The Power of Repetitive Framing: How “Our Democracy” Redefines America’s Constitutional Republic

July 9, 2026



In recent years, I couldn’t help but notice the phrases “our democracy” and “threat to our democracy” had become more dominant in American political speech and media by the day. In contrast, references to “our republic” remained rare. You must understand that this pattern is not accidental. It represents a sustained campaign of repetitive framing designed to shift public understanding of the U.S. system of government, an effort to subvert it.

The United States is a **constitutional republic**. The word “democracy” does not appear in the Constitution or the Declaration of Independence. Nowhere. Not in one place. Article IV, Section 4 of the Constitution guarantees every state “a Republican Form of Government.” The Founders intentionally built safeguards against pure majority rule, including the Electoral

College, equal state representation in the Senate, separation of powers, federalism, and the Bill of Rights.

James Madison warned in Federalist No. 10 that pure democracies are “spectacles of turbulence and contention” incompatible with personal security and property rights. The constitutional republic was designed to protect individual liberties from transient majorities.

Repetitive Framing Explained

Repetitive framing is the coordinated, high-frequency use of a preferred term across politicians, organizations, and media. It exploits the “illusory truth effect,” whereby repeated exposure causes people to perceive a statement as true regardless of its accuracy. By constantly repeating “our democracy,” the frame gradually replaces the precise constitutional description with one that emphasizes unlimited majority will.

Empirical Evidence

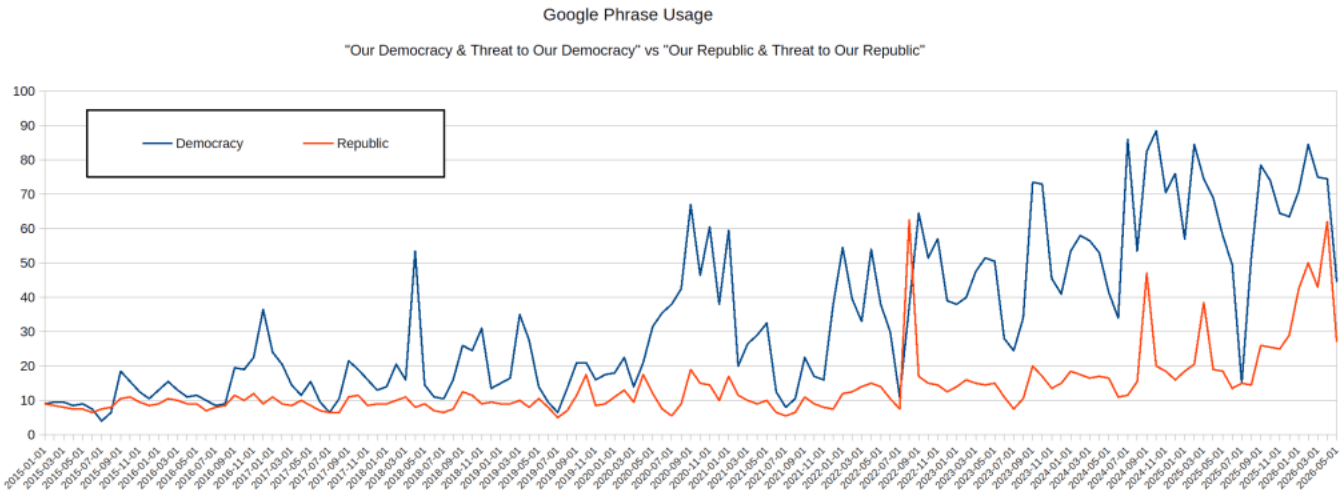


Figure 1 – Google Trends Combined Interest (Monthly Average, United States, 2015–2026) “Our Democracy” + “Threat to Our Democracy” (blue) versus “Our Republic” + “Threat to Our Republic” (red)..

Source: Google Trends data. Combined values calculated as the monthly average of each pair.

The data show a sharp and persistent divergence beginning in 2016. The “Democracy” line rises dramatically and remains elevated, frequently reaching scores of 60–90. The “Republic” line stays comparatively low and stable. This asymmetry reflects concentrated rhetorical effort rather than organic public usage.

Why the Distinction Matters

When the nation is consistently framed as “our democracy,” constitutional restraints—judicial review, state election authority, Senate procedures—are increasingly viewed as obstacles rather than essential protections. Policies that would weaken these republican safeguards are then presented as necessary defenses of “democracy.” This rhetorical inversion undermines public appreciation of the deliberate design chosen by the Founders.

How to Detect and Counter It

- Observe when “democracy” is used without reference to “republic.”
- Note when constitutional mechanisms are labeled threats to democracy.
- Demand precise language: the United States is a **constitutional republic**.
- Any time you hear or see “our democracy”, reply with this correction: **“we do not have a democracy; we have a Constitutional Republic”**. Consistent, widespread use of this correction helps neutralize the illusory truth effect over time.

Accurate terminology is a non-partisan civic responsibility.

Conclusion

The repetitive use of “our democracy” is a clear example of linguistic framing intended to reshape how Americans understand their government. Recognizing this technique allows citizens to see the manipulation and restore constitutional clarity.

The complete dataset is attached below for reference and verification:

date,“Our Democracy”,“Our Republic”,“Threat to Our Democracy”,“Threat to Our Republic”,Combined Democracy,Combined Republic
2015-01-31,18,18,0,0,9,9
2015-02-28,19,17,0,0,9.5,8.5
2015-03-31,19,16,0,0,9.5,8
2015-04-30,17,15,0,0,8.5,7.5
2015-05-31,18,15,0,0,9,7.5
2015-06-30,15,13,0,0,7.5,6.5
2015-07-31,8,15,0,0,4,7.5
2015-08-31,13,16,0,0,6.5,8
2015-09-30,37,21,0,0,18.5,10.5
2015-10-31,31,22,0,0,15.5,11
2015-11-30,25,19,0,0,12.5,9.5
2015-12-31,21,17,0,0,10.5,8.5
2016-01-31,26,18,0,0,13,9
2016-02-29,31,21,0,0,15.5,10.5
2016-03-31,26,20,0,0,13,10
2016-04-30,22,18,0,0,11,9
2016-05-31,23,18,0,0,11.5,9
2016-06-30,20,14,0,0,10,7
2016-07-31,17,16,0,0,8.5,8
2016-08-31,18,17,0,0,9,8.5
2016-09-30,39,23,0,0,19.5,11.5
2016-10-31,38,20,0,0,19,10
2016-11-30,45,24,0,0,22.5,12

2016-12-31,37,18,36,0,36.5,9
2017-01-31,48,22,0,0,24,11
2017-02-28,41,18,0,0,20.5,9
2017-03-31,29,17,0,0,14.5,8.5
2017-04-30,23,20,0,0,11.5,10
2017-05-31,31,17,0,0,15.5,8.5
2017-06-30,19,14,0,0,9.5,7
2017-07-31,13,13,0,0,6.5,6.5
2017-08-31,21,13,0,0,10.5,6.5
2017-09-30,43,22,0,0,21.5,11
2017-10-31,38,23,0,0,19,11.5
2017-11-30,32,17,0,0,16,8.5
2017-12-31,26,18,0,0,13,9
2018-01-31,28,18,0,0,14,9
2018-02-28,41,20,0,0,20.5,10
2018-03-31,32,22,0,0,16,11
2018-04-30,54,16,53,0,53.5,8
2018-05-31,29,18,0,0,14.5,9
2018-06-30,22,14,0,0,11,7
2018-07-31,21,13,0,0,10.5,6.5
2018-08-31,32,15,0,0,16,7.5
2018-09-30,52,25,0,0,26,12.5
2018-10-31,49,23,0,0,24.5,11.5
2018-11-30,36,18,26,0,31,9
2018-12-31,27,19,0,0,13.5,9.5
2019-01-31,30,18,0,0,15,9
2019-02-28,33,18,0,0,16.5,9
2019-03-31,31,20,39,0,35,10
2019-04-30,29,16,26,0,27.5,8
2019-05-31,28,21,0,0,14,10.5
2019-06-30,19,16,0,0,9.5,8
2019-07-31,13,10,0,0,6.5,5
2019-08-31,27,14,0,0,13.5,7
2019-09-30,42,23,0,0,21,11.5
2019-10-31,42,35,0,0,21,17.5
2019-11-30,32,17,0,0,16,8.5
2019-12-31,35,18,0,0,17.5,9
2020-01-31,36,22,0,0,18,11
2020-02-29,45,26,0,0,22.5,13

2020-03-31,28,19,0,0,14,9.5
2020-04-30,42,35,0,0,21,17.5
2020-05-31,35,24,28,0,31.5,12
2020-06-30,33,15,38,0,35.5,7.5
2020-07-31,23,11,53,0,38,5.5
2020-08-31,38,18,47,0,42.5,9
2020-09-30,98,38,36,0,67,19
2020-10-31,60,30,33,0,46.5,15
2020-11-30,69,29,52,0,60.5,14.5
2020-12-31,41,20,35,0,38,10
2021-01-31,70,34,49,0,59.5,17
2021-02-28,40,23,0,0,20,11.5
2021-03-31,31,20,22,0,26.5,10
2021-04-30,29,18,29,0,29,9
2021-05-31,34,20,31,0,32.5,10
2021-06-30,25,13,0,0,12.5,6.5
2021-07-31,16,11,0,0,8,5.5
2021-08-31,21,13,0,0,10.5,6.5
2021-09-30,45,22,0,0,22.5,11
2021-10-31,34,18,0,0,17,9
2021-11-30,32,16,0,0,16,8
2021-12-31,42,15,34,0,38,7.5
2022-01-31,55,24,54,0,54.5,12
2022-02-28,42,25,37,0,39.5,12.5
2022-03-31,38,28,28,0,33,14
2022-04-30,54,30,54,0,54,15
2022-05-31,47,28,29,0,38,14
2022-06-30,34,21,26,0,30,10.5
2022-07-31,22,15,0,0,11,7.5
2022-08-31,41,25,34,100,37.5,62.5
2022-09-30,75,34,54,0,64.5,17
2022-10-31,59,30,44,0,51.5,15
2022-11-30,56,29,58,0,57,14.5
2022-12-31,45,25,33,0,39,12.5
2023-01-31,47,28,29,0,38,14
2023-02-28,52,32,28,0,40,16
2023-03-31,46,30,49,0,47.5,15
2023-04-30,43,29,60,0,51.5,14.5
2023-05-31,46,30,55,0,50.5,15

2023-06-30,26,22,30,0,28,11
2023-07-31,20,15,29,0,24.5,7.5
2023-08-31,43,21,25,0,34,10.5
2023-09-30,92,40,55,0,73.5,20
2023-10-31,95,34,51,0,73,17
2023-11-30,46,27,45,0,45.5,13.5
2023-12-31,47,30,35,0,41,15
2024-01-31,62,37,45,0,53.5,18.5
2024-02-29,62,35,54,0,58,17.5
2024-03-31,54,33,59,0,56.5,16.5
2024-04-30,52,34,54,0,53,17
2024-05-31,45,33,38,0,41.5,16.5
2024-06-30,35,22,33,0,34,11
2024-07-31,81,23,91,0,86,11.5
2024-08-31,57,31,50,0,53.5,15.5
2024-09-30,92,49,73,45,82.5,47
2024-10-31,83,40,94,0,88.5,20
2024-11-30,82,37,59,0,70.5,18.5
2024-12-31,52,32,100,0,76,16
2025-01-31,70,37,44,0,57,18.5
2025-02-28,97,41,72,0,84.5,20.5
2025-03-31,86,37,63,40,74.5,38.5
2025-04-30,85,38,53,0,69,19
2025-05-31,52,37,64,0,58,18.5
2025-06-30,44,27,55,0,49.5,13.5
2025-07-31,30,30,0,0,15,15
2025-08-31,54,29,49,0,51.5,14.5
2025-09-30,100,52,57,0,78.5,26
2025-10-31,83,51,65,0,74,25.5
2025-11-30,63,50,66,0,64.5,25
2025-12-31,56,58,71,0,63.5,29
2026-01-31,73,85,69,0,71,42.5
2026-02-28,85,100,84,0,84.5,50
2026-03-31,77,86,73,0,75,43
2026-04-30,76,81,73,43,74.5,62
2026-05-31,52,42,37,12,44.5,27