

Texas v. Johnson / Data Analysis: How Do Americans Feel about a Flag Desecration Amendment?

Directions: Review the data in the tables below. Then answer the Questions to Consider (page 2).

| Do you think burning the American flag is . . . | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|--------|------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|----------|-------|-----------------|------|------|
| | Total | Gender | | Age | | | | Race | | | | Political Party | | |
| | | Male | Female | < 30 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65+ | White | Black | Hispanic | Other | Dem. | Rep. | Ind. |
| An appropriate way to protest? | 16% | 20% | 12% | 26% | 20% | 12% | 7% | 13% | 29% | 17% | 17% | 31% | 5% | 11% |
| Not an appropriate way to protest? | 74% | 70% | 78% | 61% | 68% | 77% | 89% | 80% | 49% | 73% | 68% | 55% | 91% | 78% |

| Do you favor or oppose passing a constitutional amendment that would make it illegal to burn the American flag? | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|--------|------|-------|-------|-----|-------|-------|----------|-------|-----------------|------|------|
| | Total | Gender | | Age | | | | Race | | | | Political Party | | |
| | | Male | Female | < 30 | 30-44 | 45-64 | 65+ | White | Black | Hispanic | Other | Dem. | Rep. | Ind. |
| Favor | 48% | 43% | 53% | 50% | 44% | 45% | 57% | 51% | 32% | 55% | 43% | 40% | 70% | 43% |
| Oppose | 37% | 45% | 31% | 34% | 41% | 38% | 35% | 36% | 47% | 27% | 41% | 49% | 21% | 37% |

Source: YouGov Poll, <http://big.assets.huffingtonpost.com/tabsHPFlagBurning20161201.pdf>. *Interviewing Dates:* November 30–December 1, 2016. *Target population:* U.S. citizens, aged 18 and over. *Sampling method:* Respondents were selected from YouGov’s opt-in Internet panel using sample matching. A random sample (stratified by gender, age, race, education, geographic region, and voter registration) was selected from the 2014 American Community Study. *Number of respondents:* 1000. *Margin of error:* ±4% (adjusted for weighting). *Survey mode:* Web-based interviews.

Questions to Consider

1. How do most Americans feel about whether it is an appropriate form of protest to burn the flag?
2. Which demographic group is most in favor of a constitutional amendment making it illegal to burn the flag?
3. Which demographic group is most opposed to a constitutional amendment making it illegal to burn the flag?
4. Which of the following conclusions can be drawn from the data regarding the constitutional amendment to protect the flag?
 - a. It will pass by a large margin.
 - b. It enjoys widespread political support.
 - c. It has only partisan support.
 - d. Many people who disapprove of flag burning do not support an amendment to ban it.
5. From studying the tables, what conclusions can be drawn regarding American political opinion on the issue of the Constitutional amendment to protect the flag?
6. What would account for the differences in results in Question 2 and Question 3?
7. Why do some people believe that even speech that is unpopular needs to be protected?