American Artistic Exceptionalism and the Internet

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Abstract
It is believed that a considerable part of the American public believe in American exceptionalism, a belief that the United States possesses unique qualities and a special destiny that sets it apart from other nations, often linked to ideals of democracy and freedom. But are there people in the US who are artistically exceptionalist too? We used GSS 2014 survey data and selected those cases that either said they were somewhat proud or very proud of American artistic achievements. Overall, 1043 respondents fell in this category of American artistic exceptionalism and we put their data in a new SPSS file for further analysis. Initially, we held the belief that individuals who espouse American artistic exceptionalism were predominantly male, inclined towards conservatism, and aligned with the Republican party. However, our findings unequivocally refute these preconceptions. In instances such as political leanings and voting patterns, the data demonstrated precisely the opposite trend, revealing that American artistic exceptionalists were more inclined to identify as Democrats rather than Republicans.

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Introduction

The internet has not only revolutionized the way we create, consume, and distribute art but has also ushered in a new era of artistic exploration and innovation. This article explores the intricate interplay between artistic exceptionalism and the internet, exploring how American artistic exceptionalists use internet to access information. The advent of the internet has expanded the horizons of artistic creation, breaking down geographical barriers and allowing artists to explore new realms of creativity (Zohouri et al., 2020). Unlike traditional artistic mediums, which often require physical tools and materials, the digital canvas offers an infinite playground for artists. Digital art, encompassing everything from digital painting to 3D modeling and animation, has become a prominent facet of artistic exceptionalism in the digital age.

One notable aspect of the digital art revolution is its accessibility. With the rise of user-friendly software and hardware, aspiring artists around the world can easily access and experiment with digital tools. This democratization of artistic creation empowers individuals who may not have had access to traditional art supplies or formal art education to explore their creative potential. Online tutorials, forums, and communities provide valuable resources for learning and sharing techniques, fostering a global network of artists eager to push the boundaries of their craft.

The digital realm also facilitates collaboration and cross-pollination of ideas among artists. Online platforms enable artists from diverse backgrounds to connect, exchange ideas, and collaborate on projects regardless of their physical locations. This interconnectedness has given rise to a rich tapestry of artistic influences, resulting in a fusion of styles and perspectives that redefine the boundaries of American artistic exceptionalism.

In the age of the internet, the concept of artistic exceptionalism has taken on new dimensions with the phenomenon of viral art. A single artwork, performance, or creative endeavor can captivate the digital world, spreading like wildfire across social media platforms. Artists who achieve viral success often experience a meteoric rise to fame and recognition (Miles, 2001). Viral art challenges traditional notions of American artistic exceptionalism by thrusting relatively unknown artists into the spotlight overnight. Social media platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter serve as launchpads for these viral sensations. The speed and scale of digital sharing mean that an exceptional piece of art can reach millions of viewers in a matter of hours, transcending geographical boundaries and cultural barriers.

In their informative article entitled "Google's University? An Exploration of Academic Influence on the Tech Giant's Propaganda," Sarfi et al. (2021) show how Internet and powerful elites behind big-tech corporations influence our perceptions without our notice. Sarfi and his colleagues described how a certain perception about the world is indoctrinated on us through various means including universities in the Western Europe and North America. They conclude

> *Companies, particularly those engaged in the collection and utilization of personal data for predictive purposes, often employ these strategies to convince the public of their benevolent intentions. Corporate influence can extend into the development of academic curricula, especially within fields related to business, technology, and industry. Pressure from industry stakeholders may prompt universities to incorporate content that aligns with corporate interests, potentially overshadowing alternative viewpoints. Consequently, the dissemination of information may lack diverse perspectives, reinforcing certain biases within the realm of knowledge (Sarfi et al., 2021: p199).*

One of the transformative aspects of these big-tech corporations clandestine strategy could be seen on perception of artistic exceptionalism is the virtualization of museums and galleries. Online platforms have made it possible for art enthusiasts from around the world to explore renowned museums and exhibitions without leaving their homes. This digital democratization of art access has broadened the audience for exceptional works of art. In addition to established institutions, online art galleries and platforms have emerged, providing a space for emerging and underrepresented artists to showcase their work. These digital spaces offer opportunities for artists to gain recognition and sell their creations directly to a global audience, bypassing the traditional gatekeepers of the art world (Bautista, 2013).

Given the many benefits internet has brought to the artistic exploration, one question is how internet feeds the general psyche of those US citizens who could be identified as 'artistic exceptionalists'. Here, we took help from the data we obtained from an American cross-country survey to see if American artistic exceptionalists use internet differently than other groups of Americans. But first, let's see what American exceptionalism and American artistic exceptionalism are.

American exceptionalism and the arts

American exceptionalism is a concept that has been deeply ingrained in the American psyche and national identity. It refers to the belief that the United States is unique and exceptional among nations, possessing qualities, values, and a destiny that set it apart. This idea has played a significant role in shaping American history, politics, and foreign policy, as well as influencing how the country views itself and its role in the world (Ameli & Shahghasemi, 2018). At the heart of American exceptionalism lies the notion of a "city upon a hill." John Winthrop, a prominent figure in early American history, is often associated with the concept of the "city upon a hill." This powerful metaphor has had a profound impact on the American psyche and the nation's sense of identity. John Winthrop was born in 1588 in Edwardstone, Suffolk, England, into a family of substantial means. He received a solid education and pursued a legal career before becoming involved in the Puritan movement. Winthrop's religious convictions led him to join a group of Puritans seeking religious freedom in the New World. In 1630, he embarked on a journey across the Atlantic Ocean as part of the Great Migration, which saw thousands of Puritans relocate to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

Upon arriving in the New World, John Winthrop was elected as the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, a position he held for several terms. During his leadership, he delivered a sermon titled "A Model of Christian Charity" aboard the ship Arbella, which would become one of his most famous speeches. It is within this sermon that Winthrop articulated the idea of a "city upon a hill" (Morgan, 1987).

In his sermon, Winthrop spoke of the Puritan colonists as a community chosen by God to be an example to the world. He envisioned their colony as a "city upon a hill" that would shine as a beacon of righteousness and virtue for all to see. Winthrop emphasized the importance of unity, selflessness, and moral conduct among the colonists, viewing their success and prosperity as a testament to God's favor. The notion of a "city upon a hill" held significant religious and political implications. It reinforced the idea of exceptionalism, that the Massachusetts Bay Colony was uniquely chosen by God to serve as a model for others. This concept also laid the foundation for the idea of American exceptionalism, the belief that the United States would similarly become a shining example of democracy and freedom in the world. The "city upon a hill" metaphor resonated deeply with the Puritans and later generations of Americans. It became a foundational element of American identity, shaping the country's self-perception and its sense of purpose. Over time, this metaphor evolved and

expanded beyond its religious origins to encompass broader notions of American exceptionalism (van Engen, 2020).

The concept of the "city upon a hill" was not limited to the Massachusetts Bay Colony. It found expression in various forms throughout American history, from President Ronald Reagan's use of the phrase to describe America's role in the world to Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a racially integrated and just society as a fulfillment of the "city upon a hill" ideal. Despite its enduring influence, the concept of the "city upon a hill" has also faced criticism and scrutiny. Some argue that it has been used to justify American expansionism, exceptionalism, and even imperialism. Critics contend that it can lead to a sense of arrogance and entitlement, obscuring the nation's flaws and shortcomings (Cunningham, 2021).

One key aspect of American exceptionalism is the belief in the nation's founding principles, particularly the ideals of liberty and democracy. The United States was founded on the principles of individual rights, limited government, and the consent of the governed. These principles, enshrined in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, are seen as universal and enduring, setting the United States apart as a nation dedicated to freedom and self-governance (Shahghasemi, 2017). The American Revolution itself is often cited as evidence of exceptionalism. The successful rebellion against British colonial rule was seen as a unique and transformative event, inspiring other nations to seek their own independence and self-determination. The American Revolution became a symbol of the power of democratic ideals and the ability of a people to shape their own destiny (Madsen, 1998).

Another facet of American exceptionalism is the country's vast and varied geography. The United States boasts diverse landscapes, from towering mountains to fertile plains, from vast deserts to lush forests, and from expansive coastlines to mighty rivers. This geographical diversity has not only shaped the nation's history but has also contributed to a sense of exceptionalism. Americans often view their land as unique and bountiful, fostering a pioneering spirit and a sense of limitless opportunity. Economic prosperity and innovation have also been central to the perception of American exceptionalism. The United States has been a hotbed of technological advancement, entrepreneurship, and economic growth. Innovations like the assembly line, the internet, and Silicon Valley's tech boom have reinforced the idea that America is a land of limitless possibilities, where anyone can achieve success through hard work and ingenuity.

Throughout its history, America has faced significant challenges and crises, from the Civil War to the Great Depression to the Civil Rights

Movement. However, the belief in American exceptionalism has often been a driving force in overcoming these challenges. The idea that the United States has a unique mission to fulfill, a destiny to embrace, has inspired resilience and determination in the face of adversity. American exceptionalism has also played a significant role in shaping the country's foreign policy. The belief in America's moral duty to spread democracy and freedom has influenced its engagement with the world. Whether through military intervention, diplomacy, or humanitarian efforts, the United States has often seen itself as a global leader and a force for good.

However, it's important to note that the concept of American exceptionalism is not without its critics. Some argue that it can lead to arrogance and a sense of entitlement (Shahghasemi et al., 2011), causing the United States to act unilaterally and without regard for the interests and sovereignty of other nations. Others contend that it can perpetuate a myth of American perfection, obscuring the country's own shortcomings and injustices (Bacevich, 2008). American exceptionalism, with its belief in the unique qualities and destiny of the United States, can indeed culminate into American artistic exceptionalism. This connection stems from the notion that the American experience, shaped by its history, culture, and values, provides fertile ground for artistic innovation and expression.

American exceptionalism often highlights the nation's diverse and dynamic cultural landscape. This diversity has given rise to a wide range of artistic forms and styles, reflecting the multifaceted nature of American society. From literature to visual arts, music to film, American artists have drawn inspiration from the country's unique history and the promise of its democratic ideals. Moreover, the belief in individualism and the pursuit of one's dreams, central tenets of American exceptionalism, encourages artists to explore their creative potential freely. The idea that anyone, regardless of their background, can rise to greatness fosters an environment where artistic voices from all walks of life can emerge (Jones, 2013).

In addition, the United States' economic prosperity and technological innovation have played a role in American artistic exceptionalism. Artists have access to resources and opportunities that can help bring their visions to life, from state-of-the-art studios to cutting-edge digital tools. American exceptionalism's emphasis on self-reliance and resilience has also inspired artists to tackle challenging and thought-provoking subjects, contributing to a rich artistic tradition that explores the complexities of the American experience.

American artistic exceptionalism, therefore, can be understood as the extraordinary and distinctive contributions made by American

artists across various creative disciplines, including literature, visual arts, music, and film. It encompasses the notion that American artists, drawing from the nation's diverse cultural influences and historical experiences, have consistently produced innovative and influential works that resonate both nationally and internationally. This exceptionalism is marked by a dynamic synthesis of ideas, a spirit of experimentation, and an enduring commitment to exploring the multifaceted dimensions of the American identity. It is a reflection of the belief that artistic expression in the United States, characterized by its diversity, creativity, and cultural richness, holds a unique and unparalleled place in the global artistic landscape.

Given this definition, we had four research questions that we tried to answer by the help of the General Social Survey 2014 study in the US:

RQ1: What are demographic aspects of American artistic exceptionalists?
RQ2: How American artistic exceptionalists related to politics?
RQ3: What are the main source of information for American artistic exceptionalists?

And most importantly:

RQ4: How American artistic exceptionalists use the internet to access information?

Methodology
In order to do our study, we used GSS 2014 data. The General Social Survey (GSS), conducted biennially, is a crucial resource for sociologists, policymakers, and researchers, providing a comprehensive snapshot of American society and its evolving trends (Linneman, 2017). The 2014 GSS, like its predecessors, continued this tradition, offering valuable insights into the attitudes, behaviors, and attributes of the American population. One of the 2014 GSS's key areas of focus was on social mobility and economic inequality. With the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis still impacting many American lives, the survey provided essential data on how individuals perceived their economic opportunities. It explored attitudes toward wealth distribution, social class identification, and the perceived possibility of moving up the social ladder. The findings indicated a growing concern about income inequality and a general skepticism about the feasibility of the American Dream, reflecting the ongoing economic anxieties of the post-recession era.

Another significant aspect of the 2014 GSS was its examination of social attitudes and beliefs. This encompassed views on marriage, family, and gender roles, reflecting ongoing societal changes. The survey showed an increasing acceptance of non-traditional family structures and a continued trend towards more liberal attitudes on issues of marriage equality and gender roles. This shift was indicative of broader cultural changes in American society, mirroring the legal and social recognition of same-sex marriage which was gaining momentum at the time.

The survey also delved into political beliefs and affiliations, which was particularly relevant given the approaching 2016 presidential election. It provided a detailed look at political polarization, with data suggesting that Americans were increasingly divided along ideological lines. This division was evident in attitudes towards government spending, healthcare, and immigration, topics that were becoming central themes in American political discourse. Religious affiliation and spirituality were also key topics in the 2014 GSS. The data indicated a continuation of a gradual decline in traditional religious affiliation, with an increase in individuals identifying as non-religious or spiritual but not religious. This trend was particularly pronounced among younger demographics, signaling a significant shift in the religious landscape of the United States.

In terms of health and well-being, the 2014 GSS included questions related to mental and physical health, healthcare access, and lifestyle behaviors. The responses provided insights into the public's health concerns and experiences with the healthcare system, especially in the context of the ongoing implementation of the Affordable Care Act. The GSS 2014 also continued to explore issues of race and ethnicity, an ever-relevant topic in the American social fabric. It examined perceptions of race relations, discrimination, and diversity, offering a nuanced view of how different ethnic and racial groups experience and perceive these issues.

Technological usage and its impact was another area of interest. With the rapid advancement of digital technology, the GSS sought to understand how these changes were affecting social interactions, media consumption, and privacy concerns.

With a robust sample size of 3,842 respondents, GSS 2014 offered a comprehensive view of diverse social attitudes and behaviors. The methodology employed in this edition was meticulously designed to ensure representation and accuracy. Utilizing a full-probability, multistage stratified sampling method, the GSS ensured that various segments of the U.S. population, including often underrepresented groups, were included. This approach significantly enhances the

reliability and generalizability of the findings. In terms of data collection, the 2014 GSS predominantly relied on face-to-face interviews conducted in the homes of respondents. This traditional approach, despite the rise of digital survey methods, was chosen for its effectiveness in achieving higher response rates and the ability to delve deeply into sensitive topics. The interviewers, trained professionals, adhered to a standardized procedure to ensure consistency across the data. The survey itself comprised a mix of core questions, repeated annually to track changes over time, and special modules that focused on current issues, reflecting the pulse of the American public in 2014.

Each interview lasted approximately 90 minutes, a duration that strikes a balance between thoroughness and respondent comfort. This length allowed for an in-depth exploration of a range of topics, from family dynamics to civic participation, without causing significant fatigue. Post-collection, the data underwent rigorous analysis to validate its accuracy and reliability.

Adhering to stringent ethical standards, the 2014 GSS upheld the principles of informed consent and confidentiality. Ensuring anonymity, respondents were assured that their individual responses would be confidential and reported only in aggregate form. This ethical consideration is vital for maintaining the integrity of the survey and the trust of the participants.

In order to extract the data we needed to answer our research questions, we included only those participants who said they were either 'Somewhat Proud' or 'Very Proud' of American artistic and literary accomplishments

Findings

The SPSS output provided represents the distribution of pride levels in American artistic achievements among 1043 artistic exceptionalist respondents, with no missing responses. This selection criteria specifically targeted those who expressed pride to some degree, and the data shows that the majority, 59.6%, reported being 'Somewhat Proud' of American artistic and literary accomplishments. This is also the mode of the dataset, indicating it is the most frequently observed response. On the other hand, 40.4% of respondents felt 'Very Proud', marking a substantial proportion that holds American arts and literature in very high esteem.

We also curious about perceived job prestige of artistic exceptionalist Americans. The SPSS output summarizes the occupational prestige scores (originally established in the year) 2010 for 1004 respondents,

with 39 cases missing. The mean occupational prestige score is 43.92, indicating the average level of perceived prestige attached to the occupations of respondents. Also, as the overall mean for the same variable for all American respondents of GSS 2014 is 48.22, we can claim that artistically exceptionalist Americans are working in lower jobs in comparison with general Americans. The median score is very close to the mean, at 43, suggesting a relatively symmetrical distribution of data around the central value. However, the standard deviation of 13.63 points to a moderate spread of scores around the mean, reflecting a varied perception of occupational prestige among the respondents. The range of the scores is 64, calculated from the minimum score of 16 to the maximum of 80, which demonstrates a wide disparity in the occupational prestige levels represented in the sample. This wide range may indicate that the sample includes both low-prestige and high-prestige occupations.

One of the important demographic factors in the US is marital status. Historically, the American Dream, closely tied to exceptionalism, often encompassed ideals of a nuclear family, with marriage seen as a cornerstone of social and economic stability (Coontz, 2005). This perspective promoted the idea that successful personal life, often measured by marriage, was a part of the American exceptionalist narrative. However, as societal norms evolve, the relevance of marriage in the context of American exceptionalism is being reexamined. Changing attitudes toward marriage, increasing divorce rates, and the growing acceptance of diverse family structures challenge the traditional view, suggesting a more pluralistic understanding of American identity and values (Cherlin, 2010). Our analysis here reveals the marital status of 1043 respondents, with only 2 responses missing. The largest group is 'Married', accounting for 44.1% of the valid responses, followed by 'Never Married' at 26.7%. Those who are 'Divorced' represent 16.3%, while 'Widowed' accounts for 9.1%, and the smallest group is 'Separated', making up 3.7%. The cumulative percentages add up to 100%, reflecting the entirety of valid responses distributed across the different categories of marital status. This distribution indicates that nearly half of the respondents are currently married, suggesting a traditional marital pattern within the sample. The substantial percentage of individuals who have never been married might be indicative of changing social norms or a younger demographic within the respondent pool.

Older Americans, shaped by historical contexts like the Cold War and the post-World War II era, are often more inclined towards a traditional view of American exceptionalism. This perspective is rooted in the United

States' role as a global leader and a beacon of democracy and economic success during the 20th century (Pew Research Center, 2014). In contrast, younger Americans, influenced by contemporary global challenges and increased interconnectedness, tend to adopt a more critical stance. This demographic is more likely to question the narrative of inherent superiority, considering issues like globalization, climate change, and international human rights as benchmarks for evaluating national success and moral leadership (Howe & Strauss, 2000). Our SPSS output presents the age statistics of 1041 respondents (with 2 missing responses) from a survey. The mean age of respondents is 49.7 years (similar to the mean age for GSS 2014 survey data of 49.84), with a median age very close to the mean, at 50 years. This close proximity between the mean and median suggests a relatively symmetric age distribution among the respondents. A standard deviation of 17.508 indicates a broad spread of ages, showing that the respondents vary significantly in age. The range of 71 years (from a minimum age of 18 to a maximum of 89) confirms this wide dispersion, indicating the inclusion of both young adults and senior citizens in the sample. Therefore, we might conclude, American artistic exceptionalism has no relationship with age.

Men and women may perceive and articulate the concept of American greatness differently. Men are often found to be more inclined towards a traditional view of American exceptionalism, which emphasizes military strength and economic dominance as key indicators of national superiority. Women, on the other hand, might interpret exceptionalism in the context of social and cultural achievements, like advancements in gender equality, art, and human rights. These differences can be attributed to varying life experiences and socialization patterns among genders. We ran a test and our output illustrates the gender distribution of 1043 artistic exceptionalist respondents. Out of the valid responses, 468 respondents are male, which constitutes 44.9% of the sample, while 575 respondents are female, accounting for 55.1%. The data shows a slightly higher representation of females in this sample. We cannot, therefore, say that there is a significant difference between men and women in terms of artistic exceptionalism.

The relationship between birthplace and the perception of American superiority is a subject of considerable debate in sociological and political discourse (Lipset, 1996). Scholars argue that this belief system can be particularly pronounced among those born in the U.S., as the narrative of exceptionalism is often ingrained through education, media, and national symbols from an early age (Zinn, 2005). However, the interpretation and acceptance of American exceptionalism can

vary significantly among immigrants. While some immigrants may adopt these views as part of their assimilation process, embracing the ideals of freedom and opportunity associated with the U.S. (Huntington, 2004), others may maintain a more critical perspective, shaped by their experiences and histories in their countries of origin (Ngai, 2004). This dichotomy illustrates how birthplace can influence the perception and adoption of the concept of American exceptionalism. Out of the 1043 artistic exceptionalist participants, a significant majority, 908 respondents (87.1%, something similar to that of GSS 2014 general results (87.8%), indicated that they were born in the country where the survey was conducted. On the other hand, 135 respondents (12.9%) reported that they were not born in the country. This data suggests that the majority of the survey's respondents are natives of the country in question, with a smaller but noteworthy proportion representing the immigrant or foreign-born population. Since about 13% of Americans have been born outside U.S., we can conclude that artistic exceptionalism has no relationship with birth place.

American exceptionalism resonates more strongly with conservative ideologies, often championed by the Republican Party (Schuck, 2008). Republicans generally emphasize national pride, military strength, and unilateralism in foreign policy, aligning with traditional views of American exceptionalism (McCoy, 2017). In contrast, the Democratic Party, with its more liberal base, tends to approach exceptionalism with emphasis on America's unique role in advancing global democracy and human rights, rather than superiority (Hodgson, 2009). This divergence reflects broader ideological differences: conservatives focusing on nationalistic and exceptionalist rhetoric, and liberals advocating a more multilateral and inclusive approach to global leadership (Mead, 2011). The SPSS output details the political party affiliation of 1043 respondents, with 11 cases missing. The largest group is 'STRONG DEMOCRAT' comprising 18.4% of the total respondents, closely followed by 'NOT STR DEMOCRAT' at 16.7%. Independents account for a significant proportion at 17.4%. Those identifying as 'STRONG REPUBLICAN' constitute 10.8%, with 'NOT STR REPUBLICAN' at 10.5% and 'IND, NEAR REP' at 10.2%. The 'IND, NEAR DEM' category makes up 12.5%, and a smaller fraction, 2.4%, align with 'OTHER PARTY'. The data reveals a political landscape where a plurality of respondents identify with the Democratic Party (strongly or not strongly), followed by a substantial number of Independents, indicating a preference for non-partisanship or a middle-ground political stance. Republicans, both strong and not strong, together with those leaning towards the Republican side ('IND, NEAR REP'), make up a significant

portion but are fewer in comparison to the Democratic and Independent respondents. We can conclude, therefore that political affiliations are not absolute and can vary with the evolving political landscape and individual beliefs, and hence we can see here that artistic exceptionalists are more Democrats, rather than Republicans.

To further study this seemingly contradictory result, we explored our data further and studied our respondents' voting behavior. The 2008 U.S. presidential election, which saw Barack Obama and John McCain as major contenders, brought into focus the concept of American exceptionalism and its influence on voter preferences. Studies suggest that perceptions of American exceptionalism influenced voter choices. Voters who strongly believed in American exceptionalism were more likely to support McCain, seeing his policies and military background as more aligned with traditional American values. On the other hand, Obama's message of change and global inclusivity appealed to voters with a less traditional view of American exceptionalism, attracting those who believed in a diverse, globally integrated America. Our result here shows the voting preferences of 1043 artistically exceptionalist respondents for a particular election, with 363 respondents (34.8%) not providing valid responses. Out of the 680 valid responses, a majority of 60% (408 respondents) reported voting for Obama, while 37.9% (258 respondents) voted for McCain. A small fraction, 1.8% (12 respondents), voted for another candidate, and a negligible 0.3% (2 respondents) indicated they didn't vote. The data reveals a clear preference for Obama among those who disclosed their choice, with his votes nearly doubling those for McCain, and hence, our former result is further endorsed.

In this study, we were particularly interested in artistically exceptionalist Americans' source of information. The SPSS output reflects data on the preferences of 1043 respondents regarding newspaper format, though a vast majority of responses (1014, or 97.2%) are missing or categorized as 'IAP' (presumably 'Prefer not to answer'). Of the 29 valid responses, a significant majority prefers printed newspapers (24 respondents or 82.8%) over online newspapers (5 respondents or 17.2%). The mode of the dataset is 1, indicating that printed newspapers are the most common preference among those who provided a response. The minimum and maximum values (1 and 2, respectively) suggest that the responses were coded as a binary variable, with '1' likely representing printed newspapers and '2' representing online newspapers, and the range of 1 reflects this binary nature. The number of respondents in this variable is scant and therefore the results are not significant.

We studied the information-seeking behavior of our respondents both among artistically exceptionalists and general Americans. Upon reviewing the two datasets provided, several insights can be drawn about the online information-seeking behavior of the survey respondents. In the general dataset, which encompasses a larger total number of respondents (3842), only 23.9% provided valid answers regarding their online information sources. Within this subset, search engines were the most popular source, chosen by 38% of those who responded. This was followed by online newspapers and online magazines, which garnered 22.7% and 14.3% respectively. The vast majority of the sample, 75.5%, did not provide information, which was categorized under 'IAP'. The large number of non-responses is a limitation and suggests that conclusions drawn from this dataset may not be reflective of the broader population.

Comparatively, the second dataset, with a smaller pool of respondents (1043), had an even lower rate of valid responses, just 12.6%. Again, search engines topped the list as the most common source (32.1%), with online newspapers (25.2%) and online magazines (16.0%) following. The 'IAP' responses in this dataset were even higher at 87.4%, further compounding the challenge of making generalizations from this data. The consistency in the preference for search engines in both datasets suggests a clear trend in the use of these tools for information gathering among those who did provide responses.

The similarity in the distribution of valid responses across both datasets, with search engines being the primary source, indicates a potential commonality in online behavior among the respondents. However, the significant proportion of non-responses in both datasets raises important questions about the willingness or ability of survey participants to report their online information-seeking behavior. The reasons for this high level of non-disclosure could vary, from a lack of confidence in answering to concerns about privacy. The high number of non-responses suggests that the results may be biased towards a particular segment of the sample that is willing to report their behavior. We decided, therefore, to compare our results on this variable with the results from the general results for GSS 2014. Upon a comparative analysis of the two datasets regarding respondents' main source of information about events in the news, certain trends and distinctions emerge.

Dataset of 1043 artistic exceptionalists, where only 316 respondents provided valid responses, and TV emerged as the most popular source, chosen by 154 individuals, or 48.7% of those who provided valid answers. This preference for television is notable and aligns with traditional media consumption patterns where TV has historically been a central

source of news. However, with 727 respondents (69.7%) not providing an answer (IAP), the data potentially suffers from non-response bias, which might limit the generalizability of the finding.

Dataset of general GSS 2014 presents a broader sample with 3842 participants, of which 2128 provided valid responses. TV is still the dominant source with 922 respondents (43.3% of valid responses) favoring it. However, the Internet follows closely at 35.3% (752 respondents), which suggests a significant reliance on digital media for news. Compared to the first dataset, the Internet seems to have a more substantial presence among valid responses, potentially indicating a shift towards digital platforms for news consumption. The non-response rate here is considerably lower at 44.6%, offering a potentially more accurate reflection of the larger population's media habits.

When comparing the two datasets, both display a strong preference for television as the primary source for news. Nonetheless, the second dataset shows a relatively higher reliance on the Internet, which may reflect changing trends in media consumption or differences in the demographics of the respondents. The larger sample size and lower non-response rate of the second dataset enhance its reliability and may provide a more current perspective on news consumption patterns.

The statistical comparison doesn't reveal a statistically significant difference between the two datasets regarding the proportion of individuals using what as their main news source, as indicated by the z-test. The p-value obtained from the test (0.071) was above the conventional alpha level of 0.05, suggesting that any observed difference might be due to chance rather than a real difference in the populations.

In order to better make sense of our data, we created a third dataset for those people who didn't see the American art as something noteworthy. A total of 101 participants fell in this category and had a disheartening view on cultural achievements of the U.S. Specifically, a substantial majority of the respondents, 82.2%, expressed that they are "Not Very Proud" of these accomplishments. A smaller, yet significant, portion of the sample, accounting for 17.8%, went even further to state that they are "Not Proud At All". With no missing responses, the data is comprehensive and suggests an overarching sentiment of dissatisfaction or disconnection with the current state or recognition of the arts and literature.

This dataset reflects the preferences of a group of individuals regarding their primary sources of information for events in the news. Out of a total of 101 participants in the third dataset, 32 provided valid responses, while a substantial portion, 69 respondents, did not provide any information, thus are marked as missing. The data illustrates a pronounced inclination

towards digital and electronic media, with the Internet emerging as the most prevalent source, with half of the valid responses (16 out of 32, or 15.8% of the entire participant pool) indicating it as their main channel for news. Television is the second most favored medium, with approximately one-third of the valid responses (11 out of 32, representing 10.9% of the total participants) relying on it for news.

Conversely, traditional print media such as newspapers, and other conventional sources like radio, hold a relatively marginal position, each garnering only 6.3% of the valid responses (2 out of 32 for each, equating to 2% of the total number of participants).

The z-test for comparing the proportion of respondents who reported the Internet as their main source of information about events in the news yielded a z-statistic of approximately 2.02 and a p-value of 0.044. The positive z-statistic indicates that the proportion of respondents reporting the Internet as their main news source is higher among the artistically exceptionalist Americans in comparison with those Americans who are not that proud of the artistic achievements of their country. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, this result is statistically significant at the 5% significance level. This suggests that there is a significant difference in the proportion of respondents using the Internet as their main source of information about events in the news between the two groups and artistically exceptionalist Americans use internet more for information-seeking purposes.

Discussion and Conclusion
American art is a vast and intricate tapestry that reflects the nation's complex history, generous funds, diverse population, and innovative spirit. Its superiorities lie in various aspects, from its pioneering role in several artistic movements to its influence on global art forms and cultural expressions. American art is distinguished by its exceptional diversity. The United States is often referred to as a melting pot of cultures, and this is vividly mirrored in its art. From the Harlem Renaissance, which celebrated African American culture in the 1920s and 1930s (Baker Jr, 2013), to the Chicano Art Movement that emerged in the 1960s to empower Mexican American communities (Jackson, 2009), American art has continually embraced a wide range of cultural narratives. This inclusivity not only enriches American art but also ensures that it resonates with a global audience.

American art also boasts a legacy of innovation. The Abstract Expressionist movement, which originated in New York in the 1940s, revolutionized the way art is perceived and created (Berube, 1998). Artists like Jackson Pollock, who introduced the drip painting technique, and Mark

Rothko, known for his color field paintings, broke away from traditional forms and narratives, paving the way for new artistic expressions that emphasized spontaneity and emotional intensity. Pop Art is another domain where American art has asserted its superiority. Artists like Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein transformed mundane consumer objects and comic strips into high art, thereby blurring the lines between 'high' culture and 'low' culture (Caulfield, 2012). Their work highlighted America's post-war consumerism and omnipresent media culture, creating iconic images that continue to influence art and advertising today.

The United States has also been at the forefront of integrating technology with art. The rise of digital art and the use of computer graphics in the late 20th century began a new era where technology became a canvas, and coding a form of paintbrush. American artists have been pioneers in creating digital masterpieces and utilizing the Internet as a platform to disseminate and democratize art. In the realm of cinematic arts, Hollywood's influence cannot be overstated. American movies have not only dominated the global box office but have also been instrumental in shaping the film industry's standards and storytelling techniques. The American film industry's technological advancements, from special effects to animation, have set the bar high for cinematic experiences worldwide (Silver, 2007). The United States is home to some of the world's leading art institutions and universities, offering robust programs that attract and cultivate artistic talent from across the globe. The support for arts education has fostered a generation of artists who have the freedom and resources to experiment and innovate.

American art is also a major cultural export that has influenced lifestyles and popular culture around the world. From music genres like jazz, blues, and hip-hop, which originated within African American communities, to the global influence of American street art and graffiti, the cultural imprints of American art are ubiquitous and profound. Furthermore, American art has often been intertwined with social and political activism. The work of artists like Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat in the 1980s used public spaces to address social issues (Fretz, 2010), from apartheid to the AIDS crisis, reflecting a tradition of art not just as an aesthetic pursuit but as a vehicle for change.

With such a rich artistic background, it is no surprise that some Americans see the US as an exceptional artistic phenomenon. American artistic exceptionalism is a concept that underscores the unique and unparalleled contributions of the United States to the global artistic landscape. Rooted in a rich area of diverse cultural influences, the American artistic tradition has evolved and flourished over the centuries, leaving

an indelible mark on the world stage. One of the defining characteristics of American artistic exceptionalism lies in its ability to synthesize and redefine various artistic forms. From literature and visual arts to music and film, American creators have consistently pushed boundaries and challenged conventions. The melting pot of cultures that is the United States has given rise to a dynamic and eclectic artistic expression that captures the essence of the nation's complex identity. Literature, as a prime example, reflects the vast spectrum of American experiences. From the transcendentalist writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson to the gritty realism of 20th-century novelists like John Steinbeck, American literature encompasses a diverse range of voices and perspectives (Babayev, 2009). The exploration of the American Dream, individualism, and societal critiques permeates the works of iconic authors such as F. Scott Fitzgerald and Toni Morrison, contributing to a literary tradition that resonates globally (Messenger, 2019). American artistic exceptionalism is not without its complexities and challenges. Critics argue that it can sometimes lead to cultural hegemony, overshadowing the contributions of artists from other regions.

Our preliminary impression was that American artistic exceptionalists are mainly men, conservative, and republicans but our results here showed clearly that our assumptions were wrong and in cases like political inclination and voting behavior, the results were vice versa and American artistic exceptionalists were more likely to be democrats, and not republicans.

Ethical considerations
The authors have completely considered ethical issues, including informed consent, plagiarism, data fabrication, misconduct, and/or falsification, double publication and/or redundancy, submission, etc.

Conflicts of interests
The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests.

Data availability
The dataset generated and analyzed during the current study is available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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