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Big Doubts About News Media's Values
PUBLIC VOTES FOR CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN 2000

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Kimberly Parker, Research Director
Molly Sonner, Gregory Flemming, Survey Directors
Scott Nolde, Survey Analyst
Beth Donovan, Editor
Pew Research Center for The People & The Press
202/293-3126
<http://www.people-press.org>

Big Doubts About News Media's Values

PUBLIC VOTES FOR CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN 2000

The anomalies of American public opinion continue even as the impeachment trial fades into history. Today, the public view of the state of the nation is much improved, despite the fact that a major component of that view — trust in government — remains low. Politically, the public expresses negative views of the Republican Party, yet is more inclined to vote for leading GOP presidential candidates than Democrats. Moreover, Americans say they want the next president to carry on the policies and programs of the current administration, but almost no one wants another Clinton, and support for Vice President Al Gore is tepid.

The only clear and consistent trend is discontent with the news media. Public criticism of press practices and coverage of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal continues. And the negative view of the news media now extends to its values, with growing numbers of Americans describing the press as immoral, unprofessional and uncaring about the country. Just about the only good news for the press in a new Pew Research Center survey is that Americans still believe the press cares about the job it does.

The next election is still almost two years away, but Americans have some ideas about what they want in their next president and rather definite ideas about what — and who — they don't want. A modest 54%-to-41% majority says it wants a president who offers policies and programs similar to those of the Clinton administration. However, an overwhelming 78% says that even taking into account Bill Clinton's personal strengths they want a different kind of person in the White House.

Majorities of registered voters who know them also say they don't want Dan Quayle, Patrick Buchanan, Lamar Alexander, Robert Smith, Gary Bauer, or Steve Forbes to be president. In contrast to this largely ideological group of candidates, substantial percentages say there is a chance they would vote for perceived moderate candidates such as Republicans George W. Bush, Elizabeth Dole and John McCain or Democrats Al Gore and Bill Bradley.

State of the Nation	
<i>Rated "Very High"</i>	<u>%</u>
1999	28
1998	20
1997	15
1996	10
Our Next President	
<i>Policies and Programs</i>	<u>%</u>
Similar to Clinton	54
Different	41
Don't know	<u>5</u>
	100
<i>Personal Qualities</i>	
Similar to Clinton	17
Different	78
Don't know	<u>5</u>
	100
Opinion of Political Parties	
<i>Democrat</i>	<u>%</u>
Favorable	58
Unfavorable	37
Don't know	<u>5</u>
	100
<i>Republican</i>	
Favorable	44
Unfavorable	51
Don't know	<u>5</u>
	100
Presidential Contenders*	
<i>Would Consider Voting for</i>	<u>%</u>
George W. Bush	72
Elizabeth Dole	64
Al Gore	52

* Based on registered voters.

Potential support for more middle-of-the-road candidates is in keeping with the moderation observed in the results of the mid-term elections and the public’s continued satisfaction with the status quo. Americans today not only rate the state of their own lives very highly, but they also rate the country as a whole more highly than they have in over 30 years.

Not so the news media. The press gets barely a “C” for its final grade on coverage of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal, and the public continues to give the news media poor performance grades for accuracy, correcting mistakes and the way they play their watchdog role. Moreover, the new survey finds a striking decline in the public’s perception of news media values since the mid-1980s. The number of Americans seeing news organizations as immoral has tripled, leaving the public evenly split (38%-to-40%) on whether the press is immoral or not. Similarly, the two-to-one belief that the press protected democracy in 1985 has evaporated. Today, the public is divided, with 45% saying the news media protect democracy and 38% saying they hurt it.

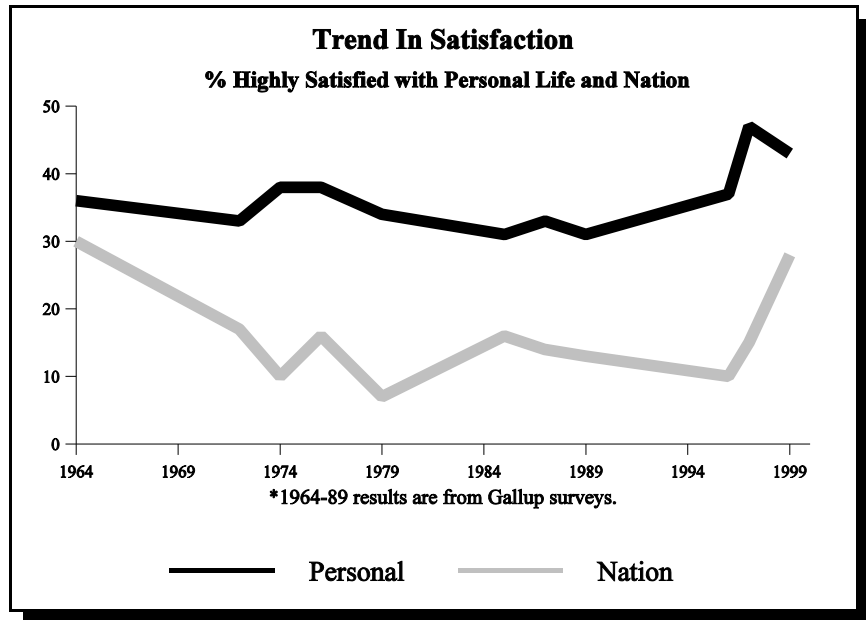
Eroding Media Values		
	<u>1985</u>	<u>1999</u>
<i>Best Describes</i>	%	%
<i>News Media?</i>		
Moral	54	40
Immoral	13	38
Helps democracy	54	45
Hurt democracy	23	38
Professional	72	52
Unprofessional	11	32

These are the principal findings of the Pew Research Center’s latest nationwide telephone survey of 1,203 adults. The survey was conducted February 18-21, 1999 and has a margin of error of 3 percentage points.

Spike in National Mood

The public’s sense of how well the country is doing has finally caught up with Americans’ positive ratings of their own lives. In fact, the national mood is better today than at any time since the 1960s, and the public is even more optimistic about the future. Nearly one-in-three Americans give the country high ratings today, reflecting a substantial jump from just 10% in 1996 and 20% a year ago. One-third of Americans (36%) say the outlook for the next five years is just as strong.

The upswing in the national mood has diminished the traditional “optimism gap” — the tendency for Americans to rate their own lives substantially better than they rate the country. Indeed, while personal satisfaction remains high — 43% place themselves on the top three steps of an eleven-step rating ladder — the gap between the personal and national ratings is substantially smaller than it was several years ago.



The increase in positive ratings for the country has been largest among less affluent groups, who typically express lower levels of satisfaction with the state of the nation. Fully 30% of those with a high school education or less give the country a high rating, for example, up from just 18% a year ago.

Men continue to rate the condition of the country more favorably than women do, and the national ratings are colored by partisanship, as well. Just 18% of Republicans give the country a high rating, for example, compared to 23% of Independents and 38% of Democrats.

Over the past four decades, the national mood has tended to rise and fall along with the level of public trust in government.¹ But the spike in public optimism today marks a divergence in this trend: Even as ratings for the country are up, the public’s level of trust in government and elected officials is flat at best. Just 31% of Americans say they trust the government at least most of the time, down from 38% in late 1997.

¹ See “Deconstructing Distrust: How Americans View Government” (March 1998), p. 6.

Indeed, one major consequence of the year-long investigation and the impeachment trial of President Clinton may be new worries about the nation's political leadership. Asked to describe in their own words their hopes and fears for the country, one-in-five Americans mention government and politics.

For example, today 18% mention government and political leadership as a concern for the nation. This is the same number as in a February 1998 survey, after the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal broke, and up substantially from 8% in 1996. Just as many Americans mentioned government and politics when describing their hopes and wishes for the country's future.

Hopes and Fears for the Country							
----- Gallup -----							
	<u>1959</u>	<u>1964</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Wishes and hopes for the country...</i>							
Economy	45	48	45	40	26	30	31
Political leadership	0	0	0	11	9	18	21
Miscellaneous	0	0	16	25	27	14	20
Peace/security	65	57	58	61	19	29	16
Religion/morality	7	10	8	5	10	13	14
Cooperation/unity	0	9	15	19	8	10	8
Crime	0	0	11	14	12	8	6
Race relations	14	15	10	5	4	5	4
<i>Fears and worries for the country...</i>							
War/national security	64	50	30	35	12	40	29
Miscellaneous	0	5	27	38	34	19	25
Economy	25	19	24	18	18	17	19
Political Leadership	0	5	5	5	8	18	18
Religion/morality	0	5	6	6	6	11	12
Communism	12	29	12	13	--	--	--
National Disunity	0	8	26	13	--	--	--

Peace and prosperity also remain top issues. Some 31% of Americans today mention economic factors as their main hope for the nation's future, while nearly as many (29%) mention national security and war as their top worry for the country.

Looking for New Faces?

The person matters more than the political party to Americans when thinking about choosing the next president. Some 61% say they care a good deal which party wins the White House, a figure that is unchanged from before the last presidential election. But 83% say they care *who* gets elected, up somewhat from 78% in 1995. What's more, just 49% of the public says the press should focus mostly on what a candidate believes about issues, down from 69% in 1995. Growing numbers of Americans say the press should focus mostly on candidates' past accomplishments (36%, up from 23% in 1995) and what a candidate is like as a person (12%, up from 6%).

That the public places greater importance on *who* becomes president rather than which party wins the White House may explain why several potential Republican candidates lead in the polls, despite the party's low ratings. But with the election more than a year away, the slate of possible presidential contenders is also divided by wide gaps in how well the candidates are known.

Nearly all voters say they have heard of Democrats Al Gore (98%) and Jesse Jackson (98%) and Republicans Dan Quayle (97%), George W. Bush (94%), and Elizabeth Dole (91%). Among these well-known contenders, Bush, Dole, and Gore draw favorable ratings: 72% of voters say they would consider voting for Bush, 64% for Dole and 52% for Gore.² These are comparable to the ratings given leading candidates a year before the 1996 election. Some 56% of voters said in October 1995 they would consider voting for Clinton, for example, while 48% said they might vote for Bob Dole.

However, other potential candidates face greater obstacles, despite their high visibility. Most voters say there is no chance they would support Dan Quayle (54%) or Jesse Jackson (56%). And while many voters say they have heard of Patrick Buchanan (83%) and Steve Forbes (71%), neither draws a majority who would consider voting for him.

Falling somewhere in the middle are candidates like Bill Bradley, John Kerry, Lamar Alexander, and John McCain — potential candidates who are not widely known. But Bradley and McCain get mostly positive marks from voters who have heard of them. Among these voters, about half (55%) say they would consider voting for Bradley, and 58% say they would consider supporting McCain. There is less enthusiasm for Kerry and still less for Alexander.

Rating the Presidential Contenders						
(Based on Registered Voters)						
	Have <u>Heard</u>	<i>Chance of Voting Among Those Who Have Heard ...</i>				
		<u>Good</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK.</u>	<u>(N)</u>
Al Gore	98	22	30	45	3=100	(910)
Jesse Jackson	98	12	30	56	2=100	(904)
Dan Quayle	97	9	33	54	4=100	(902)
George W. Bush	94	34	38	24	4=100	(868)
Elizabeth Dole	91	26	38	33	3=100	(854)
Patrick Buchanan	83	6	26	63	5=100	(782)
Steve Forbes	71	8	35	52	5=100	(685)
Bill Bradley	55	14	41	39	6=100	(531)
Lamar Alexander	42	6	27	60	7=100	(421)
John Kerry	38	8	37	48	7=100	(374)
John McCain	32	16	42	35	7=100	(332)
John Kasich	21	16	31	45	8=100	(229)
Gary Bauer	18	12	26	51	11=100	(188)
Robert Smith	12	8	19	64	9=100	(120)

² All figures concerning support for possible presidential candidates are based on registered voters.

Finally, several candidates remain unknown to the average voter. Barely one-in-five voters say they have heard of John Kasich (21%) or Gary Bauer (18%), and fewer still have heard of Robert Smith (12%). Among the small number who are familiar with these candidates, Kasich gets modest support (47% would consider voting for him), but Bauer (38%) and Smith (27%) draw less enthusiasm.

Among the leading Republican candidates, Dole has no real edge among her husband’s supporters. Although 46% of those who supported Bob Dole in 1996 say there’s a good chance they would vote for Elizabeth Dole, fully two-thirds (67%) say there is a good chance they would vote for Bush.³ At the same time, while most potential GOP candidates earn less support from women than from men, Dole does equally well with men and women. Overall, 64% of men and 64% of women say they would consider voting for Dole. In this early poll, the leading Democratic candidates do no better among women than among men (see Table, page 16).

Little Clinton Boost for Gore

Though Clinton’s job approval rating remains high at 64%, there are some signs that the president’s popularity may not transfer fully to his vice president. Among voters who now approve of the job Clinton is doing as president, just 32% say there is a good chance they would vote for Gore, and 26% say there is *no chance* they would vote for Gore.

Even among the majority of Americans who support continuing the Clinton administration’s policies, Gore’s numbers are mixed. Just 30% of voters who want the next president to pursue similar policies and programs — just with a different type of person — say there is a good chance they would vote for Gore, while 27% say there is no chance they would support the vice president. Not surprisingly, those who oppose Clinton’s policies — and those who wanted him removed from office — are overwhelmingly against Gore.

Filling Clinton’s Shoes?			
<i>Compared to Clinton, next president should reflect...</i>			
<i>Chances of voting for Al Gore...*</i>	Same Person & Policies	Different Person, Same Policies	Different Person & Policies
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
	%	%	%
Good chance	42	30	5
Some chance	32	41	17
No chance	17	27	77
Don’t know	<u> </u> 9	<u> </u> 2	<u> </u> 1
	100	100	100
	(N=104)	(N=336)	(N=364)

* Based on registered voters.

³ There has been some speculation that some voters may be confusing George W. Bush with his father, the former president, but the younger Bush gets equally strong support whether he is identified as “Texas Governor George W. Bush” or simply as “George W. Bush.”

Specific Programs Trump General Tax Cuts

Most Americans finally accept that the federal government has made significant progress in reducing the federal budget deficit. As recently as May 1997, only 29% of the public thought progress had been made; today that number is 61%.

When it comes to utilizing that surplus, the public favors specific spending proposals over a tax cut. Assuming that roughly two-thirds of the surplus will be set aside for Social Security, 65% of the public says the remainder should be spent on education, the environment, health care, crime-fighting and military defense. Only 27% favors putting the remaining one-third of the surplus toward a tax cut.

Even Republicans only narrowly support returning the remaining surplus money to the public in the form of a tax cut — 50% support this option. However, 39% of GOP loyalists favor spending some of the surplus funds on education, the environment, health care and the like. White men and those making \$75,000 a year or more express higher than average support for a tax cut, but solid majorities in every major demographic group favor the proposed spending. Democrats and Independents overwhelmingly support spending over a tax cut, 81% and 65% respectively.

	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
<i>Use remaining one third of surplus for...</i>			
Tax cut	50	14	27
Spending on education, environment, health care	39	81	65
Some other purpose	7	4	5
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

Interestingly, support for a broad tax cut is much stronger when the alternative is funding for *unspecified* new government programs. In that case, half of the respondents (53%) say the remainder of the surplus should be used for a tax cut; only 34% opt for funding on “new government programs.”

If some form of tax cuts are in the offing, the public favors a more targeted approach over the across-the-board solution. Fully 58% say that if there is to be a tax cut, they would prefer targeted benefits for lower and middle class Americans to help offset the costs of education, child care and long-term care. Far fewer — 37% — favor the GOP’s proposed 10% across-the-board income tax cut which would apply equally to all Americans, regardless of how much money they make.

Women overwhelmingly favor the targeted approach (63% vs. 32% who would prefer an across-the-board cut). Men are more evenly divided, though a narrow majority backs targeted benefits (53% vs. 42%). Republicans split nearly down the middle: 50% support their party's proposed 10% cut, and 46% prefer targeted benefits.

Americans express strong to moderate support for several specific tax cut proposals. Two-thirds of the public (67%) consider giving tax credits to people who provide long-term care to elderly or disabled family members a very important thing for Congress to do. Fully 61% support the idea of increasing the amount of money senior citizens can earn before their Social Security benefits are reduced. Nearly half (48%) say eliminating the so-called marriage penalty is a very important thing for Congress to do. Fewer think it is important for Congress to provide a 10% across-the-board income tax cut or lower the capital gains tax (42% and 31%, respectively).

By a 57%-to-38% margin, the public favors renewing the independent counsel law. Support is strongest among Republicans (76% favor), while Democrats are evenly divided (49%-to-47%).

Media Values in Doubt

The public's evaluation of press values has plummeted over the past 15 years, with increasing numbers of Americans saying the news media is immoral, unprofessional and disrespectful. Consistent with this, public assessment of the news media's job performance remains anemic, and the grades given to the press for its coverage of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal are poor.

The decline in the Americans' ratings of press values is startling. The number of Americans who describe the news media as immoral jumped three-fold to 38% from 13% in 1985. The increase in those who say the news media lack professionalism is comparable, climbing to 32% from 11%. And today, two-thirds of Americans say the press displays a disregard for the people it covers (67% from 48%). Two-thirds of the public also says the press tries to cover up its mistakes —

Media Values Found Wanting		
	<u>1985</u>	<u>1999</u>
<i>News organizations generally...</i>	%	%
Moral	54	40
Immoral	13	38
Care about people they report on	35	21
Don't care about people they report on	48	67
Highly professional	72	52
Not professional	11	32
Protect democracy	54	45
Hurt democracy	23	38
Growing in influence	63	59
Declining in influence	17	32
Stand up for America	52	41
Too critical of America	30	42
Willing to admit their mistakes	34	26
Try to cover up their mistakes	55	66
Care about how good a job they do	79	69
Don't care how good a job they do	11	22
Politically biased in reporting	45	56
Careful not to be politically biased	36	31

a jump since 1985, when just over half of the public said so.

The press' role in protecting democracy has also tumbled in the public mind. Americans are divided 45%-to-38% over whether the news media protect or hurt democracy. In 1985, the public saw the press as a democratic caretaker by a two-to-one margin (54%-to-23%). In addition Americans now split evenly (41%-to-42%) over whether the press is too critical of the United States, a significant change from the mid-1980s when the public described the news media as standing up for America by a 52%-to-30% margin.

While a majority of Americans continue to see the news media's influence on the rise, the number who say it is in decline has nearly doubled since 1985. Today, 32% say the press is declining in influence, up from 17%. In another remarkable decline in esteem for the news media, a 56% majority of the public describes the press as politically biased, an 11 percentage point increase over this same period.

Low Performance Ratings

Public criticism of the way the press does its job has not significantly worsened as a result of the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal. Currently, 58% of the public doubts the general accuracy of news reports and 31% thinks that criticism by the press keeps political leaders from doing their jobs — both numbers are virtually unchanged from February 1997. Similarly, the 72% of Americans who now see the media as propagating scandals mirrors the 74% who felt this way in 1995. And, the public remains divided in its opinion of the media, just as it was prior to the barrage of Lewinsky coverage (49% favorable, 49% unfavorable now vs. 50%-to-48% in 1997).

The perception that news organizations drive controversies by devoting so much time and space to the personal and ethical behavior of public figures holds across races, ages, genders, and education and income levels. Even among those who disapprove of Clinton's performance as president and those who are critical of the Senate impeachment vote, six-in-ten share the view that the media perpetuates scandals.

Similarly, the belief that news stories and reports are often inaccurate is consistent for solid majorities of Democrats and Republicans, Clinton supporters and detractors, those who approve of the Senate vote and those who disapprove. Some of the harshest criticism is from blacks, Americans age 50 and up, and the less affluent; about two-thirds of each group finds the press often inaccurate.

Finally, a significant minority of the public questions the press' adversarial role in our democracy, with nearly one-third saying that criticism by the press keeps political leaders from doing their jobs. This is almost a two-fold increase since 1985, when only 17% of the public expressed concern about the negative effects of the press' watchdog role, but is unchanged from the 32% who said so in pre-Lewinsky 1997.

Poor Grades for Impeachment Coverage

Given the public's criticism of the press' values and performance in general, it is no surprise that a solid majority of Americans give the media poor grades for their coverage of the investigation and impeachment trial of President Clinton. The news media get a "C" or worse from 59% of Americans.

The press draws poor grades from a majority of all ages, races, genders, and income levels. Even those who disagree on the appropriateness of the final Senate vote agree on their rating of the press: 59% of both groups give the news media a "C" or worse for their coverage. Some of the sharpest criticism comes from college graduates (67% give poor grades) and Republicans (64% rated the press coverage "C" or lower, compared to 55% of Democrats and 58% of Independents).

	<i>Investigation Coverage Rated</i>	
	<u>A or B</u>	<u>C, D or F</u>
<i>News Organizations...</i>	%	%
Don't care about people report on	57	74
Cover up mistakes	53	75
Politically biased in reporting	43	66
Too critical of America	34	47
Immoral	27	46
Declining in influence	23	39
Hurt democracy	25	45
Not professional	20	41
Don't care about doing a good job	12	29

These harsh evaluations of the press coverage of the investigation and impeachment of President Clinton are closely linked to the public's similarly negative views of the news media's values. Those who gave the press poor grades for their coverage of this particular controversy were especially critical of the news media's values, practices and watchdog role.

The differences between the attitudes of these harsh and lenient graders of the press are consistent across every measure of the media's values. Three-quarters of those who view press coverage of the Clinton-Lewinsky controversy negatively accuse news organizations of not caring about the people they cover and trying to cover up mistakes: Only 57% and 53%, respectively, of those who gave the press positive ratings agree. Two-thirds of harsh graders say the press is politically biased; less than half (43%) of lenient graders agree. And, 46% of critics of the scandal coverage attribute immorality to news organizations, compared to just 27% of those less critical of the media's handling of the Clinton-Lewinsky story.

News Interest Index

With videotaped depositions and a final vote in the Senate, President Clinton's impeachment trial topped the news interest index for the month with 31% of the public following the trial in the Senate very closely, up from a low of 22% in mid-January. More than one-third of Republicans and Democrats paid very close attention to the story, compared to 25% of Independents.

Notwithstanding the recent flurry of speculation that Hillary Clinton might run for the U.S. Senate in New York, only 19% of the public said they were following the story very closely in this poll. Interest in the story was higher in the East, where 28% of adults paid very close attention. Not surprisingly, more women (21%) followed the story very closely than did men (16%), and interest was highest among African-Americans (30% followed it very closely, compared to 17% of whites).

Before the verdict, nearly one-in-four Americans were paying very close attention to the Jasper, Texas murder trial, in which a white man was charged with dragging a black man to his death behind a truck. Interest in the story was particularly high among blacks, with 48% following it very closely, more than twice that of whites (21%). The recent labor dispute and flight cancellations at American Airlines drew the very close attention of only 18% of the public, and reports of corruption in the International Olympic Committee continued to garner little public interest, with just 11% following the story very closely.

In international news, interest in NATO efforts to end ethnic conflict in Kosovo, Serbia remained relatively low. Despite recent increases in America's military presence in the region and threats of military action, only one-in-ten adults followed this story very closely — a number unchanged since mid-January. Similarly, only 5% of the public paid very close attention to demonstrations throughout Europe protesting the capture of Kurdish rebel leader Abdullah Ocalan.

**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH
NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"**

	Clinton's Impeachment Trial	Texas Murder Trial	Hillary Clinton's Possible Run For Senate	American Airlines Labor Dispute	(N)
<i>Total</i>	31	24	19	18	(1203)
<i>Sex</i>					
Male	32	22	16	17	(581)
Female	30	26	21	18	(622)
<i>Race</i>					
White	30	21	17	17	(981)
*Hispanic	27	26	16	18	(85)
Black	42	48	30	23	(117)
<i>Age</i>					
Under 30	26	14	12	13	(250)
30-49	25	22	16	15	(498)
50+	40	32	26	23	(442)
<i>Education</i>					
College Grad.	35	24	21	25	(374)
Some College	32	22	16	16	(319)
High School Grad	25	21	19	14	(389)
< H. S. Grad.	34	33	18	17	(117)
<i>Region</i>					
East	37	29	28	19	(208)
Midwest	24	17	12	17	(302)
South	35	30	21	17	(434)
West	26	18	15	18	(259)
<i>Party ID</i>					
Republican	36	22	17	18	(319)
Democrat	34	31	25	20	(416)
Independent	25	19	14	15	(399)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

* The designation, Hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

CONTINUED...

**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH
NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"**

	NATO's Efforts To End Conflict In Kosovo	Charges Of International Olympic Committee Corruption	Protests In Europe Against Capture Of Kurdish Rebel Leader	(N)
<i>Total</i>	11	11	5	(1203)
<i>Sex</i>				
Male	16	11	6	(581)
Female	7	11	5	(622)
<i>Race</i>				
White	11	11	5	(981)
*Hispanic	15	8	6	(85)
Black	7	12	4	(117)
<i>Age</i>				
Under 30	9	7	4	(250)
30-49	9	8	3	(498)
50+	16	17	8	(442)
<i>Education</i>				
College Grad.	19	15	9	(374)
Some College	12	13	3	(319)
High School Grad	6	9	4	(389)
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<i>Region</i>				
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West	11	15	4	(259)
<i>Party ID</i>				
Republican	13	16	7	(319)
Democrat	12	10	5	(416)
Independent	8	10	3	(399)

Question: Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely.

* The designation, Hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

TABLES

RATING THE NATION

	--- 1998 ---			--- 1999 ---			Change in "High"
	<u>High</u> %	<u>Medium</u> %	<u>Low</u> %	<u>High</u> %	<u>Medium</u> %	<u>Low</u> %	
Total	20	36	43	28	34	36	+8
Sex							
Male	25	40	35	32	30	36	+7
Female	15	32	51	23	38	37	+8
Race							
White	18	36	45	25	34	38	+7
Non-white	30	33	35	39	33	28	+9
Black	28	35	36	43	32	25	+15
Hispanic*	35	25	39	38	40	21	+3
Race and Sex							
White Men	23	40	36	30	31	37	+7
White Women	13	33	53	21	38	39	+8
Age							
Under 30	13	36	50	23	35	40	+10
30-49	21	39	39	25	37	36	+4
50-64	21	36	42	29	35	34	+8
65+	24	27	47	37	24	35	+13
Education							
College Grad.	22	41	36	25	39	35	+3
Some College	22	37	40	25	36	36	+3
High School Grad.	16	36	46	26	35	37	+10
<H.S. Grad.	21	29	49	37	22	37	+16
Family Income							
\$75,000+	24	41	32	23	45	31	-1
\$50,000-\$74,999	16	46	37	22	39	38	+6
\$30,000-\$49,999	21	35	44	25	37	36	+4
\$20,000-\$29,999	18	32	48	24	33	41	+6
<\$20,000	18	32	50	34	26	38	+16
Region							
East	21	35	42	30	37	29	+9
Midwest	19	41	38	26	34	38	+7
South	21	32	47	30	30	38	+9
West	17	37	45	22	38	39	+5
Party ID							
Republican	14	33	52	18	32	47	+4
Democrat	30	40	29	38	36	24	+8
Independent	15	35	49	23	32	44	+8

Question: Now thinking about the ladder again, suppose the top represents the best possible situation for OUR COUNTRY; and the bottom, the worst possible situation. Please tell me on which step of the ladder... you think the United States is at the present time? You can name any number between zero and 10.

* The designation Hispanic is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

"GOOD CHANCE" OF VOTING FOR CANDIDATES

(Based on Registered Voters Who Could Rate Each†)

	Dan <u>Quayle</u> %	George W. <u>Bush</u> %	Elizabeth <u>Dole</u> %	Al <u>Gore</u> %	Jesse <u>Jackson</u> %	Bill <u>Bradley</u> %
Total	9	34	26	22	12	14
Sex						
Male	11	37	26	23	9	14
Female	8	31	26	21	13	14
Race						
White	10	37	28	20	8	14
Non-white	6	13	13	35	36	14
Black	5	10	12	36	42	*
Race and Sex						
White Men	12	41	27	19	5	14
White Women	8	34	29	21	10	14
Age						
Under 30	6	30	14	13	17	*
30-49	7	32	28	19	10	9
50-64	11	36	31	22	15	26
65+	15	38	26	36	8	12
Education						
College Grad.	10	36	31	26	10	22
Some College	7	35	29	18	8	10
High School Grad. or Less	10	32	22	22	14	9
Family Income						
\$75,000+	8	44	29	20	6	17
\$50,000-\$74,999	11	41	32	19	9	23
\$30,000-\$49,999	6	24	25	19	11	9
<\$30,000	12	34	22	27	18	10

Question: How much of a chance is there that you would vote for **(INSERT NAME)** if (he/she) is a candidate for president in 2000 — is there a good chance, some chance, or no chance?

* Too few cases.

† The number who could rate varies across candidates. See questionnaire.

Continued ...

	<u>Dan Quayle</u>	<u>George W. Bush</u>	<u>Elizabeth Dole</u>	<u>Al Gore</u>	<u>Jesse Jackson</u>	<u>Bill Bradley</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	9	34	26	22	12	14
<i>Region</i>						
East	8	33	27	25	14	25
Midwest	13	31	26	22	10	12
South	10	40	26	20	11	7
West	6	28	26	23	13	13
<i>Religious Affiliation</i>						
Total White Protestant	11	41	29	18	5	10
White Prot. Evangelical	13	42	28	17	5	11
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	10	39	31	18	4	10
White Catholic	8	36	30	20	9	19
<i>Community Size</i>						
Large City	7	29	24	29	18	16
Suburb	8	39	26	18	6	15
Small City/Town	10	32	27	20	12	15
Rural Area	11	37	30	21	9	9
<i>Party ID</i>						
Republican	17	58	40	5	5	7
Democrat	6	17	15	44	20	18
Independent	7	29	24	13	11	18
<i>Clinton Approval</i>						
Approve	5	23	18	32	16	17
Disapprove	16	54	39	3	5	10
No opinion	16	44	36	13	8	11
<i>GOP Congressional Approval</i>						
Approve	11	51	36	9	8	9
Disapprove	8	22	19	32	14	17
<i>1996 Presidential Vote</i>						
Clinton	5	18	16	38	17	20
Dole	19	67	46	2	4	6
<i>1998 Congressional Vote</i>						
Republican	17	59	42	5	3	12
Democrat	7	18	13	42	16	18

PREFERENCE IN CUTTING TAXES

	<u>10% Across the Board Income Tax Cut</u> %	<u>Targeted Tax Benefits</u> %	<u>(VOL) Neither</u> %	<u>Don't Know/ Refused</u> %
Total	37	58	2	3=100
Sex				
Male	42	53	3	2
Female	32	63	2	3
Race				
White	38	58	2	2
Non-white	33	63	1	3
Black	33	62	2	3
Hispanic*	31	63	3	3
Race and Sex				
White Men	44	52	3	1
White Women	33	62	2	3
Age				
Under 30	37	61	0	2
30-49	38	59	1	2
50-64	41	53	4	2
65+	32	56	6	6
Education				
College Grad.	40	55	4	1
Some College	40	56	2	2
High School Grad.	36	60	1	3
<H.S. Grad.	32	62	2	4
Family Income				
\$75,000+	49	46	4	1
\$50,000-\$74,999	42	55	2	1
\$30,000-\$49,999	37	61	2	*
\$20,000-\$29,999	24	71	3	2
<\$20,000	32	62	2	4

Question: Generally, which approach to cutting taxes would you prefer — a 10 percent across-the-board income tax cut that would apply equally to all Americans, regardless of how much money they make; OR, targeted tax benefits designed to help offset the costs of education, child care, and long-term care for lower and middle class Americans?

* The designation Hispanic is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

Continued ...

	<u>10% Across the Board Income Tax Cut</u>	<u>Targeted Tax Benefits</u>	<u>(VOL) Neither</u>	<u>Don't Know/ Refused</u>
	%	%	%	%
Total	37	58	2	3=100
Region				
East	38	58	3	1
Midwest	36	60	1	3
South	39	55	3	3
West	34	60	3	3
Religious Affiliation				
Total White Protestant	40	55	2	3
White Prot. Evangelical	42	53	1	4
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	38	58	3	1
White Catholic	38	59	3	*
Community Size				
Large City	30	66	3	1
Suburb	39	57	2	2
Small City/Town	37	57	2	4
Rural Area	44	53	1	2
Party ID				
Republican	50	45	3	2
Democrat	28	69	1	2
Independent	38	58	2	2
Clinton Approval				
Approve	31	65	2	2
Disapprove	52	43	3	2
No opinion	33	60	2	5
GOP Congressional Approval				
Approve	46	50	2	2
Disapprove	32	63	3	2
1996 Presidential Vote				
Clinton	29	67	1	3
Dole	61	32	5	2
1998 Congressional Vote				
Republican	54	41	4	1
Democrat	28	68	1	3

ACCURACY OF NEWS ORGANIZATIONS

	News Organizations <u>Get Facts Straight</u> %	Stories And Reports <u>Often Inaccurate</u> %	Don't Know/ <u>Refused</u> %
Total	37	58	5=100
Sex			
Male	39	57	4
Female	36	59	5
Race			
White	39	56	5
Non-white	28	67	5
Black	26	70	4
Hispanic*	36	62	2
Race and Sex			
White Men	41	55	4
White Women	37	58	5
Age			
Under 30	41	54	5
30-49	43	53	4
50-64	31	67	2
65+	25	66	9
Education			
College Grad.	43	51	6
Some College	37	59	4
High School Grad.	40	55	5
<H.S. Grad.	26	70	4
Family Income			
\$75,000+	47	48	5
\$50,000-\$74,999	42	55	3
\$30,000-\$49,999	37	57	6
\$20,000-\$29,999	34	65	1
<\$20,000	32	63	5

Question: In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

* The designation Hispanic is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

Continued ...

	<u>News Organizations Get Facts Straight</u>	<u>Stories And Reports Often Inaccurate</u>	<u>Don't Know Refused</u>
	%	%	%
Total	37	58	5=100
Region			
East	31	61	8
Midwest	43	52	5
South	35	61	4
West	41	57	2
Religious Affiliation			
Total White Protestant	40	56	4
White Prot. Evangelical	36	61	3
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	45	50	5
White Catholic	39	55	6
Community Size			
Large City	39	56	5
Suburb	41	54	5
Small City/Town	36	59	5
Rural Area	34	61	5
Party ID			
Republican	38	59	3
Democrat	37	57	5
Independent	38	57	5
Clinton Approval			
Approve	38	57	5
Disapprove	37	60	3
GOP Congressional Approval			
Approve	41	56	3
Disapprove	35	60	5
1996 Presidential Vote			
Clinton	37	56	7
Dole	40	58	2
1998 Congressional Vote			
Republican	35	62	3
Democrat	38	56	6

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the main survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,203 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period February 18-21, 1999. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on either Form 1 (N=603) or Form 2 (N=600), the sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed). The design of the sample ensures this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone numbers in the U.S. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing three or more residential listings.

The sample was released for interviewing in replicates. Using replicates to control the release of sample to the field ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. The use of replicates also insures that the regional distribution of numbers called is appropriate. Again, this works to increase the representativeness of the sample.

At least five attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making a contact with a potential respondent. All interview breakoffs and refusals were re-contacted at least once in order to attempt to convert them to completed interviews. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the "youngest male 18 or older who is at home." If there is no eligible man at home, interviewers asked to speak with "the oldest woman 18 or older who is at home." This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

Non-response in telephone interview surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis.

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 1996). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone.

The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters.

QUESTIONNAIRE

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
FEBRUARY 1999 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
— FINAL TOPLINE —
February 18 - 21, 1999
N=1,203

Hello, I am _____ calling for Princeton Survey Research Associates in Princeton, New Jersey. We are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and TV stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home. **[IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?]**

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Bill Clinton is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
February, 1999	64	30	6=100
Mid-January, 1999	66	29	5=100
January, 1999	63	30	7=100
Late December, 1998	71	27	2=100
Early December, 1998	61	32	7=100
November, 1998	65	29	6=100
September 21-22, 1998	62	33	5=100
September 19-20, 1998	55	36	9=100
Early September, 1998	61	33	6=100
Late August, 1998	62	32	6=100
Early August, 1998	63	28	9=100
June, 1998	59	32	9=100
May, 1998	62	28	10=100
April, 1998	62	28	10=100
March, 1998	65	26	9=100
Early February, 1998	71	26	3=100
January, 1998	61	30	9=100
November, 1997	58	31	11=100
September, 1997	58	29	13=100
August, 1997	59	32	9=100
June, 1997	54	34	12=100
May, 1997	57	34	9=100
April, 1997	55	34	11=100
February, 1997	60	32	8=100
Early February, 1997	57	30	13=100
January, 1997	59	31	10=100
November, 1996	57	34	9=100
July, 1996	54	38	8=100
June, 1996	54	38	8=100
April, 1996	53	39	8=100
March, 1996	55	38	7=100
February, 1996	51	39	10=100
January, 1996	50	43	7=100
October, 1995	48	42	10=100
September, 1995	45	42	13=100
August, 1995	44	44	12=100
June, 1995	50	40	10=100
April, 1995	47	43	10=100

Q.1 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
March, 1995	44	44	12=100
February, 1995	44	44	12=100
December, 1994	41	47	12=100
November, 1994	48	40	12=100
October, 1994	41	47	12=100
Early October, 1994	38	47	15=100
September, 1994	41	52	7=100
July, 1994	45	46	9=100
June, 1994	42	44	14=100
May, 1994	46	42	12=100
March, 1994	45	42	13=100
January, 1994	51	35	14=100
Early January, 1994	48	35	17=100
December, 1993	48	36	16=100
October, 1993	44	42	14=100
September, 1993	49	35	16=100
Early September, 1993	43	43	14=100
August, 1993	39	46	15=100
May, 1993	39	43	18=100
Early May, 1993	45	37	18=100
April, 1993	49	29	22=100
February, 1993	56	25	19=100

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
February, 1999	37	51	12=100
Mid-January, 1999	36	51	13=100
January, 1999	38	50	12=100
Late December, 1998	39	56	5=100
Early December, 1998	38	49	13=100
November, 1998	41	48	11=100
September 21-22, 1998	44	44	12=100
September 19-20, 1998	46	41	13=100
Early September, 1998	44	37	19=100
Late August, 1998	48	36	16=100
Early August, 1998	43	37	20=100
June, 1998	42	38	20=100
May, 1998	40	41	19=100
April, 1998	41	40	19=100
March, 1998	43	39	18=100
January, 1998	43	41	16=100
November, 1997	41	43	16=100
August, 1997	42	44	14=100
June, 1997	33	50	17=100
May, 1997	40	44	16=100
April, 1997	40	44	16=100
February, 1997	44	42	14=100
January, 1997	38	47	15=100

Q.2 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
November, 1996	40	43	17=100
July, 1996	38	48	14=100
June, 1996	36	50	14=100
April, 1996	39	46	15=100
March, 1996	35	51	14=100
February, 1996	33	53	14=100
January, 1996	36	54	10=100
October, 1995	36	51	13=100
September, 1995	36	50	14=100
August, 1995	38	45	17=100
June, 1995	41	45	14=100
April, 1995	44	43	13=100
March 1995	43	39	18=100
December, 1994	52	28	20=100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT,

Q.3 Let's talk about the quality of your life. Imagine a ladder with steps numbered from zero at the bottom to 10 at the top. Suppose the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you; and the bottom, the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder [INSERT ITEM]? You can name any number between zero and 10. ... And on what number step [INSERT ITEM]? ...

[READ A-C IN ORDER:]

a. do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1985⁴</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1964</u>
43	High (8-10)	48	47	37	31	33	31	34	38	38	33	34	36
31	Medium (6-7)	31	31	33	35	36	36	31	30	26	29	30	33
25	Low (0-5)	21	22	29	34	30	33	33	32	33	38	34	30
<u>1</u>	Don't know	*	*	<u>1</u>	*	<u>1</u>	*	<u>2</u>	*	<u>3</u>	*	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
6.9	Mean Rating	7.1	7.0	6.7	6.4	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.7	6.6	6.4	6.6	6.9

b. would you say you stood five years ago?

		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1971</u>	<u>1964</u>
27	High (8-10)	29	28	26	28	25	28	29	24	25	27	28
23	Medium (6-7)	23	25	27	27	27	24	22	22	23	25	24
49	Low (0-5)	48	46	46	44	48	48	49	53	50	47	47
<u>1</u>	Don't know	*	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	*	*	*	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
5.7	Mean Rating	5.9	5.9	5.8	6.0	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.5	5.5	5.8	6.0

c. do you think you will be five years from now—just your best guess?

		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1964</u>
69	High (8-10)	72	73	64	56	61	59	57	60	58	58	57
14	Medium (6-7)	14	13	16	21	19	19	18	18	17	17	22
10	Low (0-5)	11	10	16	18	14	16	19	14	17	15	11
<u>7</u>	Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
8.2	Mean Rating	8.2	8.2	7.7	7.4	7.7	7.6	7.0	7.7	7.4	7.6	7.9

⁴

Trends for 1964 through 1985 are from Gallup.

Q.4 Now thinking about the ladder again, suppose the top represents the best possible situation for OUR COUNTRY; and the bottom, the worst possible situation. Please tell me on which step of the ladder [INSERT ITEM]. You can name any number between zero and 10. ... And on what number step [INSERT ITEM]? **[READ A-C IN ORDER:]**

a.		you think the United States is at the present time?											
		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1985⁵</u>	<u>1979</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1964</u>
28	High (8-10)	20	15	10	20	13	14	16	7	16	10	17	30
34	Medium (6-7)	36	34	36	33	42	34	41	27	29	23	27	34
36	Low (0-5)	43	50	52	44	43	51	42	63	53	65	53	32
<u>2</u>	Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
6.2	<i>Mean Rating</i>	5.8	5.6	5.4	5.9	5.7	5.5	5.9	4.8	5.5	4.8	5.5	6.5
b.		would you say the U.S. was five years ago?											
		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1964</u>		
17	High (8-10)	17	14	14	20	13	12	28	27	19	24		
34	Medium (6-7)	36	36	35	32	33	30	29	32	30	34		
44	Low (0-5)	45	48	48	43	51	56	40	36	47	37		
<u>5</u>	Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>		
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100		
5.8	<i>Mean Rating</i>	5.7	5.7	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.3	6.0	6.3	5.6	6.1		
c.		do you think the U.S. will be five years from now—just your best guess											
		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1989</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1972</u>	<u>1964⁶</u>	
36	High (8-10)	33	29	26	32	31	28	37	32	29	35	57	
26	Medium (6-7)	27	28	27	24	33	29	28	24	21	22	17	
27	Low (0-5)	36	39	44	36	31	34	27	34	37	33	15	
<u>11</u>	Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	
6.6	<i>Mean Rating</i>	6.1	5.9	5.7	6.0	6.3	6.1	6.6	6.1	5.8	6.2	7.7	

⁵ Trends for 1964 through 1985 and 1991 are from Gallup.

⁶ In 1964 the question referred to "ten years from now."

Q.5a In your own words, what are your main wishes and hopes for the country's future? What do you most hope for to make the country better? (**OPEN END, RECORD VERBATIM. PROBE FOR CLARITY ONLY. ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR THEM. ACCEPT UP TO THREE RESPONSES.**)

		<u>Feb. 1998</u>
31	ECONOMIC (NET)	30
10	Economy/Economic growth/Stability (unspecified)	11
6	Create jobs/More jobs/Lower employment	8
5	Social Security/Assured Social Security	1
4	Poverty/Take on hunger/Needy/Homeless	5
4	Taxes/Lower taxes/Easier tax laws	4
2	National debt/Attention to national debt/Get budget figured out	3
2	Distribution of wealth/Rid of greed	2
*	Inflation/Control inflation	1
2	All other Economic mentions	--
21	GOVERNMENT/POLITICAL LEADERSHIP (NET)	18
	Congress does what's best for the country should work for	
4	the people/Should look out for country not own interest	4
	Distance from other countries problems/Take care of our own/	
4	Leave other countries alone	3
4	More moral President/Leader with good morals	3
2	Qualified people in Congress/Public office	2
2	Good President/Leader	3
2	New President/Get Bill Clinton out of office	2
*	Governor should have more morals/Good common sense	1
4	All other government/political leadership mentions	1
20	MISCELLANEOUS (NET)	14
8	Education/Well educated group of people	5
5	Health care for all/Medical care system to take care of all people	4
2	Drugs/Eliminate drugs/No drugs	4
1	Environment/Paying attention to the environment	*
4	All other miscellaneous mentions	2
16	WORLD PEACE/NATIONAL SECURITY (NET)	29
8	Peace (unspecified)	10
7	No war/World peace/Peace with all nations	16
*	Stay out of conflict with Iraq	2
1	All other world peace/national security mentions	1
14	RELIGION/MORALITY (NET)	13
5	Better morals (unspecified)	4
5	Back to Christianity/Country will return to Christian heritage	4
2	Improve quality of family	2
2	Personal responsibility	--
1	Bring back prayer to public schools	*
1	All other religion/morality mentions	*
8	COOPERATION/UNITY (NET)	10
7	People come together/More love between citizens	8
1	More equality	2
*	All other cooperation/unity mentions	*
6	CRIME (NET)	8
5	Crime/Violence/Eliminate crime/Violence	8
1	All other crime mentions	*
4	RACE RELATIONS (NET)	5
	More tolerance of other races/Racial problems have to go/People	
4	will learn to understand country is multi-ethnic	4
0	All other race relations mentions	*
7	Don't know/Refused/No answer	6

Q.5b And what are your main fears and worries about the country's future? (**OPEN END, RECORD VERBATIM. PROBE FOR CLARITY ONLY. ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR THEM. ACCEPT UP TO THREE RESPONSES.**)

		<u>Feb 1998</u>
29	WAR/NATIONAL SECURITY (NET)	40
16	War/World War III	25
3	Terrorism/Terrorist attack	2
3	A high profile as a world power/Not being a predominant nation	3
2	World's coming to an end	1
2	Nuclear war	3
2	War with Iraq	4
1	Biological germ warfare	2
*	War with China	*
1	All other War/National security mentions	1
25	MISCELLANEOUS (NET)	19
8	Crime/Violence	7
	Financial burden on the elderly/Eliminate benefits for the elderly/	
5	Lack of Social Security	2
4	Quality of education	3
3	Drugs/Drug use/Legalization of drugs	4
2	Lack of medical/health care	2
1	Pollution	1
*	Illegal immigration/Letting in too many aliens/Not curbing immigration	1
6	All othe miscellaneous mentions	2
19	ECONOMIC (NET)	17
7	Economic downturn/Collapse/Recession/Depression	6
4	Unemployment/Jobs leaving the U.S./Going to other countries	3
2	Poverty/Homelessness/Taking care of the poor	2
2	Government spending/Cost of big government	1
2	Economy (unspecified)	2
1	National debt	2
1	Inflation	1
1	All other economic mentions	1
18	GOVERNMENT/POLITICAL LEADERSHIP (NET)	18
4	Country's leadership/Leaders/Lack of leadership	4
	Getting involved in other people's business/Worry about	
3	own future not other countries	3
3	Big government/Too much government encroachment on individual rights	3
	Not working for the good of the people/Lack of focus	
3	on needs of people/Loss of confidence in the government	3
1	Gridlock in government/Internal fighting/Acting politically	1
1	Immoral President	1
1	Corruption in government/Dishonest/Illegal things in government	2
	Not using common sense/Not enough strength and wisdom/	
1	Responding the wrong way	2
1	Political uprising/Rebellion against authority/Anarchy	2
*	President's impeachment	*
*	All other Government/Political Leadership mentions	--
12	RELIGION/MORALITY (NET)	11
7	Decline/Lack of morals	4
3	Lack of parental guidance/Breakdown of the family	3
2	People's selfish interests/Self gratification	3
1	Immoral faults will be accepted so they don't seem wrong	1
*	All other religion/morality mentions	*
1	None	2
12	Don't know/Refused/No answer	9

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

Q.6 How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right? Just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

	Just About <u>Always</u>	Most Of the <u>Time</u>	Only <u>Some</u>	(VOL.) <u>Never</u>	<u>DK</u>
February, 1999	4	27	64	4	1=100
November, 1998	4	22	61	11	2=100
February, 1998	5	29	61	4	1=100
November, 1997	2	36	60	2	*=100
NES ⁷ , 1996	2	25	70	2	1=100
1994	2	19	74	3	2=100
1992	3	26	68	2	1=100
1990	3	25	69	2	1=100
1988	4	37	56	2	1=100
1986	3	35	58	2	2=100
1984	4	40	53	1	2=100
1982	2	31	62	2	3=100
1980	2	23	69	4	2=100
1978	2	27	64	4	3=100
1976	4	30	62	1	3=100
1974	2	34	61	1	2=100
1972	5	48	44	1	2=100
1970	7	47	44	*	2=100
1968	7	54	37	*	2=100
1966	17	48	28	3	4=100
1964	14	62	22	*	2=100
1958	16	57	23	0	4=100

Q.7 Now I'm going to read you a few statements. For each one, please tell me if you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree. The first one is...(ROTATE ITEMS)

	Completely <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Disagree</u>	Completely <u>Disagree</u>	Don't <u>Know</u>
a. Generally speaking, elected officials in Washington lose touch with the people pretty quickly	29	49	18	3	1=100
November, 1997	32	44	18	5	1=100
July, 1994	39	44	13	3	1=100
May, 1993	29	53	13	3	2=100
June, 1992	35	49	12	3	1=100
Nov, 1991	41	43	11	4	1=100
May, 1990	30	48	17	2	3=100
Feb, 1989	30	50	16	2	2=100
May, 1988	26	50	19	3	2=100
May, 1987	22	51	21	3	3=100
b. Most elected officials are trustworthy	2	41	41	14	2=100
February, 1998	2	49	38	10	1=100
October, 1997	3	41	40	15	1=100

7

Trend numbers for 1958 through 1996 are from the American National Election Studies.

Q. 7 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Completely Agree</u>	<u>Mostly Agree</u>	<u>Mostly Disagree</u>	<u>Completely Disagree</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
c. The government is really run for the benefit of all the people	4	38	41	16	1=100
November, 1997	9	39	35	15	2=100
July, 1994	10	32	38	19	1=100
June, 1992	8	36	37	17	2=100
Nov, 1991	11	37	34	16	2=100
May, 1990	10	42	35	10	3=100
Feb, 1989	12	45	31	10	2=100
May, 1988	11	42	34	10	3=100
May, 1987	9	48	31	8	4=100
d. I'm generally bored by what goes on in Washington	17	39	32	11	1=100
June, 1998	16	33	33	16	2=100
November, 1997	14	37	34	14	1=100
July, 1994	17	34	33	15	1=100
June, 1992	20	35	31	13	1=100
November, 1991	16	36	30	16	2=100
May, 1990	12	36	38	12	2=100
February, 1989	10	37	37	13	3=100
May, 1988	11	37	38	12	2=100
May, 1987	8	34	41	13	4=100

Q.8 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely?
[INSERT ITEM]

[NOTE: ASK ITEMS A-D FIRST, ROTATING ITEMS; THEN ASK ITEMS E-G, ROTATING ITEMS]

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	(VOL.) DK
a. The impeachment trial of President Clinton in the Senate	31	38	20	11	*=100
Mid-January, 1999	22	37	26	14	1=100
January, 1999	27	37	21	14	1=100
Late December, 1998 ⁸	34	37	22	7	*=100
b. The Texas murder trial of a man accused of dragging a black man behind a pickup truck	24	41	20	14	1=100
c. Protests in Europe over the capture of a Kurdish rebel leader	5	17	30	48	*=100

⁸

In Late December the story was listed as "The debate and vote in the House of Representatives to impeach Bill Clinton."

Q. 8 CONTINUED ...

		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	(VOL.) DK
d.	NATO efforts to end ethnic conflict in Kosovo, Serbia	11	30	28	30	1=100
	Mid-January, 1999 ⁹	9	21	24	44	2=100
	March, 1998 ¹⁰	5	12	26	55	2=100
e.	Charges of corruption against members of the International Olympic Committee	11	33	27	29	*=100
	January, 1999 ¹¹	9	28	29	33	1=100
f.	The labor dispute and flight cancellations involving American Airlines	18	41	26	15	*=100
g.	Reports that Hillary Clinton might run for the U.S. Senate	19	35	24	21	1=100

**ON ANOTHER SUBJECT,
ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=603]**

Q.9 Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal WHICH PARTY wins the presidential election in the year 2000 or that you don't care very much which party wins?

		<u>Oct 1995¹²</u>	<u>Oct 1991</u>	<u>May 1987</u>
61	Care a good deal	61	55	54
36	Don't care very much	36	39	40
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=600]

Q.10 Generally speaking, would you say that you personally care a good deal WHO wins the presidential election in the year 2000 or that you don't care very much who wins?

		<u>Oct 1995</u>	<u>Oct 1991</u>	<u>May 1987</u>
83	Care a good deal	78	73	76
16	Don't care very much	19	22	20
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100

⁹ In Mid-January the story was listed as "The massacre of 45 people in Kosovo, Serbia."

¹⁰ In March 1998 the story was listed as "Ethnic conflict in Kosovo, Serbia."

¹¹ In January 1999, the story was listed as "Charges that Salt Lake City used illegal practices to win the 2002 Winter Olympic games."

¹² For Q.9 and Q.10 the trends from 1995, 1991 and 1987 refer to the 1996, 1992 and 1988 elections.

ASK ALL:

Q.11 Thinking about the Democratic and Republican parties, would you say there is a great deal of difference in what they stand for, a fair amount of difference, or hardly any difference at all?

		March	June	Oct	July	May	May
		<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1987</u>
33	A great deal	28	25	34	23	24	25
46	A fair amount	45	48	46	51	45	45
18	Hardly any	23	25	18	24	27	25
<u>3</u>	DK/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

ROTATE Q.12 AND Q.13

Q.12 What does it mean to you when someone says they are a REPUBLICAN? (**OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “DON’T KNOW”. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR SECOND RESPONSE.**)

		May	Jan
		<u>1990</u>	<u>1987</u>
18	Conservative/Right wing	22	21
12	Rich, powerful, monied interests	20	18
6	Business oriented	10	13
	That’s their party/Vote for Republican Party/		
11	Agrees with GOP population	--	8
5	Personal greed/Out for personal gain/Protect own assets	--	--
4	Against government spending/Conservative spending	6	5
3	Doesn’t bother me/It’s their choice	--	--
2	Not a Democrat	--	--
2	Religious/Pro-life/Family oriented	1	--
2	Morality	--	--
1	Honest	--	--
1	Concerned about freedom	--	--
--	Named party	--	5
--	Not for people	4	5
--	Lower taxes, no tax against taxes	1	1
--	Mentioned Bush	1	--
--	Mentioned abortion	1	--
--	Represents the public	--	2
--	Strong national defense	--	2
11	Other	8	12
33	No answer	45	28

Q.13 What does it mean to you when someone says they are a DEMOCRAT? (**OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “DON’T KNOW”. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR SECOND RESPONSE.**)

		May <u>1990</u>	Jan <u>1987</u>
16	Liberal	18	18
15	For the people/For working people That’s their party/Vote for Republican Party/	18	21
12	Agrees with GOP population	--	9
9	For social programs/Social justice	9	7
4	Just a name/Doesn’t mean much	--	3
3	Cares for poor, disadvantaged	7	7
3	Not much difference/Same as if they were Republican	--	--
2	Too much government spending/Bigger government	3	7
2	Middle class/For the middle class	--	--
2	Open-minded	--	--
1	Believe in higher taxes, for taxes	1	2
1	Pro-choice/Mentions abortion	1	--
*	For minorities	2	--
--	Not in control of things	--	1
--	Trustworthy/truthful	--	1
--	Mentions of prominent Democrats	1	--
11	Other	8	12
30	No answer	47	27

Q.14 In reporting on a presidential candidate, what ONE factor do you think news organizations should pay the most attention to...(READ)

		<u>Oct 1995</u>	<u>Oct 1991¹³</u>	<u>Nov 1987</u>
12	What a candidate is like as a person,	6	7	9
49	What a candidate believes about important issues, OR	69	46	41
36	What a candidate has accomplished in the past?	23	42	45
<u>3</u>	(DO NOT READ) Don’t know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100

13

For October 1991 and November 1987 trend figures based on slightly different question, "In reporting on a presidential candidate, what one factor do you think news organizations should pay the most attention to... a candidate's personal character, a candidate's stand on issues, OR a candidate's past experiences and qualifications."

- Q.15 Next, I'm going to read you a list of some people who have been in the news lately. Not everyone will have heard of them. For each one that I name, please tell me whether or not you have heard of this person. (First, **(INSERT NAME; ROTATE ITEMS)**, have you heard of this person or not? **(IF YES, ASK Q.16; IF NO, DK, SKIP TO NEXT ITEM.)** **[NOTE: ASK ITEMS A-I AND ITEMS J-M IN BLOCKS; ROTATE BLOCKS, AND ROTATE ORDER OF ITEMS WITHIN BLOCKS]**)
- Q.16 How much of a chance is there that you would vote for **(INSERT NAME)** if (he/she) is a candidate for president in 2000 — is there a good chance, some chance, or no chance?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS: [N=924]

		Have <u>Heard</u>	Have not <u>Heard</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>	<i>Based on Those Who Have Heard</i>				<u>(N)</u>
					<u>Good Chance</u>	<u>Some Chance</u>	<u>No Chance</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>	
a	Dan Quayle	97	3	0=100	9	33	54	4=100	(902)

FORM 1 ONLY: [N=471]

b.1	George W. Bush	95	5	*=100	32	36	27	5=100	(449)
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FORM 2 ONLY: [N=453]

b.2	Texas Gov. George W. Bush	93	7	*=100	36	39	22	3=100	(419)
b.	Elizabeth Dole	91	9	*=100	26	38	33	3=100	(854)
c.	Steve Forbes	71	29	*=100	8	35	52	5=100	(685)
d.	Patrick Buchanan	83	15	2=100	6	26	63	5=100	(782)
e.	John McCain	32	67	1=100	16	42	35	7=100	(332)
f.	John Kasich	21	78	1=100	16	31	45	8=100	(229)
g.	Gary Bauer	18	81	1=100	12	26	51	11=100	(188)
h.	Lamar Alexander	42	57	1=100	6	27	60	7=100	(421)
i.	Robert Smith	12	87	1=100	8	19	64	9=100	(120)
j.	Al Gore	98	2	0=100	22	30	45	3=100	(910)
k.	Jesse Jackson	98	2	*=100	12	30	56	2=100	(904)
l.	Bill Bradley	55	44	1=100	14	41	39	6=100	(531)
m.	John Kerry	38	61	1=100	8	37	48	7=100	(374)

Q.17 Now I'd like your views on some things in the news. As I read from a list, please tell me which category best describes your overall opinion of what I name. (First,) would you say your overall opinion of... **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ITEMS)** is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? **(INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE")**

NOTE: OCTOBER 1998 TRENDS ARE BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS.

	Very Favorable	Mostly Favorable	Mostly Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Never Heard Of	Can't Rate
a. The Democratic Party	11	47	26	11	0	5=100
January, 1999	14	41	26	12	0	7=100
Early December, 1998	18	41	24	10	0	7=100
October, 1998	11	45	29	9	*	6=100
Early September, 1998	13	47	25	8	*	7=100
March, 1998	15	43	26	10	*	6=100
August, 1997	11	41	32	10	0	6=100
June, 1997	10	51	25	8	*	6=100
January, 1997	13	47	28	7	*	5=100
October, 1995	9	40	37	11	—	3=100
December, 1994	13	37	31	13	*	6=100
July, 1994	13	49	27	7	*	4=100
May, 1993	14	43	25	9	0	9=100
July, 1992	17	44	24	9	*	6=100
b. The Republican Party	7	37	36	15	0	5=100
January, 1999	10	34	27	23	0	6=100
Early December, 1998	11	35	27	20	*	7=100
October, 1998	9	43	28	14	0	6=100
Early September, 1998	9	47	26	11	*	7=100
March, 1998	10	40	31	12	*	7=100
August, 1997	9	38	36	11	*	6=100
June, 1997	8	43	31	11	1	6=100
January, 1997	8	44	33	10	*	5=100
October, 1995	10	42	28	16	*	4=100
December, 1994	21	46	19	8	*	6=100
July, 1994	12	51	25	8	*	4=100
May, 1993	12	42	25	10	0	11=100
July, 1992	9	37	31	17	*	6=100
c. The news media	6	43	34	15	0	2=100
March, 1998	9	39	34	16	*	2=100
September, 1997	7	43	34	14	*	2=100

Q.17 CONTINUED ...

		Very Favor- <u>able</u>	Mostly Favor- <u>able</u>	Mostly Unfavor- <u>able</u>	Very Unfavor- <u>able</u>	Never Heard <u>Of</u>	Can't <u>Rate</u>
d.	Congress	4	48	36	8	0	4=100
	January, 1999	7	41	30	15	0	7=100
	Early December, 1998	11	41	29	12	0	7=100
	October, 1998	7	55	25	8	0	5=100
	Early September, 1998	7	59	22	5	0	7=100
	October, 1997	5	48	33	11	0	3=100
	August 1997	6	44	33	11	0	6=100
	June, 1997	4	48	34	8	0	6=100
	May, 1997	5	44	32	10	*	9=100
	February, 1997	6	46	31	9	*	8=100
	January, 1997	6	50	32	8	*	4=100
	June, 1996	6	39	38	12	*	5=100
	April, 1996	6	39	37	13	0	5=100
	January, 1996	4	38	38	16	*	4=100
	October, 1995	4	38	42	13	0	3=100
	August, 1995	5	40	34	13	*	7=100
	June, 1995	8	45	31	11	*	5=100
	February, 1995	10	44	27	10	0	9=100
	July, 1994	7	46	34	9	*	4=100
	May, 1993	8	35	35	13	0	9=100
	November, 1991	7	44	34	9	0	6=100
	March, 1991	16	50	19	7	0	8=100
	May, 1990	6	53	25	9	1	6=100
	May, 1988	8	56	23	5	0	8=100
	January, 1988	6	58	25	4	0	7=100
	May, 1987	10	64	16	4	*	6=100
	January, 1987	7	52	23	8	0	10=100
	June, 1985	9	58	21	5	*	7=100

Q.18 Looking ahead to the next presidential election, would you like to see a president who offers policies and programs similar to those of the Clinton administration, OR would you like to see a president who offers different policies and programs?

54 Policies and programs similar to Clinton administration
 41 Different policies and programs
5 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q.19 Now thinking about both the strengths and weaknesses of Bill Clinton as a person, would you like to see the next president have personal qualities similar to Bill Clinton, OR would you like to see a president who has different personal qualities?

17 Similar personal qualities
 78 Different personal qualities
5 Don't know/Refused
 100

NOW A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NEWS...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=603]

Q.20 Some people think that by criticizing leaders, news organizations keep political leaders from doing their job. Others think that such criticism is worth it because it keeps political leaders from doing things that should not be done. Which position is closer to your opinion?

		Early Feb <u>1998</u>	Feb <u>1997</u>	Late Jan <u>1994</u>	Early Jan <u>1994</u>	Aug <u>1989</u>	Dec <u>1986</u>	June <u>1985</u>
31	Criticism by the press keeps political leaders from doing their job	39	32	24	18	23	26	17
58	Criticism keeps leaders from doing things that shouldn't be done	55	56	66	69	68	60	67
<u>11</u> 100	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u> 100	<u>12</u> 100	<u>10</u> 100	<u>13</u> 100	<u>9</u> 100	<u>14</u> 100	<u>16</u> 100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=600]

Q.21 Some people say that in covering the personal and ethical behavior of public figures, news organizations are only reporting the news. Others say that news organizations are driving the controversies themselves, by devoting as much coverage to these stories as they do. Which view comes closer to your own?

		<u>March 1995</u>
24	Only reporting the news	20
72	Driving the controversy	74
1	Neither (VOL.)	*
<u>3</u> 100	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u> 100

ASK ALL:

Q.22 In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

		Early Aug <u>1998</u>	Early Feb <u>1998</u>	Feb <u>1997</u>	Jan <u>1992</u>	Aug <u>1989</u>	Aug <u>1988</u>	May <u>1988</u>	Jan <u>1988</u>	July <u>1985</u>
37	News organizations get the facts straight	33	34	37	49	54	40	48	44	55
58	Stories and reports often inaccurate	58	63	56	44	44	50	43	48	34
<u>5</u> 100	Don't know/Refused	<u>9</u> 100	<u>3</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>7</u> 100	<u>2</u> 100	<u>10</u> 100	<u>9</u> 100	<u>8</u> 100	<u>11</u> 100

Q.23 I'm going to read you some pairs of opposite phrases. After I read each pair, tell me which ONE phrase you feel better describes news organizations generally. If you think that NEITHER phrase applies, please say so. [ROTATE ITEMS]

			Jan <u>1987</u>	July <u>1986</u>	June <u>1985</u>
21	a.	Care about the people they report on, OR	41	--	35
67		Don't care about the people they report on?	45	--	48
9		Neither applies	9	--	10
<u>3</u>		Don't know/Refused	<u>5</u>	--	<u>7</u>
100			100		100
26	b.	Willing to admit their mistakes, OR	--	--	34
66		Try to cover up their mistakes?	--	--	55
6		Neither applies	--	--	4
<u>2</u>		Don't know/Refused	--	--	<u>7</u>
100					100
40	c.	Moral, OR	--	--	54
38		Immoral?	--	--	13
16		Neither applies	--	--	20
<u>6</u>		Don't know/Refused	--	--	<u>13</u>
100					100
59	d.	Growing in influence, OR	--	--	63
32		Declining in influence?	--	--	17
6		Neither applies	--	--	7
<u>3</u>		Don't know/Refused	--	--	<u>13</u>
100					100
45	e.	Protect democracy, OR	52	58	54
38		Hurt democracy?	27	18	23
13		Neither applies	13	17	13
<u>4</u>		Don't know/Refused	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>
100			100	100	100
69	f.	Care about how good a job they do, OR	--	77	79
22		Don't care about how good a job they do?	--	16	11
6		Neither applies	--	5	4
<u>3</u>		Don't know/Refused	--	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>
100				100	100
52	g.	Highly professional, OR	--	71	72
32		Not professional?	--	13	11
13		Neither applies	--	12	9
<u>3</u>		Don't know/Refused	--	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>
100				100	100
41	h.	Stand up for America, OR	53	53	52
42		Too critical of America?	35	28	30
13		Neither applies	8	15	10
<u>4</u>		Don't know/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>
100			100	100	100

Q.23 CONTINUED ...

			<u>Jan</u> <u>1987</u>	<u>July</u> <u>1986</u>	<u>June</u> <u>1985</u>
56	i.	Politically biased in their reporting, OR	47	42	45
31		Careful that their reporting is NOT politically biased?	39	41	36
8		Neither applies	7	9	7
<u>5</u>		Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>12</u>
100			100	100	100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT,

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=603]

Q.24 In your opinion, over the past few years have we made significant progress in reducing the federal budget deficit, or not?

		<u>May</u> <u>1997</u>	<u>Dec</u> <u>1994</u>	<u>Feb</u> <u>1989</u>
61	Yes	29	26	15
29	No	59	65	77
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>12</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=600]

Q.24a In your opinion, have we made significant progress in reducing the federal budget deficit, or not?

61	Yes
31	No
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK FORM 1 ONLY: [N=603]

Q.25F1 President Clinton has proposed setting aside approximately two-thirds of an expected budget surplus to fix the Social Security system. What do you think the leaders in Washington should do with the remainder of the surplus? Should the money be used for a tax cut, OR should it be used to fund new government programs?

53	Should be used for a tax cut
34	Should be used to fund new programs
9	Should be used for some other purpose (VOL.)
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK FORM 2 ONLY: [N=600]

Q.26F2 President Clinton has proposed setting aside approximately two-thirds of an expected budget surplus to fix the Social Security system. What do you think the leaders in Washington should do with the remainder of the surplus? Should the money be used for a tax cut, OR should it be spent on programs for education, the environment, health care, crime-fighting and military defense?

- 27 Should be used for a tax cut
- 65 Should be spent on programs
- 5 Should be used for some other purpose (VOL.)
- 3 Don't know/Refused
- 100

ASK ALL:

Q.27 Generally, which approach to cutting taxes would you prefer — a 10 percent across-the-board income tax cut that would apply equally to all Americans, regardless of how much money they make; OR, targeted tax benefits designed to help offset the costs of education, child care, and long-term care for lower and middle class Americans?

- 37 10% across-the-board income tax cut
- 58 Targeted tax benefits for lower and middle class
- 2 Neither (VOL.)
- 3 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Q.27a Next, I'd like your opinion on some programs and proposals that are being discussed in this country today. For each one, please tell me how important it is for Congress to do. (First,...) **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ITEMS)** — is this a very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important thing for Congress to do?

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. A 10 percent across-the-board income tax cut that would apply equally to all Americans	42	31	16	10	1=100
b. Eliminating the so-called "marriage penalty", which taxes some married couples at a higher rate than if they filed as single people	48	32	12	5	3=100
c. Increasing the amount of money senior citizens can earn before their Social Security benefits are reduced	61	29	6	3	1=100
d. Providing tax credits to people who provide long-term care to elderly or disabled family members	67	28	4	1	*=100
e. Cutting the capital gains tax	31	40	15	7	7=100

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT,

Q.28 Do you approve or disapprove of the vote in the Senate impeachment trial which allowed Bill Clinton to remain in office?

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
February, 1999	63	34	3=100
TREND PRIOR TO SENATE VOTE:	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Favor</u>	
Mid-January, 1999 ¹⁴	63	33	4=100
January, 1999	64	32	4=100
Late December, 1998	65	31	4=100
Early December, 1998 ¹⁵	67	29	4=100
November, 1998	70	23	7=100
Late October, 1998 (RV)	66	28	6=100
Early October, 1998 (RV)	62	32	6=100

Q.29 Thinking back over the past year, what grade would you give the press for the way it has covered the investigation and impeachment trial of Bill Clinton? Would you grade the press an A, B, C, D, or F?

13	A
26	B
28	C
17	D
14	F
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	
2.1	<i>Mean Rating</i>

Q.30 In your opinion, how much, if at all, has the investigation and impeachment of Bill Clinton hurt the country — a great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or not at all?

31	Great deal
32	Fair amount
24	Not very much
12	Not at all
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

¹⁴ For Mid-January 1999, January 1999 and Late December 1998 trend figures based on different question, "Based on what you know at this point, do you think that Bill Clinton should or should not be removed from office?"

¹⁵ For early December 1998, November 1998 and October 1998 trend figures based on slightly different question, "Based on what you know at this point, do you think that Bill Clinton should or should not be impeached and removed from office?"

Q.31 The law that provides for an independent counsel to look into possible wrongdoing by presidents and senior members of their administrations is currently up for renewal. Do you think this law should be renewed, or not?

57 Should be renewed
 38 Should not
5 Don't know/Refused
 100

Finally, I'd like to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only...

Q.32 Do you use a computer at your workplace, at school, or at home on at least an occasional basis?

		Early					Late					Early					
		Jan 1999	Dec 1998	Sept 1998	Aug 1998	Aug 1998	April 1998	Jan 1998	Nov 1997	June 1997	Sept 1996 ¹⁶	Sept 1996	July 1996	April 1996	March 1996	Feb 1996	Jan 1996
68	Yes	69	64	64	66	66	61	65	66	60	59	56	56	58	61	60	59
32	No	31	36	36	34	34	39	35	34	40	41	44	44	42	39	40	41
*	DK/Ref	*	*	*	0	*	*	*	*	0	*	*	*	*	*	0	0
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

IF YES (USE A COMPUTER) IN Q.32, ASK:

Q.33 Do you ever go online to access the Internet or World Wide Web or to send and receive email?

BASED ON TOTAL RESPONDENTS:

		Early		Early			Early		
		Jan 1999	Dec 1998	Nov 1998	Sept 1998	Aug 1998	Nov 1997	July 1996	June 1995 ¹⁷
49	Goes online	47	42	37	42	43	36	23	14
51	Does not go online	53	58	63	58	57	63	77	86
*	Don't know/Refused	*	0	*	*	*	1	0	*
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

¹⁶ Based on registered voters only.

¹⁷ The 1995 figure combines responses from two separate questions:
 (1) Do you or anyone in your household ever use a modem to connect to any computer bulletin boards, information services such as CompuServe or Prodigy, or other computers at other locations? (IF YES, PROBE: Is that you, someone else or both?)
 (2) Do you, yourself, ever use a computer at (work) (school) (work or school) to connect with computer bulletin boards, information services such as America Online or Prodigy, or other computers over the Internet?