



**THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**For The People & The Press**

***NEWS Release***  
*1150 18<sup>th</sup> Street, N.W., Suite 975*  
*Washington, D.C. 20036*  
*Tel (202) 293-3126*  
*Fax (202) 293-2569*

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2004, 4:00 P.M.

**Bush Personal Image Tumbles**  
**DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY CAMPAIGN IMPRESSES VOTERS**

**Also Inside ...**

- Deficits Hit Home, War Blamed
- Dean's Fault, Not the Media's
- High Interest in Missing Iraqi WMDs
- Low Interest in Bush Guard Controversy
- Texas and Mass. – Political Hot-Buttons

*FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:*

Andrew Kohut, Director  
Carroll Doherty, Editor  
Scott Keeter, Associate Director  
Michael Dimock, Research Director  
Elizabeth Mueller Gross, Special Projects Director  
Nilanthi Samaranayake, Peyton Craighill and Nicole Speulda, Project Directors  
Jason Owens, Research Assistant  
Kate DeLuca, Staff Assistant  
Pew Research Center for The People & The Press  
202/293-3126  
<http://www.people-press.org>

## **Bush Personal Image Tumbles**

### **DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY CAMPAIGN IMPRESSES VOTERS**

So far, the presidential primary campaign has been very good for the Democratic Party. Public interest in the race has been relatively high. Nearly half of Americans (45%) have a positive overall impression of the Democratic field, up from 31% just a month ago. And while a slim majority of the public continues to believe that President Bush will win the general election, there also has been a sharp rise in the percentage who feel a Democratic candidate will prevail in November – from 21% in January to 36% in the current survey.

Democrats themselves have become much more engaged, and confident, since the start of their party’s primary campaign, but the shift has been notable among independents as well. In January, 47% of Democrats and just 27% of independents gave positive ratings to the Party’s field. Currently, 61% of Democrats and 44% of independents express a positive opinion of the Democratic candidates. And significantly more Democrats and independents predict Democratic victory than did so in January.

At a time when President Bush’s approval ratings and personal image are in sharp decline, the leading Democratic presidential candidates have made a positive impression on the public. Two-thirds (67%) of those familiar enough with Sen. John Kerry to rate him have a favorable view of him; Sen John Edwards’ favorable rating is nearly as high (63%), though fewer people are familiar with him than they are with Kerry.

Bush’s personal image, by contrast, is at the low point of his presidency. His overall favorability rating has tumbled from 72% last April, shortly after the fall of Baghdad, to 53% in the current survey. Moreover, when asked for a one-word description of Bush, equal percentages now give negative and positive responses, which marks a dramatic shift since last May when positive descriptions outnumbered negative ones by roughly two-to-one (52%-27%). The most frequently used negative word to describe Bush is “liar,” which did not come up in the May 2003 survey. The

	<i>Total</i>		<i>Among Democrats</i>	
	Jan	Feb	Jan	Feb
<i>The Democratic field of candidates</i>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2004</u>
	%	%	%	%
Excellent/good	31	45	47	61
Fair/poor	57	49	44	35
Don’t know	<u>12</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Who will win in November?*</i>				
George W. Bush	61	51	38	25
A Democrat	21	36	39	61
Don’t know	<u>18</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>14</u>
	100	100	100	100

\* Based on Registered Voters

president's job approval also stands at an all-time low. Just 48% approve of his performance as president, the first time in his presidency his rating has fallen below 50%.

In turn, the latest nationwide survey of 1,500 Americans by the Pew Research Center, conducted Feb. 11-16, finds Kerry running even with Bush in a general election match-up among registered voters (47%-47%). However, Kerry's support is less of an endorsement of his candidacy than a reflection of opposition to Bush. Fully twice as many Kerry supporters characterize their choice as a vote *against* Bush rather than a vote *for* Kerry (30% vs. 15%). By comparison, Bush supporters are much more affirmative in their feelings about the president – 39% characterize their choice as a vote for Bush, while just 6% see it as a vote against Kerry.

<b>Bush Image Worsens</b>			
		Apr <u>2003</u>	Feb <u>2004</u>
<i>Impression of George W. Bush</i>	%	%	
Favorable	72	53	
Unfavorable	25	44	
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	
	100	100	
		May <u>2003</u>	Feb <u>2004</u>
<i>One-word description</i>	%	%	
Positive	52	36	
<i>*Honest, leader, strong</i>			
Negative	27	36	
<i>*Liar, arrogant, stupid</i>			
Neutral	9	13	
<i>*Fair, politician, conservative</i>			
No answer/DK	<u>12</u>	<u>15</u>	
	100	100	
*Top three words in each category			

Previous incumbent presidents, Bill Clinton and George Bush Sr., also drew more positive than negative support at this point in the election cycle, but supporters of Bush are significantly more likely to cast their choice in positive terms. In that regard, Kerry's situation is comparable to Clinton's in March 1992; Clinton supporters also were much more likely to see their vote as being against Bush Sr. rather than as for Clinton.

Despite the emphasis on military backgrounds in the current campaign, the public is more aware of Kerry's electoral success than his military service record. Nearly six-in-ten (59%) are able to name Kerry as the victor in the New Hampshire primary, far more than the number who in 2000 could correctly identify Al Gore and John McCain as winners in that state's Party primaries. In fact, Kerry's victory was on par with Pat Buchanan's surprise win in New Hampshire in 1996 in terms of public awareness.

In contrast, only about four-in-ten Americans (41%) could correctly identify Kerry as the Democratic candidate who "served in Vietnam and then protested the Vietnam War when he returned home." Republicans are as likely as Democrats to know this salient fact about Kerry's biography (42% Republican, 41% Democrat).

But the survey also found that Americans generally do not regard a presidential candidate's

military experience a very important job qualification. Just one-in-five (21%) say it is very important to learn about a candidate's military service, which is largely unchanged since just before the last presidential campaign in October 1999 (19%). By comparison, overwhelming majorities continue to attach great value on learning about a candidate's reputation for honesty (88%) and how well a candidate connects with average people (71%).

Accordingly, the poll found relatively little public interest in news stories about the controversy surrounding Bush's service in the National Guard during the Vietnam War. Just one-in-five Americans (19%) followed the flap very closely. However, nearly twice as many Americans (37%) paid very close attention to reports that no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq, making that the second-ranked news story of the month behind news on the general situation in Iraq.

Bush's slide also comes amid rising opposition to the war in Iraq. The "bounce" in support for the military operation that followed Saddam Hussein's capture in December has completely disappeared. Currently, 56% say the war was the right decision, down from 65% last month. Perceptions of progress in Iraq also have declined. About six-in-ten (63%) say things there are going very or fairly well, compared with 75% who said that shortly after Hussein's capture.

Still, majorities of Americans continue to believe that the war in Iraq has helped the war on terrorism (55%) and, more important, contributed to the long-term security of the United States (56%). Republicans overwhelmingly believe the war has helped in the struggle against terrorism and strengthened U.S. security, while Democrats, by smaller margins, disagree. Significantly, narrow majorities of independents feel the war has aided in the fight against terror and the security of the U.S. (52% each).

The survey also shows that the vast majority of Americans now are aware of the nation's growing budget deficit. Only about one-in-five (21%) point to lower government revenue as a result of the tax cuts promoted by the president as contributing a great deal to the deficit; far more blame the war in Iraq (73%) or the rising cost of homeland security (46%). And when asked what has had the *greatest* impact on the deficit, 61% cite the war compared with 8% who cite lower revenue from the tax cuts.

	<i>Added to the deficit...</i>		
	<u>A great</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>NET</u>
	<u>deal</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>%</u>
War in Iraq	73	19	92
Homeland defense	46	35	81
Impact of tax cuts	21	37	58
Domestic spending	8	31	39

More Democrats than Republicans say the tax cuts have contributed to the deficit, but even among Democrats the war in Iraq is a much bigger factor behind the nation's fiscal imbalance. Two-thirds of Democrats (66%) say the cost of the war has had the greatest effect on the deficit; just 13% say that about the tax cuts.

***Democrats Energized, Independents Swayed***

Americans continue to have mixed views about the effectiveness of the primary process as the best means of selecting nominees, but it is clear that the 2004 primaries have engaged and energized voters, particularly Democrats and independents. Perceptions of the quality of the Democratic field of candidates, as well as the outlook for the party in November, have shifted notably from a month ago, and public attention to the campaign has risen appreciably.

While Republicans remain steadfast in their support for the president, the Democratic primaries have unified Democrats as they approach the general election, and swayed many political independents. In early January, Bush led Kerry by 52%-41% in a hypothetical match-up among registered voters. Today, voters are divided (47%-47%).

This reflects a significantly more unified Democratic Party (Democratic support for Kerry rose from 77% in January to 86% today in a match-up vs. Bush). It also represents a sizable shift in the views of independents, who favored Bush over Kerry a month ago (by a 52% to 37% margin), and Kerry over Bush today (by a 51% to 41% margin).

	<i>Democrats</i>		<i>Independents</i>		<i>Republicans</i>	
	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>
<i>The Democratic field of candidates*</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent/good	47	61	27	44	22	33
Fair/poor	44	35	59	50	69	62
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Who will win in November?***</i>						
George W. Bush	38	25	53	43	86	82
A Democrat	39	61	22	40	6	10
Don't know	<u>23</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Trial heat***</i>						
George W. Bush	17	10	52	41	92	91
John Kerry	77	86	37	51	7	6
Don't know	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100

\* Based on total, trend from Jan 6-11, 2004  
 \*\* Based on registered voters, trend from Jan 6-11, 2004.  
 \*\*\* Based on registered voters, trend from Dec 19, 2003-Jan 4, 2004

The primaries have also helped the Democratic Party in general. While favorable ratings of the Democratic Party have risen only slightly since last June (from 54% to 58%), this increase has come entirely among independents. Last June, political independents rated the Democratic and Republican Parties about equally (55% favorable for the former, 54% for the latter). Today, 65%

of independents rate the Democratic Party favorably, compared with 50% who give the Republican Party a positive rating.

On the other hand, positive views of Democratic leaders in Congress have declined over the past two years. Just 38% approve of their job performance, while 42% disapprove. That is significantly worse than two years ago; in June 2002, a 47% plurality approved of the job Democratic congressional leaders were doing, while 36% disapproved.

Ratings for Republican congressional leaders also have declined. In January 2003, 48% expressed a positive view of the job performance of Republican leaders, while 37% disapproved. Today, opinion is split (41% positive, 42% negative).

	June 2001	June 2002	Jan 2003	Feb 2004
<i>Republican</i>	%	%	%	%
Approve	40	50	48	41
Disapprove	40	34	37	42
Don't know	<u>20</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>17</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Democratic</i>				
Approve	50	47	--	38
Disapprove	28	36	--	42
Don't know	<u>22</u>	<u>17</u>	--	<u>20</u>
	100	100		100

***Campaign Interest and Awareness***

The percent of Americans following news about the Democratic primary race very closely rose from 16% a month ago to 29% today. This rise in interest has occurred among Democrats (from 24% to 42%), independents (from 13% to 26%) and even Republicans (from 12% to 22%).

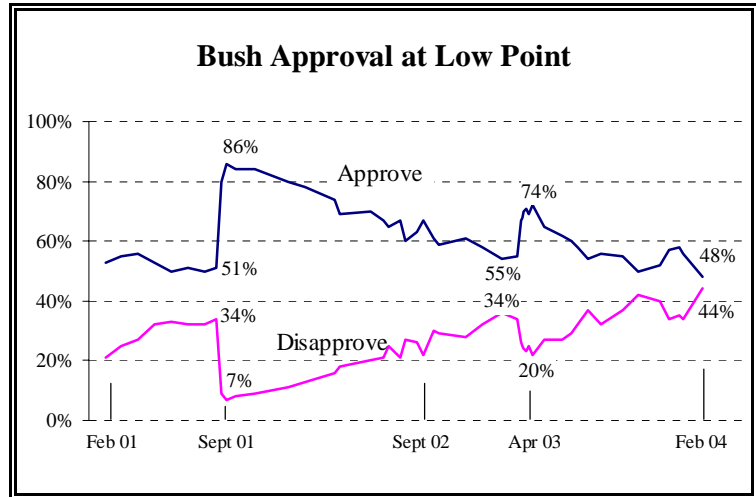
This is consistent with the pattern in previous elections. In each of the past three election cycles, public interest in the campaign has spiked following early results in Iowa, New Hampshire, and other primary states.

	Jan	Feb/ Mar	Change
2004	16	29	+13
2000	19	26	+7
1996	10	26	+16
1992	11	35	+24

### ***Bush's Rough Month***

Bush's approval rating now stands at 48%, with 44% disapproving. Prior to this point, his lowest rating had been 50%, in August 2001 just before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and again in November 2003, just before the capture of Saddam Hussein.

His current approval rating represents an eight-point drop since mid-January. The decline has come across the board demographically, with most groups in the population expressing less approval now than a month ago. Larger than average declines were seen among white mainline Protestants (12 points) and white Catholics (11 points), among Democrats (11 points), and among residents of rural areas (16 points).



Bush's personal ratings have also declined. In early January, Gallup found 65% viewing the president favorably and only 35% with an unfavorable opinion. Currently, 53% have a positive opinion of the president, with 44% expressing a negative opinion. A quarter of Americans have a *very* unfavorable opinion of the president, which is more than double the percentage who had a strongly negative view of Bush last April (11%).

Among Democrats, 51% have a *very* unfavorable opinion (and another 27% are somewhat unfavorable). By contrast, 48% of Republicans have a very favorable opinion (with 46% somewhat favorable). The level of polarization in the president's favorability exceeds that for President Clinton in September 1998, during the impeachment battle. Clinton was viewed very unfavorably by 46% of Republicans, and very favorably by 32% of Democrats.

***Bush ‘One-Worders’ More Negative***

When asked for a one-word impression of George W. Bush, respondents divided evenly between those who gave a positive word and those who gave a negative word (36% each), while 13% offered a neutral description, and 15% said they could not come up with a word. Four years ago, at the conclusion of the bitter nominating fight between Bush and Senator John McCain, one-word descriptions of Bush were similarly divided. But in May 2003, favorable one-word descriptions of the president outnumbered unfavorable words by a margin of nearly two to one (52% to 27%).

One-word descriptions provided by people who approve of the president’s job performance tend to stress Bush’s honesty, leadership qualities, and strength – a mix very similar to that seen in May 2003. Several people mentioned his Christian faith and his patriotism. Other words mentioned by several people included confident, determined, dedicated, character, honorable, moral, reliable, sincere and gutsy.

Negative traits commonly attributed to Bush include dishonesty, arrogance, incompetence, and lack of knowledge. Lying and dishonesty, in particular, are more commonly mentioned now than last May.

***Images of Kerry and Edwards Generally Positive***

Public views of Democratic contenders John Kerry and John Edwards are generally positive, with favorable opinions outnumbering unfavorable opinions by margins of about two-to-one. Overall, 58% of Americans have a positive view of Kerry, with 28% negative and 14% unable to rate him. Among only those who are familiar enough with Kerry to rate him, two-thirds feel favorably, one-third unfavorably.

Edwards still is not familiar to a sizable minority of Americans – 34% have not heard of him or could not rate him. Of those familiar with the North Carolina senator, 63% view him favorably, 37% unfavorably.

<b>One-Word Descriptions of President Bush</b>			
<i>Bush Approvers</i>			
<u>May 2003*</u>		<u>February 2004</u>	
28	Honest	25	Honest
20	Good	20	Fair
16	Leader	20	Leader
12	Confident	14	Strong
12	Courageous	13	Good
12	Great	13	Excellent
11	Christian	12	Christian
11	Determined	12	Integrity
11	Integrity	7	Character
		7	Patriotic
<i>Bush Disapprovers</i>			
15	Arrogant	21	Liar
8	Cowboy	16	Arrogant
7	Idiot	9	Incompetent
4	Incompetent	8	Dishonest
		8	Stupid
		7	Ass
		7	Idiot

\* The number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are NOT percentages.



Although Edwards has won only one primary thus far, his strong performance in several states – most recently, in the Wisconsin primary – has been fueled in part by support from independents and even Republicans. Nationally, Edwards has a more positive image than Kerry among Republicans (52% vs. 36%).

But Kerry remains more popular among Democrats *and* independents than Edwards, garnering nearly unanimous favorable opinion among Democrats who can rate him (91%) and 71% among independents who express an opinion. By contrast, Edwards gets a 78% favorable rating among Democrats who can rate, and 62% among independents.

<b>Republicans Like Edwards</b>				
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
<i>Kerry</i>	%	%	%	%
Favorable	67	36	91	71
Unfavorable	<u>33</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>29</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Edwards</i>				
Favorable	63	52	78	62
Unfavorable	<u>37</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>38</u>
	100	100	100	100

\*Based on those who could rate.

***One-Word Descriptions of Kerry***

When asked for a single word that comes to mind about John Kerry, most voters (78%) are able to volunteer a description, while just 22% cannot. This compares favorably with awareness of Al Gore in March 2000, near the end of the last primary season, when 21% did not volunteer a word to characterize Gore. At that point, however, Gore had served as vice president for more than seven years. Just as many (21%) had nothing to say about George W. Bush in March 2000.

<b>Impressions of Kerry</b>		Feb
<b>Mostly Positive</b>		<u>2004</u>
<i>One-word description</i>	%	%
Positive	38	
<i>Honest, good, qualified</i>		
Negative	19	
<i>Phony, arrogant, liar</i>		
Neutral	21	
<i>Democrat, liberal, fair</i>		
No answer/DK	<u>22</u>	
	100	

Overall, a 38% plurality mentioned a positive word to describe Kerry – honest, good, qualified, intelligent and knowledgeable are among the most common favorable words. In March 2000, only 26% offered a positive word about Gore. In the current poll, 19% volunteer a negative word about Kerry, most frequently that he is phony, arrogant, or a liar.

***Evaluating the Primary Process***

Despite the favorable impact the primaries have had on Democrats and independents, the public’s overall evaluation of the primary process remains mixed. Just four-in-ten Americans feel that the presidential primaries so far have been a good way of determining the best qualified nominees, while slightly more

<b>Primaries a Good Way of Picking Nominees?</b>			
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
1980*	40	48	12=100
1988	56	31	16=100
1992	31	59	10=100
1996	35	58	7=100
2000	41	50	9=100
2004	40	46	14=100

\*1980 figures from Newsweek. All trends from March of election year except 1988 (May).

(46%) think they have not been. This evaluation of the process in general is comparable to how the public viewed the 2000, 1996 and 1980 primaries, but significantly better than public ratings of the primaries in 1992, when Clinton scandals dominated the news. In recent years, only the 1988 primaries were viewed positively by a majority of Americans.

Negative campaigning and the amount of money in the political process are the enduring concerns of Americans as they think about the election process more generally. Roughly six-in-ten say each of these practices bother them very much (61%, 59%). That is almost identical to measures taken four and eight years ago during the early stages of the previous two presidential campaigns. Somewhat fewer people (44%) say they are very bothered by what politicians say to get elected, and smaller minorities express a great deal of concern about political advertising on television (29%) or the way the news covers the campaigns (13%).

	<u>1996</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2004</u>
<i>Very bothered by...</i>	%	%	%
Negative campaigning	60	57	61
Amount of money	56	59	59
Political rhetoric	53	46	44
Political advertising	32	25	29
News coverage	15	13	13

***Coverage OK, But Media Seen as Too Influential***

As in past elections, most Americans are satisfied with the overall amount and quality of media coverage of the primaries. But Americans express a growing concern about the amount of influence the press has on which candidates become the presidential nominees. In 1988, 47% said the media had too much influence on the outcome of the primaries, a figure which rose to 58% in 1992, when many were critical of the way the press handled scandals related to Arkansas governor Bill Clinton. Today, 63% say the press has too much influence on who wins in the primaries.

But relatively few criticize the press for paying too little (8%) or too much (28%) attention to the primary races, while 61% feel the amount of coverage is about right. And most say the coverage has been excellent (11%) or good (43%). Republicans and Democrats give equally favorable ratings to the

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2004</u>
<i>Quality of press coverage</i>	%	%	%	%	%
<b>Excellent/Good</b>	--	<b>56</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>54</b>
Fair/Poor	--	39	35	32	42
Don't know	--	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
		100	100	100	100
<i>Amount of press coverage</i>					
<b>Right amount</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>61</b>
Too much	24	19	29	22	28
Too little	7	15	10	10	8
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Media influence on outcome</i>					
<b>Too much</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>58</b>	--	--	<b>63</b>
Too little	4	5	--	--	5
Right amount	41	33	--	--	28
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>4</u>	--	--	<u>4</u>
	100	100			100

quality of the coverage, though Republicans are twice as likely as Democrats to think the amount of attention paid to the process has been excessive (34% vs. 18% say there has been “too much” coverage).

***Press Too Tough on Bush?***

While the predominant view is that the press has been fair to Kerry and Bush over the past few months, a significant minority – mostly Republicans – believe that news organizations have been too tough on the president over the past two months.

Two-thirds of Americans (67%) say the press has been fair in its treatment of Kerry, almost exactly the same evaluation of press treatment of both Gore and Bush at roughly the same point in their campaigns four years ago. Among the minority who are critical of the way the press has covered Kerry, far more say journalists have been too easy on him (18%) than too tough (5%). Even among Kerry supporters, very few (7%) see the press as overly critical of their candidate.

Perceptions of how the press has treated the president are somewhat different. While about half (49%) say the press has been fair in its coverage of Bush over the past few months, 27% say coverage has been too tough. This is the prevailing view among Republicans and Bush supporters, roughly half of whom say media coverage has been too critical recently. Democrats, not surprisingly, continue to feel that press coverage of the president has been either fair (57%) or too easy on him (30%).

***Assessing Dean’s Downfall***

The public generally takes a skeptical view of news organizations, but Americans do not blame the media for the problems that former Vermont Gov. Howard Dean encountered in his race for the nomination.

About half (49%) say the press has been fair in its treatment of Dean, though among press critics, more say coverage of Dean has been too tough (24%) than say it has been too easy (11%). But when asked directly, 57% say Dean’s own actions and views were more responsible for his failing campaign; just 22% blamed the way the press has covered him. This is the majority view across party lines.

Only among the minority who say that at some

<b>Who’s to Blame for Howard Dean’s Problems?</b>			
	Howard Dean	News Media	Both/ DK
	%	%	%
Total	57	22	21=100
Republican	63	17	20=100
Democrat	53	22	25=100
Independent	59	25	16=100
Dean supporter*	45	41	14=100
Not	68	14	18=100

\* Favored Dean “at any point in the campaign”.

point in the presidential campaign they wanted Dean to win the Democratic nomination (23% of the public ) does a significant number blame the press for Dean’s downfall. But even among current and former supporters, as many blame Dean for his campaign’s problems (45%) as the press (41%).

***Budget Deficit: Awareness, Little Political Impact***

While it is still early in the 2004 election cycle, Democratic candidates have largely failed to convince Americans that the growing budget deficit was caused by the president’s tax cuts. In the public’s eye, the war in Iraq is the overwhelming cause of the current budget problems, and secondarily the costs of homeland defense.

Americans are aware of the deficit problem. Overall, 82% of Americans correctly say that the federal government is currently spending more money than it is taking in, and 79% know that the current budget deficit is larger than it was four years ago. This is starkly different from four years ago when, despite a budget surplus, just as many believed the government was running a deficit as said it was in surplus. The current public perceptions are more in line with the actual budgetary situation than then, and are virtually identical to the public’s awareness of the budget situation in 1989, when deficits also loomed large. Democrats, Republicans and independents are all equally aware of the current budget situation.

	Feb 1989	Feb 2000	Feb 2004
<i>Perception of budget</i>	%	%	%
Deficit	<b>81</b>	34	<b>82</b>
Surplus	6	<b>29</b>	4
Balanced	3	1	*
Don’t know	<u>10</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>14</u>
	100	100	100

\* Correct answer in bold.

By an overwhelming margin, the public attributes the deficit primarily to the war in Iraq. Fully 73% say Iraq has added a great deal to the deficit, compared with 46% who cite the costs of homeland defense, 21% who cite lower revenue as a result of recent tax cuts, and just 8% who cite increased domestic spending.

Nearly all (92%) say the war in Iraq has had at least some impact on the deficit. By comparison, 58% see the tax cuts as even somewhat related to the deficit, and only a minority (39%) makes any connection between the deficit and domestic spending. Asked to identify which of these factors has had the single *greatest* effect on the federal budget deficit, 61% cite Iraq. Fewer than one-in-ten choose any of the other three options.

Despite their disagreements over the war and tax cuts, Republicans and Democrats largely agree on the causes of the current budget situation. Two-thirds of Republicans and 79% of Democrats say the war in Iraq has contributed a great deal to the deficit. And majorities in both

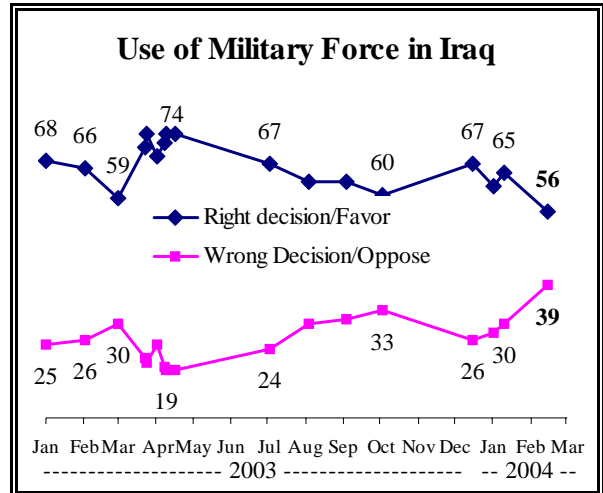
parties cite the war as the single biggest cause of the budget shortfall.

Democrats are roughly three times more likely than Republicans (32% vs. 11%) to say that decreased revenue as a result of recent tax cuts had a great deal of impact on the deficit. But even among the most liberal Democrats – and among those who plan to vote against Bush in November – the tax cuts are mentioned much less often than Iraq or homeland defense as the major budget busters. Most Democrats (62%) do say the tax cuts have had at least some impact on the size of the deficit, though 30% think it has not. Among Republicans, 53% say the tax cuts have had at least some effect on the deficit, compared with 40% who believe they have had little or no effect on the budget situation.

<i>Believe added "a great deal" to deficit</i>	----Party----		
	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
War in Iraq	67	79	74
Homeland defense	48	44	47
Impact of tax cuts	11	32	19
Domestic spending	10	7	7

### War Support Slips

Public backing of the decision to use military force in Iraq has dipped to its lowest point since the war began. Currently, 56% say taking military action in Iraq was the right decision, down from 65% a month ago, and a previous low of 60% last October. The proportion saying it was the “wrong decision” to take military action has risen to 39% from 30% a month ago.



Most Americans remain at least fairly optimistic about how well the U.S. military effort in Iraq is going. After a boost of confidence following the capture of Saddam Hussein in December, evaluations of the state of affairs have returned to roughly where they were in the summer and fall of last year. Currently, 17% say things are going very well in Iraq, 46% see things going fairly well, and a third say the effort is going not too well (23%) or not at all well (11%).



Whether recent declines in support for the

war in Iraq reflect recent reports about the absence of weapons of mass destruction or just the fading memory of Saddam's capture is difficult to know, but there is no doubt that the WMD story is of far greater interest to war opponents than war supporters. Regardless of their position on the war, most Americans have been following recent reports that no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq very (37%) or fairly (39%) closely. While half of war opponents have followed this *very* closely – making it the single biggest news story of the month for war opponents – only three-in-ten war supporters say it has been a major focus of their attention.

Despite concerns about the justifications for war, most Americans continue to believe that the war in Iraq has made America and the world a safer place. By a 55% to 32% margin, more say the war in Iraq has helped, not hurt, the war on terrorism. And on a separate form of the survey respondents were asked if the war has or has not contributed to the long-term security of the United States. By a 56% to 38% margin most say it has.

<i>Following WMD news...</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>War was...</i>	
		<i>Right decision</i>	<i>Wrong decision</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Very closely	37	30	50
Fairly closely	39	44	30
Not closely	23	24	20
Don't know	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
	100	100	100

Not surprisingly, voters who plan to support Bush in November are overwhelmingly of the view that Iraq has made the nation safer, while those who support Kerry disagree. But among those who say they have not made up their minds yet (about 10% of voters), opinion on this issue is evenly divided, with just as many saying the war in Iraq has made America and the world safer as saying it has not.

### ***Partisans Look at Mass., Texas***

Attitudes toward the home states of the likely presidential candidates reflect a good deal of partisanship. Texas is almost universally favored by Republicans (94%), but Democrats and many independents are far less positive (62% of Democrats, 70% of independents). The 32-point partisan gap in the favorable rating for Texas is the largest for any state tested.

Massachusetts also evokes a highly partisan reaction, with 85% of Democrats and just 64% of Republicans expressing a positive opinion of the Bay State. There is a comparable ideological division in the views of both Texas and Massachusetts, with conservatives showing greater fondness for the former and liberals holding more favorable opinions of Massachusetts.

	<i>R-D</i>			<i>Diff</i>
	<i>Rep</i>	<i>Dem</i>	<i>Ind</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	
Texas	94	62	70	+32
Georgia	91	78	80	+13
Florida	84	71	77	+13
New York	77	74	80	+3
Penna.	88	86	86	+2
Arizona	88	87	90	+1
Michigan	82	81	84	+1
Illinois	81	89	86	-8
California	60	78	71	-18
Mass.	64	85	76	-21

\*Based on those who could rate.

The partisan divide in views of California is almost as large as the gap for Massachusetts (with Democrats and liberals more favorable). Georgia and Florida get better ratings from Republicans, while Illinois is viewed somewhat more favorably by Democrats. There is virtually no partisan split in opinions of other states tested: New York, Pennsylvania, Arizona and Michigan.

***Iraq Leads News Interest***

News of the *situation in Iraq* continues to be the top story in terms of public interest. That has been the case in every monthly news interest index since October 2002, when reports on the sniper shootings near Washington, D.C. led the news interest index.

A second Iraq-related story – *reports that no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq* – also drew broad interest (37% very closely). Nearly half of Democrats (48%) say they tracked this story very closely, compared with 37% of independents and 29% of Republicans.

<b>Iraq, Weapons Controversy Top News Stories</b>	
	Following <u>very closely</u>
<i>News stories...</i>	%
Situation in Iraq	47
No weapons found in Iraq	37
Democratic primary race	29
Gay marriage debate	26
Super Bowl halftime show	22
Bush's National Guard service	19
Ricin in Senate office	12

Public interest in news of the *race for the Democratic presidential nomination* has increased dramatically – from 16% following very closely in January to 29% in the current survey. As expected, there also are sizable political differences in attention to the primary contest: 42% of Democrats followed this story very closely, compared with 26% of independents and 22% of Republicans.

Roughly a quarter of Americans (26%) say they paid very close attention to the *debate about allowing gays and lesbians to marry*. While interest in this story has increased since last summer, it still lags far behind public attention to the controversy over President Clinton's efforts to end the ban on gays in the military, which erupted shortly after he took office in 1993.

Just 22% of Americans say they paid very close attention to the *controversy over Janet Jackson's performance during the Super Bowl halftime show*, which drew extensive news coverage. African-Americans were far more likely than whites to track this controversy very closely (36% vs. 21%).

Another widely-covered story – *questions about President Bush’s service in the National Guard during the Vietnam War* – also attracted close attention from about one-in-five Americans (19%). Significantly, interest in this story was nearly the same among Republicans as among Democrats (19%, 21%). But 37% of male veterans tracked this story very closely. There was very little public interest in news that *the poison Ricin was found in a Senate office building*. Only about one-in-ten Americans (12%) followed this news very closely.

<b>News Interest in Homosexual Stories</b>	
<i>Percent following...</i>	<u>Very closely</u> %
Attempt to lift ban on gays in the military {02-93}	45
Decision to ease military gay ban {08-93}	44
<b>Gay marriage debate {2-04}</b>	<b>26</b>
Gay marriage debate {8-03}	19
Supreme Court ruling on gay Boy Scout leaders {07-00}	16

\*\*\*\*\*

**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 February 11-16, 2004. 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=785) or Form 2 (N=715), 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.



**PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY “VERY CLOSELY”**

	Current situation in Iraq	No WMD found in Iraq	Democratic Presidential Race	Gay Marriage Debate	Janet Jackson/ Superbowl Halftime Show	Pres. Bush’s National Guard Service	Ricin found in Senate Office Bldg.	(N)
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
<b>Total</b>	47	38	29	26	22	19	12	(1500)
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	54	37	30	23	19	22	11	(679)
Female	40	38	28	29	25	16	13	(821)
<b>Race</b>								
White	47	38	29	26	21	19	12	(1224)
Non-white	44	38	30	26	26	16	12	(259)
Black	45	38	31	27	36	14	13	(173)
Hispanic*	47	34	27	26	38	12	15	(93)
<b>Race and Sex</b>								
White Men	54	34	28	23	18	20	10	(560)
White Women	40	41	30	29	24	17	15	(664)
<b>Age</b>								
Under 30	33	23	17	19	24	7	4	(247)
30-49	45	35	27	22	17	15	10	(554)
50-64	58	45	34	31	28	25	17	(378)
65+	54	52	42	38	24	32	19	(300)
<b>Education</b>								
College Grad.	54	44	42	32	19	20	14	(471)
Some College	47	37	24	26	18	18	10	(233)
H.S. Grad or Less	43	35	25	23	26	18	12	(793)
<b>Region</b>								
East	55	37	30	26	22	20	12	(269)
Midwest	46	39	30	25	21	15	11	(374)
South	46	38	28	27	22	20	14	(565)
West	41	38	28	27	24	19	11	(292)
<b>Party ID</b>								
Republican	53	29	22	31	22	19	12	(466)
Democrat	48	48	42	28	23	21	14	(502)
Independent	41	37	26	21	21	17	11	(453)

\* 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

	-----Mid-Jan 2004-----			-----February 2004-----			Change	
	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	<u>Approve</u> %	<u>Disapprove</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	<u>in Approval</u>	<u>(N)</u>
<b>Total</b>	56	34	10=100	48	44	8=100	-8	(1500)
<b>Sex</b>								
Male	58	33	9	53	41	6	-5	(679)
Female	53	36	11	45	46	9	-8	(821)
<b>Race</b>								
White	61	30	9	54	39	7	-7	(1224)
Non-white	35	52	13	24	66	10	-11	(259)
Black	21	65	14	13	76	11	-8	(173)
Hispanic*	48	38	14	48	42	10	0	(93)
<b>Race and Sex</b>								
White Men	62	30	8	57	37	6	-5	(560)
White Women	60	30	10	51	40	9	-9	(664)
<b>Age</b>								
Under 30	51	36	13	45	48	7	-6	(247)
30-49	60	31	9	50	40	10	-10	(554)
50-64	60	32	8	52	44	4	-8	(378)
65+	46	44	10	44	47	9	-2	(300)
<b>Sex and Age</b>								
Men under 50	58	31	11	52	41	7	-6	(380)
Women under 50	56	34	10	45	45	10	-11	(421)
Men 50+	59	35	6	53	43	4	-6	(292)
Women 50+	50	39	11	45	48	7	-5	(386)
<b>Education</b>								
College Grad.	55	39	6	50	44	6	-5	(471)
Some College	58	31	11	54	35	11	-4	(233)
High School Grad.	58	31	11	46	47	7	-12	(676)
Less Than H.S.	47	41	12	42	51	7	-5	(117)
<b>Family Income</b>								
\$75,000+	62	31	7	53	43	4	-9	(339)
\$50,000-\$74,999	61	30	9	57	35	8	-4	(231)
\$30,000-\$49,999	55	34	11	55	39	6	0	(345)
\$20,000-\$29,000	50	38	12	37	54	9	-13	(192)
<\$20,000	45	43	12	36	55	9	-9	(227)
<b>Region</b>								
East	50	37	13	40	53	7	-10	(269)
Midwest	55	34	11	48	48	4	-7	(374)
South	60	32	8	54	36	10	-6	(565)
West	55	37	8	48	43	9	-7	(292)

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

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

Continued on next page...

	-----Mid-Jan 2004-----			-----February 2004-----			Change	
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>in Approval</u>	<u>(N)</u>
	%	%	%	%	%	%		
<b>Total</b>	56	34	10=100	48	44	8=100	-8	(1500)
<b>Community Size</b>								
Large City	47	45	8	41	50	9	-6	(290)
Suburb	53	36	11	50	42	8	-3	(373)
Small City/Town	55	32	13	49	44	7	-6	(547)
Rural Area	69	26	5	53	39	8	-16	(283)
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>								
Total White Protestant	68	24	8	59	34	7	-9	(740)
- Evangelical	75	17	8	71	22	7	-4	(356)
- Non-Evangelical	61	31	8	49	44	7	-12	(384)
White Catholic	62	29	10	51	43	6	-11	(255)
Secular	38	52	9	29	60	11	-9	(122)
<b>Party ID</b>								
Republican	90	7	3	87	8	5	-3	(466)
Democrat	27	64	9	16	77	7	-11	(502)
Independent	52	34	14	46	46	8	-6	(453)
<b>Party and Ideology</b>								
Conservative Republican	93	5	2	92	5	3	-1	(295)
Moderate/Lib. Republican	86	10	4	80	13	7	-6	(160)
Conservative/Mod. Dem	31	58	11	20	71	9	-11	(347)
Liberal Democrat	17	79	4	5	92	3	-12	(137)
<b>Parental Status</b>								
Parent	62	29	9	53	39	8	-9	(465)
Non-Parent	53	37	10	46	46	8	-7	(1032)
<b>Marital Status</b>								
Married	62	29	9	58	36	6	-4	(803)
Unmarried	49	40	11	38	52	10	-11	(692)
<b>Registered Voter</b>								
Yes	58	35	7	51	43	6	-7	(1149)
No	45	46	9	43	45	12	-2	(351)
<b>Use of Force in Iraq</b>								
Right Decision	76	15	9	75	18	7	-1	(836)
Wrong Decision	15	76	9	10	83	7	-5	(574)
<b>Labor Union</b>								
Union Household	49	42	9	43	55	2	-6	(177)
Non-Union Household	57	33	10	49	42	9	-8	(1319)
<b>Follow News on Pres. Bush</b>								
<b>National Guard Service</b>								
Very/Fairly Closely	--	--	--	45	51	4	--	(341)
Not too/Not at all Closely	--	--	--	51	38	11	--	(363)

## TREND IN PRESIDENTIAL HORSE RACE

(Based on Registered Voters)

	-----Early January 2004-----			-----February 2004-----			<i>Change in Bush Support</i>
	Bush/Lean	Kerry/Lean	Other/ Undecided	Bush/Lean	Kerry/Lean	Other/ Undecided	
	<u>Bush</u> %	<u>Kerry</u> %	<u>Undecided</u> %	<u>Bush</u> %	<u>Kerry</u> %	<u>Undecided</u> %	
<b>Total</b>	52	41	7=100	47	47	6=100	-5
<b>Sex</b>							
Male	59	36	5	54	41	5	-5
Female	45	46	9	41	53	6	-4
<b>Race</b>							
White	57	36	7	52	42	6	-5
Non-white	27	66	7	20	74	6	-7
Black	18	75	7	11	84	5	-7
<b>Race and Sex</b>							
White Men	63	32	5	57	39	4	-6
White Women	52	40	8	47	46	7	-5
<b>Age</b>							
Under 30	50	46	4	43	54	3	-7
30-49	54	41	5	50	44	6	-4
50-64	52	40	8	50	45	5	-2
65+	49	40	11	39	54	7	-10
<b>Sex and Age</b>							
Men under 50	59	39	2	57	38	5	-2
Women under 50	48	45	7	41	54	5	-7
Men 50+	59	33	9	50	45	5	-9
Women 50+	43	47	10	41	52	8	-2
<b>Education</b>							
College Grad.	50	43	7	49	45	6	-1
Some College	59	37	4	54	41	5	-5
High School Grad or Less	49	43	8	42	52	6	-7
<b>Family Income</b>							
\$75,000+	57	37	6	51	44	5	-6
\$50,000-\$75,000	61	33	6	54	43	3	-7
\$30,000-\$50,000	54	42	4	54	43	3	0
\$20,000-\$30,000	53	42	5	32	61	7	-21
<\$20,000	35	56	9	32	61	7	-3
<b>Region</b>							
East	46	48	6	40	55	5	-6
Midwest	51	40	9	45	51	4	-6
South	53	41	6	52	42	6	-1
West	55	38	7	47	46	7	-8

Question: Suppose the 2004 presidential election were being held TODAY, and the candidates were George W. Bush, the Republican or John Kerry, the Democrat? Who would you vote for?

*Continued on next page...*

	----- Early January 2004 -----			-----February 2004-----			<i>Change in Bush Support</i>
	Bush/Lean	Kerry/Lean	Other/ <u>Undecided</u>	Bush/Lean	Kerry/Lean	Other/ <u>Undecided</u>	
	<u>Bush</u> %	<u>Kerry</u> %	<u>Undecided</u> %	<u>Bush</u> %	<u>Kerry</u> %	<u>Undecided</u> %	
<b>Total</b>	52	41	7=100	47	47	6=100	-5
<b>Community Size</b>							
Large City	42	51	7	41	52	7	-1
Suburb	52	41	7	51	43	6	-1
Small town	54	39	7	47	48	5	-7
Rural area	58	36	6	49	46	5	-9
<b>Religious Affiliation</b>							
Total White Protestant	64	30	6	58	37	5	-6
- Evangelical	69	25	6	69	26	5	0
- Non-Evangelical	57	36	7	46	49	5	-11
White Catholic	53	38	9	51	46	3	-2
Secular	36	58	6	26	63	11	-10
<b>Party ID</b>							
Republican	92	7	1	91	6	3	-1
Democrat	17	77	6	10	86	4	-7
Independent	52	37	11	41	51	8	-11
<b>Party/Ideology</b>							
Conservative Republican	93	6	1	95	3	2	+2
Moderate/Liberal Rep.	92	6	2	84	12	4	-8
Conserv./Moderate Dem.	20	76	4	12	84	4	-8
Liberal Democrat	7	86	7	2	93	5	-5
<b>Bush Approval</b>							
Approve	83	13	4	87	10	3	+4
Disapprove	5	87	8	3	92	5	-2
<b>2000 Presidential Vote</b>							
Bush	88	9	3	84	12	4	-4
Gore	13	81	6	8	87	5	-5
<b>Ideology</b>							
Conservative	71	25	4	68	27	5	-3
Moderate	49	43	8	39	55	6	-10
Liberal	16	78	6	18	77	5	+2
<b>Use of Force in Iraq</b>							
Right Decision	74	21	5	74	22	4	0
Wrong Decision	10	83	7	7	88	5	-3
<b>Male Veteran</b>							
Veteran	--	--	--	54	44	5	--
Non-Veteran	--	--	--	54	41	5	--
<b>Labor Union</b>							
Union Household	45	46	9	38	59	3	-7
Non-Union Household	53	41	6	48	46	6	-5

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**FEBRUARY 2004 NEWS INTEREST INDEX**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**February 11 - 16, 2004**  
**N=1500**

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>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	Don't <u>know</u>		<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
February, 2004	48	44	8=100	<b>2001</b>			
Mid-January, 2004	56	34	10=100	Mid-November, 2001	84	9	7=100
Early January, 2004	58	35	7=100	Early October, 2001	84	8	8=100
<b>2003</b>				Late September, 2001	86	7	7=100
December, 2003	57	34	9=100	Mid-September, 2001	80	9	11=100
November, 2003	50	40	10=100	Early September, 2001	51	34	15=100
October, 2003	50	42	8=100	August, 2001	50	32	18=100
September, 2003	55	36	9=100	July, 2001	51	32	17=100
Mid-August, 2003	56	32	12=100	June, 2001	50	33	17=100
Early August, 2003	53	37	10=100	May, 2001	53	32	15=100
Mid-July, 2003	58	32	10=100	April, 2001	56	27	17=100
Early July, 2003	60	29	11=100	March, 2001	55	25	20=100
June, 2003	62	27	11=100	February, 2001	53	21	26=100
May, 2003	65	27	8=100				
April 10-16, 2003	72	22	6=100				
April 9, 2003	74	20	6=100				
April 2-7, 2003	69	25	6=100				
March 28-April 1, 2003	71	23	6=100				
March 25-27, 2003	70	24	6=100				
March 20-24, 2003	67	26	7=100				
March 13-16, 2003	55	34	11=100				
February, 2003	54	36	10=100				
January, 2003	58	32	10=100				
<b>2002</b>							
December, 2002	61	28	11=100				
Late October, 2002	59	29	12=100				
Early October, 2002	61	30	9=100				
Mid-September, 2002	67	22	11=100				
Early September, 2002	63	26	11=100				
Late August, 2002	60	27	13=100				
August, 2002	67	21	12=100				
Late July, 2002	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				

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

**ROTATE Q.2 AND Q.3**

Q.2F1 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Republican leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**<sup>1</sup>

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	Don't <u>know</u>		<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
February, 2004	41	42	17=100	July, 1996	38	48	14=100
January, 2003	48	37	15=100	June, 1996	36	50	14=100
June, 2002	50	34	16=100	April, 1996	39	46	15=100
May, 2002	49	34	17=100	March, 1996	35	51	14=100
February, 2002	56	24	20=100	February, 1996	33	53	14=100
Early September, 2001	43	39	18=100	January, 1996	36	54	10=100
June, 2001	40	40	20=100	October, 1995	36	51	13=100
May, 2001	45	36	19=100	September, 1995	36	50	14=100
April, 2001	45	30	25=100	August, 1995	38	45	17=100
January, 2001	43	36	21=100	June, 1995	41	45	14=100
July, 2000	36	46	18=100	April, 1995	44	43	13=100
May, 2000	40	42	18=100	March, 1995	43	39	18=100
March, 2000	38	43	19=100	December, 1994	52	28	20=100
February, 2000	40	43	17=100				
January, 2000	39	41	20=100				
December, 1999	38	42	20=100				
October, 1999	34	50	16=100				
Late September, 1999	34	46	20=100				
August, 1999	40	44	16=100				
July, 1999	36	45	19=100				
June, 1999	37	46	17=100				
May, 1999	38	44	18=100				
March, 1999	38	47	15=100				
February, 1999	37	51	12=100				
January, 1999	38	50	12=100				
Early December, 1998	38	49	13=100				
November, 1998	41	48	11=100				
Early September, 1998	44	37	19=100				
Early August, 1998	43	37	20=100				
June, 1998	42	38	20=100				
May, 1998	40	41	19=100				
April, 1998	41	40	19=100				
March, 1998	43	39	18=100				
January, 1998	43	41	16=100				
November, 1997	41	43	16=100				
August, 1997	42	44	14=100				
June, 1997	33	50	17=100				
May, 1997	40	44	16=100				
April, 1997	40	44	16=100				
February, 1997	44	42	14=100				
January, 1997	38	47	15=100				
November, 1996	40	43	17=100				

<sup>1</sup> Some trends from 1998 and 1999 have been omitted.

Q.3F1 Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the job the Democratic leaders in Congress are doing? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
February, 2004	38	42	20=100
June, 2002	47	36	17=100
May, 2002	42	37	21=100
February, 2002	49	30	21=100
Early September, 2001	49	30	21=100
June, 2001	50	28	22=100

**ASK ALL:**

Q.4 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; RANDOMIZE. OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The race for the Democratic presidential nomination	29	37	20	13	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	16	30	27	26	1=100
Early January, 2004	14	32	30	23	1=100
December, 2003	16	26	27	30	1=100
November, 2003	11	26	34	28	1=100
October, 2003	12	27	28	32	1=100
September, 2003	17	25	30	27	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	12	27	27	33	1=100
May, 2003	8	19	31	41	1=100
January, 2003 <sup>2</sup>	14	28	29	28	1=100
February, 2000	26	36	21	17	*=100
January, 2000	19	34	28	18	1=100
March, 1996	26	41	20	13	*=100
January, 1996	10	34	31	24	1=100
March, 1992	35	40	16	9	*=100
January, 1992	11	25	36	27	1=100
May, 1988	22	46	23	6	3=100
November, 1987	15	28	35	21	1=100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

b.F1 News about the current situation in Iraq	47	38	10	4	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	48	39	9	4	*=100
December, 2003	44	38	11	6	1=100
November, 2003	52	33	9	5	1=100
October, 2003	38	40	14	7	1=100
September, 2003	50	33	10	6	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	45	39	10	5	1=100

---

<sup>2</sup> In January 2003, the story was listed as "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2004." In 2000, the story was listed as "News about candidates for the 2000 presidential election." In 1996, the story was listed as "News about the Republican presidential candidates." In January 1992 and 1987, the story was listed as "News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination." In 1988, the story was listed as "News about the presidential campaign in 1988."



**Q.4 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/Ref
Early July, 2003	37	41	13	8	1=100
June, 2003	46	35	13	6	*=100
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*=100
April 11-16, 2003 <sup>3</sup>	47	40	10	2	1=100
April 2-7, 2003	54	34	9	2	1=100
March 20-24, 2003	57	33	7	2	1=100
March 13-16, 2003 <sup>4</sup>	62	27	6	4	1=100
February, 2003	62	25	8	4	1=100
January, 2003	55	29	10	4	2=100
December, 2002	51	32	10	6	1=100
Late October, 2002	53	33	8	5	1=100
Early October, 2002	60	28	6	5	1=100
Early September, 2002	48	29	15	6	2=100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

c.F2	Recent reports that no weapons of mass destruction have been found in Iraq	37	39	14	9	1=100
------	--	----	----	----	---	-------

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

d.F1	Controversy over Janet Jackson's performance during the Super Bowl halftime show	22	27	24	26	1=100
------	--	----	----	----	----	-------

**ASK ALL:**

e.	The poison Ricin found in a Senate office building	12	30	28	29	1=100
	Mid-November, 2001 <sup>5</sup>	41	41	12	5	1=100
	Early November, 2001	47	35	13	4	1=100
f.	The debate about allowing gays and lesbians to marry	26	32	22	19	1=100
	Mid-August, 2003	19	30	22	28	1=100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

g.F2	Questions about President Bush's service in the National Guard during the Vietnam War	19	25	25	29	2=100
------	---	----	----	----	----	-------

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

Q.5F1 Do you happen to know which Democratic candidate won the New Hampshire primary?

		<i>Dem Primary</i> <u>Feb 2000</u>	<i>Rep Primary</i> <u>Feb 2000</u>	<i>Rep Primary</i> <u>Feb 1996</u>
59	John Kerry {correct}	46 ( <i>Gore</i> )	41 ( <i>McCain</i> )	62 ( <i>Buchanan</i> )
2	Other/Incorrect	8	14	10
<u>39</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>46</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>28</u>
100		100	100	100

<sup>3</sup> From March 20 to April 16, 2003 the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."

<sup>4</sup> From October 2002 to March 13-16, 2003 the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq." In Early September 2002 the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."

<sup>5</sup> In 2001 the story was listed as "Reports of Anthrax cases around the country."

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

Q.6F2 Do you happen to know which Democratic candidate served in Vietnam and then protested the Vietnam war when he returned home?

41	John Kerry {correct}
4	Other/Incorrect
<u>55</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**ASK ALL:**

Q.7 Thinking about the presidential primaries so far, generally do you think they have been a good way of determining who the best qualified nominees are or not?

		<i>Gallup</i>				<i>Newsweek</i>			
		March	March	March	Jan	June	May	Jan	March
		<u>2000</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1980</u>
40	Yes	41	35	31	51	48	56	61	40
46	No	50	58	59	41	37	31	23	48
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>12</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.8 All in all, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the presidential campaign so far: excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		June	March	Feb	Sept	July	Feb	Sept	May	March	Feb
		<u>2000</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>
11	Excellent	7	10	13	13	7	16	12	10	12	11
43	Good	41	46	50	44	35	45	45	44	51	45
30	Only fair	38	32	25	29	42	25	27	33	28	32
12	Poor	10	9	7	11	14	10	11	10	6	7
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

Q.9F1 So far, do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the 2004 presidential campaign, too little coverage to the campaign, or the right amount of coverage?

		Oct	April	June	March	Feb	Sept	July	March	Oct	Sept	Feb	Oct	May	Nov
		<u>2003</u>	<u>2003<sup>6</sup></u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1987</u>
28	Too much	23	15	19	25	22	28	18	29	18	22	19	12	24	21
8	Too little	17	38	16	10	10	14	13	10	18	11	15	22	7	16
61	Right amount	51	38	60	61	63	49	59	58	60	62	62	58	62	58
<u>3</u>	DK/Refused	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

<sup>6</sup> In April 2003, the question was asked as part of a list and was worded: "the race for the Democratic presidential nomination."

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

Q.10F2 How much influence do you think news organizations have on which candidates become the presidential nominees? Too much, too little or about the right amount?

		- Registered Voters -				-- RVs --						
		Sept	Oct	Sept	Sept	Feb	Jan	Oct	Aug	May	Jan	Nov
		<u>1999</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u> <sup>7</sup>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>	<u>1987</u>
63	Too much	64	67	64	54	58	53	58	54	47	51	59
5	Too little	4	4	4	4	5	4	3	1	4	4	5
28	About the right amount	30	25	30	37	33	40	36	41	41	37	31
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**NO QUESTIONS 11 THRU 13**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.14 Suppose the 2004 presidential election were being held TODAY, and the candidates were [George W. Bush, the Republican or John Kerry, the Democrat? **READ, ROTATE**]. Who would you vote for?

**IF OTHER OR DK (3,9 IN Q.14) ASK:**

Q.14a As of TODAY, do you LEAN more to [**READ, ROTATE IN SAME ORDER AS Q.14**]?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1149]:**

		Early	Oct	Feb	Feb	March	May
		Jan	2003	2000	1996	1992	1988
		<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1988</u>
47	George W. Bush/Lean Bush	52	50	46 <i>Bush</i>	44 <i>Dole</i>	49 <i>Bush, Sr.</i>	40 <i>Bush, Sr.</i>
47	John Kerry/Lean Kerry	41	42	45 <i>Gore</i>	52 <i>Clinton</i>	44 <i>Clinton</i>	53 <i>Dukakis</i>
<u>6</u>	Other candidate/DK (VOL.)	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

<sup>7</sup> In January 1988, May 1988 and January 1992, the question was asked: "How much influence do you feel news organizations have on which candidates become presidential nominees?" In November 1987, the question was asked: "How much influence do you feel news organizations have on which candidates become their parties' presidential nominees?" Registered voter trends from 1996, 1992 and 1988 were asked: "... which candidate becomes the president?"

**THOSE WHO CHOSE JOHN KERRY (IN Q.14/14a), ASK:**

Q.15 Would you say that your choice is more a vote FOR John Kerry or more a vote AGAINST George W. Bush?

**THOSE WHO CHOSE GEORGE W. BUSH (IN Q.14/14a), ASK:**

Q.16 Would you say that your choice is more a vote FOR George W. Bush or more a vote AGAINST John Kerry?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1149]:**

	----- <i>KERRY</i> -----				----- <i>BUSH</i> -----								
	Pro-	Anti-	Un-		Pro-	Anti-	Un-	<b>Other/</b>					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Kerry</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Kerry</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>DK</b>				
Feb 2004	<b>47</b>	15	30	2	<b>47</b>	39	6	2	<b>6=100</b>				
	----- <i>GORE</i> -----				----- <i>BUSH</i> -----								
	Pro-	Anti-	Un-		Pro-	Anti-	Un-	<b>Other/</b>					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Gore</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Gore</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>DK</b>				
Nov 2000	<b>45</b>	29	14	2	<b>41</b>	27	12	2	<b>14=100</b>				
Sept 2000	<b>47</b>	30	14	3	<b>41</b>	24	14	3	<b>12=100</b>				
	----- <i>CLINTON</i> -----				----- <i>DOLE</i> -----				----- <i>PEROT</i> -----				
	Pro-	Anti-	Un-		Pro-	Anti-	Un-	Pro-	Anti-	Un-	<b>Other/</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>other</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Dole</b>	<b>other</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Perot</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>DK</b>
Nov 1996	<b>51</b>	33	15	3	<b>32</b>	15	15	2	<b>9</b>	4	5	*	<b>8=100</b>
Oct 1996	<b>51</b>	33	16	2	<b>34</b>	15	18	1	<b>8</b>	4	4	*	<b>7=100</b>
Sept 1996	<b>52</b>	35	15	2	<b>34</b>	16	17	1	<b>8</b>	3	5	0	<b>6=100</b>
Mar 1996	<b>53</b>	30	20	3	<b>41</b>	15	25	1	--	--	--	--	<b>6=100</b>
	----- <i>CLINTON</i> -----				----- <i>BUSH</i> -----				----- <i>PEROT</i> -----				
	Pro-	Anti-	Un-		Pro-	Anti-	Un-	Pro-	Anti-	Un-	<b>Other/</b>		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Clinton</b>	<b>other</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>other</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Perot</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>DK</b>
Oct 1992	<b>48</b>	23	22	3	<b>35</b>	19	13	3	<b>8</b>	3	5	*	<b>9=100</b>
Sept 1992	<b>53</b>	21	29	3	<b>38</b>	20	16	2	--	--	--	--	<b>9=100</b>
Aug 1992	<b>57</b>	27	28	2	<b>37</b>	20	16	1	--	--	--	--	<b>6=100</b>
Mar 1992	<b>44</b>	13	29	2	<b>49</b>	32	15	2	--	--	--	--	<b>7=100</b>
	----- <i>DUKAKIS</i> -----				----- <i>BUSH</i> -----								
	Pro-	Anti-	Un-		Pro-	Anti-	Un-	<b>Other/</b>					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Dukakis</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Dukakis</b>	<b>decid</b>	<b>DK</b>				
Oct 1988	<b>42</b>	23	15	4	<b>50</b>	31	16	3	<b>8=100</b>				
Sept 1988	<b>44</b>	21	19	4	<b>50</b>	31	15	4	<b>6=100</b>				
May 1988	<b>53</b>	23	26	4	<b>40</b>	26	11	3	<b>7=100</b>				

**THOSE WHO DID NOT CHOOSE KERRY, ASK:**

Q.17 Do you think there is a chance that you might vote for John Kerry in November, or have you definitely decided not to vote for him?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1149]:**

		----- <b>Gore 2000</b> -----						----- <b>Clinton</b> -----	
		Late	Mid-	Early				July	May
		<b>Nov</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Sept</b>	<b>June</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1992</b>
15	Chance might vote for him	8	9	10	11	13	14	8	11
33	Decided not to vote for him	41	44	40	38	35	34	36	38
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
53%		55%	57%	55%	56%	53%	54%	48%	55%

**THOSE WHO DID NOT CHOOSE BUSH, ASK:**

Q.18 Do you think there is a chance that you might vote for George W. Bush in November, or have you definitely decided not to vote for him?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=1149]:**

		----- Bush 2000 -----						-- Dole--	Bush, Sr.
		Late		Mid-	Early		July	May	
		<u>Nov</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Sept</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1992</u>	
10	Chance might vote for him	8	10	12	11	15	15	8	
41	Decided not to vote for him	44	41	40	39	38	40	40	
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5</u>	
53%		59%	55%	57%	57%	59%	54%	58%	

**ASK FORM 3 ONLY: [NOTE: FORM 3 AND 4 ARE HALF SAMPLES THAT ARE INDEPENDENT (ORTHOGONAL) TO FORM 1 AND 2 USED IN OTHER QUESTIONS]:**

Q.19F3 Please tell me what one word best describes your impression of John Kerry. Tell me just the ONE best word that describes him. (OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS "DON'T KNOW". ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR SECOND RESPONSE).

		<b>Al Gore</b>	
<u>Feb 2004*</u>		<u>March 2000</u>	
45	Honest	24	Boring
26	Democrat	12	Good
21	Good	9	Fair
15	Liberal	9	Capable
14	Fair	9	Honest
11	Phony	8	Okay
12	Arrogant	7	Politician
10	Politician	7	Dull
10	Qualified	7	I like him
9	Intelligent	6	Dishonest
9	Knowledgeable	6	Incompetent
9	Presidential	6	Environmentalist
8	Veteran	6	Dislike
7	Sincere	6	Follower
7	Tall	5	Great
7	Competent	5	Weak
6	Experienced	5	Intelligent
6	Ambitious	5	Alright
6	Honorable	5	Mediocre
6	Charismatic	5	Fake
5	Interesting		
5	Truthful		

(N=752)

(N=585)

\* The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are not percentages.

**ASK FORM 4 ONLY:**

Q.20F4 Please tell me what one word best describes your impression of George W. Bush. Tell me just the ONE best word that describes him. **(OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “DON’T KNOW”. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR SECOND RESPONSE).**<sup>8</sup>

		<i>(Registered Voters)</i>				
<u>Feb 2004*</u>	<u>May 2003</u>	<u>Mid-Oct 2000</u>	<u>March 2000</u>	<u>Sept 1999</u>		
27 Honest	29 Honest	47 Honest	17 Good	63 Good		
24 Fair	21 Good	28 Good	11 Okay	37 Okay		
24 Leader	20 Arrogant	19 OK/Okay	10 Arrogant	27 Alright		
21 Liar	16 Leader/Leadership	17 Sincere	9 Reference to father	27 Likable		
17 Arrogant	13 Great	13 Arrogant	8 Honest	22 Honest		
14 Strong	12 Confident	13 Fair	8 Dislike	20 Unknown		
12 Christian	12 Courageous	13 Alright	7 Integrity	15 Dislike		
13 Excellent	11 Aggressive	12 Dislike	6 Fair	13 Intelligent		
13 Good	11 Christian	12 Leader	6 Conservative	12 Rich		
12 Integrity	11 Determined	12 Untrustworthy	6 Untrustworthy	11 Conservative		
9 Stupid	11 Integrity	11 Trustworthy	6 President	10 Fair		
9 Incompetent	10 Patriot/Patriotic	11 President	6 Determined	10 Impressive		
8 Dishonest	9 Cowboy	11 Inexperienced	5 I like him	10 Interesting		
7 Confident	8 Competent	10 Conservative	5 Inexperienced	10 Politician		
7 Determined	8 Decisive	9 Refer to Father	5 Great	9 Aggressive		
7 Idiot	8 Idiot	9 Republican	5 Wimp	9 Arrogant		
7 Patriotic	8 President	9 Liar	5 Bad	9 Leader		
7 Ass	8 Strong	9 Boring	5 Cocky	8 Smart		
6 Character	7 Adequate	8 I like him	5 Excellent	8 Young		
6 Poor	7 Excellent	8 Good man/guy	5 Leader	7 Confident		
6 Selfish	7 Fair	8 Stupid				
<b>(N=748)</b>	<b>(N=602)</b>	<b>(N=997)</b>	<b>(N=599)</b>	<b>(N=1205)</b>		

\* The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are not percentages.

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY:**

Q.23F1 Regardless of who you might support, who do you think is most likely to win the coming presidential election? [READ]

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=602]:**

		<b>George H.W. Bush</b>					
		<u>Mid-Jan</u>	<u>Sept</u>	<u>June</u>	<u>March</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Oct</u>
		<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>
51	George W. Bush, or	61	47	66	72	66	78
36	A Democratic candidate	21	34	22	20	25	11
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

<sup>8</sup> NOTE ON QUESTION ORDERING: In previous surveys, these “one word” questions were asked toward the beginning of the questionnaire. For George W. Bush, another trend from March 1999 is also available.

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY:**

Q.24F2 Regardless of who you might support, who do you think is most likely to win the coming presidential election? [READ]

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=547]:**

56 George W. Bush, or  
 32 John Kerry  
12 Other/Can't say/Don't know/Refused (VOL.)  
 100

**ASK ALL:**

Q.25 Overall, what's your impression of the candidates who ran for the Democratic presidential nomination? AS A GROUP, would you say they were excellent candidates, good candidates, fair candidates or poor candidates?<sup>9</sup>

		<i>Democratic</i>		<i>Republican</i>	<i>-- Democratic --</i>			<i>Republican</i>
		Mid Jan <u>2004</u>	Sept <u>2003</u>	Oct <u>1995</u>	Feb <u>1992</u>	Oct <u>1991</u>	Jan <u>1988</u>	Jan <u>1988</u>
5	Excellent	4	3	3	3	2	3	3
40	Good	27	27	29	31	18	27	34
37	Fair	40	39	46	51	38	44	42
12	Poor	17	15	18	9	15	17	11
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Ref.	<u>12</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**ROTATE Q.26-27**

Q.26 Would you say the press has been too easy, too tough or fair in the way it has covered John Kerry's campaign?

		<u>Gore</u> <u>March 2000</u>
18	Too easy	17
5	Too Tough	8
67	Fair	65
<u>10</u>	Don't Know/Ref (VOL)	<u>10</u>
100		100

Q.27 Would you say the press has been too easy, too tough, or fair in the way it has covered George W. Bush over the past few months?

		<u>March 2000</u> <sup>10</sup>
19	Too easy	14
27	Too Tough	10
49	Fair	65
<u>5</u>	Don't Know/Ref (VOL)	<u>11</u>
100		100

<sup>9</sup> All trends' question wording was asked in the present tense.

<sup>10</sup> In March 2000 the question asked about "George W. Bush's campaign."

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

Q.28F1 Would you say the press has been too easy, too tough, or fair in the way it has covered Howard Dean's campaign?

11	Too easy
24	Too tough
49	Fair
<u>16</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY:**

Q.29F2 In your opinion, what is MORE responsible for the problems Howard Dean has had in his campaign: the way the press has covered him or Howard Dean's personal actions and views themselves?

<u>Total</u>		Based on very/fairly close attention to the Democratic race <sup>11</sup>	Based on very/fairly close attention to Clinton scandals
		<u>Feb 2004</u>	<u>Feb 1992</u>
22	Press coverage	22	48
57	Dean himself	62	40
3	Both (VOL.)	4	5
1	Neither (VOL.)	1	*
<u>17</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100
N= (715)		(505)	(655)

**ASK ALL:**

Q.30 At any point in the presidential campaign, did you want Howard Dean to win the Democratic nomination?

		<i>Republican nomination</i>	
		<u>Bradley</u> <u>March 2000</u>	<u>McCain</u> <u>March 2000</u>
23	Yes	28	44
63	No	60	48
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>
100		100	100

<sup>11</sup> In February 1992 the question was worded: "In your opinion, what is MORE responsible for the problems Bill Clinton has had in his campaign so far: the way the press has covered him or Bill Clinton's personal actions and views, themselves?" The question was asked only of those who followed very or fairly closely "Charges that Arkansas Gov. Clinton has had extramarital affairs" or "Controversy about Gov. Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969." To create an approximate trend for comparison, this column shows the current question about Howard Dean based only on those who followed "the race for the Democratic presidential nomination" very or fairly closely. This creates a roughly comparable pool of respondents in terms of education, attentiveness, and partisanship.



**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

Q.31F1 As I read a list of different aspects of election campaigns, please tell me how much, if at all, each one bothers you personally. First, how much does **(INSERT AND ROTATE)** bother you -- very much, somewhat, not too much, or not at all?<sup>12</sup>

		<u>Very Much</u>	<u>Some- what</u>	<u>Not too much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a.	The amount of money politicians spend on campaigns	59	17	10	13	1=100
	March, 2000	59	20	9	12	*=100
	February, 1996	56	17	13	13	1=100
	<b>PSRA:</b> July, 1994	69	16	7	7	1=100
b.	Political advertising on television	29	27	20	23	1=100
	March, 2000	25	27	25	22	1=100
	February, 1996	32	24	26	17	1=100
	<b>PSRA:</b> July, 1994	31	29	23	16	1=100
c.	What politicians say to get elected	44	31	13	10	2=100
	March, 2000	46	30	13	10	1=100
	February, 1996	53	25	11	10	1=100
	<b>PSRA:</b> July, 1994	61	23	9	5	2=100
d.	News coverage about campaigns	13	30	28	29	*=100
	March, 2000	13	26	31	29	1=100
	February, 1996	15	26	30	27	2=100
	<b>PSRA:</b> July, 1994	23	31	25	20	1=100
e.	Negative campaigning	61	20	7	11	1=100
	March, 2000	57	20	11	10	2=100
	February, 1996	60	17	11	10	2=100

<sup>12</sup>

In March 2000 "if at all" was added to the question wording.

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

Q.32F2 Thinking about the presidential candidates and what you will learn about them over the next year, please rate the importance of each of the following things. How important is it for YOU to learn about **(INSERT ITEM; ROTATE ITEMS)** — very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not too Important	Not at all Important	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. How well a candidate connects with average people					
June, 2000	71	22	4	2	1=100
October, 1999	67	24	4	3	2=100
	71	23	5	1	*=100
b. A candidate's voting record or policy positions in public offices he or she previously held					
June, 2000	64	27	3	5	1=100
October, 1999	60	27	6	5	2=100
	58	31	7	3	1=100
c. A candidate's reputation for honesty					
June, 2000	88	8	1	2	1=100
October, 1999	84	11	2	2	1=100
	82	13	3	1	1=100
d. A candidate's major campaign contributors					
June, 2000	39	38	13	9	1=100
October, 1999	42	29	13	13	3=100
	37	38	14	10	1=100
e. A candidate's military background					
October, 1999	21	41	22	15	1=100
	19	37	23	21	*=100
f. Whether a candidate is an active church member					
October, 1999	27	28	19	25	1=100
	25	32	21	22	*=100

**ASK ALL:**

Q.33 Now I'd like your views on some people and organizations. (First,) would you say your overall opinion of... **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ITEMS IN BLOCKS (FIRST a. THRU c., THEN d. THRU f WITH ITEM g LAST; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS)]** is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? **[INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

	Very Favorable	Mostly Favorable	Mostly Unfavorable	Very Unfavorable	Never Heard Of	Can't Rate
a. The federal government in Washington						
April, 2003	10	49	25	11	*	5=100
December, 2002	14	59	17	5	0	5=100
Mid-November, 2001	11	53	20	7	*	9=100
Late October, 2000 (RVs)	17	65	12	3	0	3=100
October, 1997	7	47	30	10	*	6=100
	4	34	41	18	0	3=100

**Q.33 CONTINUED...**

		Very Favor- <u>able</u>	Mostly Favor- <u>able</u>	Mostly Unfavor- <u>able</u>	Very Unfavor- <u>able</u>	Never Heard <u>Of</u>	Can't <u>Rate</u>
b.	The Democratic Party	14	44	28	9	*	5=100
	June, 2003	11	43	28	10	0	8=100
	April, 2003	13	44	25	11	*	7=100
	December, 2002	15	39	27	10	*	9=100
	July, 2001	18	40	24	10	*	8=100
	January, 2001	18	42	21	9	1	9=100
	September, 2000 (RVs)	16	44	23	12	*	5=100
	August, 1999	14	45	28	9	*	4=100
	February, 1999	11	47	26	11	0	5=100
	January, 1999	14	41	26	12	0	7=100
	Early December, 1998	18	41	24	10	0	7=100
	Early October, 1998 (RVs)	11	45	29	9	*	6=100
	Early September, 1998	13	47	25	8	*	7=100
	March, 1998	15	43	26	10	*	6=100
	August, 1997	11	41	32	10	0	6=100
	June, 1997	10	51	25	8	*	6=100
	January, 1997	13	47	28	7	*	5=100
	October, 1995	9	40	37	11	0	3=100
	December, 1994	13	37	31	13	*	6=100
	July, 1994	13	49	27	7	*	4=100
	May, 1993	14	43	25	9	0	9=100
	July, 1992	17	44	24	9	*	6=100
c.	The Republican Party	14	38	26	16	*	6=100
	June, 2003	14	44	23	10	0	9=100
	April, 2003	14	49	21	10	*	6=100
	December, 2002	18	41	22	11	*	8=100
	July, 2001	11	37	27	15	*	10=100
	January, 2001	13	43	22	13	*	9=100
	September, 2000 (RVs)	11	42	28	12	0	7=100
	August, 1999	8	45	31	12	*	4=100
	February, 1999	7	37	36	15	0	5=100
	January, 1999	10	34	27	23	0	6=100
	Early December, 1998	11	35	27	20	*	7=100
	Early October, 1998 (RVs)	9	43	28	14	0	6=100
	Early September, 1998	9	47	26	11	*	7=100
	March, 1998	10	40	31	12	*	7=100
	August, 1997	9	38	36	11	*	6=100
	June, 1997	8	43	31	11	1	6=100
	January, 1997	8	44	33	10	*	5=100
	October, 1995	10	42	28	16	*	4=100
	December, 1994	21	46	19	8	*	6=100
	July, 1994	12	51	25	8	*	4=100
	May, 1993	12	42	25	10	0	11=100
	July, 1992	9	37	31	17	*	6=100

**Q.33 CONTINUED...**

		<u>Very Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Favorable</u>	<u>Mostly Unfavorable</u>	<u>Very Unfavorable</u>	<u>Never Heard Of</u>	<u>Can't Rate</u>
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:</b>							
d.F1	George W. Bush	21	32	19	25	0	3=100
	<i>Gallup</i> : January 29 - February 1, 2004	52		47		--	1=100
	<i>Gallup</i> : January 2-5, 2004	65		35		--	*=100
	<i>Gallup</i> : October 6-8, 2003	60		39		--	1=100
	<i>Gallup</i> : June 9-10, 2003	66		33		--	1=100
	April 11-16, 2003	37	35	14	11	0	3=100
	December, 2002	35	33	16	11	0	5=100
	July, 2001	22	39	21	14	*	4=100
	January, 2001	24	36	21	12	0	7=100
	May, 2000	18	40	19	12	1	10=100
	March, 1999 <sup>13</sup>	21	40	14	7	4	14=100
	November, 1997	13	41	12	6	9	19=100
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:</b>							
e.F2	The Bush administration	17	35	23	22	*	3=100
<b>ASK ALL:</b>							
f.	John Kerry	14	44	20	8	1	13=100
	January, 2003	6	24	12	4	36	18=100
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:</b>							
g.F1	John Edwards	9	33	17	7	8	26=100
	January, 2003	4	18	10	4	43	21=100

**NO QUESTION 34**

---

<sup>13</sup> In March 1999 and November 1997 the category was listed: "Texas Governor George W. Bush."

On another subject...

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

Q.35F1 Do you happen to know if the federal government is spending MORE money than it is taking in this year, or spending LESS money than it is taking in?

	June <u>2001</u> <sup>14</sup>	Feb <u>2000</u>	Aug <u>1999</u>	Feb <u>1989</u>
82 Spending more than it is taking in ( <i>Correct</i> )	46	34	41	81
4 Spending less than it is taking in	19 ( <i>correct</i> )	29 ( <i>correct</i> )	31 ( <i>correct</i> )	6
* <b>(DO NOT READ)</b> About equal	1	1	1	3
<u>14</u> Don't know/Refused	<u>34</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>10</u>
100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

Q.36F2 When the federal government spends more than it takes in, that is called a "deficit." Do you happen to know if the deficit is CURRENTLY larger, smaller, or about the same as it was four years ago?

79	Larger
6	Smaller
5	About the same
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )
100	

**ASK ALL:**

Q.37 **[IF 2,3,9 IN Q.35F1 READ: Currently, the United States has a budget deficit, meaning that it is spending more than it is taking in.]** How much do you think each of the following has contributed to the current federal budget deficit? Has **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE]** added a great deal, some, not much, or not at all to the current budget deficit?

	<u>A great deal</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Not much</u>	<u>Not at all</u>	<u>DK/ Ref.</u>
a. Increased spending on domestic programs such as roads, health care, and aid to the poor	8	31	36	21	4=100
b. Increased spending on homeland defense	46	35	11	3	5=100
c. The costs of the war in Iraq	73	19	4	2	2=100
d. Lower government revenue as a result of recent tax cuts	21	37	23	11	8=100

Q.38 Which do you think has had the GREATEST effect on the federal budget deficit? **[READ ONLY THOSE OPTIONS CITED AS "GREAT DEAL" IN Q.37a-d]**

3	Increased spending on domestic programs such as roads, health care, and aid to the poor
8	Increased spending on homeland defense
61	The costs of the war in Iraq
8	Lower government revenue as a result of recent tax cuts
2	Multiple / all the same ( <b>VOL. DO NOT READ</b> )
17	None contributed a great deal ( <b>FROM Q.37a-d</b> )
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL. DO NOT READ</b> )
100	

<sup>14</sup> In 2001, 2000 and 1999, the correct answer was "spending less than it is taking in."

**QUESTIONS 39 THROUGH 43 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE  
NO QUESTION 44 THROUGH 47**

**ASK ALL:**

Now thinking about Iraq...

Q.48 Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force against Iraq?

	<u>Right decision</u>	<u>Wrong decision</u>	<u>Don't know /Ref.</u>
February, 2004	56	39	5=100
Mid-January, 2004	65	30	5 =100
Early January, 2004	62	28	10 =100
December, 2003	67	26	7 =100
October, 2003	60	33	7 =100
September, 2003	63	31	6 =100
August, 2003	63	30	7 =100
Early July, 2003	67	24	9 =100
May, 2003	74	20	6=100
<i>April 10-16, 2003</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>7 =100</i>
<i>April 8-9,2003</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>7 =100</i>
<i>April 2-7, 2003</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>8 =100</i>
<i>March 28-April 1, 2003</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>6 =100</i>
<i>March 25-27, 2003</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>5 =100</i>
<i>March 23-24, 2003</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>5 =100</i>
March 20-22, 2003	71	22	7 =100
Late January, 1991	77	15	9 =100

Q.49 How well is the U.S. military effort in Iraq going? **[READ IN ORDER]**

	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Fairly well</u>	<u>Not too well</u>	<u>Not at all well</u>	<u>Don't know /Ref.</u>
February, 2004	17	46	23	11	3=100
Mid-January, 2004	22	51	18	6	3=100
Early January,2004	23	47	18	7	5=100
December, 2003	28	47	16	6	3=100
October, 2003	16	44	25	11	4=100
September, 2003	15	47	26	9	3=100
August, 2003	19	43	24	11	3=100
Early July, 2003	23	52	16	5	4=100
<i>April 10-16, 2003</i>	<i>61</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>3=100</i>
<i>April 8-9, 2003</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2=100</i>
<i>April 2-7, 2003</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3=100</i>
<i>March 25-April 1, 2003</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>5=100</i>
<i>March 23-24, 2003</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>6=100</i>
<i>March 20-22, 2003</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>7=100</i>

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=785]:**

Q.50F1 Do you think the war in Iraq has helped the war on terrorism, or has it hurt the war on terrorism?

		Dec <u>2003</u>	Sept <u>2003</u>	May <u>2003</u>	April <u>2003</u> <sup>15</sup>	Early Oct <u>2002</u>
55	Helped	59	54	65	63	52
32	Hurt	26	31	22	22	34
7	No effect (VOL)	6	7	6	--	--
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>9</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>14</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=715]:**

Q.51F2 Do you think the war with Iraq has or has not contributed to the long-term security of the United States?

--- ABC/Washington Post ---

		Jan <u>2004</u>	Dec <u>2003</u>	July <u>2003</u>
56	Yes, has	59	62	62
38	No, has not	38	34	35
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100

**ASK FORM 3 ONLY: [NOTE: FORM 3 AND 4 ARE HALF SAMPLES THAT ARE INDEPENDENT (ORTHOGONAL) TO FORM 1 AND 2 USED IN OTHER QUESTIONS] [N=752]:**

Q.52F3 How worried are you that there will soon be another terrorist attack in the United States? [READ]

	Very <u>worried</u>	Somewhat <u>worried</u>	Not too <u>worried</u>	Not at all <u>worried</u>	Don't know/ <u>Refused</u>
February, 2004	13	42	28	16	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	20	45	24	10	1=100
August, 2003	13	45	29	12	1=100
March, 2003	22	42	20	14	2=100
February, 2003	34	41	17	7	1=100
January, 2003	18	50	23	8	1=100
December, 2002	31	42	18	8	1=100
Early October, 2002	20	46	22	11	1=100
Late August, 2002	16	46	25	12	1=100
June, 2002	32	44	17	7	*=100
January, 2002	20	42	28	9	1=100
December, 2001	13	39	27	19	2=100
October 15-21, 2001	29	42	18	10	1=100
October 10-14, 2001	27	40	19	12	2=100
Early October, 2001	28	45	15	11	1=100

<sup>15</sup> In April 2003, the question was worded: "Do you think the war in Iraq will help the war on terrorism, or will it hurt the war on terrorism?" In Early October 2002 the question was worded: "If the U.S. uses military force in Iraq, do you think this will help the war on terrorism, or will it hurt the war on terrorism?"

**ASK FORM 4 ONLY [N=748]:**

Q.53F4 All in all, how worried are you that you or someone in your family might become a victim of a terrorist attack? Would you say you are **[READ]**

	(VOL.)					
	Very <u>Worried</u>	Somewhat <u>Worried</u>	Not too <u>Worried</u>	Not at all <u>Worried</u>	Already <u>a Victim</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
February, 2004	10	27	37	26	*	*=100
<i>March 28-April 1, 2003</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1=100</i>
<i>March 25-27, 2003</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1=100</i>
<i>March 23-24, 2003</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>2=100</i>
<i>March 20-22, 2003</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>*</i>	<i>1=100</i>
February, 2003	22	29	30	18	0	1=100
January, 2003	11	30	37	21	*	1=100
Late August, 2002	12	28	35	24	*	1=100
June, 2002	17	28	36	19	*	*=100
January, 2002	12	26	38	24	*	*=100
Early November, 2001	13	27	35	24	0	1=100
Mid-October, 2001	18	32	29	19	0	2=100
Late September, 2001	17	36	31	15	*	1=100
<b>Gallup:</b> 9/14-15/01 <sup>16</sup>	18	33	35	13	*	1=100
<b>Gallup:</b> 9/11/01 <sup>17</sup>	23	35	24	16	1	1=100
<b>Gallup:</b> August, 1998	10	22	38	29	--	1=100
<b>Gallup:</b> July, 1996	13	26	34	27	--	*=100
<b>Gallup:</b> April, 1995 <sup>18</sup>	14	28	33	24	--	1=100

---

<sup>16</sup> For the September 14-15 Gallup trend the question started with "I'd like to ask you a few questions about the events that occurred this past Tuesday in New York City and Washington, DC..."

<sup>17</sup> For the September 11 Gallup trend the question started with "I'd like to ask you a few questions about the events that occurred today in New York City and Washington, DC..."

<sup>18</sup> For the April 1995 Gallup trend the question was worded "How worried are you that you or someone in your family will become a victim of a terrorist attack similar to the bombing in Oklahoma City?"



**ASK ALL:**

And one last short question...

Q.54 I'd like your general impression of some parts of the country. First [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZED; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS – THIS IS A THREE WAY FORM SPLIT, WITH ROUGHLY 500 CASES PER FORM] – would you say your overall impression of [ITEM] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable?

	---- FAVORABLE ----			---UNFAVORABLE---			Never	Can't	(N)
	<u>NET</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>NET</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Of</u>	<u>Rate</u>	
a. Your State <sup>19</sup>	82	40	42	15	4	11	0	*=100	(789)
b. Massachusetts	58	12	46	19	6	13	0	23=100	(1500)
c.FA Texas	64	18	46	20	4	16	0	16=100	(462)
d.FA California	60	14	46	26	6	20	*	14=100	(462)
NBC: May, 1985 <sup>20</sup>	63	--	--	16	--	--	--	21=100	
e.FA Pennsylvania	64	14	50	10	3	7	0	26=100	(462)
f.FB New York	65	18	47	20	6	14	*	15=100	(505)
g.FB Michigan	62	13	49	14	5	9	0	24=100	(505)
NBC: May, 1985	50	--	--	14	--	--	--	36=100	
h.FB Georgia	66	17	49	13	5	8	*	21=100	(505)
i.FC Illinois	65	11	54	10	3	7	*	25=100	(533)
j.FC Florida	69	20	49	20	6	14	0	11=100	(533)
k.FC Arizona	71	16	55	9	3	6	*	20=100	(533)

<sup>19</sup>

Due to a data collection error, respondents in TX, CA, PA, NY, MI, GA, IL, FL, AZ were only asked about their own state if they were assigned to the form (form A, B, or C) on which their state was listed in items c-k. To estimate an accurate national ranking for a person's own state, respondents from these states were included in the overall ratings for a person's own state, and weighted to adjust for missing data.

<sup>20</sup>

The NBC News question was worded: "Do you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of..."