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The Sagging Stock Market's Big Audience

NEWS MEDIA'S IMPROVED IMAGE PROVES SHORT-LIVED

In a summer dominated by business scandals and a sagging stock market, the public is in an increasingly cranky mood. President Bush's approval ratings have slipped, support for increased regulation of business is up, and Americans are less confident that the government is giving them the straight story about terrorism.

At the same time public criticism of the news media, which abated in response to coverage of the 9-11 attacks, is once again as strong as ever. The favorable glow from the media's post-9/11 performance has completely disappeared. As the media's focus has shifted away from terrorism, Americans regard news organizations with the same degree of skepticism as they did in the 1990s.

A July Pew Research Center survey¹ of 1,365 adults shows that the public's grades for news organizations have tumbled since November, on measures ranging from professionalism and patriotism to compassion and morality. Just 49% think news organizations are highly professional, down from 73% in November. If anything, the news media's rating for professionalism is now a bit lower than it was in early September, shortly before the terrorist strikes (54%).

Over the same period, the news media's rating for patriotism, which stood at an all-time high in November (69%), has plummeted 20 points. While 49% say the news organizations "stand up for America," 35% believe it is too critical of the country. A majority once again believes news organizations do not care about the people they report on; in November, a 47% plurality viewed the

press as compassionate. The trend is similar for the public's assessment of the news media's morality, fairness and accuracy, all of which have returned to pre-Sept. 11 levels.

	Feb 1999	Sept 2001	Nov 2001	July 2002
	%	%	%	%
<i>News organizations ...</i>				
Usually get facts straight	37	35	46	35
Usually report inaccurately	58	57	45	56
Don't know	5	8	9	9
	100	100	100	100
Are highly professional	52	54	73	49
Are not professional	32	27	12	31
Neither/Don't know	16	19	15	20
	100	100	100	100
Stand up for America	41	43	69	49
Too critical of America	42	36	17	35
Neither/Don't know	17	21	14	16
	100	100	100	100
Are moral	40	40	53	39
Are immoral	38	34	23	36
Neither/Don't know	22	26	24	25
	100	100	100	100
Care about the people they report on	21	23	47	30
Don't care	67	64	38	55
Neither/Don't know	12	13	15	15
	100	100	100	100

¹

This report is based on the results of three national surveys: July 22-28 (N=995), July 8-16 (N=1,365) and May 6-16 (N=1,002). See methodology.

Still, while Americans are once again taking a dim view of the press, they continue to value the watchdog role that news organizations perform. Indeed, there has been a modest uptick in the number who believe press scrutiny of political leaders keeps them from doing things they should not (from 54% to 59%). And a 49% plurality thinks press criticism of the military keeps the armed forces prepared, compared with 40% who say such criticism undermines the military; that marks little change since November.

The positive view of terrorism coverage that led to the short-lived boost in the news media's image is still apparent in the current attitudes. The public continues to rate coverage of the war on terror – both in Afghanistan and at home – more highly than most other news stories. More than seven-in-ten gave the press an excellent or good grade for covering these stories, while more contentious news such as recent Supreme Court decisions on vouchers and the death penalty were rated less favorably.

A new Pew survey finds little change in the public's assessment of the credibility of individual news organizations over the past two years. Once again, CNN is rated as the most credible television news source, with 37% giving it the top grade for believability (down from 42% in 1998). The Wall Street Journal rates nearly as high: 33% say they can believe most or all they read in that newspaper. Only 21% say the same about their own local paper.

Among leading political figures tested, former President Bill Clinton stands out for his extraordinarily low credibility. Roughly one-in-ten (12%) say they can believe all or most of what the former president says, while nearly four times as many (46%) believe almost nothing Clinton says. Clinton's ratings are much lower than during the spring of 1998, in the midst of the Lewinsky scandal. By contrast, three-in-ten find the current president, George W. Bush, highly credible. But more Americans (39%) give Secretary of State Colin Powell top marks for believability.

Amid growing concerns about the economy and business scandals, President Bush's standing among the public is sliding. Today, 65% approve of the job he is doing, five points lower than June's measure, and 15 points below his rating in January. While the president's handling of the threat of terrorism remains important to the public, analyses of Bloomberg News Surveys by the Pew Research Center found that concerns about the economy are becoming more important in the public's judgment of Bush's performance [see *"Economy Becoming Bigger Factor in Bush Job Ratings" July 18, 2002*]. In that regard, news interest in the volatile market is as high as it has ever been, roughly at the same level it was following the collapse of the Russian economy in August 1998 and when the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped more than 1,000 points within a one-week period.

	App-rove %	Dis-approve %	DK/Ref %
July 22-28	65	25	10=100
July 8-16	67	21	12=100
June	70	20	10=100
April	69	18	13=100
Early April	74	16	10=100
February	78	13	9=100
January	80	11	9=100

The survey also shows that the spate of corporate scandals has begun to affect long-term attitudes toward business and government regulation. A 54% majority believes government regulation is necessary to protect the public interest, up from 50% earlier this year and 41% in 1994. Nearly six-in-ten (58%) say corporations make too much profit, and for the first time a majority (51%) strongly holds that opinion.

Media's Post-Post Sept. 11 Image

When the news media's image showed dramatic improvement last fall, roughly half of Americans still viewed news organizations as unwilling to admit mistakes, believed they stood in the way of solving society's problems, and were politically biased. Today, those perceptions are much more prevalent, as all three measures stand at virtually the same point they did just prior to Sept. 11.

Two-thirds of Americans believe news organizations are unwilling to acknowledge their errors, while just 23% say they admit their mistakes. There has been less change on the question of whether the news media stands in the way of society solving its problems; still, nearly six-in-ten see the media as an obstacle. And the number who believe news organizations are politically biased has increased by 12 points, to 59%.

As in the past, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to see the media as politically biased, but there has been a bigger shift on this issue since November among Democrats and independents. Solid majorities in both groups (57% of Democrats, 56% of independents) now see the media as biased; just 42% of Democrats and 40% of independents said that in November. Nearly seven-in-ten Republicans (69%) say the media is politically biased, a smaller increase from 61% last November.

A majority of Americans also believe news organizations are becoming more powerful. By two-to-one (57%-29%), the public says the media's influence is growing, not decreasing. That opinion has been one of the few constants regarding the press – last September, 55% said the media's influence was growing. Even in the mid-1980s, when the public's overall opinion of the media was more favorable, 63% held that view.

	Feb 1999	Sept 2001	Nov 2001	Now
	%	%	%	%
<i>News organizations ...</i>				
Are politically biased	56	59	47	59
Are careful not to be biased	31	26	35	26
Neither / Don't know	13	15	18	15
	100	100	100	100
Try to cover up mistakes	66	67	52	67
Are willing to admit mistakes	26	24	35	23
Neither / Don't know	8	9	13	10
	100	100	100	100
<i>News media ...*</i>				
Helps society solve its problems	36	31	35	31
Gets in the way	54	58	51	58
Don't know	10	11	14	11
	100	100	100	100

* February trend from 1997.

Patriotism and Politics

For the most part, the improvement in the media’s image last fall cut across political and demographic lines, as have the negative changes since then. Still, it is notable that at least some groups continue to hold more favorable impressions of the press than they did before Sept. 11.

Last November, fully 78% of Democrats said the media “stands up for America,” up from 47% in early September. While that number has declined to 60% in the current survey, that is still 13 points above the September figure. Women also view the media as more patriotic than they did in September 2001, though less so than in November.

<i>News media stands up for America</i>	Early Sept 2001		Nov 2001		Now	
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Total	43	69	49			
Men	39	63	42			
Women	46	74	56			
Republicans	43	64	44			
Independents	41	66	44			
Democrats	47	78	60			

The same pattern is apparent, to a lesser degree, on attitudes on whether the press “protects democracy.” Overall, half hold that view now, a decrease from 60% last November. Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say the media protects democracy, and more Democrats express this view than did so last September.

A Boost for the Watchdog Role

Though the public has much lower regard for the media’s values, most Americans continue to favor the watchdog role performed by news organizations. If anything, there is greater support now than in November, when the media’s overall image was much more favorable.

Six-in-ten Americans (59%) say press criticism keeps political leaders from doing things that should not be done, while just 26% believe it prevents politicians from doing their jobs. The number favoring the watchdog role is up slightly from November, and is at about the same level as in early September (60%).

Republicans were divided on this issue in November, with 48% favoring an aggressive media role and 41% saying it hamstrings political leaders. Now, 53% back the watchdog role and 31% say it is not worth it. Democrats, who already strongly backed press scrutiny of political leaders, also are more supportive.

<i>Press criticism keeps political leaders from ...</i>	--- November 2001 ---				--- July 2002 ---			
	All %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %	All %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
Doing their job	32	41	27	27	26	31	21	28
Wrongdoing	54	48	62	57	59	53	68	58
Don’t know	14	11	11	16	15	16	11	14
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Americans express more reservations about news organizations criticizing the military; 49% say such criticism keeps the nation prepared, while 40% believe it weakens our defenses. In November, the same number (49%) thought the press' watchdog role kept the nation prepared. During the Persian Gulf War in 1991, more people (59%) felt press criticism of the military was worth it, while just 28% thought it undermined the nation's defenses.

Scandals Take Toll on Business

The public's fundamental attitudes toward business remained fairly constant through the early part of this year, but there are signs that the weight of highly visible corporate scandals is having a negative impact. Since February, when the Enron scandal broke, there have been modest increases in the number of Americans who believe corporations are making too much profit and see the need for government regulation of business.

The changes are more dramatic when measured over the long-term. Currently, 54% say government regulation of business is necessary to protect the public interest, an increase of four points since February and 13 points since the summer of 1994, prior to the Republican successes in the off-year elections that fall. Indeed, sentiment on this question is completely reversed compared with 1994, when opponents of regulation outnumbered supporters by a margin of 54% to 41%; now supporters outnumber opponents by 54% to 36%.

The percentage of the public saying that business corporations make too much profit now stands at 58%, compared with 54% in February and 52% in the 1990s. Just a third now say business corporations make a "fair and reasonable profit," down from 42% in 1999. There has been less of a long-term change in opinion on whether too much power is concentrated in the hands of a few large companies. That has long been a widely held view – 80% say so now, compared with 77% earlier this year and 76% in 1994.

Notably, the intensity of opinion on these issues has increased; 51% now feel *strongly* that businesses make too much profit compared with 44% who strongly agreed with that opinion in February. Over the same period, there was a five-point rise in the number who feel strongly that too much power is concentrated in the hands of a few large companies (from 62% to 67%).

More Favor Government Regulation				
	July 1994	Aug 1999	Feb 2002	July 2002
<i>Business corporations make ...</i>	%	%	%	%
Too much profit	52	52	54	58
Fair and reasonable profit	43	42	39	33
Don't know	5	6	7	9
	100	100	100	100
<i>A few large corporations hold ...</i>				
Too much power	76	77	77	80
Not too much power	19	17	17	12
Neither/Don't know	5	6	6	8
	100	100	100	100
<i>Government regulation of business ...</i>				
Is necessary	41	48	50	54
Does more harm than good	54	44	41	36
Neither/Don't know	5	8	9	10
	100	100	100	100

Declining Confidence in Terrorist Reports

Americans are less confident now than last fall that they are getting accurate reports from the government about efforts to deal with terrorism. In November, fully eight-in-ten Americans had a great deal or fair amount of confidence that the government was giving the public an accurate picture. Today, 60% express such confidence.

The decline has been most notable among African Americans. In November, 68% of African Americans had a great deal or fair amount of confidence in government reports; today, only 40% do. In November, residents of the eastern U.S. were the most confident about government reports; today they are among the least confident (83% then, 57% now). Liberal Democrats have experienced a similarly steep decline in confidence, but even conservative Republicans have dropped from 94% confidence to 79%.

Amid some complaints that government warnings about possible terrorist attacks are too vague and only alarm people, the public itself sees the situation somewhat differently. By a margin of more than two-to-one, Americans say that the government should be giving the public all the warnings it can, even if the warnings are vague (62%), and rejects the criticism that the government is scaring people too much by issuing vague warnings (28%).

The public has a similar assessment of news reports on terrorist threats. The same number of Americans fault the press for scaring the public unnecessarily as criticize the government for too many vague warnings (28% in both cases). Fewer (20%) say the press is not giving the public the news it needs about possible terrorist threats. But for the most part, the public sees news organizations as striking the right balance between the two (41%).

Women tend to be less critical than men of both the government's and the media's handling of terrorism reporting. One-third of men think the public is being scared by excessive news reporting of possible terrorist threats, compared with only 23% of women, while more women see the press striking the right balance. Similarly, though majorities of both men and women think the government should be giving all the warnings it can, men are somewhat more likely to say the government is scaring people too much.

<i>Confidence in govt terrorism reports</i>	Nov 2001 %	Now %
Great deal	19	14
Fair amount	61	46
Not much	15	27
None	3	11
Don't know	2	2
	100	100

Media Credibility Ratings

The public's evaluations of the credibility of major news organizations has remained fairly stable over the past two years. Among major TV outlets, the ratings are unchanged or show a slight decline. CNN continues to be rated the most believable television news source, with 37% of Americans who are able to rate it saying they believe all or most of what they see and hear on CNN. This represents a modest slip in credibility from a peak of 42% in 1998.

The three major broadcast networks are rated about equally in terms of believability: roughly one-in-four say they believe all or most of what they see on ABC, NBC and CBS. This represents a slight decline for all three networks: from 1996 through 2000 roughly three-in-ten gave network news the highest rating for believability. As in previous years, network news magazines are rated slightly better than the news organizations themselves. One-third (34%) give CBS's 60 Minutes a high rating for believability, 31% give the same high rating to ABC's 20/20, and 28% to NBC's Dateline.

The ratings of local TV are similar to the networks, with 27% saying they can believe all or most of what they see on their local newscasts. Credibility here has dropped from 33% and 34% in 2000 and 1998, respectively.

Fewer Americans are able to rate MSNBC and the Fox News Channel. Among those who can rate them, 28% give MSNBC high marks for believability, and 24% say the same about the Fox News Channel. C-SPAN receives high believability ratings from 30% of those able to rate it.

Broadcast & Cable Believability*					
	Believe all or most		Believe almost nothing		Can't Rate
	4%	3%	2%	1%	%
CNN	37	39	17	7=100	13
May, 2000	39	39	16	6=100	16
May, 1998	42	41	13	4=100	13
60 Minutes	34	43	17	6=100	11
May, 2000	34	41	18	7=100	8
20/20	31	41	21	7=100	15
C-SPAN	30	44	19	7=100	39
May, 2000	33	39	18	10=100	38
MSNBC	28	44	22	6=100	23
May, 2000	28	42	22	8=100	31
Dateline NBC	28	42	24	6=100	17
May, 2000	32	38	23	7=100	18
Local TV News	27	41	24	8=100	6
May, 2000	33	41	20	6=100	6
May, 1998	34	41	19	6=100	4
CBS News	26	46	21	7=100	11
May, 2000	29	42	22	7=100	10
NewsHour	26	39	26	9=100	49
May, 2000	24	35	26	15=100	48
NBC News	25	47	21	7=100	9
May, 2000	29	41	22	8=100	9
ABC News	24	48	21	7=100	10
May, 2000	30	41	23	6=100	12
Fox News					
Cable Channel	24	43	25	8=100	21
May, 2000	26	37	25	12=100	25
NPR	23	39	28	10=100	29
May, 2000	25	34	29	12=100	37

* Percentages based on those who could rate each.

The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer is less well-known than commercial evening news programs, but its credibility ratings are comparable among those who can rate them. The NewsHour is rated highly by roughly one-quarter of the public — 26% say they can believe all or most of what they hear on this show. Ratings for National Public Radio are slightly lower (23% say they believe all or most of what they say).

Not surprisingly, there is a partisan dimension to evaluations of media credibility. Republicans tend to be more skeptical of most media sources, with the notable exception of the Fox News Cable Channel. For example, 45% of Democrats say they believe all or most of what they see on CNN, compared with 32% of Republicans, and there is a similar credibility gap with respect to the network evening news programs. Republicans and Democrats, however, are equally likely to say Fox News is credible (28% and 27%, respectively).

Wall Street Journal Highly Credible

Though unfamiliar to many Americans, the Wall Street Journal is seen as a highly credible news source among those who rate it, a third of whom say they believe all or most of what they read there. This compares favorably to local papers and USA Today. Fewer than one-in-four (21%) give their local daily newspaper equally high marks for believability, and USA Today is highly rated by just 19% of those who gave an opinion.

Among news magazines, U.S. News and World Report receives slightly better marks for credibility than Time or Newsweek. Among those who can rate the magazines, just over a quarter (26%) believe all or most of what they read in U.S. News and World Report, compared with 23% for Time and 20% for Newsweek. Believability ratings for both Time and Newsweek are slightly lower this year than in 2000 or 1998.

	Believe all or most		Believe almost nothing		Can't Rate
	4%	3%	2%	1%	%
Wall St. Journal	33	44	16	7=100	34
May, 2000	41	37	14	8=100	34
U.S. News	26	47	20	7=100	30
Time	23	47	21	9=100	24
May, 2000	29	41	22	8=100	26
Your daily paper	21	42	27	10=100	7
May, 2000	25	40	26	9=100	7
Newsweek	20	52	22	6=100	28
May, 2000	24	43	24	9=100	27
USA Today	19	48	25	8=100	24
May, 2000	23	41	27	9=100	25
Associated Press	17	45	29	9=100	22
May, 2000	21	42	28	9=100	23
People	9	27	42	22=100	27
May, 2000	10	24	40	26=100	24
National Enquirer	3	7	14	76=100	21
May, 2000	4	4	10	82=100	18

* Percentages based on those who could rate each.

Entertainment and tabloid outlets such as People and the National Enquirer receive the lowest ratings overall. Just 9% of those able to rate People Magazine say they can believe all or most of what they read in the magazine, while twice as many (21%) say they believe almost nothing they read there. Even fewer (3%) give high credibility to the Enquirer, while three-quarters (76%) say it simply cannot be believed.

Broadcast Anchors More Believable

Despite modest believability ratings for their network news programs, Tom Brokaw, Dan Rather, and Peter Jennings remain the most trusted figures in television news. By comparison, the best-known cable news anchors – Brian Williams, Brit Hume and Aaron Brown – and cable talk hosts – Larry King and Bill O’Reilly – are seen as significantly less credible.

More than a third of those able to rate them say they believe all or most of what the broadcast network anchors say, and only about one-in-five give these news figures even modestly negative ratings for credibility. Other well-known network personalities, such as Diane Sawyer and Ted Koppel, get similarly high marks for believability.

In addition to being less visible, cable news anchors also are not seen in as favorable terms by those familiar with them. Fewer than one-in-five give MSNBC’s Brian Williams and Fox’s Brit Hume high marks for credibility, and just 14% say they completely believe CNN’s Aaron Brown.

One of the most recognized cable news figures – talk show host Larry King – gets decidedly mixed reviews. While 18% say they believe all or most of what King says, almost as many (16%) say they believe almost nothing. But this is an improvement for King; six years ago 27% said he was not credible, and only 11% gave him high marks.

Fox News’ Bill O’Reilly is seen as slightly more credible than King, although O’Reilly is not nearly as well known. Among those who are familiar with O’Reilly, 22% say they believe all or most of what he has to say, while just 13% believe almost nothing. His Fox colleague Geraldo Rivera, who is more widely recognized than O’Reilly, is seen as far less credible. People who believe almost nothing of what Rivera says outnumber those who find him highly credible by four-to-one (36% to 9%).

	Believe all or most		Believe almost nothing		Can't Rate
	4%	3%	2%	1%	%
Tom Brokaw	39	41	16	4=100	10
Dan Rather	37	41	15	7=100	8
Peter Jennings	36	42	16	6=100	9
Diane Sawyer	31	45	18	7=100	11
Ted Koppel	30	45	19	6=100	16
Jim Lehrer	25	42	25	8=100	43
Katie Couric	24	44	23	9=100	25
Bill O’Reilly	22	35	29	13=100	42
Tim Russert	21	41	30	8=100	49
Brian Williams	19	46	27	8=100	48
Larry King	18	30	35	16=100	16
Brit Hume	16	43	33	8=100	53
Aaron Brown	14	40	35	11=100	61
Geraldo Rivera	9	20	35	36=100	12

* Percentages based on those who could rate each.

Clinton's Lost Credibility

While never enjoying a particularly high level of public trust, Bill Clinton's credibility is currently in the tank. Though a minority (12%) says they believe all or most of what Clinton says, nearly four times as many (46%) say they can believe almost nothing of what Clinton says. Fully 77% of Republicans take this view, while 40% of independents and 22% of Democrats agree. In May 1998, months before his testimony in the Lewinsky case, just 23% gave Clinton this lowest mark for believability.

Three-in-ten say they believe all or most of what George W. Bush says, twice as many as find him to not be credible (13%). The last measure of presidential credibility this high was soon after President Reagan's re-election in 1985, though the question was not asked about the first President Bush when he enjoyed broad job approval during and after the Gulf War. More than half of Republicans (52%) give Bush the highest score for credibility. Democrats are divided, just as many say they cannot believe Bush (21%) as trust him implicitly (16%).

Al Gore also suffers from a credibility problem, though not as severe as Clinton's. Fully 27% of those who can rate him said they believe almost nothing of what Gore says, twice as many as say they find him highly credible (13%).

Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle also lacks credibility in the eyes of many people. Among the two-thirds of Americans who can give Daschle a believability rating, nearly a quarter gave him the lowest available mark, while just 9% say they believe all or most of what Daschle says.

By comparison, members of the Bush administration are seen as far more believable, particularly Secretary of State Colin Powell. Nearly four-in-ten (39%) say they believe all or most of what Powell says, making him the only politician whose credibility rating rivals those of the network news anchors.

	Believe all or most		Believe almost nothing		Can't Rate
	4%	3%	2%	1%	Rate %
<i>George W. Bush</i>					
May, 2002	30	37	20	13=100	1
<i>Bill Clinton</i>					
May, 2002	12	19	23	46=100	3
May, 1998	17	28	31	23=100	1
April, 1996	14	31	25	28=100	2
Feb, 1993	18	35	25	19=100	3
<i>George Bush Sr.</i>					
Feb, 1993	12	31	36	21=100	1
Aug, 1989	20	44	25	11=100	1
<i>Ronald Reagan</i>					
Aug, 1989	16	31	27	26=100	0
Jan, 1987	18	35	23	23=100	2
July, 1985	28	40	20	12=100	1

* Percentages based on those who could rate each.

	Believe all or most		Believe almost nothing		Can't Rate
	4%	3%	2%	1%	Rate %
Colin Powell	39	39	17	6=100	6
Oprah Winfrey	29	30	27	14=100	8
Alan Greenspan	21	44	28	7=100	20
Dick Cheney	19	41	29	11=100	9
Don Rumsfeld	16	42	30	12=100	25
Al Gore	13	29	31	27=100	4
Tom Daschle	9	31	37	23=100	37

* Percentages based on those who could rate each.

Pledge Controversy Top News Story

News of a controversial court ruling on the Pledge of Allegiance and stories on terrorism led the Pew news interest index for July. A majority of Americans (52%) paid very close attention to the recent federal court ruling that the words “One nation, under God” cannot appear in the Pledge of Allegiance. That marks the highest interest in a non-terrorism story since Sept. 11, and one of the most closely followed court decisions since Pew began measuring news interest in 1986. Two 1989 Supreme Court rulings, on flag burning and abortion, attracted nearly as much interest (51%, 47% respectively).

Summer News Interests	
<i>Stories ...</i>	Follow “Very Closely” %
Court ruling on Pledge of Allegiance	52
Defending against terrorism in US	51
US military efforts in Afghanistan	41
Ups and downs in the stock market ¹	33
WorldCom and other business scandals ¹	28
Court ruling on school vouchers	19
Court ruling on death penalty for retarded	16
Bush’s involvement in Harken Energy ¹	13

¹ Figures from July 22-28. All others from July 8-16.

Religious people followed the court’s decision much more closely than the non-religious. Solid majorities of Protestants (56%) and Catholics (54%) paid very close attention to the court ruling, compared with only about a third of seculars (34%). Republicans and conservatives followed this story more closely than Democrats and liberals; 62% of conservative Republicans tracked the court ruling very closely compared with 48% of liberal Democrats.

Interest in terrorism-related stories remains high. Half (51%) said they paid very close attention to stories on defending the United States against terrorism, a modest rise from 45% in June. Interest in U.S. military efforts in Afghanistan rose slightly, from 38% to 41%.

Two recent Supreme Court decisions garnered far less attention than the federal court ruling on the Pledge of Allegiance. Just one-in-five (19%) paid very close attention to the Court’s decision permitting vouchers to be used at private and religious schools, while fewer (16%) very closely followed the ruling banning the execution of the mentally retarded.

The quadrennial World Cup soccer tournament held in Japan and South Korea was followed very or fairly closely by one-quarter (26%) of the public in June. Although relatively few people said they followed the tournament very closely (10%), three-in-ten (31%) correctly identified the Brazilian national team as the champions of the tournament. Hispanic Americans and college graduates are significantly more knowledgeable on this topic than others. Four years ago, 38% were able to correctly identify the French national team as the World Cup champions.

Interest in Economy; Not Bush's Past

With greater news coverage and more Americans invested in the stock market, market volatility garners higher public interest today than in the past. Two-thirds of Americans say they paid at least fairly close attention to recent ups and downs in the market, the highest interest level ever registered. The nearest comparison is September 1998, when the market fell more than 1,000 points in one week on the heels of the crumbling of the Russian economy and massive loan defaults. At that time, 63% followed the news closely.

Interest in the stock market is greatest among those age 50-64, fully 41% of whom are following this news very closely, and another 33% fairly closely. By comparison, just 23% of those under age 30 are following market news very closely, and one-third of those age 30 to 49 and 65 and older say the same.

Roughly three in-ten Americans (28%) closely tracked recent business scandals involving WorldCom and other major U.S. corporations. The number paying very close attention to such scandals has nearly tripled from 11% last December, when news of the bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation broke. People with a college degree and those in the highest income categories are significantly more interested in this story, as well as the stock market, than are those with less education and lower incomes.

But public interest in legal and ethical questions surrounding Bush's tenure as a board member of the Harken Energy company in the 1990s is of relatively little interest to most Americans. Just 13% are following this story very closely, while 62% say they are following it not too or not at all closely. While older Americans, college graduates and those with higher incomes show somewhat more interest in this story than those who are younger, less educated, and poorer, there is little evidence of a partisan divide. Democrats are, at best, only slightly more interested in the story than Republicans, with 16% and 13%, respectively, of each following the story very closely.

	Interest Up in Stock Market		
	<i>Percent following recent ups and down of market</i>		
	<i>“Very”</i>	<i>“Fairly”</i>	<i>Closely</i>
Late-July, 2002	33	33	66
March, 2001	27	27	54
October, 2000	20	26	56
April, 2000	18	28	46
March, 2000	23	29	52
March, 1999	18	29	48
January, 1999	24	28	52
September, 1998	32	31	63
August, 1998	17	23	40
January, 1998	21	25	46
November, 1997	25	36	61
September, 1997	14	22	36
April, 1997	17	21	38
February, 1996	12	20	32

Highest Grades for Terrorism Coverage

The media gets higher marks for coverage of terrorism-related stories and the military efforts in Afghanistan than for coverage of other stories. Among the people who were following these stories very or fairly closely, seven-in-ten rate coverage of terrorism and the war as excellent or good. Ratings for press coverage of terrorism-related news were very strong in the initial weeks following the attacks, but subsequently declined and have stabilized in the past few months.

	Excel- lent %	Good %	Fair/ Poor %	Don't Know %
U.S. military effort	25	46	27	2=100
Defending against terrorism	26	47	26	1=100
Business scandals	23	39	36	2=100
Vouchers Court ruling	12	35	48	5=100
Pledge of Allegiance ruling	19	38	38	5=100
Death penalty Court ruling	10	41	45	4=100

* Based on those who followed stories very or fairly closely.

Roughly six-in-ten (62%) of the people following the WorldCom business scandal closely rated the coverage as excellent or good. Coverage of the Pledge of Allegiance decision was rated excellent or good by 57%. Around half (51%) of those following closely gave excellent or good ratings to coverage of the death penalty decision and 47% favorably rated coverage of the voucher ruling.

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the *July Media Update* survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,365 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period July 8-16, 2002. 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=686) or Form 2 (N=679), the sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

Results for the *Late July Supplement* survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 995 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period July 22-28, 2002. 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 3.5 percentage points.

Results for the *Believability* survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,005 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period May 6-16, 2002. 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 3.5 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.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	<u>Pledge of Allegiance Ruling[^]</u> %	<u>Defending[^] against Terrorism</u> %	<u>Military[^] Effort in Afghanistan</u> %	<u>Stock Market Fluctuation</u> %	<u>Recent Business Scandals</u> %	<u>Vouchers Court Ruling[^]</u> %	<u>Death Penalty Ruling[^]</u> %	<u>Harken Energy Scandal</u> %	<u>(N)</u>
Total	52	51	41	33	29	19	16	13	(995)
Sex									
Male	50	55	42	39	34	18	16	16	(518)
Female	53	48	40	27	24	21	15	10	(477)
Race									
White	52	50	40	32	27	19	15	12	(790)
Non-white	53	55	40	34	35	22	18	17	(187)
Black	53	54	42	41	41	24	20	18	(94)
Hispanic ^{^^}	39	59	40	22	18	16	11	10	(84)
Age									
Under 30	34	37	38	24	16	14	13	6	(192)
30-49	49	54	40	32	28	16	11	10	(407)
50+	64	58	43	38	35	26	22	18	(373)
Education									
College Grad.	51	51	45	46	36	25	17	20	(340)
Some College	52	55	35	41	32	18	15	16	(247)
High School Grad.	52	50	46	25	25	17	15	9	(319)
<H.S. Grad.	52	49	30	17	17	18	14	5	(83)
Region									
East	54	50	48	36	34	17	19	13	(129)
Midwest	47	47	38	33	26	17	11	12	(279)
South	57	58	42	31	28	22	18	13	(306)
West	46	46	36	34	28	20	14	13	(281)
Party ID									
Republican	60	52	44	39	28	19	13	13	(309)
Democrat	48	50	38	33	36	21	17	16	(295)
Independent	50	58	44	28	23	19	18	11	(301)

[^] Ns do not apply because item was fielded in a survey conducted July 8-16, 2002; N=1365.

^{^^} 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?

TREND IN PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL

	--- June 2002 ---		--- Early July 2002 ---		--- Late July 2002 ---		Jun-July Change
	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	
Total	70	20	67	21	65	25	-5
Sex							
Male	69	21	72	20	66	25	-3
Female	71	19	63	22	64	24	-7
Race							
White	75	16	71	18	71	20	-4
Non-white	52	35	50	34	44	40	-8
Black	48	43	41	41	35	47	-13
Hispanic [^]	73	14	65	20	61	28	-12
Race and Sex							
White Men	73	16	73	19	72	22	-1
White Women	76	16	70	17	70	19	-6
Age							
Under 30	74	17	65	20	68	20	-6
30-49	72	18	71	19	66	25	-6
50-64	70	21	68	24	64	29	-6
65+	64	26	60	25	60	23	-4
Sex and Age							
Men under 50	71	19	72	19	65	26	-6
Women under 50	74	16	66	20	69	21	-5
Men 50+	68	22	71	23	69	24	+1
Women 50+	66	24	58	26	57	29	-9
Education							
College Grad.	70	24	72	22	61	31	-9
Some College	75	17	65	23	71	22	-4
High School Grad.	74	16	69	17	65	24	-9
<H.S. Grad.	55	26	60	27	62	18	-7
Family Income^{^^}							
\$75,000+	74	18	71	20	68	25	-6
\$50,000-\$74,999	74	20	75	17	67	23	-7
\$30,000-\$49,999	74	18	68	23	69	26	-5
\$20,000-\$29,999	67	23	71	22	63	24	-4
<\$20,000	62	24	52	25	58	28	-4

[^] The designation Hispanic is unrelated to the white-black categorization.

^{^^} The income categories for July 2002 surveys are \$60K+, \$40-59K, \$30-39K, \$20-29K, and less than \$20K.

Question: Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?

Continued ...

	--- June 2002 ---		--- Early July 2002 ---		--- Late July 2002 ---		Jun-July Change
	Approve %	Disapprove %	Approve %	Disapprove %	Approve %	Disapprove %	
Total	70	20	67	21	65	25	-5
Region							
East	68	24	67	22	65	24	-3
Midwest	73	17	70	19	63	23	-10
South	70	20	69	19	68	24	-2
West	70	19	62	24	63	28	-7
Religious Affiliation							
Total White Protestant	79	13	73	17	73	19	-6
White Catholic	86	9	76	16	77	15	-9
Secular	49	35	46	34	43	43	-6
Party ID							
Republican	95	2	90	7	91	5	-4
Democrat	53	37	49	36	40	46	-13
Independent	66	22	68	20	68	23	-2
Party and Ideology							
Conservative Republican	96	*	94	4	94	2	-2
Moderate/Liberal Republican	93	4	85	10	85	10	-8
Conservative/Moderate Democrat	57	32	57	28	44	44	-13
Liberal Democrat	48	45	33	55	30	54	-18

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JULY OMNIBUS – MEDIA UPDATE
FINAL TOPLINE
July 8 - 16, 2002
N=1365

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>
Late July, 2002 ²	65	25	10=100
July, 2002	67	21	12=100
June, 2002	70	20	10=100
April, 2002	69	18	13=100
Early April, 2002	74	16	10=100
February, 2002	78	13	9=100
January, 2002	80	11	9=100
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. OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**

ASK FORM 1 [N=686]:		<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.F1	The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan	41	38	13	7	1=100
	June, 2002	38	32	20	9	1=100
	April, 2002	39	39	13	8	1=100
	Early April, 2002	45	37	12	5	1=100
	February, 2002	47	39	8	5	1=100
	January, 2002	51	35	9	4	1=100
	December, 2001	44	38	12	5	1=100
	Mid-November, 2001	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

² Late July 2002 was conducted July 22 - 28, 2002; N=995.

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

Q.2 CONTINUED

		Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/Ref
ASK FORM 2 [N=679]:						
b.F2	Defending against terrorist attacks in the U.S.	51	33	9	6	1=100
	June, 2002	45	35	12	7	1=100
	April, 2002	46	36	10	7	1=100
	Early April, 2002	49	35	10	5	1=100
	December, 2001 ⁴	60	29	7	3	1=100
	Mid-November, 2001	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 ⁵	73	22	4	1	*=100
	Mid-September, 2001	74	22	3	1	*=100
c.	Recent business scandals involving WorldCom and other major U.S. corporations					
	Late July, 2002 ¹	29	34	19	17	1=100
	July, 2002	31	33	18	17	1=100
	February, 2002 ⁶	28	33	19	19	1=100
	January, 2002	19	24	20	35	2=100
	December, 2001 ⁷	11	23	28	36	2=100
d.	The Supreme Court ruling allowing vouchers to be used at private and religious schools	19	24	22	33	2=100
e.	The federal court ruling that the words “One nation, under God” cannot appear in the Pledge of Allegiance	52	27	10	10	1=100
f.	The Supreme Court ruling that bans the death penalty for the mentally retarded	16	23	25	34	2=100

⁴ From Mid-October 2001 to December 2001 the story was listed as “Terrorism attacks on the United States.”

⁵ In Early October 2001 and Mid-September 2001 the story was listed as “News about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington?”

⁶ In February 2002 and January 2002 the story was listed as “The ongoing investigation into the bankruptcy of the Enron corporation.”

⁷ In December 2001 the question was worded “The bankruptcy of the Enron Corporation and its impact on the retirement investments of Enron employees.”

Q.2 CONTINUED

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
g. Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market					
Late July, 2002 ¹	33	33	15	18	1=100
March, 2001	27	27	18	27	1=100
Mid-October, 2000	20	26	23	31	1=100
April, 2000	18	28	23	31	*=100
Early April, 2000	19	29	20	32	*=100
March, 2000	23	29	21	26	1=100
March, 1999	18	29	22	31	*=100
January, 1999	24	28	19	28	1=100
Early September, 1998	32	31	20	17	*=100
Mid-August, 1998	17	23	21	39	*=100
January, 1998	21	25	23	31	*=100
November, 1997 ⁸	25	36	18	20	1=100
September, 1997	14	22	23	40	1=100
April, 1997	17	21	22	40	*=100
February, 1996	12	20	25	42	1=100
h. George W. Bush's involvement in alleged accounting irregularities and insider stock trading at a Texas energy company in the early 1990s					
Late July, 2002 ¹	13	22	24	38	3=100
<i>Gallup</i> : July 9-11, 2002 ⁹	12	26	26	35	1=100

ASK Q.3 ITEMS ONLY IF CORRESPONDING ITEM IN Q.2 WAS FOLLOWED VERY OR FAIRLY CLOSELY

Q.3 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE. OBSERVE FORM SPLITS], excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>	
a.F1 The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan	25	46	20	7	2=100	(N=541)
b.F2 Defending against terrorist attacks in the U.S.	26	47	18	8	1=100	(N=579)
c. Recent business scandals involving WorldCom and other major U.S. corporations	23	39	26	10	2=100	(N=901)
d. The Supreme Court ruling allowing vouchers to be used at private and religious schools	12	35	34	14	5=100	(N=610)
e. The federal court ruling that the words "One nation, under God" cannot appear in the Pledge of Allegiance	19	38	24	14	5=100	(N=1092)
f. The Supreme Court ruling that bans the death penalty for the mentally retarded	10	41	33	12	4=100	(N=550)

⁸ In November 1997, April 1997 and February 1996, the story was listed as "Recent major ups and downs in the stock market."

⁹ Gallup trend worded: "How closely have you followed the news about George W. Bush's involvement in alleged accounting irregularities and insider stock trading while he was a director at Harken Energy Corporation in Texas in the early 1990s -- very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not at all?"

ASK ALL:

Q.4 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]**

		<u>Mid-Nov 2001</u>
14	A great deal of confidence	19
46	A fair amount of confidence	61
27	Not too much confidence	15
11	No confidence at all	3
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>

Thinking more generally about the news media,

Q.5 Which of the following two statements about the news media do you agree with more...**[READ]**

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

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=686]:

Q.6F1 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?

		<u>Mid-Nov 2001</u>	<u>Early Sept 2001</u>	<u>Feb 1999</u>	<u>Early Feb 1998</u>	<u>Feb 1997</u>	<u>Late Jan 1994</u>	<u>Early Jan 1994</u>	<u>Aug 1989</u>	<u>Dec 1986</u>	<u>June 1985</u>
26	Keeps leaders from doing their job	32	25	31	39	32	24	18	23	26	17
59	Keeps leaders from doing things that shouldn't be done	54	60	58	55	56	66	69	68	60	67
<u>15</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>14</u>	<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>	<u>100</u>

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=679]:

Q.7F2 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?

		<u>Mid-Nov 2001</u>	<u>March 1991</u>	<u>Aug 1989</u>	<u>Dec 1986</u>	<u>July 1985</u>
40	Weakens defenses	37	28	33	31	31
49	Keeps nation prepared	49	59	56	57	51
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>14</u>	<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>	<u>100</u>

ASK ALL:

Q.8 In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

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

Q.9 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]

			Mid- Nov 2001	Early Sept 2001	Feb 1999	Aug 1989	Jan 1987	July 1986	July 1985
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=686]:									
a.F1	30	Care about the people they report on, OR	47	23	21	--	41	--	35
	55	Don't care about the people they report on?	38	64	67	--	45	--	48
	10	Neither applies	11	10	9	--	9	--	10
	5	Don't know/Refused	4	3	3	--	5	--	7
	100		100	100	100		100		100
b.F1	23	Willing to admit their mistakes, OR	35	24	26	--	--	--	34
	67	Try to cover up their mistakes?	52	67	66	--	--	--	55
	6	Neither applies	9	5	6	--	--	--	4
	4	Don't know/Refused	4	4	2	--	--	--	7
	100		100	100	100				100
c.F1	39	Moral, OR	53	40	40	--	--	--	54
	36	Immoral?	23	34	38	--	--	--	13
	18	Neither applies	17	20	16	--	--	--	20
	7	Don't know/Refused	7	6	6	--	--	--	13
	100		100	100	100				100
d.F1	57	Growing in influence, OR	--	55	59	--	--	--	63
	29	Declining in influence?	--	29	32	--	--	--	17
	7	Neither applies	--	9	6	--	--	--	7
	7	Don't know/Refused	--	7	3	--	--	--	13
	100			100	100				100
e.F1	50	Protect democracy, OR	60	46	45	55	52	58	54
	29	Hurt democracy?	19	32	38	19	27	18	23
	14	Neither applies	14	15	13	20	13	17	13
	7	Don't know/Refused	7	7	4	6	8	7	10
	100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=679]:									
f.F2	65	Care about how good a job they do, OR	78	69	69	--	--	77	79
	23	Don't care about how good a job they do?	14	22	22	--	--	16	11
	8	Neither applies	6	7	6	--	--	5	4
	4	Don't know/Refused	2	2	3	--	--	2	6
	100		100	100	100			100	100
g.F2	49	Highly professional, OR	73	54	52	--	--	71	72
	31	Not professional?	12	27	32	--	--	13	11
	15	Neither applies	12	15	13	--	--	12	9
	5	Don't know/Refused	3	4	3	--	--	4	8
	100		100	100	100			100	100
h.F2	49	Stand up for America, OR	69	43	41	--	53	53	52
	35	Too critical of America?	17	36	42	--	35	28	30
	12	Neither applies	10	16	13	--	8	15	10
	4	Don't know/Refused	4	5	4	--	4	4	8
	100		100	100	100		100	100	100
i.F2	59	Politically biased in their reporting, OR	47	59	56	--	47	42	45
	26	Careful that their reporting is NOT politically biased	35	26	31	--	39	41	36
	10	Neither applies	11	8	8	--	7	9	7
	5	Don't know/Refused	7	7	5	--	7	8	12
	100		100	100	100		100	100	100

C.1 and C.2 ASKED JULY 11 - 16 [N=840]:

Thinking again about the press...

C.1 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering [INSERT ITEM, ROTATE]? Would you say the press does an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or a poor job? (And how would you rate the job the press has done in covering [NEXT ITEM]?)

		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	National politics and the federal government in Washington	9	47	33	9	2=100
b.	State politics and your state government in [INSERT NAME OF STATE CAPITAL]	7	39	36	13	5=100

C.2 I am going to read some things about television news reporting. For each, tell me if you think it is a good thing or a bad thing... First [INSERT ITEM, ROTATE] is that a good thing or a bad thing in your opinion?

		<u>Good Thing</u>	<u>Bad Thing</u>	<u>Neither</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Reporters and news people having background as advisers to political candidates and office holders	44	42	7	7=100
b.	News anchors delivering the news in a more friendly and informal way	76	16	4	4=100
c.	Hosts of cable news shows having strong opinions about politics	50	38	6	6=100

And finally,

Q.13 Do you happen to know what country's team won the World Cup soccer tournament this year? [IF YES, PROBE: Which team?]

		<u>Early Aug 1998¹⁰</u>
31	Brazil/Brazilian team (<i>correct</i>)	38
14	Other/Incorrect	12
<u>55</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>50</u>
100		100

¹⁰ In Early August 1998, the correct answer was France.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
2002 BELIEVABILITY SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
May 6 - 16, 2002
N=1002

ASK ALL:

Q.9 Now, I'm going to read a list. Please rate how much you think you can BELIEVE each organization I name on a scale of 4 to 1. On this four point scale, "4" means you can believe all or most of what the organization says. "1" means you believe almost nothing of what they say. How would you rate the believability of **(READ ITEM. ROTATE LIST)** on this scale of 4 to 1? **(INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE")**

	Believe 4	3	2	Cannot Believe 1	Never Heard of	Can't Rate
a. USA Today	15	36	19	6	1	23=100
May, 2000	17	31	20	7	2	23=100
May, 1998	18	35	21	5	2	19=100
April, 1996	20	34	20	9	3	14=100
February, 1993	20	36	21	7	1	15=100
August, 1989	21	32	18	5	6	18=100
June, 1985	13	26	13	2	4	42=100
b. ABC News	22	43	19	6	*	10=100
May, 2000	26	36	20	6	*	12=100
May, 1998	28	43	18	4	*	7=100
April, 1996	30	44	17	5	*	4=100
February, 1993	34	42	17	4	*	3=100
August, 1989	30	46	14	3	1	7=100
June, 1985	32	51	11	1	*	5=100
c. The Wall Street Journal	22	29	11	4	1	33=100
May, 2000	27	24	9	6	4	30=100
May, 1998	30	30	9	4	2	25=100
April, 1996	28	29	13	7	3	20=100
February, 1993	30	32	14	6	2	16=100
August, 1989	30	26	9	3	6	26=100
June, 1985	25	23	6	2	1	43=100
d. The daily newspaper you are most familiar with	20	39	25	9	0	7=100
May, 2000	23	38	24	8	*	7=100
May, 1998	27	36	24	7	*	6=100
April, 1996	24	37	26	8	*	5=100
February, 1993	22	41	25	8	*	4=100
August, 1989	26	41	24	7	*	2=100
June, 1985	28	52	13	2	*	5=100
e. The Associated Press	14	35	22	7	4	18=100
May, 2000	16	32	22	7	5	18=100
May, 1998	15	36	24	6	4	15=100
April, 1996	14	40	22	9	3	12=100
February, 1993	16	39	23	7	3	12=100
August, 1989	21	43	18	4	6	9=100
June, 1985	21	40	11	2	2	24=100

Q.9 CONTINUED ...

	Believe			Cannot Believe	Never Heard of	Can't Rate
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	
f. CNN	32	34	15	6	1	12=100
May, 2000	33	32	14	5	1	15=100
May, 1998	37	35	11	4	1	12=100
April, 1996	34	37	14	4	1	10=100
February, 1993	41	35	10	4	2	8=100
August, 1989	33	31	11	2	8	16=100
June, 1985	20	24	7	1	10	38=100
g. NBC News	23	43	19	6	*	9=100
May, 2000	26	37	21	7	*	9=100
May, 1998	28	42	20	4	*	6=100
April, 1996	28	46	18	5	*	3=100
February, 1993	31	42	18	6	*	3=100
August, 1989	32	47	14	2	*	5=100
June, 1985	31	51	12	1	*	5=100
h. CBS News	23	41	19	6	*	11=100
May, 2000	26	37	20	7	*	10=100
May, 1998	26	43	21	4	*	6=100
April, 1996	30	42	17	6	*	5=100
February, 1993	31	44	16	5	*	4=100
August, 1989	29	45	16	4	1	5=100
June, 1985	33	51	11	1	*	4=100
i. C-SPAN	18	26	12	5	8	31=100
May, 2000	21	24	11	6	10	28=100
May, 1998	20	26	12	4	12	26=100
April, 1996	19	24	12	9	10	26=100
j. Time Magazine	18	35	16	7	1	23=100
May, 2000	22	30	16	6	2	24=100
May, 1998	21	38	17	4	1	19=100
June, 1985	27	38	10	2	*	23=100
k. People Magazine	7	20	31	15	1	26=100
May, 2000	8	18	30	20	2	22=100
May, 1998	8	21	34	16	1	20=100
June, 1985	8	22	28	12	1	29=100
l. Newsweek	14	37	16	5	2	26=100
May, 2000	17	32	17	7	2	25=100
May, 1998	19	40	16	5	1	19=100
June, 1985	23	40	9	2	*	26=100
m. The National Enquirer	3	5	11	60	1	20=100
May, 2000	3	3	8	68	2	16=100
May, 1998	3	4	11	69	1	12=100
June, 1985	4	7	11	54	1	23=100
n. The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer	13	20	13	5	18	31=100
May, 2000	13	18	13	8	18	30=100
May, 1998	15	21	12	5	19	28=100
June, 1985 ¹¹	18	17	6	2	29	28=100

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In 1985 this item was worded "The MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour."

Q.9 CONTINUED ...

	Believe			Cannot Believe	Never Heard	Can't Rate
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>of</u>	<u>Rate</u>
o. Your local TV news	26	39	22	7	*	6=100
May, 2000	30	39	19	6	*	6=100
May, 1998	32	38	19	6	*	4=100
June, 1985	34	47	13	1	*	5=100
p. Dateline NBC	23	35	20	5	1	16=100
May, 2000	26	31	19	6	2	16=100
May, 1998	23	39	19	5	2	13=100
q. 60 Minutes	30	39	15	5	*	11=100
May, 2000	31	37	17	7	*	8=100
May, 1998	32	37	20	4	*	7=100
r. MSNBC	21	34	17	5	4	19=100
May, 2000	19	29	15	6	8	23=100
s. National Public Radio	16	28	20	7	6	23=100
May, 2000	16	21	18	8	13	24=100
May, 1998	13	34	17	7	7	22=100
t. 20/20	26	35	18	6	1	14=100
u. The Fox News CABLE Channel	19	34	20	6	2	19=100
May, 2000	19	28	19	9	3	22=100
v. U.S. News & World Report	18	33	14	5	4	26=100

Q.10 Now I am going to read another list. Please rate how much you think you can BELIEVE each person I name on a scale of 4 to 1. Again, on this four point scale, "4" means you can believe all or most of what the person says. "1" means you believe almost nothing of what they say. How would you rate the believability of (**READ ITEM. ROTATE LIST**) on this scale of 4 to 1?

	Believe			Cannot Believe	Never Heard	Can't Rate
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>of</u>	<u>Rate</u>
a. Aaron Brown	5	16	14	4	44	17=100
b. Peter Jennings	32	38	15	6	3	6=100
May, 1998	35	40	14	4	1	6=100
April, 1996	27	37	18	8	2	8=100
February, 1993	34	40	15	4	2	5=100
August, 1989	35	39	11	3	5	7=100
June, 1985	33	41	8	1	8	9=100
c. Dan Rather	34	37	14	7	3	5=100
May, 1998	34	40	17	4	1	4=100
April, 1996	29	39	18	8	1	5=100
February, 1993	36	40	14	6	1	3=100
August, 1989	36	40	13	6	1	4=100
June, 1985	40	41	8	2	4	5=100
d. Tom Brokaw	35	37	14	4	4	6=100
May, 1998	33	42	13	3	3	6=100
April, 1996	29	37	18	7	2	7=100
February, 1993	32	41	16	5	2	4=100
August, 1989	32	42	14	3	3	6=100
June, 1985	29	40	8	1	10	12=100

Q.10 CONTINUED ...

	Believe			Cannot Believe	Never Heard	Can't Rate
	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>of</u>	<u>Rate</u>
e. Ted Koppel	25	38	16	5	6	10=100
May, 1998	27	39	17	4	4	9=100
February, 1993	30	39	15	5	4	7=100
August, 1989	32	36	14	4	6	8=100
June, 1985	30	34	8	1	14	13=100
f. Jim Lehrer	14	24	15	4	23	20=100
May, 1998	17	23	14	4	20	22=100
g. Brit Hume	7	20	16	4	35	18=100
h. Brian Williams	10	24	14	4	32	16=100
i. Diane Sawyer	27	40	16	6	5	6=100
August, 1989	24	38	16	4	9	9=100
June, 1985	17	31	11	1	24	16=100
j. Katie Couric	18	33	17	7	15	10=100
May, 1998	18	27	18	5	16	16=100
k. Bill O'Reilly	13	20	17	8	26	16=100
l. Larry King	15	26	29	14	5	11=100
April, 1996	9	21	28	21	4	17=100
m. Geraldo Rivera	7	18	31	32	4	8=100
May, 1998	8	12	33	36	3	8=100
February, 1993	8	14	31	39	2	6=100
August, 1989	9	12	27	37	7	8=100
June, 1985	18	25	12	4	25	16=100
n. Tim Russert	11	21	15	4	33	16=00

Q.11 Next, please rate the believability of the following people, using this same scale of 4 to 1. **(READ AND ROTATE, OBSERVE FORM SPLITS)**

		Believe			Cannot Believe	Never Heard of	Can't Rate
		$\frac{4}{30}$	$\frac{3}{36}$	$\frac{2}{20}$	$\frac{1}{13}$	*	$\frac{1}{100}$
a.	George W. Bush						
[FORM 1 N=485; FORM 2 N=517]:							
b.F1	Dick Cheney	17	37	26	11	4	5=100
c.F2	Bill Clinton	12	19	22	44	*	3=100
	May, 1998	17	28	31	23	0	1=100
	April, 1996	14	31	25	28	*	2=100
	February, 1993	18	35	25	19	*	3=100
d.F1	Al Gore	12	28	30	26	*	4=100
	May, 1998	14	33	29	18	1	5=100
e.F2	Colin Powell	37	36	16	5	2	4=100
	May, 1998	36	33	15	3	6	7=100
	April, 1996	28	36	19	9	2	6=100
	February, 1993	24	31	18	6	13	8=100
f.F1	Donald Rumsfeld	12	31	23	9	16	9=100
g.F2	Tom Daschle	6	20	23	14	21	16=100
h.F1	Alan Greenspan	17	36	22	5	11	9=100
i.F2	Oprah Winfrey	27	28	24	13	*	8=100
	May, 1998	26	38	25	8	*	3=100