

WHAT MAKES AN AMERICAN?

OREGONIANS PRIORITIZE CIVIC KNOWLEDGE AND PARTICIPATION

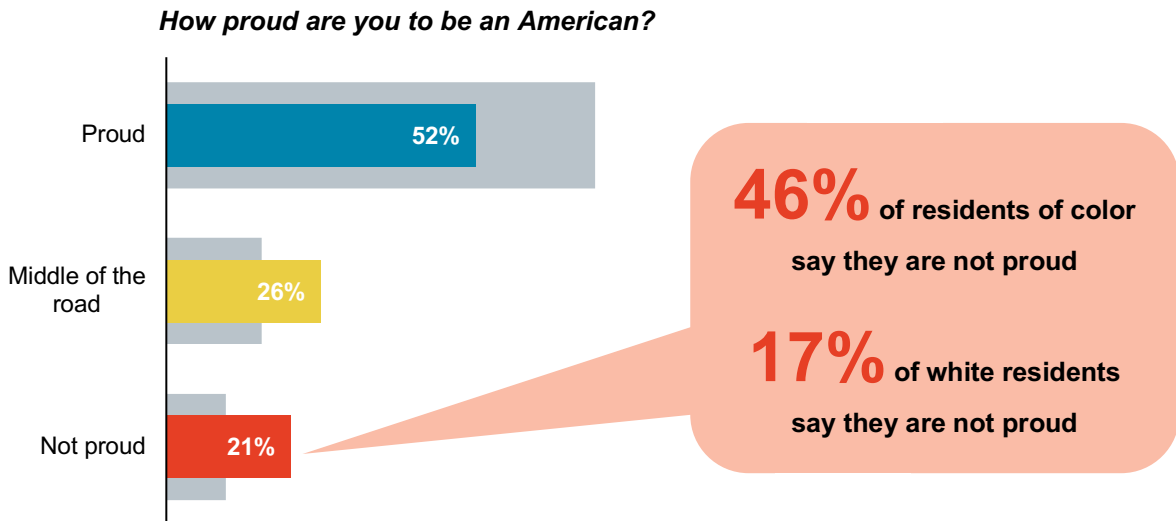
DHM Panel June Survey Results
July 16, 2019

As Independence Day celebrations wrap up, DHM and others across the nation have been reflecting on what it means to be an American. We asked Oregonians for their opinions on the matters of national pride, Americanness, and citizenship to see how they compare nationally.

These findings come from the June 2019 fielding of our DHM Panel. The survey was conducted from June 12 to 18, 2019, and surveyed 604 Oregonians. The results were weighted by age, gender, area of the state, political party, and level of education to ensure a representative sample of Oregonians. The margin of error for this survey is $\pm 4\%$.

Oregonians express less pride in the country than Americans in general.

Half of Oregonians say that they are proud to be American, less than the 72% that said so in a 2018 national polling¹. Political affiliation and ethnicity are significant factors in determining national pride. Republicans are much prouder to be American than their counterparts across the state: 85% of Republicans are proud, compared to 30% of Democrats. Oregon's residents of color are significantly more likely to say they are not proud to be an American than white residents (46% vs. 17%).



¹ <https://news.gallup.com/poll/236420/record-low-extremely-proud-americans.aspx>

21%
say the United States is better than all other countries.

Along with being less proud, Oregonians are also less nationalistic than Americans as a whole: 21% of Oregonians say the United States is better than all other countries compared to 29% nationwide² in 2017. The remainder of Oregonians are split between saying that the US is one of the best countries (39%) or that there are other countries better than the US (36%).

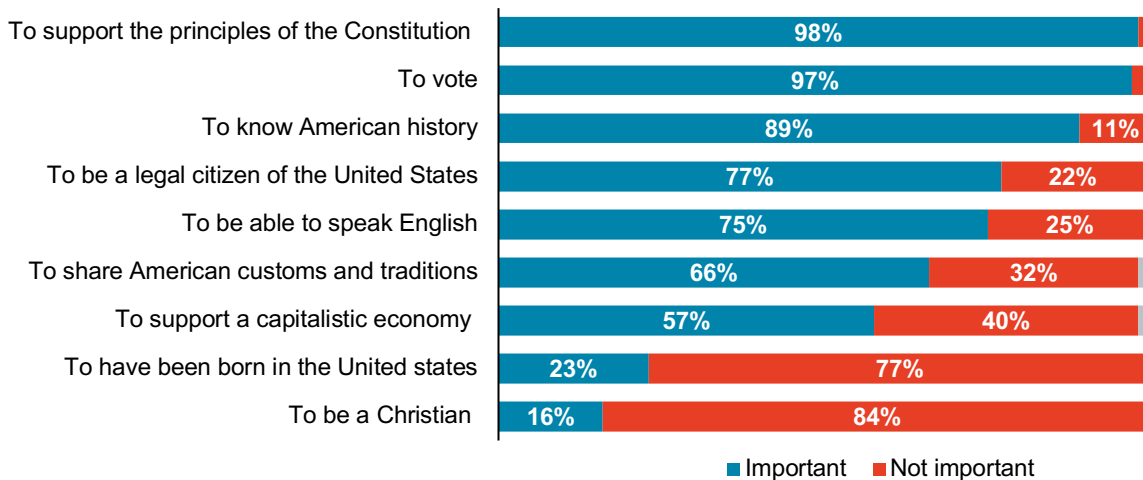
Here too, political affiliation is a significant factor. Republicans (50%) are more likely than Democrats (4%) to report that the US is better than all other countries. Meanwhile, Democrats (58%) are more likely than Republicans (4%) to say that there are other countries better than the US

Oregonians’ outlook on freedom and equality in the US leans negative.

Since DHM’s 2015 panel, Oregonians’ outlook about the future of the United States has become less optimistic. Today, 29% of Oregonians report that the US is becoming a country with fewer personal freedoms, up from 19% in 2015. Women (36%) are more likely to anticipate declines in personal freedoms compared to men (21%). Oregonians’ outlook on equality in the US has become less optimistic as well: 25% say that the country is becoming a place with less equality, up from 14% in 2015. Democrats (40%) are more likely to report that the US is becoming a country with less equality while fewer Republicans (7%) say the same.

Civic knowledge and engagement more important to Oregonians than cultural assimilation.

According to Oregonians, the most important characteristics for being truly American are to support the principles of the Constitution, to vote, and to know American history. Clear majorities feel that legal citizenship, English language ability, sharing American customs, and supporting capitalism are important. Being born in the country and being a Christian are not important to most Oregonians.



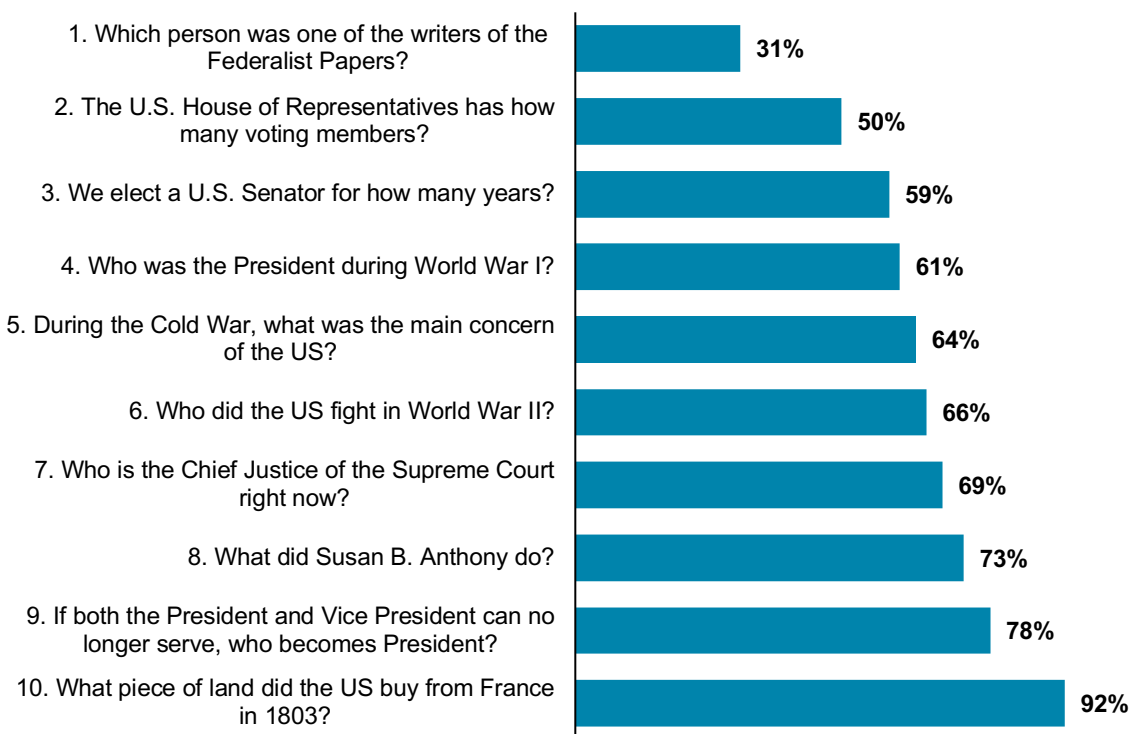
² <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/06/30/most-americans-say-the-u-s-is-among-the-greatest-countries-in-the-world/>

Supporting the principles of the Constitution, voting, and knowing American history were consistently ranked as important by Oregonians regardless of demographic differences. However, the remaining six items were ranked as important much more frequently by Republicans than by their counterparts. Notably, republicans are likely to believe that being a legal citizen (99%), speaking English (96%), sharing American customs (97%), and supporting capitalism (93%) are important factors in determining Americanness while significantly smaller percentages of Democrats would agree (35-56%).

Three in ten Oregonians would fail the USIS Civics Test.

The United States Immigration Services (USIS) Civics Test is a required part of the permanent residency and naturalization processes by which someone not born in the United States can lawfully abide in the country on a long-term basis or become a citizen. Receiving a Green Card or becoming a US citizen allows individuals to access many of the rights and privileges held by natural-born citizens, including the rights to vote in local elections and to obtain government benefits. Those applying are asked ten questions from a 100-question bank as open-ended interview style questions.

As shown in the previous section, 89% of Oregonians say it is important for Americans to know the country's history. We asked our panel ten of the questions from the 100-question bank in a multiple-choice format and 66% received a passing score of six or more correct answers. The ten questions asked are listed below, ordered from the lowest to highest percentage of Oregonians who answered correctly. Quiz yourself to see how you compare using the answer bank at the bottom of the page.



Answer Bank

1. James Madison	6. Japan, Germany, Italy
2. 435	7. John Roberts
3. 6	8. Fought for women's rights
4. Woodrow Wilson	9. Speaker of the House
5. Communism	10. The Louisiana Territory