News Item

Polarization in the Twittersphere: What 86 million tweets reveal about the political makeup of American Twitter users and how they engage with news | Medium

By Evette Treewater Alexander

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On Dec. 17, 2019, Knight Foundation released a two-part study analyzing the political dynamics of 86 million tweets. Download part one of the study [here](#), download part two of the study [here](#), and read an analysis below from Evette Alexander, Knight Foundation director for learning and impact.

The old adage remains true: birds of a feather flock together, even in the digital skies of social media.

In an effort to better understand the landscape of political news and engagement on Twitter, Knight Foundation commissioned a two-part study — "The Politics of Social Media" — to capture and analyze over 86 million tweets across the political spectrum and better understand journalists' viewpoint on the role they play in political conversations on the platform.

Led by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Associate Professor Deen Freelon from the School of Media and Journalism, [part one](#) uses an innovative ideological scoring algorithm to categorize users into political segments and explore how these segments behaved in relation to news issues and media outlets. While other studies have used scoring techniques in other capacities, or captured the self-reported political segmentation of Twitter users via survey, this is the first study to map ideological polarization on Twitter based on actual user behavior — in other words what they do, not what they say they do.

[...]

Source: [Polarization in the Twittersphere: What 86 million tweets reveal about the political makeup of American Twitter users and how they engage with news](#)