

PEW RESEARCH CENTER AND COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW
SURVEY OF JOURNALISTS
FINAL TOPLINE
FEBRUARY 8 - MARCH 21, 2000 N=287(National and Local)
N=90 (Investigative)

1. What do you feel is the most important problem facing journalism today? (OPEN-END)

<u>Total</u> ¹		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
15	Credibility problem	15	5	19	15	22	13	23
10	Coverage should be less sensationalized	13	10	16	7	8	7	9
8	Corporate ownership	9	10	8	7	3	9	7
6	Too much emphasis on costs/profits	6	8	4	7	0	5	13
6	Competing with other forms of media	8	10	8	4	8	4	4
3	Reporting accurately/factually	5	0	8	2	8	0	3
3	Financial cutbacks/budget constraints	4	5	4	3	5	2	1
3	Making sure coverage is relevant	3	0	4	3	3	4	2
2	Reporting objectively/fairly	1	0	1	3	3	3	3
2	Decline in circulation/audience	1	0	1	4	3	4	3
2	Competition damaging to journalism	2	0	3	2	0	3	1
2	Staffing problems/Not enough quality journalists	3	0	4	2	3	2	8
2	Confusion between opinions and reporting	4	3	6	0	0	0	1
2	Attracting readers/viewers/listeners	0	0	0	3	8	2	1
2	24 hour/Around the clock competition	1	3	1	2	0	3	3
2	Ratings take precedence	0	0	0	3	3	4	1
25	Other	24	42	18	26	27	27	31
21	No answer	20	24	17	22	8	23	11
37	BUSINESS/FINANCIAL (NET)	35	37	36	38	35	40	40
24	Economic pressures(subnet)	23	24	24	25	24	24	32
11	Competition(subnet)	13	16	13	9	11	11	11
2	Commercialism (subnet)	0	0	0	5	3	6	1
27	QUALITY AND STANDARDS (NET)	30	24	34	23	30	23	27
25	Quality of coverage (subnet)	28	21	31	22	30	21	24
1	Quality of writing (subnet)	2	3	1	1	0	1	0
1	Ethics and Standards (subnet)	1	0	2	1	0	1	2
19	CREDIBILITY/TRUSTWORTHINESS (NET)	18	8	22	19	27	17	24
4	PUBLIC'S APPETITE	3	5	2	5	8	4	4

¹

The Total column (N=287) is based on National (N=137) and Local (N=150) subgroups. "Investigative journalists" is a discrete category.

2. Here are some things being talked about in journalism today. For each one, please say whether it is having a positive effect on journalism, having a negative effect on journalism, or isn't having much of an effect.

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
	a. The increasing number of cable news outlets							
52	Positive Effect	51	63	47	53	46	58	46
28	Negative Effect	31	24	33	25	24	24	27
14	Not Much Effect	10	13	10	17	24	13	22
<u>6</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>8</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	b. Television shifting more to a magazine format							
21	Positive Effect	22	31	19	21	11	26	31
53	Negative Effect	55	45	60	51	51	52	42
25	Not Much Effect	22	24	20	27	35	22	26
<u>1</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	c. Buyouts of local newspapers by large newspaper chains							
7	Positive Effect	7	8	6	7	11	5	10
73	Negative Effect	73	79	70	73	62	77	81
18	Not Much Effect	17	10	22	18	24	16	9
<u>2</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	d. Buyouts of news organizations by diversified corporations							
6	Positive Effect	8	13	6	3	3	4	3
73	Negative Effect	71	68	71	75	73	74	84
18	Not Much Effect	19	16	22	18	21	19	12
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	e. The emergence of online-only news pages and magazines							
58	Positive Effect	61	58	61	55	49	56	58
19	Negative Effect	20	21	19	18	22	16	25
20	Not Much Effect	16	16	18	24	24	26	17
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

3. How good a job does journalism do striking a balance between the two goals of what audiences want to know and what's important for them to know?

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
36	Excellent/Good	37	39	37	35	40	34	38
2	Excellent	2	5	1	2	5	1	2
34	Good	35	34	36	33	35	33	36
61	Fair/Poor	60	58	61	62	60	62	62
56	Only fair	55	53	55	57	60	56	58
5	Poor	5	5	6	5	0	6	4
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

4. In your opinion, to what extent do corporate owners influence news organizations' decisions about which stories to cover or emphasize?

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			Investigative <u>Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
39	A great deal/A fair amount	34	42	30	45	27	51	61
9	A great deal	5	5	4	13	3	16	17
30	A fair amount	29	37	26	32	24	35	44
58	Not very much/Not at all	64	55	69	52	70	47	38
54	Not very much	60	47	67	48	65	43	38
4	Not at all	4	8	2	4	5	4	0
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

5. In your opinion, to what extent do advertising concerns influence news organizations' decisions about which stories to cover or emphasize?

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			Investigative <u>Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
28	A great deal/A fair amount	22	31	17	34	8	43	49
5	A great deal	3	5	2	7	0	9	11
23	A fair amount	19	26	15	27	8	34	38
70	Not very much/Not at all	76	66	82	65	92	56	51
60	Not very much	66	50	75	54	73	47	43
10	Not at all	10	16	7	11	19	9	8
<u>2</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Now, turning to another topic...

6. In your experience, do journalists sometimes purposely avoid covering certain stories that they believe are truly newsworthy?

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			Investigative <u>Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
37	Yes	31	40	25	41	24	42	55
62	No	68	60	75	57	73	57	43
<u>1</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

ASK Q.7 THRU Q.11 ONLY IF ANSWERED "YES" (Q.6 = 1), IF ANSWERED "NO"(Q.6 = 2 or 3), SKIP TO Q.12

7. What would you say is the main reason *why* journalists sometimes avoid covering stories they believe are newsworthy? (OPEN-END)

BASED ON THOSE WHO THINK JOURNALISTS SOMETIMES PURPOSELY AVOID NEWSWORTHY STORIES [N=105]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
35	CORPORATE MANAGEMENT RESTRAINTS(NET)	26	42	47
15	Bosses/Editors/Management wouldn't support	14	16	33
7	Advertising concerns	2	10	2
6	Corporate concerns	0	10	12
4	Bosses/Managers would retaliate	0	6	2
3	Internal politics	5	2	2
2	Corporate anger	2	2	0
2	Never get published (unspecified)	0	3	2
2	All other corporate/management concerns	2	2	0
30	PERSONAL CONSTRAINTS (NET)	30	29	27
16	Lack of time/resources	16	16	16
5	Laziness	2	6	8
1	Priorities	2	0	2
10	All other personal constraints	9	10	2
17	AUDIENCE READERSHIP (NET)	21	15	8
10	No audience/Not marketable audience	14	6	2
3	Ratings competition	5	2	4
3	Fear of angering audience	0	5	0
2	Political correctness	2	2	2
1	Fear of angering group being covered	2	0	0
8	STORY LIMITS (NET)	9	6	4
7	Too complex	7	6	4
1	Dull	2	0	0
3	Other	5	2	8
23	No response	23	23	18
		(n=43)	(n=62)	(n=49)

8. Typically, do journalists...

BASED ON THOSE WHO THINK JOURNALISTS SOMETIMES PURPOSELY AVOID NEWSWORTHY STORIES [N=105]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
22	decide to avoid these stories on their own	16	26	14
24	decide to avoid these stories based on how they believe their bosses would respond to the stories?	35	17	31
30	get signals from their bosses to avoid these stories?	28	31	35
13	some other reason	14	13	10
<u>11</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>8</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK Q.9 THRU Q.11 ONLY IF ANSWERED "JOURNALISTS GET SIGNALS" (Q.8 = 3):

9. When journalists get signals from their bosses to avoid some stories...

What types of signals do they get? (OPEN-END)

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAY JOURNALISTS GET SIGNALS FROM BOSSES TO AVOID STORIES [N=31]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
35	DIRECT (NET)	33	37	41
16	Don't Cover	17	16	24
10	Overt instructions about what kinds of stories to cover/avoid	8	11	0
10	Pretty clear	8	11	18
32	INDIRECT (NET)	25	37	65
13	Lack of interest in stories/ Stories don't get published/aired	17	11	41
13	Yawns/Hemming/Hawing	8	16	18
3	Banter/Jokes	0	5	6
3	Failure to free time/resources	0	5	18
3	Pleas for different stories	0	5	0
10	Warnings of declining budget/ No support in response to story	8	11	0
6	Dull	8	5	0
6	Ratings/No audience	17	0	12
3	Not newsworthy	8	0	0
3	Too expensive	0	5	0
3	No response	8	0	0

10. And what types of topics attract these signals? (OPEN-END)

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAY JOURNALISTS GET SIGNALS FROM BOSSES TO AVOID STORIES [N=31]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
26	TYPES (NET)	42	16	18
13	Complicated/Complex/Hard	25	5	12
6	Investigative	8	5	12
3	Thinking/Academic	0	5	0
3	Speciality stories/Narrowcast	8	0	0
39	SUBJECTS (NET)	33	42	41
13	Politics	0	21	12
10	Economic (general)	8	11	0
6	Financial (corporate power, consumer)	8	5	24
6	International/Foreign affairs	17	0	6
3	Domestic Issues	0	5	0
3	Poor	0	5	12
3	Health/AIDS/Medical stories	8	0	0
3	Morality/Sex	8	0	0
3	Education	0	5	0
16	POSSIBLE REACTIONS(NET)	8	21	6
16	Stories that could alienate advertisers	8	21	0
3	Stories that could alienate local elites	0	5	0
0	Stories that could alienate (general)	0	0	6
3	Other	0	5	6
26	No response	25	26	35

11. What topics are "safe subjects" — that is, are *least likely* to attract these signals? (OPEN-END)

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAY JOURNALISTS GET SIGNALS FROM BOSSES TO AVOID STORIES [N=31]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
29	SUBJECTS (NET)	33	26	41
13	Health/AIDS	25	5	0
10	Economic (general)	8	11	12
6	Politics	8	5	6
3	Financial	8	0	0
3	Crime	0	5	24
3	Government	0	5	6
0	The Poor/Needy	0	0	6
23	TYPES (NET)	17	26	12
13	Non-controversial/soft/puff	8	16	6
3	Typical controversies	8	0	0
3	Specialty stories/Narrowcast	0	5	0
3	Stories that don't alienate advertisers	0	5	0
0	Short/Simple	0	0	6
6	Other	17	0	12
42	No response	33	47	41

ASK ALL:

12. Here are some reasons for purposely avoiding truly newsworthy stories. How often, if ever, do you think the journalists you know avoid a newsworthy story because...

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>			<u>Local</u>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
	a. the story is seen as too complicated for the average reader							
52	Commonplace/Sometimes	62	63	61	43	41	45	59
	12 Commonplace	15	10	15	10	6	12	11
	40 Sometimes	47	53	46	33	35	33	48
42	Rarely/Never	35	34	38	48	54	48	31
	33 Rarely	28	24	33	37	41	38	27
	9 Never	7	10	5	11	13	10	4
<u>6</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	b. the story is seen as important but dull							
77	Commonplace/Sometimes	84	79	85	71	62	76	77
	27 Commonplace	30	29	32	25	13	29	33
	50 Sometimes	54	50	53	46	49	47	44
20	Rarely/Never	15	21	14	25	33	23	19
	16 Rarely	13	21	10	20	25	19	13
	4 Never	2	0	4	5	8	4	6
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.12 CONTINUED ...

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			<i>Investigative</i>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Journalists</u>
	c. the story would hurt a reporter's relationship with a source							
42	Commonplace/Sometimes	40	34	42	43	32	48	57
	6 Commonplace	4	5	4	8	2	10	5
	36 Sometimes	36	29	38	35	30	38	52
54	Rarely/Never	57	63	56	52	60	51	38
	45 Rarely	46	42	48	45	46	47	30
	9 Never	11	21	8	7	14	4	8
<u>4</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	d. the story would draw attention to or worsen a community problem							
19	Commonplace/Sometimes	13	8	13	23	27	23	27
	2 Commonplace	1	3	0	3	0	5	1
	17 Sometimes	12	5	13	20	27	18	26
77	Rarely/Never	83	89	82	72	68	76	69
	54 Rarely	59	63	60	49	49	52	40
	23 Never	24	26	22	23	19	24	29
<u>4</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	e. the story might be ridiculed or frowned on by other journalists							
38	Commonplace/Sometimes	38	42	32	39	38	39	32
	7 Commonplace	6	10	4	8	5	7	12
	31 Sometimes	32	32	28	31	33	32	20
58	Rarely/Never	59	55	66	56	54	60	62
	39 Rarely	39	29	47	37	40	38	37
	19 Never	20	26	19	19	14	22	25
<u>4</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	f. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to the financial interests of a news organization's owners or parent company							
35	Commonplace/Sometimes	31	42	28	39	32	44	50
	6 Commonplace	3	5	3	8	0	11	17
	29 Sometimes	28	37	25	31	32	33	33
61	Rarely/Sometimes	67	58	72	55	60	55	44
	40 Rarely	44	37	47	37	33	40	24
	21 Never	23	21	25	18	27	15	20
<u>4</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.12 CONTINUED ...

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			<i>Investigative</i>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Journalists</u>
	g. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to a news organization's advertisers							
29	Commonplace/Sometimes	23	34	19	35	24	39	40
	6 Commonplace	3	2	3	9	3	12	11
	23 Sometimes	20	32	16	26	21	27	29
66	Rarely/Never	75	66	80	59	65	60	54
	44 Rarely	47	40	51	41	32	45	36
	22 Never	28	26	29	18	33	15	18
<u>5</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	h. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to friends or associates of a news organization's owners							
24	Commonplace/Sometimes	18	18	16	29	16	32	30
	4 Commonplace	2	2	2	5	0	6	9
	20 Sometimes	16	16	14	24	16	26	21
72	Rarely/Never	79	82	82	66	79	67	63
	46 Rarely	46	48	48	46	52	47	39
	26 Never	33	34	34	20	27	20	24
<u>4</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	i. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to friends of a news organization's editors							
20	Commonplace/Sometimes	15	18	15	24	16	28	31
	3 Commonplace	2	2	2	4	0	6	3
	17 Sometimes	13	16	13	20	16	22	28
75	Rarely/Never	79	74	83	71	79	71	62
	46 Rarely	48	37	53	44	49	42	38
	29 Never	31	37	30	27	30	29	24
<u>5</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	j. the story would be damaging to a journalist's career							
38	Commonplace/Sometimes	41	39	42	35	38	34	37
	5 Commonplace	6	5	6	4	0	5	7
	33 Sometimes	35	34	36	31	38	29	30
55	Rarely/Never	52	58	53	59	57	65	59
	36 Rarely	35	40	36	38	35	41	39
	19 Never	17	18	17	21	22	24	20
<u>7</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

IF ANSWERED "COMMONPLACE" OR "SOMETIMES" IN Q.12 ITEM f (Q.12f = 1 OR 2), ASK:

13. When journalists avoid stories because they would be embarrassing or damaging to the financial interests of a news organization's *owners or parent company*, do journalists...

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAID JOURNALISTS AVOID STORIES BECAUSE THEY WOULD BE DAMAGING TO FINANCIAL INTERESTS OF NEWS ORGANIZATION'S OWNERS [N=101]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
8	decide to avoid these stories on their own?	2	12	4
30	decide to avoid these stories based on how they believe their bosses would respond to the stories?	24	35	33
45	get signals from their bosses to avoid these stories?	49	43	56
9	some other reason	16	3	7
<u>8</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100 (n=43)	100 (n=58)	100 (n=45)

IF ANSWERED "COMMONPLACE" OR "SOMETIMES" IN Q.12 ITEM g (Q.12g = 1 OR 2), ASK:

14. When journalists avoid stories because they would be embarrassing or damaging to a news organization's *advertisers*, do journalists...

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAID JOURNALISTS AVOID STORIES BECAUSE THEY WOULD BE DAMAGING TO NEWS ORGANIZATION'S ADVERTISERS [N=84]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
4	decide to avoid these stories on their own?	6	2	6
24	decide to avoid these stories based on how they believe their bosses would respond to the stories?	35	17	19
57	get signals from their bosses to avoid these stories?	44	65	67
6	some other reason	9	4	5
<u>9</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100 (n=32)	100 (n=52)	100 (n=36)

ASK ALL:

15. How often, if ever, do journalists mistakenly *think* a story is killed or buried because it is embarrassing or damaging to the financial interests of a news organization's owners or parent company, when it is actually killed or buried because it is not a good news story?

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>			<u>Local</u>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
58	Commonplace/Sometimes	58	66	59	58	62	61	67
	10 Commonplace	9	13	9	10	16	7	12
	48 Sometimes	49	53	50	48	46	54	55
34	Rarely/Never	36	32	38	32	30	35	30
	29 Rarely	29	21	33	28	30	29	28
	5 Never	7	11	5	4	0	6	2
<u>8</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Now a few questions about YOUR OWN experiences...

16. Do you sometimes purposely avoid covering certain stories that you believe are truly newsworthy?

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>			<u>Local</u>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
26	Yes	26	18	27	26	8	31	28
69	No	70	82	71	69	89	68	69
<u>5</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

IF "YES" IN Q.16 (Q.16 = 1) , ASK Q.17 THRU 19: IF "NO" (Q.16 = 2 OR 9), SKIP TO Q.20

17. What is the main reason *why* you sometimes avoid covering stories you believe are newsworthy? (OPEN-END)

BASED ON THOSE JOURNALISTS WHO SAID THEY THEMSELVES SOMETIMES PURPOSELY AVOID COVERING STORIES

[N= 74]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
41	CONTENT CONSTRAINTS	46	36	56
20	Time pressures	14	26	40
7	Too complicated	11	3	8
7	Boring	11	3	4
5	TV wrong medium	6	5	8
4	Audience not interested	9	0	0
1	Competition	0	3	0
1	Not newsworthy	0	3	0
34	MANAGEMENT CONSTRAINTS	29	38	24
19	Editor/Boss doesn't want	20	18	16
9	Past experience/tired of fight	3	15	4
3	Concern about ownership	3	3	0
1	Internal politics	3	0	0
1	Career concerns	0	3	0
0	Concern about advertisers	0	0	4
5	PERSONAL REASONS	9	3	4
1	Not interested in story	3	0	0
3	Misc. personal reasons	3	3	0
1	Laziness	3	0	4
8	Other	6	10	16
15	No response	14	15	4
		(n=35)	(n=39)	(n=25)

18. Typically, do you..

BASED ON THOSE JOURNALISTS WHO SAID THEY THEMSELVES SOMETIMES PURPOSELY AVOID COVERING STORIES

[N= 74]:

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
38	decide to avoid these stories on their own?	43	33	32
15	decide to avoid these stories based on how they believe their bosses would respond to the stories?	11	18	28
19	get signals from their bosses to avoid these stories?	17	21	20
9	some other reason	9	10	8
<u>19</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>20</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>12</u>
100		100	100	100

19. How often, if ever, do you avoid a truly newsworthy story because.. [N=72]

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
	a. the story would be seen as too complicated for the average reader			
40	Often/Sometimes	44	37	26
	7 Often	9	5	0
	33 Sometimes	35	32	26
60	Rarely/Never	56	63	74
	35 Rarely	32	37	57
	25 Never	24	26	17
<u>0</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100
	b. the story would be seen as important but dull			
58	Often/Sometimes	65	53	52
	12 Often	15	11	4
	46 Sometimes	50	42	48
40	Rarely/Never	32	47	48
	28 Rarely	26	29	31
	12 Never	6	18	17
<u>2</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100
	c. the story would hurt your relationship with a source			
18	Often/Sometimes	15	21	17
	0 Often	0	0	0
	18 Sometimes	15	21	17
79	Rarely/Never	85	74	74
	42 Rarely	47	37	26
	37 Never	38	37	48
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100
	d. the story would draw attention to or worsen a community problem			
12	Often/Sometimes	9	16	4
	1 Often	0	3	0
	11 Sometimes	9	13	4
85	Rarely/Never	88	82	96
	24 Rarely	26	21	31
	61 Never	62	61	65
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
100		100	100	100

19. CONTINUED ...

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
	e. the story might be ridiculed or frowned on by other journalists			
7	Often/Sometimes	6	8	9
	3 Often	0	5	0
	4 Sometimes	6	3	9
92	Rarely/Never	94	89	91
	25 Rarely	23	26	13
	67 Never	71	63	78
<u>1</u> 100	Don't Know/Refused	<u>0</u> 100	<u>3</u> 100	<u>0</u> 100
	f. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to the financial interests of your news organization's owners or parent company			
18	Often/Sometimes	12	24	13
	3 Often	3	3	0
	15 Sometimes	9	21	13
81	Rarely/Never	88	74	87
	21 Rarely	12	29	26
	60 Never	76	45	61
<u>1</u> 100	Don't Know/Refused	<u>0</u> 100	<u>2</u> 100	<u>0</u> 100
	g. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to your news organization's advertisers			
13	Often/Sometimes	6	18	18
	2 Often	0	2	0
	11 Sometimes	6	16	18
86	Rarely/Never	94	79	78
	15 Rarely	15	16	22
	71 Never	79	63	56
<u>1</u> 100	Don't Know/Refused	<u>0</u> 100	<u>3</u> 100	<u>4</u> 100
	h. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to friends or associates of your news organization's owners			
8	Often/Sometimes	6	10	13
	3 Often	3	2	0
	5 Sometimes	3	8	13
90	Rarely/Never	94	87	83
	22 Rarely	12	32	13
	68 Never	82	55	70
<u>2</u> 100	Don't Know/Refused	<u>0</u> 100	<u>3</u> 100	<u>4</u> 100

19. CONTINUED ...

<u>Total</u>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>		
			<u>National</u>	<u>Local</u>	
	i. the story would be embarrassing or damaging to friends or associates of your editors				
8	Often/Sometimes		6	11	9
	3 Often		3	3	0
	5 Sometimes		3	8	9
86	Rarely/Never		85	86	91
	25 Rarely		15	35	22
	61 Never		70	51	69
<u>6</u>	Don't Know/Refused		<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>
100			100	100	100
	j. the story would be damaging to your career				
11	Often/Sometimes		6	16	18
	1 Often		0	3	0
	10 Sometimes		6	13	18
86	Rarely/Sometimes		94	79	82
	47 Rarely		59	35	32
	39 Never		35	44	50
<u>3</u>	Don't Know/Refused		<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
100			100	100	100
			(n=34)	(n=38)	(n=23)

ASK ALL:

20. Have you ever softened the *tone or angle* of a news story on behalf of the interests of your news organization?

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>			<u>Local</u>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
23	Yes	17	26	15	29	33	32	23
69	No	77	71	84	61	62	66	69
<u>8</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

21. Have you ever been asked or told to avoid a newsworthy story because it was too complicated or not interesting — but suspected the actual reason was the story might be embarrassing or damaging to the financial interests of your news organization's owners or parent company?

<u>Total</u>		<u>National</u>			<u>Local</u>			<u>Investigative Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
13	Yes	4	10	2	20	13	26	34
80	No	90	90	97	71	87	72	58
<u>7</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>8</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

22 Have you ever been criticized or felt pressure from superiors *after* a news story you worked on came out because that story was seen as embarrassing or damaging to the financial interests of your news organization’s owners or parent company?

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			Investigative <u>Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
19	Yes	17	21	17	20	27	20	19
74	No	77	79	82	71	73	78	72
7	Don't know/Refused	6	0	1	9	0	2	9
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Finally, a few background questions so we can describe the types of journalists who took part in this survey...

23. What type of news organization do you work for?

<u>Total</u>		<i>National</i>			<i>Local</i>			Investigative <u>Journalists</u>
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Exec</u>	<u>Journ</u>	
51	Newspaper	29	21	35	70	79	73	62
3	Magazine	6	5	7	1	0	1	6
4	News Service	9	8	10	1	0	0	3
26	Television	36	40	36	17	16	21	16
4	Radio	9	10	9	1	0	1	0
4	Internet	5	13	2	2	5	2	0
1	Other	1	3	1	0	0	1	4
7	Don't Know/Refused	5	0	0	8	0	1	9
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100