

COVID-19 and Lockdowns in the United States

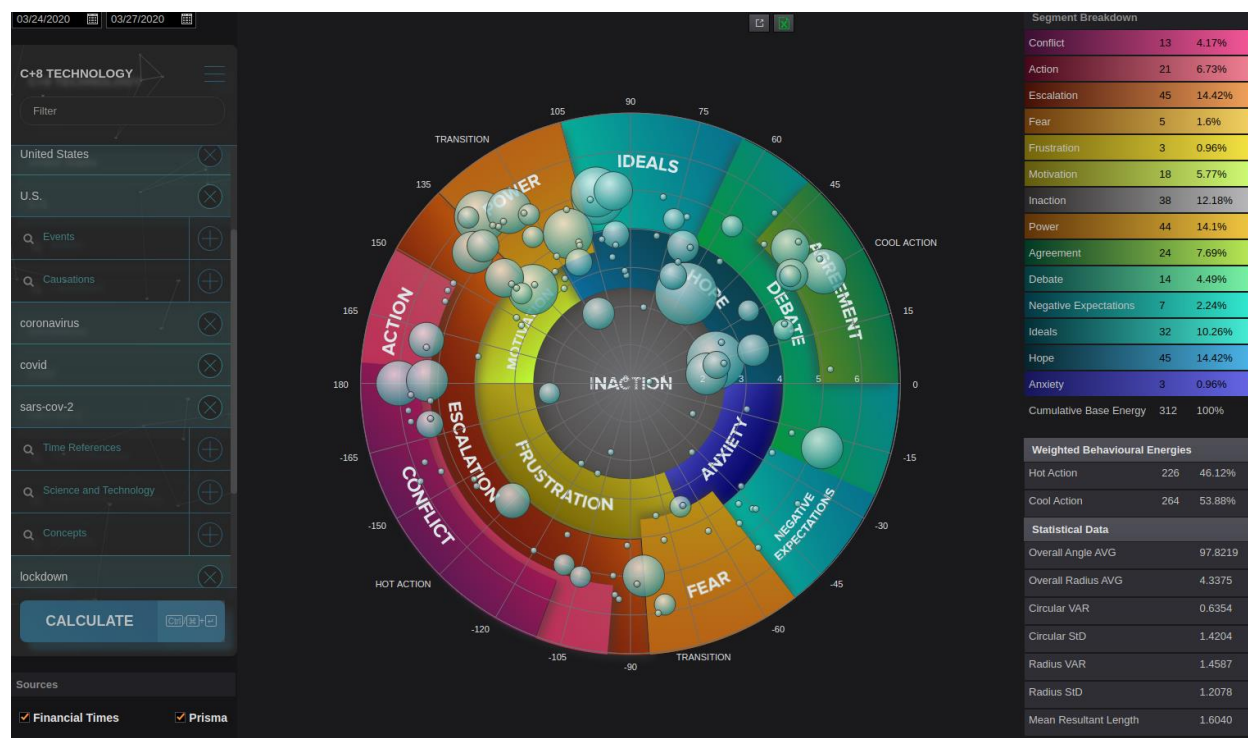
Overview

By April 4th 2020, more than half of U.S. states had imposed lockdown measures restricting gatherings and social contact in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19.¹

The second half of March was marked by discussions on how to achieve this goal, as well as the gradual shutdown of economic and social activity.

Analysis

The Social Energy Circumplex captures the moods present in the news articles discussing the lockdowns imposed in an attempt to flatten the curve of the coronavirus outbreak in the United States.



Social Energy Circumplex, query terms: United States, U.S., coronavirus, covid, sars-cov-2, lockdown, quarantine;
Time span: March 24 - 27, 2020

The results of the query show a quite balanced distribution of social energies on the Hot Action (46.12%) and Cool Action (53.88%) sides of the circumplex, the latter being slightly more populated. What do these figures show? The simplest interpretation is that attitudes toward lockdowns in the U.S. are, on the one hand, focused on finding solutions and open towards discussion – on the Cool Action side – and, on the other hand, oriented towards immediate action that is impatient and aggressive more often than not – on the Hot Action side.

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/a-state-by-state-guide-to-coronavirus-lockdowns-11584749351>

One of the most active energies is Escalation (14.42%). The mood is quite alert, assuming a tone of urgency, exemplified in the figure below. If people do not follow the rules regarding social isolation, there will be consequences (i.e., tightening the lockdown).

Packed California beaches prompt stricter virus measures
 3/24/2020 3:05:00 AM
 Californians are under orders to stay home, but crowds continue to flock to the state's beaches
 Governor Gavin Newsom tightened California's coronavirus lockdown Monday, shutting parking lots at beaches and parks in the most populous US state after tens of thousands flouted social di...

Supporting data on the Escalation energy layer of the Social Energy Circumplex from the results in the first figure

Let's explore a couple of the data points on the opposite-facing layer, Debate (4.49%). Social energies are mild here, characterized by negotiation and diplomacy rather than action.

Health minister discusses COVID-19 efforts with Japanese envoy - Turkey News
 3/25/2020 7:26:00 AM
 WORLD
 The world's largest democracy went under the world's biggest lockdown on March 25, with India's 1.3 billion people ordered to stay home in a bid to stop the coronavirus pandemic, while in the U.S., lawmakers and the White House agreed on a massive \$2 trillion domestic aid packa...

Above and below: supporting data on the Debate energy layer of the Social Energy Circumplex from the results in the first figure

Trump Says He Wants to Lift Coronavirus Restrictions "by Easter"
 3/24/2020 6:18:00 PM
 WASHINGTON -- President Trump wants to end the drastic economic measures aimed at containing the novel coronavirus "by Easter," less than three weeks from now.
 "I would love to have it open by Easter," Trump said in a Fox News interview on the White House lawn Tuesday afternoon. "I w..."

Debate's data points are situated close to its neighboring energy, Agreement (7.69%), which is characterized by a general state of harmony. The closer a data point is to a neighboring layer, the more it represents a mix of the energies showcased in the two (or sometimes three) layers. Hope (14.42%) and Power (14.1%) are also intense, pointing to a stimulation of the will to act and also to the political power necessary to do so. The Power layer is neither in Cool Action, nor in Hot Action – it is an area of transition between the two. Data points located here contain the elements necessary for social change and action to occur, but also for discussion and future-oriented ideas to be heard – political will and power.

Meanwhile, the Action (6.73%) layer is where moods are transformed into behavior. This means that the collective is mobilizing and tension is acted upon.

Coronavirus USA Update: Amazon Donates More Than 250,000 Needed Items To Quarantine Patients In Seattle
 3/26/2020 10:16:00 AM
 KEY POINTS Amazon steps up donation during coronavirus pandemic The company is donating more than 250,000 items in the Seattle area to quarantine patients Amazon Web Services has teamed up with the World Health Organization in the battle against COVID-19
 As the number of COVID-19 corona...

Supporting data on the Action energy layer of the Social Energy Circumplex from the results in the first figure