

OUR AGE OF UNCERTAINTY

# Who Is To Blame for the Government Shutdown

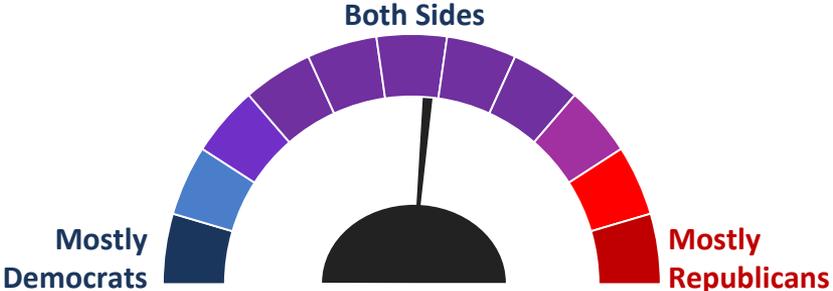
Ongoing Analysis of American Social Media

January 23, 2018

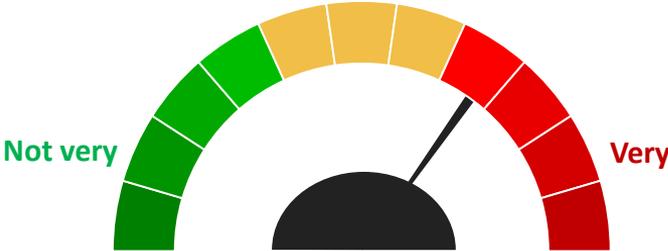
# Americans Still Angry and Blame Both Sides

*According to comments on Twitter, Facebook and Reddit*

Who is to blame for the shutdown?



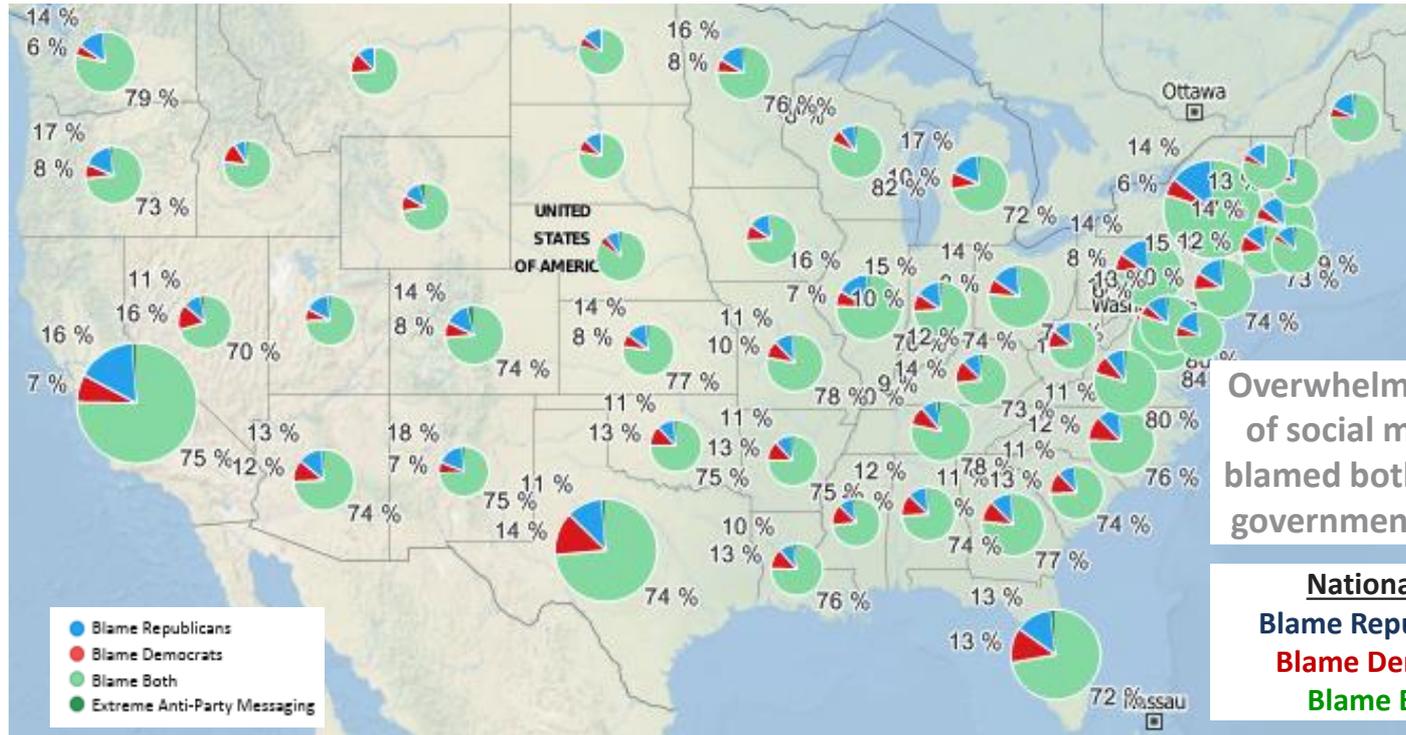
How Angry Are Americans?



Source: Ipsos analysis of ~420,000 Tweets/Facebook/Reddit Comments collected between 0000 EST -2400 EST, 1/21/2018



# “Both” Increasingly Blamed Across U.S.

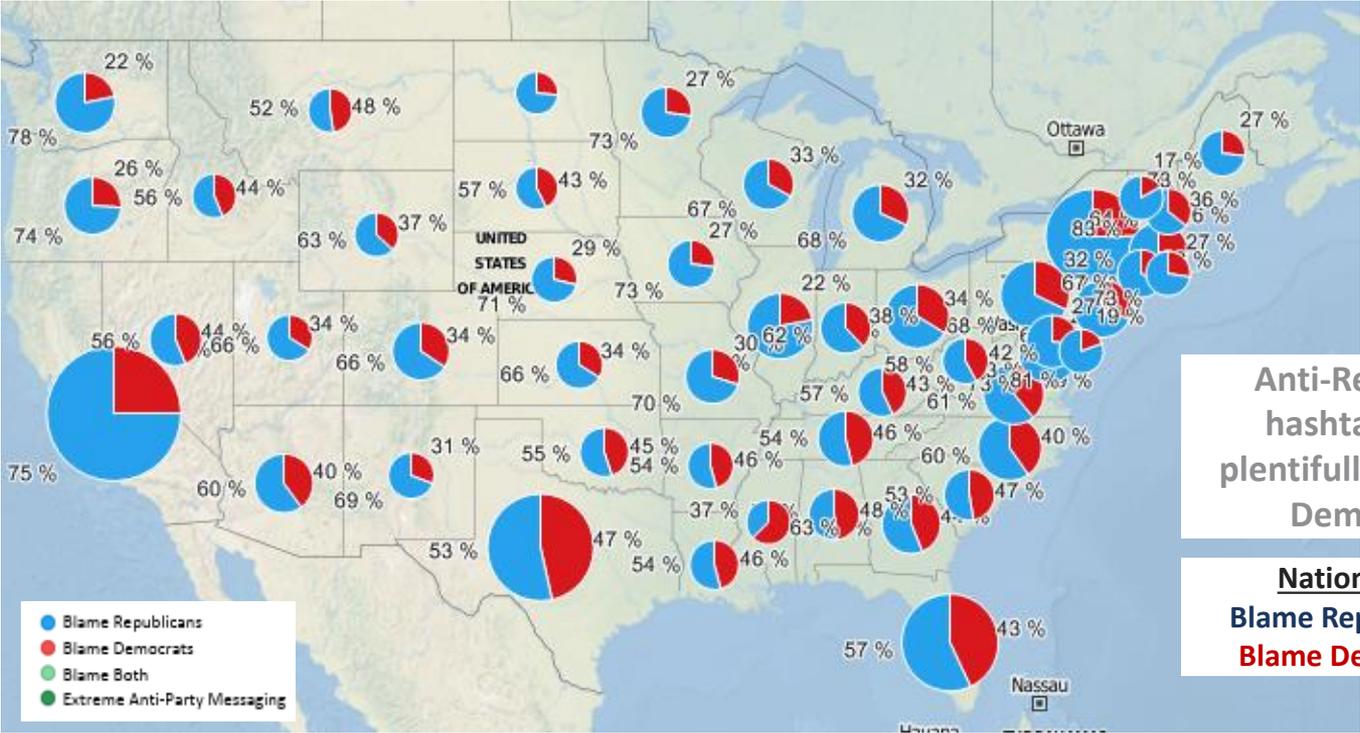


Overwhelming number of social media users blamed both parties for government shutdown

**National Average**  
 Blame Republicans: 13%  
 Blame Democrats: 9%  
 Blame Both: 78%

Source: Ipsos analysis of ~340,000 Tweets collected between 0000 EST -2400 EST, 1/21/2018

# Anti-Republican Messages Dominate Sunday



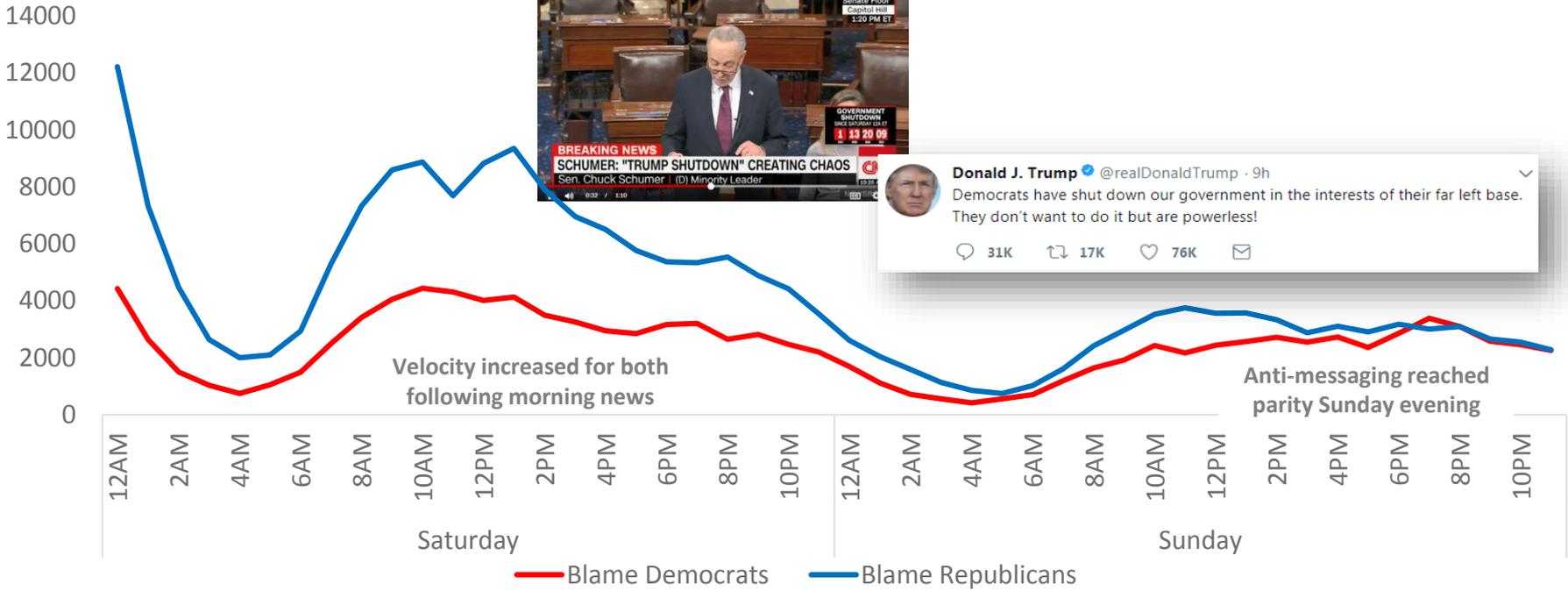
Anti-Republican hashtags more plentiful than anti-Democratic

National Average  
Blame Republicans: 64%  
Blame Democrats: 36%

Source: Ipsos analysis of ~340,000 Tweets collected between 0000 EST -2400 EST, 1/21/2018



# Day Two Velocity More Evenly Matched



Source: Ipsos analysis of ~420,000 Tweets/Facebook/Reddit collected between 0000 EST -2400 EST, 1/21/2018

# Methodology

Step 1: A random sample of 420,000 tweets, Facebook and Reddit statements about the government shutdown was collected from 0000 EST/2400 EST on 1/20-21/2018. The sample included both Democrat-leaning (e.g. #Trumpshutdown), Republican-leaning (e.g. #Schumersshutdown) and overtly neutral (e.g. #govtshutdown) hashtags and thematic statements. The sample represented an estimated 1/10 of the entire conversation taking place during this time.

Step 2: The average compound sentiment score (CSS) of comments mentioning different parties was calculated. The compound sentiment score is a continuous variable going from negative to positive and takes into consideration frequency of appearance of actors, organizations or topics next to, or associated with negative, positive and neutral comments. The lower the number, the more negative the sentiment. The CSS was calculated utilizing VADER lexicon in NLTK toolkit. (<https://github.com/cjhutto/vaderSentiment>) which has been specifically designed to extract measures of sentiment from social media. The CSS provides a useful characterization of whom did the American social media public blame for government shutdown.

*Reference: Hutto, C.J. & Gilbert, E.E. (2014). VADER: A Parsimonious Rule-based Model for Sentiment Analysis of Social Media Text. Eighth International Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (ICWSM-14). Ann Arbor, MI, June 2014.*

Step 3: The entire CSS-enriched sample was geo-coded and aggregated at the state level in order to provide a nation-wide view of the blame-related discussion. The characteristics included: 1) blame Republicans 2) blame Democrats 3) blame both 4) anti-party/anti-government messaging.

Step 4: Velocity of the pro-Democratic (e.g. #Trumpshutdown) vs. pro-Republican (e.g. #Schumersshutdown) messaging was calculated for entire time frame of the sample. Velocity is defined as speed of messaging per hour. Velocity provides a useful characteristic as to which side's narrative is winning and also helps to identify as to when a particular digital narrative is going on offensive.