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But Military Censorship Backed
TERROR COVERAGE BOOSTS NEWS MEDIA'S IMAGE

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TERROR COVERAGE BOOSTS NEWS MEDIA’S IMAGE

These are the best of times and the worst of times for the news media when it comes to public support. By and large, Americans continue to praise the press for its coverage of the war on terrorism, here and abroad. So much so that the general image of the media has, at least temporarily, lost some of its tarnish. At the same time, however, the public shows strong support for government control of the news for the sake of national security.

The latest Pew Research Center survey of 1,500 adults finds the public giving the media better grades for its performance and higher approval ratings for the values of journalists and news organizations. The number who think the media usually gets the facts straight has risen from 35% in early September to 46% today – the best grade for accuracy in Pew Center surveys since 1992. News organizations also continue to get good grades for covering the terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism, though not as high as during the first week after the attacks. The percentage rating media performance as excellent or good has slipped from 89% in mid-September to a still lofty 77% in the current survey.

Mirroring satisfaction with its recent performance, the public now holds more favorable opinions of the press’s professionalism, morality, patriotism and compassion. In particular, the percentage saying that they think news organizations stand up for America jumped from 43% in early September to 69% in the current poll. The previous high for the press on this measure had been 53%, in 1987. Similarly, the percentage seeing the news media as protecting democracy has increased from 46% three months ago to 60% now – again an all-time high for the media on this indicator.

While the public has higher regard for the media, it also favors tight government control over information related to national security – indeed, support for military censorship is as high as it was during the Persian Gulf War. By 53%-39%, respondents say it is more important for the government to be able to censor stories it believes could threaten national security than for the media to be able to report news it sees as in the national interest. By a comparable margin, Americans say the military should exert more control over news about the war rather than leave most decisions to the media.

	July 1985	Feb 1999	Early Sept 2001	Now
<i>News organizations ...</i>	%	%	%	%
Usually get facts straight	55	37	35	46
Usually report inaccurately	34	58	57	45
Don't know	11	5	8	9
	100	100	100	100
Stand up for America	52	41	43	69
Too critical of America	30	42	36	17
Neither/Don't know	18	17	21	14
	100	100	100	100
Protect democracy	54	45	46	60
Hurt democracy	23	38	32	19
Neither/Don't know	23	17	22	21
	100	100	100	100
Are moral	54	40	40	53
Are immoral	13	38	34	23
Neither/Don't know	33	22	26	24
	100	100	100	100

Despite its support for military censorship, the public is not comfortable with the media substituting propaganda for news, nor does it prefer the press to be a lap dog rather than a watchdog. The survey finds a solid majority in favor of war coverage that is neutral rather than pro-American. An even larger percentage (73%) favors coverage that portrays all points of view, including those of countries unfriendly to the United States, over pro-American news. And by 52%-40%, respondents say that when covering the war, news organizations should dig hard for information rather than trusting government and military officials who refuse to officially release information.

Along these same lines, the survey shows continued respect for the watchdog role played by news organizations, even at a time of national crisis. Roughly half of Americans believe press scrutiny of the military keeps the nation prepared, compared with 37% who say it undermines the country's defense. By an even larger margin (54%-32%), the public thinks press criticism of political leaders prevents wrongdoing rather than keeping them from doing their jobs.

While most of the public thinks that information about the war has been censored, there is little sense that the government is trying to cover up bad news, either from abroad or at home. Fully 82% believe that Pentagon officials are disclosing as much as they can about military operations in Afghanistan – just 16% think the government has been hiding bad news. Nearly two-thirds (65%) find news reports from the front to be accurate, but fewer (58%) say the same about the sometimes confusing reporting on anthrax and other domestic terrorist threats.

Support for Controlling News Media			
	Oct 1985 %	March 1991 %	Now %
<i>What's more important ...</i>			
Govt censor news it believes a threat to national security	38	58	53
Media ability to report news it believes is in national interest	50	32	39
Both/Don't know	12	10	8
	100	100	100
	Oct 1986 %	Jan 1991 %	Now %
<i>For war news ...</i>			
Give military more control	29	57	50
Media should decide how to report	64	34	40
Don't know	7	9	10
	100	100	100
But No Propaganda, Please			
	March 1991		Now
<i>News coverage should be ...</i>			
Pro-American	22		30
Neutral	71		64
No opinion/Don't know	7		6
	100		100
Pro-American			20
Show all points of view			73
No opinion/Don't know			7
			100
<i>Journalists should ...</i>			
Dig hard to get all the facts			52
Trust officials			40
Both/Don't know			8
			100

Most Americans are turning to cable news for reports about terrorism and the war, and the number doing so has increased since mid-September. Fully 53% cite cable as their primary source for news on the crisis, versus 17% for network TV and 18% for local TV. Other non-television sources lag well behind cable, although the number relying mostly on newspapers has tripled (from 11% to 34%) since the week of the attacks. All types of media may take comfort in the fact that 66% of respondents say they are more interested in the news now than before Sept. 11. This is appreciably higher than the 49% expressing increased interest a decade ago as a result of the Gulf war.

	Mid-Sept 2001 %	Now %
Television (NET)	90	85
Network TV news	30	17
Local TV news	17	18
Cable news	45	53
Other	2	2
Don't Know	2	1
Newspapers	11	34
Radio	14	19
Magazines	*	2
Internet	5	13
Other	1	1
Don't Know	1	*

I. Public Views of Terrorism Coverage

From the beginning of the crisis, the public has given the press high marks for its coverage of the attacks and the war against terrorism. In the current survey, better than three-quarters of Americans (77%) say coverage has been good or excellent, which is on par with the positive rating the public gave the press during the Gulf war (78% good or excellent).

<i>Press coverage of terrorism ...</i>	Mid Sept %	Early Oct %	Mid Oct %	Now %
Excellent	56	48	32	30
Good	33	37	42	47
Only fair	6	10	17	16
Poor	3	3	6	5
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100

But there has been a significant decline in the number of people who rate the media's performance as excellent since the first week of the crisis. Three-in-ten give that rating now, compared with 56% who viewed coverage as excellent in the Sept. 13-17 survey. Nearly all of the drop occurred between mid-September and mid-October; since then, the ratings have remained fairly stable.

There are few notable differences in how major political and demographic groups evaluate the media's coverage. But Americans who have the strongest interest in the crisis are more satisfied with coverage than those with less interest. Roughly four-in-ten (42%) who are highly interested in terrorism news view the coverage as excellent, compared with 31% of those with a moderate level of interest and 21% who express little interest.

As many as 65% of Americans think that the media's coverage of the war has been accurate, while only 17% say too many mistakes have been made. This is similar to the media's accuracy rating during the Gulf war, when 61% judged the reporting as correct and 18% saw it as error-prone.

While still generally favorable, coverage of the homefront gets more mixed reviews for accuracy. A solid majority (58%) views news on anthrax and other homefront threats as accurate, but nearly one-in-three (30%) see too many mistakes in this coverage. In assessing blame for these errors, twice as many people cite misleading information by the government as sloppy reporting by the media (16%-8%).

Two-thirds of Republicans (66%) say the anthrax coverage has for the most part been accurate, compared with barely half of Democrats (52%). Of those who view coverage as error-ridden, most Republicans point the finger at poor reporting by the news media, while Democrats who see errors in coverage overwhelmingly blame the government for providing misleading information.

Confidence in Government Information, As Well

The public also has confidence that information provided by the government on the war and domestic anti-terrorism efforts is accurate, but only a minority has a high degree of confidence.

About half (52%) have a fair amount of confidence that the government is giving an accurate picture of the war, while better than a quarter (28%) have a great deal of confidence. That is comparable to confidence levels during the Gulf war, although confidence rose sharply in March 1991 after that conflict’s successful conclusion. Public confidence in information provided by the government on anti-terrorism efforts in the United States is somewhat lower (61% fair amount, 19% great deal).

<i>Confidence in military giving an accurate picture of war ...</i>	Jan 1991 %	March 1991 %	Now %
Great deal	29	44	28
Fair amount	58	46	52
Not too much	9	7	13
No confidence	2	2	4
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

Partisan differences are evident – Republicans are more likely to express a high degree of confidence that the military and other government agencies are giving a clear picture of what is happening on both fronts. Nearly four-in-ten Republicans (39%) say they have a lot of confidence in government information on the war, compared with 24% of Democrats and 20% of independents. Three-in-ten Republicans express a lot of confidence that the government is giving an accurate picture of developments on the homefront – just 14% of Democrats and independents agree.

Censorship Less Apparent Than In Gulf

Most Americans believe that news reports from Afghanistan are subject to military censorship, although the number who say that is much lower than it was during the Gulf war (59% vs. 76%). Fewer people (46%) think that news about anthrax and other domestic terrorist threats are being censored by the government.

While most Americans support censorship, some clearly distinguish between restrictions on overseas and domestic news, and they are much more comfortable with the former than the latter. By better than five-to-one, those who believe that news from Afghanistan is being censored favor those restrictions. That is on par with the level of support for censorship measured during the Gulf war. By contrast, there is about two-to-one support for government censorship of news on homefront threats.

Less Support for Domestic Censorship			
<i>Of those who see censorship of news ...</i>			
	During	From	About
	Gulf War	Afghanistan	Anthrax
<i>Censorship is a ...</i>	%	%	%
Good idea	79	80	62
Bad idea	16	15	31
Don't know	5	5	7
	100	100	100
	(N=715)	(n=457)	(n=318)

Support for tight government control over the flow of information is reflected in other attitudes as well. Half the public believes the military should have greater influence over war reporting, while four-in-ten believe most decisions about how to report about the war should be left to news organizations. The partisan split in opinions toward the press also is seen in attitudes toward censorship and government restrictions: nearly six-in-ten Republicans (59%) want the military to exert more control over war reporting, compared with 41% of Democrats.

Trust or Verify?

But clearly, the public is of more than one mind when it comes to the competing interests of government and media during war time. Censorship is favored and 70% believe such restrictions are intended to protect the safety of U.S. forces rather than to cover up bad news. At the same time, a 52% majority endorses the idea that the media should aggressively pursue news rather than trust the government when it refuses to release information.

Ideological Divide Over Media Role					
<i>--- Party Ideology ---</i>					
	Total	Cons	Mod/Lib	Cons/Mod	Lib
	%	Repub	Repub	Democ	Democ
<i>Govt withholds information to ...</i>		%	%	%	%
Protect troops and public safety	70	89	74	67	57
Maintain political support	20	8	18	22	32
Both/Don't know	10	3	8	11	11
	100	100	100	100	100
<i>When covering war on terrorism journalists should ...</i>					
Dig hard for news	52	38	53	56	63
Trust officials	40	55	42	37	33
Both/Don't know	8	7	5	7	4
	100	100	100	100	100

Republicans side strongly with the government on both issues. Fully 84% of Republicans believe that when the government withholds information about the war, it is to protect the security of U.S. troops. And Republicans, especially conservatives, are dubious of aggressive reporting by the media – by a 55%-38% margin, conservative Republicans say the media should trust government officials when they refuse to release information instead of going all-out to break stories.

Democrats are less persuaded than Republicans that the government mostly refuses to release information in the interest of protecting troops – a quarter of all Democrats, and nearly a third of liberal Democrats, say the government mostly withholds information on the war to hide negative news. Democrats strongly back aggressive reporting, with a solid majority (57%) saying the press should dig hard for stories.

Men and women also view the media’s role differently, with men more supportive of aggressive reporting. Better than half of men (56%) say the press should dig hard for facts, while 36% support a more trusting approach. Women are more evenly divided – 47% favor an aggressive approach while 44% believe the press should trust the government. But roughly seven-in-ten men and women agree that government decisions to restrict the flow of war information are based on legitimate security motives.

Divided Over bin Laden Access

While the public has a better view of the media, Americans are divided about whether news organizations are doing their jobs properly with regard to Osama bin Laden. A 47% plurality says that the media has given bin Laden too much exposure, while 43% say it has been careful to not give him too much opportunity to promote his cause.

The Media and bin Laden				
		<i>- Education -</i>		
<i>Media gives bin Laden too much opportunity to promote cause ...</i>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Coll Grad</u>	<u>Some Coll</u>	<u>H.S. or less</u>
	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
Yes	47	38	44	53
No	43	54	47	36
Don't know	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100	100

College graduates are generally comfortable with the media’s handling of bin Laden – a majority (54%) says he has not been given too much of an opportunity to promote his cause. But those with less education express more concern over bin Laden’s media access. By a 53%-36% margin, those with a high school education or less say the media has given bin Laden too much access.

II. The Media's Post-9/11 Image

The favorable reaction to news coverage following Sept. 11 has clearly improved the public's broader view of the press's role and performance – especially as to whether news organizations stand up for America and protect democracy. However, there are still important aspects of press behavior that the public views negatively. In particular, roughly half (52%) say that the press tries to cover up its mistakes and nearly as many (47%) think the press is politically biased in its reporting.

In broader terms, just 35% say the news media helps society to solve its problems, only slightly higher than the 31% who felt that way before the attacks. About half of the public (51%) continues to believe that the news media “gets in the way” of society solving its problems.

Moreover, there is little evidence that the ideological gap in press evaluations has narrowed as a result of this new, more favorable climate for the media. Conservative Republicans, for the most part, remain highly critical of the news media, and in many cases the media's image has improved only on the moderate-to-liberal end of the political spectrum, further exacerbating ideological divisions.

Media's Weakest Links: Bias and Mistakes

For years, Republicans have been more convinced than Democrats that the press is politically biased in its reporting, and the events of the past few months have done little to change this view. As was the case in early September, a solid majority of Republicans think the press is politically biased. Democrats and independents, on the other hand, have become significantly less cynical about media bias since the terrorist attacks. Today, just four-in-ten independents see the media as biased, down from 57% prior to Sept. 11, and the decline among Democrats has been nearly as great (from 55% to 42% today).

	July 1985	Feb 1999	Early Sept	Now
	%	%	%	%
<i>News organizations ...</i>				
Are politically biased	45	56	59	47
Are careful not to be biased	36	31	26	35
Neither / Don't know	19	13	15	18
	100	100	100	100
Try to cover up mistakes	55	66	67	52
Are willing to admit mistakes	34	26	24	35
Neither / Don't know	11	8	9	13
	100	100	100	100
<i>News media ...</i>				
Helps society solve its problems	25	36	31	35
Gets in the way	71	54	58	51
Don't know	4	10	11	14
	100	100	100	100

	<i>Percent who say the press</i>					
	<i>Is politically biased in its reporting</i>			<i>Tries to cover up its mistakes</i>		
	Early Sept	Now	Diff	Early Sept	Now	Diff
	%	%		%	%	
Total	59	47	-12	67	52	-15
Republicans	68	61	-7	67	56	-11
Independents	57	40	-17	70	56	-14
Democrats	55	42	-13	63	46	-17

Similarly, while there has been a 15-point overall decline (from 67% to 52%) since early September in the percentage saying the press covers up its mistakes, there is a somewhat larger partisan gap on this question. While 56% of Republicans and independents say the press typically tries to cover up its mistakes, 46% of Democrats agree.

More See Press as Pro-American

Public perceptions that the media both “stands up for America” and “protects democracy” have increased notably since the terrorist attacks, resulting in solid majorities viewing the press favorably in both of these areas. These shifts have been pronounced regardless of party identification, though Democrats are particularly likely to believe news organizations are standing up for America. Fully 78% of Democrats hold this view today, up from 47% in early September.

Gender and education are both related to views of press patriotism, but in contrasting ways. Women are significantly more likely to say that the press stands up for America, but men are more likely to say the press defends democracy. And while those with less education think the press is pro-American, more educated people see the press protecting democracy.

	Newsroom Patriots					
	<i>Percent who say the press Stands up for America</i>			<i>Protects democracy</i>		
	Early Sept %	Now %	Diff	Early Sept %	Now %	Diff
Total	43	69	+26	46	60	+14
Republicans	43	64	+21	45	59	+14
Independents	41	66	+25	45	59	+14
Democrats	47	78	+31	48	64	+16
Men	39	63	+24	50	64	+14
Women	46	74	+28	42	56	+14
College Grad	42	63	+21	58	69	+11
Some College	37	63	+26	42	56	+14
H.S. or less	46	74	+28	42	57	+15

Young People More Positive

One of the most striking turnarounds in the public’s view of the press is the perception of how news organizations treat the subjects of their reports. Prior to the attacks, less than a quarter (23%) said the press cared about the people they report on – the single lowest rating of any press evaluation on the survey. Today, that figure has doubled to a 47% plurality who feel the press cares about the people they report on.

	A More Empathetic Press					
	<i>Percent who say the press Cares about the people</i>			<i>Is moral</i>		
	Early Sept %	Now %	Diff	Early Sept %	Now %	Diff
Total	23	47	+24	40	53	+13
18-29	22	52	+30	38	56	+18
30-49	21	44	+23	39	50	+11
50-64	25	52	+27	42	55	+13
65+	28	42	+14	42	51	+9

In particular, the perceptions of younger Americans have undergone a dramatic change. Before Sept. 11, just 22% of those under age 30 thought news organizations cared about the people they report on; fully half (52%) hold that view today. Women are more likely to perceive the press as caring than are men (53% to 41%).

Professionalism Bounces Back

Traditionally, the public has rated the press highly for its professionalism. In the mid-1980s, nearly eight-in-ten said the press cared about how good a job it did, and more than seven-in-ten believed the media was highly professional. Even when these measures hit their nadir in 1999, 69% thought the press cared about its job performance, and a majority felt the press was professional. In the wake of the terrorist attacks, these ratings have returned to their previous highs. Today, 78% say the press cares about doing a good job, and 73% think of the press as highly professional.

Despite this perception of professionalism, Americans are divided as to whether news organizations get the facts straight (46%) or whether their stories and reports are often inaccurate (45%). Still, this divided sense of media accuracy represents a significant gain from early September when just 35% said they thought the press was typically accurate and 57% disagreed. This gain has occurred across all demographic and ideological groups fairly evenly, and there is no ideological divide with respect to press accuracy.

The Attentiveness Gap

Americans who have followed the news most closely since Sept. 11 tend to have a more favorable impression of news organizations than those with lower levels of news interest, particularly in their assessments of media values and how news organizations treat people. Of those who have followed the news most closely, 63% see news organizations as moral and 56% say the press cares about the people they report on. This compares with only 44% and 40%, respectively, among those who have paid the least attention to the news.

	<i>Attentiveness</i>			<i>Hi-Lo Gap</i>
	<u>High</u>	<u>Mod</u>	<u>Low</u>	
<i>Who think the press ...</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	
Is moral	63	54	44	19
Admits mistakes	45	37	27	18
Cares about people	56	48	40	16
Protects democracy	68	61	53	15
Is highly professional	81	71	69	12
Stands up for America	76	65	68	8
Gets the facts straight	48	47	44	4
Is unbiased	36	38	33	3
Cares about job	81	76	78	3

But attentive Americans are not uniformly more favorable toward the press. While those who are more attentive are much more likely than those who are not to say the press is willing to admit its mistakes, there is no significant gap between the attentive and inattentive with respect to evaluations of media accuracy. In addition, those who follow the news more closely have virtually identical perceptions of media bias as do those who pay little or no attention to the news.

Most See Criticism as Worth It

In spite of the war and the domestic terrorist dangers, general attitudes toward the media's watchdog role have remained fairly stable. When asked whether media criticism of political leaders keeps them from doing their jobs or keeps them from doing things that shouldn't be done, more than half (54%) choose the latter, down only slightly from 60% in early September. When asked whether criticism of the military weakens the country's defenses or keeps the nation militarily prepared, a 49% plurality chooses the latter, down from 59% shortly after the Gulf war.

Watchdog Role Still Favored				
	June	Feb	Early	
<i>Press criticism keeps</i>	1985	1999	Sept	Now
<i>political leaders from ...</i>	%	%	%	%
Doing their jobs	17	31	25	32
Wrongdoing	67	58	60	54
Don't know	16	11	15	14
	100	100	100	100
<i>Press criticism of the</i>	July	March		
<i>military ...</i>	1985	1991	Now	
Weakens defenses	31	28	37	
Keeps nation prepared	51	59	49	
Don't know	18	13	14	
	100	100	100	

III. The New Media Landscape

Americans are following the news more closely than they were before Sept. 11, and cable networks such as CNN, MSNBC and Fox News Channel are their first choice for news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism. But cable is not the only source Americans are relying upon. Fully 44% say they at least sometimes get news about issues related to terrorism from talk radio shows, 35% get news from the Internet, and 24% get at least some news from religious radio and television programming.

New Audience for News

Two-thirds of the public agree that they are now more generally interested in the news than before the terrorist attacks, with one-in-four strongly agreeing. This increased interest is particularly noteworthy among less-educated and lower-income Americans who, under normal circumstances, express the least interest in keeping up with the news. Fully 71% of Americans who never attended college say they are more interested in keeping up with the news than they were before the attacks, compared with 57% of those with college degrees.

But the higher interest in news related to terrorism is not distracting attention from other news stories. Just 18% say they find it hard to get interested in news stories that do not deal with terrorism in some way, while 80% reject this statement. The public had a similar reaction during the Gulf war, when 23% said it was hard to get interested in other news, and 74% said it was not.

Better than half (57%) of those who say they are more interested in the news cite cable as a main source of information, compared with 46% of those who are no more interested in the news since the attacks. Overall, cable is the top source of news for all Americans (53%), regardless of age, gender, race, or other characteristics. Newspapers rate a distant second, with about one-in-three saying they get most of their news this way. Network television news, which was a top source for three-in-ten Americans immediately following the attacks, is now no more prominent a source of information about terrorism than radio or local television news. As in the past, newspapers and network television news are used more heavily by older Americans, while radio and the Internet are predominantly used by the young.

<i>Main news source ...</i>	<i>Age</i>			
	<i>18-29</i>	<i>30-49</i>	<i>50-64</i>	<i>65+</i>
Cable TV	55	54	55	49
Network TV	14	14	20	22
Local TV	19	16	18	22
Newspaper	24	30	39	46
Radio	24	22	16	10
Internet	20	14	10	3

Late-night TV shows, such as those hosted by David Letterman and Jay Leno, are less important as sources for news on terrorism than they were as sources of political information during the 2000 presidential campaign. During the run-up to the 2000 primaries, nearly one-in-three Americans said they at least sometimes got news about the presidential campaign from these late-night shows. Just 17% say the same today about news related to terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism. However, as was the case during the campaign, Americans under age 30 are more than twice as likely to cite Leno and Letterman as news sources than are those age 30 and older (29% to 14% respectively).

Economy Interest Highest Since '93

News about terrorism in the United States continues to attract the most interest from the public, with two-thirds (66%) tracking these stories very closely. Roughly half the public (49%) paid very close attention to the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan. While women were more interested in news about terrorism, men paid more attention to news about the military campaign.

The recent crash of an American Airlines plane near Kennedy Airport in New York also attracted very close attention from nearly half the public (48%). Despite the surge in public interest in the news, there was less attention to this crash than in the 1996 TWA crash off the coast of New York, which nearly seven-in-ten Americans (69%) tracked very closely.

<i>Plane crash stories ...</i>	<i>Very Closely</i>
	<i>%</i>
TWA crash off New York coast (7/96)	69
United Airlines in Iowa (8/89)	53
American Airlines in NY (11/01)	48
Alaskan Airlines near LA (2/00)	35
Colombian airliner in NY (2/90)	33
EgyptAir off New England coast (12/99)	30
American Airlines in Arkansas (6/99)	19

About four-in-ten people (41%) paid very close attention to reports of anthrax cases around the country. Minorities paid slightly more attention to this story than did whites. Attention was lower in the West than in other regions of the country. Also, 41% of the public followed reports about the condition of the U.S. economy very closely. This is almost twice the percentage of those who followed the story this past summer and is at its highest level since 1993.

The capture of Kabul by Afghan opponents of the Taliban drew close attention from 36% of the public. At the bottom of this month's news interest index is the debate in Washington over whether airport security personnel should be federal employees or not. Only 31% of the public followed this story very closely. Republican and Democratic interest mirrored that of the public.

Sustained Support for Bush, Military Action

George W. Bush continues to receive high marks for his job performance, with 84% approving of the way he is handling his job as president. The president's job approval ratings have not dipped below 80% since the Sept. 11 attacks. Even among African-Americans, who were most critical of Bush in the early months of his presidency, 60% currently approve of his job performance, up nearly two-fold since before the attacks.

Americans also continue to support the use of military force to retaliate against those responsible for the attacks, even if it means U.S. troops might suffer thousands of casualties. Since mid-September, support for military action has barely changed (82% then, 85% now). That number declines only slightly (to 77%) when the possibility of thousands of military casualties is raised.

Minorities and liberals are somewhat more likely to oppose the use of military force – 22% of nonwhites and 26% of liberals oppose military action if it means the loss of thousands of U.S. casualties. Nonetheless, these groups back military force by wide margins even when the prospect of large-scale U.S. casualties is raised.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Terrorism Attacks on the U.S.+ %	Military Effort in Afghanistan %	Plane Crash in New York %	Reports About Anthrax+ %	Reports About U.S. Economy %	Capture of Kabul %	Debate over Airline Security %	(N)
Total	66	49	48	41	41	36	31	(1500)
Sex								
Male	62	54	48	39	44	41	31	(694)
Female	71	44	48	44	39	30	31	(806)
Race								
White	66	49	47	40	41	36	29	(1240)
Non-white	67	49	56	48	39	38	37	(237)
Black	n/a	46	58	n/a	41	38	45	(129)
Hispanic*	n/a	44	47	n/a	38	31	39	(101)
Age								
Under 30	61	36	36	32	32	20	21	(307)
30-49	67	49	44	38	41	37	27	(573)
50+	69	56	59	50	46	43	40	(599)
Education								
College Grad.	74	55	46	38	45	42	27	(496)
Some College	61	49	44	39	42	34	30	(380)
High School Grad.	69	49	49	43	40	35	32	(498)
<H.S. Grad.	n/a	38	57	n/a	34	30	37	(121)
Region								
East	69	51	52	44	38	34	32	(252)
Midwest	69	49	48	46	42	34	30	(382)
South	68	48	48	42	43	36	30	(524)
West	59	48	47	34	40	38	32	(342)
Party ID								
Republican	67	54	47	39	42	37	30	(510)
Democrat	67	52	56	48	45	38	36	(456)
Independent	66	44	42	41	39	35	27	(427)
Internet User								
Yes	69	51	45	41	41	37	29	(992)
No	62	46	54	42	41	34	34	(508)

+ Based on split samples; Ns do not apply.

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

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?

EVALUATIONS OF TERRORISM COVERAGE

	<u>Excellent</u> %	<u>Good</u> %	<u>Fair/Poor</u> %	<u>DK/Ref</u> %
Total	30	47	21	2=100
Sex				
Male	29	47	23	1
Female	31	47	19	3
Race				
White	30	49	19	2
Non-white	28	41	29	2
Black	25	39	32	4
Hispanic*	40	35	25	0
Race and Sex				
White Men	28	49	22	1
White Women	32	48	17	3
Age				
Under 30	29	46	23	2
30-49	29	47	23	1
50-64	37	44	17	2
65+	26	51	19	4
Sex and Age				
Men under 50	28	46	25	1
Women under 50	29	48	21	2
Men 50+	30	51	17	2
Women 50+	33	45	18	4
Education				
College Grad.	27	52	20	1
Some College	28	45	25	2
High School Grad.	33	44	21	2
<H.S. Grad.	29	50	17	4
Family Income				
\$75,000+	32	47	20	1
\$50,000-\$74,999	25	52	23	0
\$30,000-\$49,999	30	49	20	1
\$20,000-\$29,999	32	47	19	2
<\$20,000	32	42	24	2

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

Question: In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the terrorist attacks and the war against terrorism... excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Continued ...

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Fair/Poor</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
	%	%	%	%
Total	30	47	21	2=100
Region				
East	34	47	17	2
Midwest	30	49	20	1
South	31	45	21	3
West	25	47	26	2
Religious Affiliation				
Total White Protestant	31	48	19	2
White Protestant Evangelical	35	45	17	3
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	28	51	20	1
White Catholic	34	49	16	1
Secular	24	48	25	3
Community Size				
Large City	25	47	25	3
Suburb	31	48	19	2
Small City/Town	31	48	19	2
Rural Area	31	47	21	1
Party ID				
Republican	36	46	17	1
Democrat	33	45	20	2
Independent	23	51	25	1
Party and Ideology				
Conservative Republican	36	45	18	1
Moderate/Liberal Republican	35	49	15	1
Conservative/Moderate Democrat	35	44	20	1
Liberal Democrat	31	47	22	*
Bush Approval				
Approve	32	50	17	1
Disapprove	8	35	56	1
2000 Presidential Vote				
Bush	36	43	20	1
Gore	29	47	23	1
Marital Status				
Married	30	49	20	1
Unmarried	28	46	23	3
Parental Status				
Parent	29	50	19	2
Non-Parent	30	46	22	2
Labor Union				
Union Household	28	48	23	1
Non-Union Household	30	47	21	2

MEDIA ACCURACY

	--- Early September 2001 ---			--- Mid-November 2001 ---			Change in Get Facts Straight
	Get Facts Straight	Stories Inaccurate	DK	Get Facts Straight	Stories Inaccurate	DK	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	35	57	8=100	46	45	9=100	+11
Sex							
Male	34	59	8	47	46	7	+13
Female	37	55	8	45	45	10	+8
Race							
White	36	56	8	47	45	8	+11
Non-white	33	59	8	40	47	13	+7
Black	n/a	n/a	n/a	39	50	11	-
Hispanic*	n/a	n/a	n/a	44	44	12	-
Race and Sex							
White Men	33	59	8	47	46	7	+14
White Women	39	53	8	48	43	9	+9
Age							
Under 30	34	62	4	46	45	9	+12
30-49	38	52	10	49	44	7	+11
50-64	32	58	10	47	46	7	+15
65+	35	60	5	38	49	13	+3
Sex and Age							
Men under 50	37	55	8	49	45	6	+12
Women under 50	37	56	7	47	44	9	+10
Men 50+	26	67	7	44	47	9	+18
Women 50+	38	53	9	42	47	11	+4
Education							
College Grad.	37	55	8	51	41	8	+14
Some College	38	54	8	41	51	8	+3
H.S. Grad. or less	33	60	7	46	45	9	+13
Family Income							
\$75,000+	39	52	9	49	47	4	+10
\$50,000-\$74,999	37	58	5	48	41	11	+11
\$30,000-\$49,999	37	56	7	44	47	10	+7
<\$30,000	31	62	7	49	44	7	+18

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

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

Continued ...

	--- Early September 2001 ---			--- Mid-November 2001 ---			Change in Get Facts Straight
	Get Facts	Stories		Get Facts	Stories		
	<u>Straight</u>	<u>Inaccurate</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Straight</u>	<u>Inaccurate</u>	<u>DK</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	35	57	8=100	46	45	9=100	+11
Region							
East	32	61	7	50	44	6	+18
Midwest	42	52	6	48	43	9	+6
South	37	55	8	44	47	9	+7
West	27	63	10	44	46	10	+17
Religious Affiliation							
Total White Protestant	35	57	8	46	45	9	+11
White Protestant Evangelical	34	59	6	44	47	9	+10
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	37	54	9	49	42	9	+12
White Catholic	41	52	7	47	46	7	+6
Secular	n/a	n/a	n/a	51	39	10	-
Community Size							
Large City	37	57	6	42	50	8	+5
Suburb	33	58	9	50	44	6	+17
Small City/Town	35	60	5	46	43	11	+11
Rural Area	33	55	12	47	44	9	+14
Party ID							
Republican	38	57	5	47	48	5	+9
Democrat	39	55	6	47	42	11	+8
Independent	29	59	12	47	45	8	+18
Party and Ideology							
Conservative Republican	36	57	7	46	48	6	+10
Moderate/Liberal Republican	n/a	n/a	n/a	48	49	3	-
Conservative/Moderate Democrat	35	61	4	47	43	10	+12
Liberal Democrat	n/a	n/a	n/a	47	45	8	-
Bush Approval							
Approve	36	58	6	49	43	8	+13
Disapprove	33	59	8	29	64	7	-4
2000 Presidential Vote							
Bush	34	59	7	47	46	7	+13
Gore	41	51	8	49	39	12	+8
Marital Status							
Married	38	55	7	47	45	8	+9
Unmarried	32	60	8	45	46	9	+13
Parental Status							
Parent	40	52	8	49	42	9	+9
Non-Parent	32	60	8	44	47	9	+12
Labor Union							
Union Household	37	52	11	45	44	11	+8
Non-Union Household	35	58	7	47	45	8	+12

THE NEWS IS MORE INTERESTING NOW?

	---- March 1991 ----			---- Mid-November 2001 ----			Change in Agree
	<u>Agree</u> %	<u>Disagree</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	<u>Agree</u> %	<u>Disagree</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	
Total	49	49	2=100	66	33	1=100	+17
Sex							
Male	45	53	2	63	35	2	+18
Female	51	46	3	68	31	1	+17
Race							
White	48	50	2	65	33	2	+17
Non-white	50	48	2	68	32	*	+18
Black	46	51	3	69	31	0	+23
Hispanic*	n/a	n/a	n/a	74	25	1	--
Race and Sex							
White Men	45	53	2	62	36	2	+17
White Women	51	47	2	68	30	2	+17
Age							
Under 30	56	43	1	67	32	1	+11
30-49	48	50	2	63	36	1	+15
50-64	46	54	*	68	30	2	+22
65+	44	51	5	68	30	2	+24
Sex and Age							
Men under 50	47	51	2	63	36	1	+16
Women under 50	55	43	2	66	33	1	+11
Men 50+	43	56	1	65	32	3	+22
Women 50+	46	51	3	70	29	1	+24
Education							
College Grad.	34	63	3	57	42	1	+23
Some College	47	52	1	63	36	1	+16
High School Grad.	55	43	2	70	28	2	+15
<H.S. Grad.	54	43	3	74	23	3	+20
Family Income**							
\$75,000+ (\$50K+)	39	59	2	57	42	1	+18
\$50,000-\$74,999 (\$30-\$49K)	50	48	2	65	34	1	+15
\$30,000-\$49,999 (\$20-\$29K)	51	48	1	67	32	1	+16
\$20,000-\$29,999 (\$15-\$19K)	54	46	0	74	24	2	+20
<\$20,000 (<\$15K)	49	48	3	71	28	1	+22

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

** The categories in parentheses correspond to family incomes in March of 1991.

Question: Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree... I am now more generally interested in the news than I was before the terrorist attacks.

Continued ...

	---- March 1991 ----			---- Mid-November 2001 ----			Change in Agree
	Agree %	Disagree %	DK %	Agree %	Disagree %	DK %	
Total	49	49	2=100	66	33	1=100	+17
Region							
East	49	49	2	63	36	1	+14
Midwest	47	51	2	65	33	2	+18
South	51	47	2	71	28	1	+20
West	47	51	2	60	38	2	+13
Religious Affiliation							
Total White Protestant	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	30	1	--
White Protestant Evangelical	n/a	n/a	n/a	74	25	1	--
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	n/a	n/a	n/a	63	36	1	--
White Catholic	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	31	4	--
Secular	n/a	n/a	n/a	47	51	2	--
Community Size							
Large City	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	30	1	--
Suburb	n/a	n/a	n/a	61	37	2	--
Small City/Town	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	32	2	--
Rural Area	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	33	2	--
Party ID							
Republican	51	47	2	70	29	1	+19
Democrat	46	51	3	69	30	1	+23
Independent	49	50	1	62	37	1	+13
Party and Ideology							
Conservative Republican	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	30	1	--
Moderate/Liberal Republican	n/a	n/a	n/a	72	27	1	--
Conservative/Moderate Democrat	n/a	n/a	n/a	73	27	0	--
Liberal Democrat	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	34	2	--
Bush Approval							
Approve	50	48	2	68	31	1	+18
Disapprove	35	61	4	54	43	3	+19
2000 Presidential Vote							
Bush	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	33	1	--
Gore	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	34	2	--
Marital Status							
Married	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	34	2	--
Unmarried	n/a	n/a	n/a	69	30	1	--
Parental Status							
Parent	n/a	n/a	n/a	65	34	1	--
Non-Parent	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	32	2	--
Labor Union							
Union Household	n/a	n/a	n/a	64	34	2	--
Non-Union Household	n/a	n/a	n/a	66	32	2	--

MAIN SOURCE FOR NEWS ABOUT TERRORISM

	<u>Network TV</u>	<u>Local TV</u>	<u>Cable TV</u>	<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Magazine</u>	<u>Internet</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	17	18	53	34	19	2	13
Sex							
Male	15	16	54	34	19	1	16
Female	18	21	52	34	19	2	9
Race							
White	16	18	54	35	20	2	12
Non-white	18	23	50	30	15	1	15
Black	21	26	46	27	13	*	13
Hispanic*	12	27	57	33	23	2	12
Race and Sex							
White Men	16	15	55	35	20	1	16
White Women	17	20	53	35	20	2	9
Age							
Under 30	14	19	55	24	24	2	20
30-49	14	16	54	30	22	1	14
50-64	20	18	55	39	16	1	10
65+	22	22	49	46	10	3	3
Sex and Age							
Men under 50	14	15	52	29	23	1	21
Women under 50	14	20	56	28	23	1	12
Men 50+	17	18	58	42	12	1	8
Women 50+	24	22	48	42	14	3	6
Education							
College Grad.	18	9	50	40	22	2	21
Some College	16	15	55	34	20	2	17
High School Grad.	16	25	54	32	20	1	7
<H.S. Grad.	16	24	54	26	12	2	7
Family Income							
\$75,000+	17	13	53	38	20	2	21
\$50,000-\$74,999	13	13	61	41	19	1	13
\$30,000-\$49,999	17	15	61	32	22	1	13
\$20,000-\$29,999	18	25	43	29	18	3	8
<\$20,000	13	26	49	30	17	1	9

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

Question: How have you been getting most of your news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism? From television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet? Do you get most of your news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism from network TV news, from local TV news, or from cable news networks such as CNN, MSNBC, and the Fox New Channel?

Continued ...

	<u>Network TV</u>	<u>Local TV</u>	<u>Cable TV</u>	<u>Newspaper</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Magazine</u>	<u>Internet</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
<i>Total</i>	17	18	53	34	19	2	13
<i>Region</i>							
East	16	19	53	41	17	2	11
Midwest	17	18	54	33	21	2	11
South	17	18	57	28	19	1	14
West	17	20	47	37	20	2	14
<i>Religious Affiliation</i>							
Total White Protestant	17	18	56	35	19	2	11
White Protestant Evangelical	19	18	55	31	20	1	8
White Prot. Non-Evangelical	15	17	58	39	18	3	14
White Catholic	16	16	56	39	20	1	11
Secular	12	22	43	29	23	2	18
<i>Community Size</i>							
Large City	17	24	46	38	16	2	14
Suburb	15	17	56	36	21	2	14
Small City/Town	16	17	59	31	18	1	12
Rural Area	19	18	49	31	21	2	11
<i>Party ID</i>							
Republican	16	14	59	34	22	2	13
Democrat	17	20	53	34	13	2	11
Independent	17	20	50	36	21	1	15
<i>Party and Ideology</i>							
Conservative Republican	16	14	57	37	23	2	12
Moderate/Liberal Republican	16	14	62	28	18	1	17
Conservative/Moderate Democrat	19	22	52	33	12	1	9
Liberal Democrat	16	13	54	35	15	4	16
<i>Bush Approval</i>							
Approve	17	18	55	33	19	2	12
Disapprove	14	17	48	39	19	2	19
<i>2000 Presidential Vote</i>							
Bush	18	15	54	38	21	2	14
Gore	17	19	52	38	14	2	12
<i>Marital Status</i>							
Married	17	17	56	35	19	1	12
Unmarried	16	20	50	32	20	2	13
<i>Parental Status</i>							
Parent	14	17	55	32	23	1	13
Non-Parent	18	19	53	34	17	2	12
<i>Labor Union</i>							
Union Household	10	22	58	40	18	*	13
Non-Union Household	18	18	53	33	20	2	13

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,500 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period November 13-19, 2001. 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=769) or Form 2 (N=731), the sampling error is plus or minus 4 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 one 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 10 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 2000). 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.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
MID-NOVEMBER SURVEY
MEDIA ATTITUDES / YOUTH ENGAGEMENT / RELIGION AFTER 9/11
FINAL TOPLINE
NOVEMBER 13 - 19, 2001
N = 1,500**

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush 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 George W. Bush is handling his job as president? [IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
Mid-November, 2001	84	9	7=100
Early October, 2001	84	8	8=100
Late September, 2001	86	7	7=100
Mid-September, 2001	80	9	11=100
Early September, 2001	51	34	15=100
August, 2001	50	32	18=100
July, 2001	51	32	17=100
June, 2001	50	33	17=100
May, 2001	53	32	15=100
April, 2001	56	27	17=100
March, 2001	55	25	20=100
February, 2001	53	21	26=100

Q.2 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; ROTATE ITEMS A/B & C FIRST, FOLLOWED BY ROTATED ITEMS D THROUGH G]**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:					
a.F1	Terrorism attacks on the United States				
	66	25	6	2	1=100
	Early November, 2001				
	63	26	6	3	2=100
	Mid-October, 2001				
	78	16	4	1	1=100
	Early October, 2001 ¹				
	73	22	4	1	*=100
	Mid-September, 2001				
	74	22	3	1	*=100
	June, 1995 ²				
	58	32	8	2	*=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:					
b.F2	Reports of anthrax cases around the country				
	41	41	12	5	1=100
	Early November, 2001				
	47	35	13	4	1=100
ASK ALL:					
c.	The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan				
	49	36	11	3	1=100
	Early November, 2001				
	45	36	12	6	1=100
	Mid-October, 2001				
	51	35	10	3	1=100
	January, 1991 ³				
	67	28	4	1	0=100
d.	The capture of Kabul by Afghan opponents of the Taliban				
	36	33	18	12	1=100

¹ In Early October 2001 and Mid-September 2001 the question was worded: "News about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington?"

² In June 1995 the question was worded: "the Oklahoma City bombing."

³ In January 1991 the question was worded: "How closely have you been following news about the War in the Gulf?"

Q.2 CONTINUED ...

	<u>Closely</u>	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all DK/Ref</u>
e. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	41	36	15	7	1=100
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1=100
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0=100
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1=100
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1=100
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2=100
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*=100
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*=100
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1=100
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*=100
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1=100
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*=100
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1=100
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1=100
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*=100
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1=100
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*=100
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1=100
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*=100
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*=100
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1=100
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*=100
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*=100
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	*=100
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1=100
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*=100
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1=100
f. The debate in Washington over whether airport security personnel should be federal employees or not	31	32	22	14	1=100
g. The recent crash of an American Airlines plane near Kennedy Airport in New York	48	34	13	4	1=100

Q.3 How have you been getting most of your news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism? From television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the Internet? [ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS: IF ONLY ONE RESPONSE IS GIVEN, PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL RESPONSE]

IF RESPONDENT ANSWERED '1' TELEVISION AS EITHER 1ST OR 2ND RESPONSE IN Q.3:

Q.3a Do you get most of your news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism from network TV news, from local TV news, or from cable news networks such as CNN, MSNBC, and the Fox News Channel? [ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS BUT DO NOT PROBE]

		Mid-Sept 2001 ⁴	Early Sept 2001	Feb 2001	Oct 1999	Jan 1999	Jan 1996	Sept 1995	Jan 1994	Sept 1993	Jan 1993
85	Television	90	74	76	80	82	88	82	83	83	83
17	Network TV news	30	20	20	22	--	--	--	--	--	39
18	Local TV news	17	26	25	31	--	--	--	--	--	30
53	Cable news ⁵	45	34	35	35	--	--	--	--	--	38
2	Other	2	1	1	2	--	--	--	--	--	2
1	Don't know	2	*	1	*	--	--	--	--	--	1
34	Newspapers	11	45	40	48	42	61	63	51	60	52
19	Radio	14	18	16	19	18	25	20	15	17	17
2	Magazines	*	6	4	5	4	8	10	10	9	5
13	Internet ⁶	5	13	10	11	6	--	--	--	--	--
1	Other (VOL)	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	5	3	1
*	Don't know/Refused	1	*	1	*	*	*	1	1	*	1

Q.4 Now I'd like to ask you about some other ways in which you might be getting news about terrorist attacks and the war on terrorism. For each item that I read, please tell me how often, if ever, you LEARN SOMETHING about terrorist attacks or the war on terrorism from this source. (First), how often, if ever, do you learn something about terrorist attacks or the war on terrorism from [INSERT ITEM, ROTATE ITEMS a. THRU c. WITH ITEM d. ALWAYS LAST] – regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never? ⁷

		Regularly	Sometimes	Hardly Ever	Never	DK/Refused
a.	Talk radio shows	19	25	20	36	*=100
	January, 2000	15	29	19	31	6=100
	April, 1996	12	25	24	39	*=100
b.	Late night TV shows such as David Letterman and Jay Leno	6	11	20	63	*=100
	January, 2000	9	19	18	45	9=100
	April, 1996	6	19	19	56	0=100
c.	Religious radio or TV shows, such as "Focus on the Family"	11	13	17	59	*=100
	January, 2000	7	12	14	59	8=100
	April, 1996	6	12	15	67	*=100
d.	The Internet	17	18	10	55	*=100
	January, 2000	9	15	9	57	10=100

⁴ In Mid-September 2001 the question was worded "the terrorist attacks." From January 1993 to Early September 2001 the question was worded "national and international issues." In September 1995, question wording did not include "international."

⁵ Beginning in October 1999, "cable news networks such as CNN and MSNBC" was substituted for "CNN."

⁶ Beginning in February 2001, "Internet" was substituted for "computer online sources."

⁷ In January 2000 and April 1996 the question was worded: "...getting news about the presidential campaign." And item "c" was "Religious radio shows, such as "Focus on the Family"."

Q.5 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the terrorist attacks and the war against terrorism? **[READ]**⁸

		<u>Mid-Oct 2001</u>	<u>Early Oct 2001</u>	<u>Mid-Sept 2001</u>	GULF WAR <u>Jan 1991</u>
30	Excellent	32	48	56	36
47	Good	42	37	33	42
16	Only fair	17	10	6	15
5	Poor	6	3	3	5
2	Don't know/Refused	3	2	2	2
100		100	100	100	100

On another topic...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.6F1 Do you favor or oppose taking military action, including the use of ground troops, to retaliate against whoever is responsible for the terrorist attacks?

		<u>Mid-Sept 2001</u>
85	Favor	82
8	Oppose	8
7	Don't Know/Refused	10
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.7F2 Do you favor or oppose taking military action, including the use of ground troops, to retaliate against whoever is responsible for the terrorist attacks, even if it means that U.S. armed forces might suffer thousands of casualties?

		<u>Mid-Sept 2001</u>
77	Favor	77
14	Oppose	9
9	Don't Know/Refused	14
100		100

ASK ALL:

Q.8 I'd like to read you a couple of statements. Please tell me if you strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree with each.

		<u>Strongly Agree</u>	<u>Agree</u>	<u>Disagree</u>	<u>Strongly Disagree</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	I am now more generally interested in the news than I was before the terrorist attacks	26	40	28	5	1=100
	GULF WAR: March, 1991	15	34	42	7	2=100
b.	I find it hard to get interested in news stories that don't deal with terrorism in some way	4	14	60	20	2=100
	GULF WAR: March, 1991	3	20	60	14	3=100

8

In Early October 2001 and Mid-September 2001 the question was worded, "In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?" In January 1991 the question was worded "covering the War in the Gulf."

Thinking more generally about the news media,

Q.9 Which of the following two statements about the news media do you agree with more...**[READ]**

		Early Sept 2001	Early Feb 1998	Jan 1998	Feb 1997	March 1995	July 1994
35	The news media helps society to solve its problems	31	29	31	36	33	25
	OR						
	The news media gets in the way of society solving						
51	its problems	58	65	63	54	57	71
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.10F1 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 Sept 2001	Feb 1999	Early Feb 1998	Feb 1997	Late Jan 1994	Early Jan 1994	Aug 1989	Dec 1986	June 1985
32	Criticism by the press keeps political leaders from doing their job	25	31	39	32	24	18	23	26	17
54	Criticism keeps leaders from doing things that shouldn't be done	60	58	55	56	66	69	68	60	67
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>15</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.11F2 Some people think that by criticizing the military, news organizations weaken the country's defenses. Others think that such criticism helps keep our nation militarily prepared. Which position is closer to your opinion?

		March 1991	Aug 1989	Dec 1986	July 1985
37	Weakens defenses	28	33	31	31
49	Keeps nation prepared	59	56	57	51
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>13</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>18</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

ASK ALL:

Q.12 In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

		Early Sept 2001	Feb 1999	Early Aug 1998	Early Feb 1998	Feb 1997	Jan 1992	Aug 1989	Aug 1988	May 1988	Jan 1988	July 1985
46	Get the facts straight	35	37	33	34	37	49	54	40	48	44	55
45	Stories often inaccurate	57	58	58	63	56	44	44	50	43	48	34
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Q.13 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 NOTE FORM SPLIT]

			Early				
			Sept	Feb	Jan	July	July
			2001	1999	1987	1986	1985
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:							
aF1.	47	Care about the people they report on, OR	23	21	41	--	35
	38	Don't care about the people they report on?	64	67	45	--	48
	11	Neither applies	10	9	9	--	10
	4	Don't know/Refused	3	3	5	--	7
	100		100	100	100		100
bF1.	35	Willing to admit their mistakes, OR	24	26	--	--	34
	52	Try to cover up their mistakes?	67	66	--	--	55
	9	Neither applies	5	6	--	--	4
	4	Don't know/Refused	4	2	--	--	7
	100		100	100			100
cF1.	53	Moral, OR	40	40	--	--	54
	23	Immoral?	34	38	--	--	13
	17	Neither applies	20	16	--	--	20
	7	Don't know/Refused	6	6	--	--	13
	100		100	100			100
NO ITEM d							
			Sept	Feb	Early		July
			2001	1999	Aug	Jan	July
			1989	1987	1986	1985	1985
eF1.	60	Protect democracy, OR	46	45	55	52	58
	19	Hurt democracy?	32	38	19	27	18
	14	Neither applies	15	13	20	13	17
	7	Don't know/Refused	7	4	6	8	7
	100		100	100	100	100	100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:							
			Sept	Feb	Jan	July	July
			2001	1999	1987	1986	1985
fF2.	78	Care about how good a job they do, OR	69	69	--	77	79
	14	Don't care about how good a job they do?	22	22	--	16	11
	6	Neither applies	7	6	--	5	4
	2	Don't know/Refused	2	3	--	2	6
	100		100	100		100	100
gF2.	73	Highly professional, OR	54	52	--	71	72
	12	Not professional?	27	32	--	13	11
	12	Neither applies	15	13	--	12	9
	3	Don't know/Refused	4	3	--	4	8
	100		100	100		100	100
hF2.	69	Stand up for America, OR	43	41	53	53	52
	17	Too critical of America?	36	42	35	28	30
	10	Neither applies	16	13	8	15	10
	4	Don't know/Refused	5	4	4	4	8
	100		100	100	100	100	100
iF2.	47	Politically biased in their reporting, OR	59	56	47	42	45
	35	Careful that their reporting is NOT politically biased?	26	31	39	41	36
	11	Neither applies	8	8	7	9	7
	7	Don't know/Refused	7	5	7	8	12
	100		100	100	100	100	100

On a different topic...

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.15F1 How much confidence do you have that the military is giving the public an accurate picture of how the war is going in Afghanistan? **[READ]**

		-- GULF WAR --	
		<u>March 1991</u>	<u>Jan 1991</u>
28	A great deal of confidence	44	29
52	A fair amount of confidence	46	58
13	Not too much confidence	7	9
4	No confidence at all	2	2
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.16F2 How much confidence do you have that the government is giving the public an accurate picture of how efforts to deal with terrorism in the U.S. are going? **[READ]**

19	A great deal of confidence
61	A fair amount of confidence
15	Not too much confidence
3	No confidence at all
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.17F1 To the best of your knowledge are news reports from Afghanistan being censored by the American military?

IF YES IN Q.17 ASK:

Q.18F1 Do you think such restrictions on news reports are a good idea or bad idea?

		-- GULF WAR --
		<u>Jan 1991</u>
59	Yes, censored	76
	47 Good idea	60
	9 Bad idea	12
	3 Don't know/Refused	4
23	No	14
<u>18</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>10</u>
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.19F2 To the best of your knowledge are news reports about Anthrax and other terrorist threats here in the United States being censored by the government?

IF YES IN Q.19 ASK:

Q.20F2 Do you think such restrictions on news reports are a good idea or bad idea?

46	Yes, censored
	28 Good
	14 Bad idea
	4 Don't know/Refused
41	No
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.21F1 Has the news coverage of the war in Afghanistan been accurate for the most part, or have too many mistakes been made?

IF '2' TOO MANY MISTAKES IN Q.21, ASK

Q.22F1 Do you think these mistakes are the result of poor reporting on the part of journalists, or are these mistakes the result of the government giving out misleading information?

		-- GULF WAR --
		<u>Jan 1991</u>
65	Accurate	61
17	Too many mistakes made	18
4	Poor reporting on the part of journalists	n/a
9	Government giving out misleading information	n/a
1	Both (VOL)	n/a
1	Neither (VOL)	n/a
2	Don't know/Refused	n/a
<u>18</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>21</u>
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.23F2 Has the news coverage about Anthrax and other terrorist threats here in the United States been accurate for the most part, or have too many mistakes been made?

IF '2' TOO MANY MISTAKES IN Q.23, ASK:

Q.24F2 Do you think these mistakes are the result of poor reporting on the part of journalists, or are these mistakes the result of the government giving out misleading information?

58	Accurate	
30	Too many mistakes made	
8	Poor reporting on the part of journalists	
16	Government giving out misleading information	
3	Both (VOL)	
1	Neither (VOL)	
2	Don't know/Refused	
<u>12</u>	Don't know/Refused	
100		

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.25F1 Do you think the military is hiding bad news about military operations in Afghanistan from the public or do you think it is telling the public as much as it can under the circumstances?

		-- GULF WAR --
		<u>Jan 1991</u>
16	Hiding bad news	19
82	Telling as much as it can	78
<u>2</u>	No opinion/Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.26F2 Do you think the U.S. government is hiding bad news about Anthrax and other terrorist threats here in the United States from the public or do you think it is telling the public as much as it can under the circumstances?

21	Hiding bad news	
76	Telling as much as it can	
<u>3</u>	No opinion/Don't know/Refused	
100		

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.27F1 In trying to keep the public informed, are news organizations giving Osama bin Laden too much opportunity to promote his cause or are news organizations being careful not to give Osama bin Laden too much opportunity to promote his cause?

		-- Saddam Hussein --		"Terrorists"
		March 1991	Jan 1991	Aug 1986
47	Too much opportunity	39	44	56
43	Being careful	50	44	34
10	No opinion/Don't know/Refused	11	12	10
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.27F2 In your view, has there been too much, too little, or the right amount of discussion of ways to stop terrorists OTHER THAN using military force?

		Early Oct 2001
16	Too much	11
36	Too little	35
40	Right amount	48
8	Don't know/Refused	6
100		100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.28F1 Do you think the military should exert more control over how news organizations report about the war or do you think that most decisions about how to report about the war should be left to news organizations themselves?

		Mid-Oct 2001	GULF WAR Jan 1991	Oct 1986 ⁹
50	Give military more control	59	57	29
40	News organizations should decide	28	34	64
10	Don't know/Refused	13	9	7
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.29F2 Which is more important to you: that the government be able to censor news stories it feels threaten national security OR that the news media be able to report stories they feel are in the national interest?

		March 1991	Aug 1989	June 1985	Oct 1985
53	Government able to censor	58	40	44	38
39	News media able to report	32	52	38	50
4	Both equal (VOL)	5	5	9	6
4	Don't know/Refused	5	3	9	6
100		100	100	100	100

⁹

In October 1986 the question was worded "Some people feel that the government should have more control over how news organizations report on terrorist incidents. Other feel that most decisions on how to report the story should be made by the news organizations themselves. Which comes closer to your opinion?"

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=769]:

Q.30F1 In your opinion, which is better – that news coverage of a war be pro-American or that news coverage of a war be neutral?

		<u>March 1991</u>
30	Pro-American	22
64	Neutral	71
<u>6</u>	No opinion/Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=731]:

Q.31F2 In your opinion, which is better – that news coverage of a war be pro-American or that news coverage of a war show all points of view, including those of countries not friendly to the United States?

20	Pro-American
73	Show all points of view
<u>7</u>	No opinion/Don't know/Refused
100	

NO Q.32 OR Q.33

ASK ALL:

Q.34 When covering events in the war on terrorism, should journalists be digging hard to get all the information they can for their reports, or should they trust government and military officials if they refuse to officially release some information?

52	Digging hard
40	Trust officials
3	Both equal (VOL)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.35 When the government withholds information about the war on terrorism, is it mostly to protect American troops and the American public, or is it mostly to hide bad news to maintain support for the government's actions?

70	Protect troops and public safety
20	Maintain political support for actions
5	Both equal (VOL)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	