

SOCIAL MEDIA AND JOURNALISM

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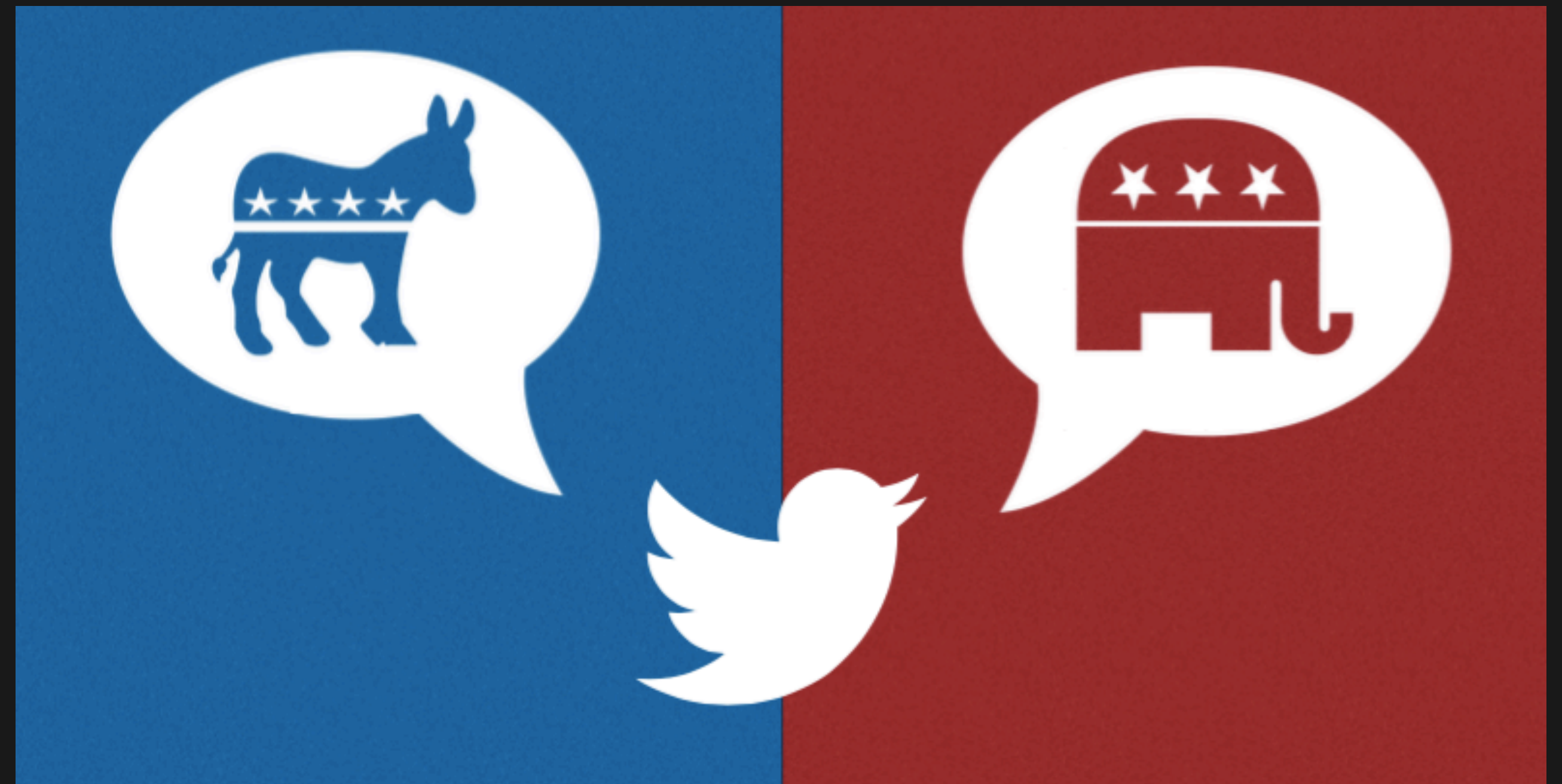
Importance of Social Media

- 46 percent of Americans consume news through social media, and 37 percent of Americans share news through social media.
- Journalists must understand and use social media to communicate with news audiences.
- Social media platforms have expanded and complicated journalistic gatekeeping.
- Social media platforms have become sites for public discourse about the news—and increasingly, decision-makers about the boundaries of news—alongside sites for consuming it.



Consuming News on Social Media

- Relying on social media as one's dominant source of news can have a negative influence for knowledge and media literacy.
- 72 percent of Americans believe it's likely that social media sites censor political views they do not support.
- More than half of Americans believe that tech companies, including social media platforms, should be more regulated.



Journalistic Ethics on Social Media

- Journalists are not as free to share their personal opinions in social media posts.
- News outlets create and maintain their own social media guidelines for employees.
- Journalists should comport themselves according to the same ethical standards they use outside of social media.
- Social media platforms also provide sites of toxic digital attacks against journalists, especially female journalists and journalists of color.



Key Takeaways:

- Social media platforms have expanded and complicated journalistic gatekeeping in ways that impact users' trust, knowledge, and news consumption. It has also played a key role in reshaping news distribution.
- As of 2019, 46 percent of Americans consumed news through social media platforms and 37 percent of Americans shared news through social media platforms. This number continues to grow, and it has a huge financial impact on the journalism industry.
- Posting on social media can have much more complicated repercussions for journalists than for average users, depending on what they share. In particular, journalists must often moderate themselves on social media to reduce the appearance of bias or lack of professionalism. Today, many journalistic outlets have their own social media guidelines for employees.
- Social media platforms also provide sites of toxic digital attacks against journalists, especially female journalists and journalists of color. This can be especially troubling when journalists are attacked but must nevertheless maintain an online presence under organizational guidelines.