"Shut up and Dribble" Attitude
More Prevalent among Republicans

Results Reveal Sharp Partisan Divides in Perceived Roles of Athletes and Celebrities

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A majority of Republicans believe professional athletes should stay out of politics and causes, with a sizable portion saying it is completely inappropriate for them to do so, according to a new national poll conducted for the University of Delaware's Center for Political Communication.

More than 40% of Republicans say it is "not at all appropriate" for professional athletes to speak out about political issues or causes, compared to approximately 5% of Democrats. At the same time, nearly 60% of Democrats say such speech is "very appropriate," with just over 8% of Republicans saying so. Independents are more evenly distributed across the scale.

The national poll, conducted by RABA Research, comes just weeks after conservative FOX News host Laura Ingraham rebuked LeBron James for "talking politics" and said, "Keep the political comments to yourselves ... Shut up and dribble."

More recently, the Sacramento Kings players and owner have spoken out publicly about the fatal police shooting of 22-year old Stephon Clark, followed by the joint release of a PSA with the Boston Celtics calling for "accountability."

"What we are witnessing is a divide in terms of how Americans think about political speech— in particular, who gets to speak," says Dr. Dannagal Young, Associate Professor of Communication at the University of Delaware.

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"How appropriate is it for professional athletes to speak out about political issues or causes?"

- **Republicans**
  - Not at all: 4.7%
  - Not very: 17.3%
  - Somewhat: 42.9%
  - Very: 33.5%

- **Independents**
  - Not at all: 12.7%
  - Not very: 16.5%
  - Somewhat: 25.1%
  - Very: 33.1%

- **Democrats**
  - Not at all: 15.4%
  - Not very: 8.2%
  - Somewhat: 57.5%
  - Very: 33.1%
"Part of this divide stems from the fact that celebrities and athletes tend to speak out for liberal causes. In addition, liberals have a history of political expression in non-political realms dating back to the music, art, and activism of the 1960s counterculture. Hence, it is unsurprising that we find more support for celebrity political expression among Democrats than Republicans."

These divides are further exemplified in responses to the prompt, "Professional athletes are paid to play the game, not share their political opinion." While nearly 25% of Democrats strongly agreed with this statement, a majority — 79% — of Republicans strongly agreed.

Respondents were also asked whether such speech constitutes First Amendment rights when celebrities speak out about politics. Among Democrats, 88% said they strongly agreed with the statement, "When celebrities speak out about politics, they are exercising their First Amendment rights," compared with 69% of Republicans.

**METHODOLOGY**

607 interviews among American adults were conducted March 21-22, 2018 via online interviews. The results were weighted to ensure proportional response. Margin of error for these results is +/-4.1%. Party ID was recoded to three categories for graphic purposes (Democrats = 298; Independents = 127; and Republicans = 182). For questions on methodology, please email: info@rabaresearch.com or call 917-685-4819. The National Agenda Opinion Project research is funded by the University of Delaware's nonpartisan Center for Political Communication (CPC). The study was supervised by the CPC's Associate Director, Lindsay Hoffman (Associate Professor), Dannagal Young (Associate Professor), and Phil Jones (Associate Professor) in the Departments of Communication and Political Science & International Relations.
Q1. In general, how APPROPRIATE do you think it is for the following kinds of people to speak out about political issues or causes?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Person</th>
<th>Not at all appropriate</th>
<th>Not very appropriate</th>
<th>Somewhat appropriate</th>
<th>Very appropriate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Late-night comedians</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollywood actors</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional athletes</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional athletes are paid to play the game, not share their political opinions.</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
It is acceptable for award-winning actors to use their platform to discuss issues or causes.

When celebrities speak out about politics, they are exercising their first amendment rights.

Q3. How often do you try to watch or listen to the following (either on TV, radio, or online):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Channel</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>All the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Late Show with Stephen Colbert on CBS</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rush Limbaugh Show</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannity with Sean Hannity on FOX News</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rachel Maddow Show on MSNBC</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Show with Trevor Noah on Comedy Central</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q4. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement about you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When faced with a problem, I usually see the one best solution very quickly.</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't like situations that are uncertain.</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's frustrating to listen to someone who cannot make up his or her mind.</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q5. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither Agree nor Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thinking is not my idea of fun.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only think as hard as I have to.</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would prefer complex to simple problems.</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q6. What is the highest level of education you have attained?

- Less than high school: 2%
- High school graduate: 12%
- Some college: 22%
- Two-year degree: 8%
- Four-year degree: 28%
- Professional degree: 25%
- Doctorate: 3%
Q7. In general, how interested are you in what is going on with politics and public affairs?

Extremely interested 46%
Somewhat interested 36%
Not very interested 11%
Not at all interested 8%

Q8. In general, how closely do you follow politics?

Extremely closely 34%
Somewhat closely 42%
Not very closely 17%
Not at all 7%

Q9. In politics today, do you consider yourself a...

Strong Democrat 13%
Democrat 17%
Independent that Leans Democratic 19%
Independent 21%
Independent that Leans Republican 12%
Republican 14%
Strong Republican 4%
Other (please specify)

Q10. In general, would you describe your political views as...

Very liberal 11%
Liberal 18%
Somewhat liberal 13%
Moderate 24%
Somewhat conservative 10%
Conservative 11%
Very conservative 7%
Other 7%
Q11. What is your race?
African-American 5%
White 78%
Hispanic 7%
Asian 2%
Other 3%
Prefer not to say 6%

Q12. Age
18-29 17%
30-44 29%
45-60 15%
> 60 38%

Q13. Gender
Male 47%
Female 53%

Q14. Household Income
$0-$9,999 7%
$10,000-$24,999 10%
$25,000-$49,999 16%
$50,000-$74,999 16%
$75,000-$99,999 12%
$100,000-$124,999 8%
$125,000-$149,999 4%
$150,000-$174,999 4%
$175,000-$199,999 2%
$200,000+ 6%
Prefer not to answer 15%