that is, possibly censored your comments, questions, or words?

Response	Frequency	Percent
Never	188	19
Rarely, once or twice	245	24
Occasionally, a handful of times	315	31
Fairly often, a couple times a week	172	17
Very often, nearly every day	80	8
(Missing)	1	0

There are always some people whose ideas are considered offensive or dangerous by other people. Of the following ideas presented below, which one do you consider the most offensive?

Response	Frequency	Percent
All whites are racist oppressors	188	19
America got what it deserved on 9/11	180	18
January 6th was a peaceful protest	121	12
Abortion should be completely illegal	112	11
Black Lives Matter is a hate group	79	8
The federal government should confiscate all guns	57	6
Transgender people have a mental disorder	64	6
Collateral damage in Gaza is justified for the sake of Israeli security	47	5
We shouldn't ignore differences in IQ scores by race, ethnicity, and gender when making important decisions	46	5
From the river to the sea Palestine will be free	36	4
The police are just as racist as the Klu Klux Klan	42	4
The Catholic church is a pedophilic institution	28	3

Do you think your local community should **ALLOW** or **NOT ALLOW** someone to give a public speech who has previously said that [insert what respondent said was the most offensive].

Response	Frequency	Percent
My local community definitely should not allow this person to give a public speech	292	29
My local community probably should not allow this person to give a public speech	231	23
My local community probably should allow this person to give a public speech	259	26
My local community definitely should allow this speaker to give a public speech	218	22

Do you think the local college should **ALLOW** or **NOT ALLOW** someone to teach there who has previously said that [insert what respondent said was the most offensive].

Response	Frequency	Percent
The local college definitely should not allow this person to teach at the local college	382	38
The local college probably should not allow this person to teach at the local college	310	31
The local college probably should allow this person to teach at the local college	190	19
The local college definitely should allow this person to teach at the local college	119	12

Do you think the public library should **KEEP** or