

FOR RELEASE: THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 1992, A.M.

**Times Mirror News Interest Index  
February 1992**

**Public Interest and  
Awareness of the News**

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## WASHINGTON FOLLOWS THE PRIMARIES; AMERICA FOLLOWS TYSON, OLYMPICS, & ECONOMY

While the eyes of Washington have been focused on the presidential primaries, most Americans have paid much more attention to the Mike Tyson rape trial, the Winter Olympics, and reports about the U.S. economy.

According to the latest *Times Mirror News Interest Index*, 24% of those polled cited the Mike Tyson rape trial as the story they followed *most closely*. Twenty-one percent said they followed the Winter Olympics "most closely", and 14% said reports about the condition of the U.S. economy. The Democratic and Republican primaries in New Hampshire received only 6% and 4% respectively in the "most closely" watched category.

When the public is measured as to which news events they followed *very closely*, stories about the state of the economy ranked first with 47%, and 34% very closely followed statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy. Thirty-three percent said the Winter Olympics, and 32% said the Tyson trial were news events that they followed "very closely."

Among all Americans, 41% have received their information about the campaign from television only and 38% from newspapers *and* television. People who received their information from print sources alone (9%) or a combination of print and tv, were somewhat better informed than those who relied solely on the electronic media. When asked to identify a candidate with the *America First* theme, only 7% of those who followed the campaign on tv were able to identify Pat Buchanan as the message sender. Seventeen percent of those who were reading newspapers and watching tv both, were able to identify Buchanan, and among those who used print alone to follow news about the campaign, 23% linked America First with the Buchanan candidacy. But no matter what the news source and what the question, the information level at this stage of the campaign is still quite low.

Although reports about the U.S. economy was the most *widely* followed story, the Tyson trial was the most *intensely* followed. This is similar to data from the *December News Interest Index* when the release of U.S. hostages was the most *widely* followed story, but the William Kennedy Smith trial was the most *intensely* followed.

One reason for the dominance of the Tyson story is the extraordinary attention black Americans paid to the story. Fifty-one percent of black Americans cited Tyson as the story they followed most closely, compared to only 20% of white Americans. People with lower levels of education followed the Tyson story more closely than those with more education.

### *Public Says Japan Replaces Soviet Union as Greatest Threat to U.S.*

The *News Interest Index* also revealed that the collapse of the Soviet Union and the rising tide of negative stories about Japan have produced a dramatic shift in how Americans view the world. Thirty-one percent of the respondents volunteered that Japan represented the greatest danger to the U.S., while 13% said Russia. In March of 1990, 32% said the Soviet Union was the greatest danger and only 8% said Japan.

Perhaps because they feel more economically threatened, younger Americans (18-29 years old) were significantly more likely to single out Japan as a danger. People on the East Coast were also more likely to say Japan, compared to people on the West Coast.

## Figure 1

### *Campaign Themes Go Unnoticed*

One measure of how little attention Americans were paying to the February presidential primaries is found in the low recognition of the candidates' campaign themes. No more than 13% of respondents could correctly match a given campaign theme with the right candidate. Pat Buchanan's *America's interests should come ahead of the world's interests* was correctly identified by 13%.

Seventeen percent associated George Bush with the theme *the middle class should be given a tax cut*, while 9% associated the theme with Bill Clinton. Only 16% of Paul Tsongas' own supporters correctly associated the former Senator with the theme of *Business and Government should form a partnership to improve American economic competitiveness*.

### *Press Getting Mixed Grades for Coverage*

The public is giving the press decidedly mixed grades for its coverage. Forty-eight percent of respondents said the press has done an *only fair* or *poor* job covering the U.S. economy, 38% said the same for coverage both of the Republican primary in New Hampshire and the controversies surrounding Bill Clinton.

In comparison, only 17% said press coverage of the Winter Olympics was "only fair" or "poor".

On press coverage of the campaign specifically, 56% said it was *excellent* or *good*, while 39% said it was *only fair* or *poor*. Although there was substantial criticism of the coverage of Governor Clinton's campaign difficulties, a 56% to 40% margin in the Times Mirror sample said that they believed it was important to learn about the controversies that had come to light. When asked what was more responsible for the problems Governor Clinton has had in his campaign, 48% cited the press coverage and 40% attributed them to Clinton's own actions and views. Not surprisingly, 56% of Clinton supporters said the press has been irresponsible in its coverage of the Arkansas Governor.

### *TV Dominant Source of Campaign News*

Television remains the dominant source for presidential campaign news. People were asked where they were getting most of their news about the presidential election campaign and a total of two answers were accepted. Eighty percent cited television, 49% said newspapers, 18% said radio, and 4% said magazines.

Of those who cited television as the main source, 40% said their information came primarily from network news, 37% said local news, and 29% said CNN.

Black Americans are much less likely than average to get their political news from newspapers, and much more likely to get political news from local TV or CNN.

#### *In other results:*

\*By a 2-1 margin, people believe that the reporters who broke the Anita Hill/Clarence Thomas story should be allowed to keep their sources confidential;

\*CNN continued to be cited as the TV network doing the best job in covering the news, although its margin has slipped from earlier surveys;

\*The reduced press coverage of this year's campaign meets with public approval; 62% say news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage, while only 15% said it was too little;

\*Even though coverage may be reduced, 58% said that news organizations have too much influence on which candidates win the nominations;

\*Women were five times more likely than men to follow closely the news stories about breast implants;

\*Only 1 American in 6 said they have watched any of the Democratic debates.

## PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Reports About the Condition of the U.S. Economy	U.S. Workers Lazy	Winter Olympics	Tyson Rape Trial	State of Union Address	N
Total	47	34	33	32	26	(1227)
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	52	39	30	30	26	(612)
Female	42	30	36	34	26	(615)
<i>Race</i>						
White	46	34	34	28	26	(1065)
*Hispanic	46	31	26	49	37	( 69)
Black	50	35	22	60	19	(105)
<i>Age</i>						
Under 30	38	29	32	37	19	(294)
30-49	45	33	37	31	28	(497)
50+	53	39	30	30	28	(427)
<i>Education</i>						
College graduate	52	32	39	29	35	(364)
Other college	50	35	36	26	27	(347)
High school grad.	41	36	31	37	25	(384)
Less than h.s. grad.	44	32	24	36	15	(130)
<i>Region</i>						
East	47	36	36	34	26	(309)
Midwest	39	37	36	33	24	(340)
South	48	31	28	35	26	(437)
West	52	33	32	24	27	(141)
<i>Party ID</i>						
Republican	43	33	36	26	32	(405)
Democrat	49	35	29	39	23	(393)
Independent	49	33	34	31	22	(400)

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

\*The designation, hispanic, is unrelated to the white-black categorization  
CONTINUED...

	Breast Implant Controversy	Repub. Primary In New Hampshire	Democratic Primary In New Hampshire	Clinton Affair	Clinton Draft	N
Total	24	19	19	15	11	(1227)
<i>Sex</i>						
Male	14	20	19	15	13	(612)
Female	33	19	20	16	9	(615)
<i>Race</i>						
White	23	19	18	15	11	(1065)
*Hispanic	27	26	27	25	10	( 69)
Black	32	18	24	15	11	(105)
<i>Age</i>						
Under 30	22	15	13	12	5	(294)
30-49	24	16	17	12	10	(497)
50+	26	26	26	20	16	(427)
<i>Education</i>						
College graduate	24	24	27	14	10	(364)
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Midwest	20	18	18	14	12	(340)
South	24	18	16	18	11	(437)
West	22	21	18	13	7	(141)
<i>Party ID</i>						
Republican	23	20	13	13	8	(405)
Democrat	27	21	25	20	11	(393)
Independent	21	17	19	12	12	(400)

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

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

## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted among a nationwide sample of 1,227 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period February 20-23, 1992. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. 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.

# **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**



**TIMES MIRROR NEWS INTEREST INDEX**  
**FEBRUARY 1992**  
**N=1,227**  
**February 20-23, 1992**

SEX: 1[ ]Male 2[ ]Female INTERVIEWER'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TIME STARTED: \_\_\_\_\_ INTERVIEWER'S I.D.: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TIME FINISHED: \_\_\_\_\_ PAGE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
 LENGTH: \_\_\_\_\_ REPLICATE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_  
 REGION: 1 East STRATUM: 1 Stratum One  
 2 Midwest 2 Stratum Two  
 3 South 3 Remainder  
 4 West  
 DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

INTRODUCTION: Hello, we are conducting a telephone opinion survey for leading newspapers and tv stations around the country. I'd like to ask a few questions of the youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home (IF NO MALE, ASK: May I please speak with the oldest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home?)

**MY FIRST QUESTION IS...**

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling his job as President?

Feb 1992		NEWS INTEREST INDEX						
		Jan 1992	Nov 1991	Oct 1991	July 1991	May 1991	March 1991	Jan 25 1991
39	Approve	46	55	61	67	77	84	79
53	Disapprove	43	33	28	23	16	10	14
$\frac{8}{100}$	Don't know	$\frac{11}{100}$	$\frac{12}{100}$	$\frac{11}{100}$	$\frac{10}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{6}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT...

INTERVIEWER NOTE: PLEASE FAMILIARIZE YOURSELF WITH THE RESPONSE CATEGORIES

Q.2 What do you think is the most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in the past 4 weeks? (DO NOT READ)

7 OTHER (SPECIFY)  
1 DON'T KNOW/REFUSED  
35 NONE

<u>International Stories</u>	12
Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy	2
Middle East tensions	6
Break-up of Soviet Union	4
<u>Domestic Stories</u>	45
President Bush's State of the Union Address	1
Mike Tyson's rape trial	8
Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	7
The breast implant controversy	*
The Winter Olympics	8
The Democratic primary in New Hampshire	1
The Republican primary in New Hampshire	4
Charges that Arkansas Governor Clinton has had extra marital affairs	1
The controversy about Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969	*
New Hampshire Primary -- unspecified	5
Primary Elections -- unspecified	6
Governor Clinton -- unspecified	*
Jeffrey Dahmer	4

Q.3 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. (READ AND ROTATE LIST)

How closely did you follow stories about... (ITEM)?  
(REPEAT SCALE AS NECESSARY)

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. President Bush's State of the Union Address	26	26	20	27	1=100
b. Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy	34	32	21	12	1=100
c. Mike Tyson's rape trial	32	37	21	10	*=100
** d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	47	37	10	6	*=100
e. The breast implant controversy	24	39	24	13	*=100
f. The Winter Olympics	33	30	19	17	1=100
g. The Democratic primary in New Hampshire	19	31	26	24	*=100
h. The Republican primary in New Hampshire	19	31	26	23	1=100
i. Charges that Arkansas Governor Clinton has had extra marital affairs	15	28	32	24	1=100
j. The controversy about Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969	11	21	32	35	1=100

\*\* Trend information on reports about U.S. economy

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
Feb/1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
Jan/1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
Oct/1991	36	38	16	9	1=100

Q.4 Which one of the stories I just mentioned, have you followed most closely? **(DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)**

	<u>Story Followed Most Closely</u>
a. President Bush's State of the Union Address	5
b. Statements by Japanese leaders that American workers are lazy	5
c. Mike Tyson's rape trial	24
d. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	14
e. The breast implant controversy	7
f. The Winter Olympics	21
g. The Democratic primary in New Hampshire	6
h. The Republican primary in New Hampshire	4
i. Charges that Arkansas Governor Clinton has had extra marital affairs	5
j. The controversy about Governor Clinton's joining ROTC to avoid the draft in 1969	1
CAN'T SAY	<u>8</u> 100

**IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.4, SKIP TO Q.6**

Q.5 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering (STORY FOLLOWED MOST CLOSELY IN Q.4); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excel - lent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK</u>	<u>N</u>
All stories	21	44	23	10	2=100	(1128)
Tyson rape trial	21	42	24	12	1=100	(273)
Winter Olympics	34	49	14	3	*=100	(258)
U. S. economy	8	41	33	15	3=100	(174)
Breast implants	25	40	24	9	2=100	(82)
Bush's State of the Union	15	51	26	5	3=100	(71)
Democratic N. H. primary	15	52	21	10	2=100	(87)
Republican N. H. primary	12	50	35	3	*=100	(62)
Clinton's problems	18	39	22	16	5=100	(68)

**ASK ALL:**

Q. 6 In your opinion, which TV network has been doing the best job of covering the news lately - ABC, CBS, NBC or CNN?

		<u>Feb 1992</u>		<u>Oct 1991</u>	<u>July 1991</u>	<u>May 1991</u>	<u>March<sup>1</sup> 1991</u>	<u>Sept 1990</u>
19	ABC			17	18	18	12	21
18	CBS			14	14	13	8	14
14	NBC			13	13	14	10	13
37	CNN			42	41	41	58	27
<u>12</u>	Don' t know			<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>100</u>				<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

Q. 7 So far, have you watched any of the televised debates between the Democratic candidates or haven't you had a chance to watch any of them?

16 Yes

84 No

\*  
100 Don' t know

Q. 8 Did you happen to watch President Bush's State of the Union Address on tv or didn't you have a chance to watch it?

48 Yes

52 No

\*  
100 Don' t know

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<sup>1</sup> In March, 1991 respondents were asked which network was doing the best job of covering the "crisis in the Gulf".

**THINKING ABOUT THE CAMPAIGN SPECIFICALLY...**

Q. 9 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?

11 Excellent

45 Good

32 Only Fair

7 Poor

$\frac{5}{100}$  Don't know

Q. 9a How have you been getting most of your news about the Presidential election campaign? From television, from newspapers, from radio or from magazines? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

80 Television ask 9b

49 Newspapers

18 Radio

4 Magazines

3 Other

$\frac{1}{155}$  Can't say  
Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

If Television:

Q. 9b Do you get most of your news about the presidential campaign from network tv news, from local tv news, or from CNN ? (ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS)

40 Network

37 Local

29 CNN

2 **(DO NOT READ)** Other

$\frac{1}{109}$  Can't say  
Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

**ON ANOTHER SUBJECT..**

Form 2

Q. 15a As you may know, one of the candidates for President has had cancer. Do you happen to know the name of that candidate? (DO NOT READ LIST)

1 George Bush  
\* Pat Buchanan  
21 Paul Tsongas  
1 Robert Kerrey  
0 Bill Clinton  
1 Tom Harkin  
\* Jerry Brown  
48 Can't recall name  
28 Unaware of candidate with cancer  
100  
(N=617)

While the presidential campaign has just begun both Democratic and Republican candidates are already beginning to concentrate on and emphasize certain themes. As I read from a list tell me whether or not you have heard of this theme.

**(ROTATE THEMES)**

**FIRST... (PRECEDE EACH ITEM WITH: Have you heard of the theme ...?)**

Q. 16 "America's interests should come ahead of the world's interests?"

53 Heard of - ask 16b  
47 Has not - go to 16c  
100



Q. 16b Which candidate do you most associate with this theme? (DO NOT READ)

4	George Bush
13	Pat Buchanan
3	Paul Tsongas
*	Robert Kerrey
4	Bill Clinton
1	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
<u>27</u>	Can't say
53	

Q. 16c "The middle class should be given a tax cut?"

85	Heard of - ask 16d
<u>15</u>	Has not - go to 17
100	

Q. 16d Which candidate do you most associate with this theme? (DO NOT READ)

17	George Bush
4	Pat Buchanan
4	Paul Tsongas
1	Robert Kerrey
9	Bill Clinton
2	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
<u>47</u>	Can't say
85	

Q. 17 "Every American should be guaranteed health insurance?"

88 Heard of - ask 17b

$\frac{12}{100}$  Has not - go to 18

Q. 17b Which candidate do you most associate with this theme?(DO NOT READ)

13 George Bush

2 Pat Buchanan

5 Paul Tsongas

6 Robert Kerrey

8 Bill Clinton

2 Tom Harkin

2 Jerry Brown

$\frac{50}{88}$  Can't say

Q. 18 "Business and Government should form a partnership to improve American economic competitiveness?"

41 Heard of - ask 18b

$\frac{59}{100}$  Has not - go to 18c

Q. 18b Which candidate do you most associate with this theme? (DO NOT READ)

9	George Bush
2	Pat Buchanan
6	Paul Tsongas
*	Robert Kerrey
2	Bill Clinton
*	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
$\frac{21}{41}$	Can't say

**ASK EVERYONE:**

Q. 18c In your opinion, which, if any of the candidates running for President would do the best job of looking out for the interests of black people in this country? (DO NOT READ ANSWERS)

11	George Bush
2	Pat Buchanan
6	Paul Tsongas
1	Robert Kerrey
7	Bill Clinton
1	Tom Harkin
4	Jerry Brown
60	Can't say
$\frac{8}{100}$	None

Q. 18d In your opinion, which if any of the candidates running for President would do the best job of looking out for the interests of white people in this country?  
**(DO NOT READ ANSWERS)**

29	George Bush
8	Pat Buchanan
3	Paul Tsongas
1	Robert Kerrey
4	Bill Clinton
*	Tom Harkin
1	Jerry Brown
50	Can't say
$\frac{4}{100}$	None

Q. 19 So far, do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the 1992 presidential campaign, too little coverage to the campaign, or the right amount of coverage?

Feb. 1992		Oct. 1991	May 1988	Oct. 1987
19	Too much	12	24	21
15	Too little	22	7	16
62	Right amount	58	62	58
$\frac{4}{100}$	<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{7}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$

Q. 20 How much influence do you think news organizations have on which candidate becomes the Presidential nominee: too much, too little or about the right amount? **(READ CATEGORIES 1-3)**

Feb. 1992		Jan. 1992	Jan. 1988	Oct. 1987
58	Too much	53	51	59
5	Too little	4	4	5
33	About the right amount	40	37	31
$\frac{4}{100}$	<b>(DON'T READ)</b> Don't know	$\frac{3}{100}$	$\frac{8}{100}$	$\frac{5}{100}$

**IF RESPONDENT FOLLOWED ITEMS 3i OR 3j VERY OR FAIRLY CLOSELY ASK Q 21 - 22a:**

Q. 21 How responsibly have news organizations handled the controversies surrounding Governor Clinton's personal life and his draft status during the Vietnam war? Would you say... **(READ CATEGORIES 1-4)**

18 Very responsibly  
41 Fairly responsibly  
24 Not too responsibly, or  
13 Not at all responsibly  
4 **(DON'T READ)** Don't know  
100  
(N=655)

Q. 22 Do you think it was important that voters learned these things in order to judge whether Bill Clinton would make a good President or don't you think it important that voters knew these things about Bill Clinton?

56 Important  
40 Not important  
4 **(DON'T READ)** Don't know  
100  
(N=655)

Q. 22a Do you, yourself have reservations about Bill Clinton because of these charges, or don't you think they matter?

30 Have reservations  
64 Doesn't matter  
6 Don't know  
100  
(N=655)

Q. 22b 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?

48	Press coverage
40	Clinton's himself
5	(DON'T READ) Both
*	(DON'T READ) Neither
$\frac{7}{100}$	(DON'T READ) Don't know

(N=655)

**ON A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SUBJECT...**

Q.23 In your opinion what country in the world, if any represents the greatest danger to the United States? (**DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS**)

<u>Feb/1992</u>		<u>Mar/1990</u>
13	Russia, the Soviet Union, the CIS	32
2	Germany	3
*	Other European	*
31	Japan	8
8	China	8
0	Other Asian	*
12	Iraq	*
4	Iran	6
2	Libya	2
6	Other Mideastern	5
1	Cuba	3
*	Mexico	*
*	Other Latin American	8
0	Other (SPECIFY)	2
13	Can't say	13
5	None	6
<u>3</u>	The United States itself	4
100		

**AGAIN, ON ANOTHER SUBJECT:**

Q. 23a Just prior to Clarence Thomas's confirmation vote someone broke the Senate's rules of confidentiality by telling the press that Anita Hill had accused Supreme Court nominee Clarence Thomas of sexual harassment. Had you heard that the Senate is now investigating who leaked this story to the press?

48 Yes

52 No

$\frac{0}{100}$  Don't know

Form 1

Q23b The reporters and correspondents who first reported to the public that Anita Hill was charging Clarence Thomas with sexual harassment are refusing to reveal the names of their confidential sources for these stories. Do you think these reporters should be required to reveal their sources or do you think they should be allowed to keep them confidential?

30 Required to reveal

67 Allowed to keep confidential

$\frac{3}{100}$  (DON'T READ) Not sure  
(N=610)

Form 2

Q23b The reporters and correspondents who first reported to the public that Anita Hill was charging Clarence Thomas with sexual harassment are refusing to reveal who leaked the story to them. Do you think these reporters should be required to reveal their sources or do you think they should be allowed to keep them confidential?

32 Required to reveal

63 Allowed to keep confidential

$\frac{5}{100}$  (DON'T READ) Not sure  
(N=617)



**ON ANOTHER SUBJECT..**

Q. 901 How often would you say you vote; always, nearly always, part of the time, or seldom?

- 41 Always
- 32 Nearly always
- 13 Part of the time
- 11 Seldom
- 0 **(DO NOT READ)** Other **(SPECIFY)**
- 2 **(DO NOT READ)** Never vote
- $\frac{1}{100}$  Don't know/no answer

Q. 902 I'd like to know how often, if ever you read certain types of publications. For each that I read tell me if you read them regularly, sometimes, hardly ever or never? **(READ AND ROTATE)**

	<u>Regularly</u>	<u>Some- times</u>	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>(VOL) DK</u>
a. A daily newspaper	71	19	5	4	1=100
b. News magazines such as Time, U.S. News and World Report or Newsweek	20	38	20	21	1=100
c. The National Enquirer, The Sun or The Star	5	12	16	67	*=100

Q. 903 I'd like to know how often you watch or listen to certain programs. For each that I read, tell me if you watch or listen to it regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never. **(READ AND ROTATE)**

	<u>Regularly</u>	<u>Some- times</u>	<u>Hardly Ever</u>	<u>Never</u>	<u>(VOL) DK</u>
a. The network evening news	66	24	6	4	0=100
b. News magazine shows such as 60 minutes or 20/20	47	38	9	6	0=100
c. Programs on National Public Radio such as Morning Edition or All Things Considered	11	17	18	54	*=100
d. Cable News Network (CNN)	36	32	8	24	*=100
e. C-Span	7	18	16	54	5=100

# TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

## PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES (1986 - 1992)

### PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 69 Little girl in Texas who was rescued after falling into a well (Oct 87)
- 67 War's end and the homecoming of U.S. forces from the Gulf (March 91)
- 66 Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia (Aug 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Oct 90)
- 63 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the deployment of U.S. forces to the Persian Gulf (Sept 90)
- 62 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Nov 90)
- 62 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Oct 90)
- 60 Invasion of Panama (Jan 90)
- 60 Destruction caused by Hurricane Hugo (Oct 89)
  
- 59 Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf (Jan 91)
- 58 U.S. air strikes against Libya (July 86)
- 57 The plight of the American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq (Sept 90)
- 57 Recent increase in the price of gasoline (Aug 90)
- 56 Recent increases in the price of gasoline (Sept 90)
- 53 Crash of a United Airlines DC-10 in Sioux City, Iowa (Aug 89)
- 52 Alaska Oil Spill (May 89)
- 51 The release of American hostages and other westerners from Iraq and Kuwait (Jan 91)
- 51 Supreme Court decision of flag burning (July 89)
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
  
- 49 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Nov 90)
- 49 Murder of Marine Lt. Col. Higgins in Lebanon, and negotiations to free the other hostages in the Mideast (Aug 89)
- 49 Drought and its effects on American farmers (Aug 88)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (FEB 92)**
- 47 Breakup of the Soviet Union following the failed coup to depose of Mikhail Gorbachev (Oct 91)
- 47 The plight of American hostages and other Westerners detained in Iraq and Kuwait (Oct 90)
- 47 Political upheaval in China (July 89)
- 47 Supreme Court decision on abortion (July 89)
- 46 Videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an auto chase (March 91)
- 46 Nuclear accident at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union (July 86)
- 46 Freeing of two Americans who had been held hostage in the Mideast (May 90)
- 44 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 1992)
- 44 The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon (Dec 91)
- 43 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Dec 91)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 Hot weather this summer and the greenhouse effect (Aug 88)
- 42 Downing of an Iranian passenger plane by a U.S. Navy ship (Aug 88)
- 41 News regarding harassment charges raised against supreme court nominee Clarence Thomas (Oct 91)
- 40 Bush administration's plan to deal with this country's drug problem (Sept 89)
- 40 The stock market crash (Oct 87)
  
- 39 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Nov 90)
- 39 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Aug 88)
- 38 President Bush's heart problem (May 91)
- 38 News about the candidates and elections in your state (Nov 90)
- 38 Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev's visit to the U.S. for a Summit meeting (June 90)
- 38 Drug use and efforts to combat it (Jan 90)
- 38 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Sept 87)
- 37 U.S. Navy escort of Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf (Oct 87)
- 37 Stories about Dan Quayle, the Republican Vice-Presidential candidate (Aug 88)
- 37 Sentencing of Oliver North (July 89)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Oct 91)
- 36 The situation of the Kurds in northern Iraq and allied attempts to help them (May 91)
  
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (March 91)
- 36 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 91)
- 36 The murder of five people by a serial killer around the University of Florida campus in Gainesville (Sept 90)
- 35 Federal Reserve Bank's interest rate reduction (Jan 1992)
- 35 The major job cuts announced by General Motors (Jan 1992)
- 35 The Standoff in Baghdad between the Iraqis and UN weapons inspectors (Oct 91)
- 35 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (July 1991)
- 35 Attempts to change the abortion laws (Dec 89)
- 35 Hijacking of the Achille Lauro cruise ship in the Mediterranean (July 86)
- 35 Explosion and fire on the U.S. Battleship Iowa (May 89)
- 34 STATEMENTS BY JAPANESE LEADERS THAT AMERICAN WORKERS ARE LAZY (FEB 92)**
- 34 Civil war in Iraq between Shiite Iraqis and forces loyal to Saddam Hussein (March 91)
- 34 Congressional and administration efforts to reach a budget deficit agreement (Nov 90)
- 34 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Oct 90)
- 34 Reports about flooding in Texas and other southwestern states (June 90)
- 34 The war between the Colombian government and the major drug traffickers (Sept 89)
- 33 THE WINTER OLYMPICS (FEB 92)**
- 33 The nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court of Clarence Thomas to replace retiring Justice Thurgood Marshall (July 1991)
- 33 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (May 91)
- 33 Crash of the Colombian airliner near Kennedy airport in New York (Feb 90)
- 33 Congressional hearings about the Iran-Contra affair (Sept 87)
- 33 Guilty verdict in the trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Oct 89)
- 32 MIKE TYSON'S RAPE TRIAL (FEB 92)**
- 32 Criticisms of George Bush for being inconsistent in what he said about taxes and what he said about Persian Gulf policy (Nov 90)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 31 Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation as the Soviet Union came to an official end (Jan 1992)
- 31 Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (Dec 91)
- 31 President Bush's announcement of major nuclear arms reductions (Oct 91)
- 31 The closing of military bases around the country (July 1991)
- 31 Celebration of Earth Day (May 90)
- 31 The World Series (Oct 88)
- 31 Flight of East German refugees to West Germany (Oct 89)
- 31 Oliver North trial (May 89)
- 30 The end of Mikhail Gorbachev's rule, as a new commonwealth was formed to replace the Soviet Union (Dec 91)
- 30 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Aug 90)
- 30 Freeing of jailed black South African leader Nelson Mandela (March 90)
- 30 Banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life (Sept 89)
- 30 The Democratic convention (Aug 88)
- 30 President Bush's call for higher taxes to help reduce the federal deficit (July 90)
  
- 29 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 90)
- 29 Reports about the fires in Southern California (July 90)
- 29 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (April 90)
- 29 Suicide in Boston of Charles Stuart who murdered his pregnant wife and blamed it on a black man (Feb 90)
- 29 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Jan 90)
- 29 Political changes in East Germany and the flight of refugees to West Germany (Nov 89)
- 29 Attack and sexual assault on a female jogger in Central Park, New York, by a group of youths (May 89)
- 29 Failed coup attempt against Panamanian strongman Noriega (Oct 89)
- 28 The death of 87 people in a fire at a social club in the Bronx, New York (April 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in the Soviet Union (March 90)
- 28 Arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges (Feb 90)
- 28 The revolution in Romania (Jan 90)
- 28 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Dec 89)
- 28 Problems at nuclear reactor plants (Oct 88)
- 28 The end of Gary Hart's candidacy and the Donna Rice allegations (Sept 87)
- 27 the William Kennedy Smith rape trial (Dec 91)
- 27 Deployment of U.S. marines to Liberia to protect the lives of Americans caught in the civil war (Aug 90)
- 27 Lithuania's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and Moscow's response (May 90)
- 27 Acquittal of the owners of the McMartin Day Care Center in California who were charged with sexually abusing children (Feb 90)
- 27 The NFL playoffs (Jan 90)
- 27 The Republican convention (Aug 88)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 26 PRESIDENT BUSH'S STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS (FEB 92)**
- 26 Charges that the White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes and government cars for personal trips (July 1991)
  - 26 Concerns about Dan Quayle's ability to serve as President (May 91)
  - 26 Bush/Gorbachev summit meeting in Helsinki (Sept 90)
  - 26 The death of Hank Gathers, a college basketball player, during a game (April 90)
  - 26 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany (Feb 90)
  - 26 Passage in Congress of a bill to bail out ailing savings and loan institutions (Aug 89)
  - 25 Supreme court decision allowing laws that bar federally funded agencies from discussing abortion (July 1991)
  - 25 Supreme Court's hearing of arguments in a Missouri abortion case (May 89)
- 24 THE BREAST IMPLANT CONTROVERSY (FEB 92)**
- 24 Charges that Reagan campaign officials made a deal with Iran to hold up release of the hostages until after the 1980 Presidential campaign (July 1991)
  - 24 Charges that White House Chief of Staff used military airplanes for personal trips (May 91)
  - 24 Supreme Court decision that found laws against flag burning unconstitutional and the attempt in Congress to amend the Constitution (July 90)
  - 24 Nelson Mandela's visit to the U.S. (July 90)
  - 24 Deployment of the Hubble Space Telescope (May 90)
  - 24 Difficulties the government is having in getting people to fill out Census forms (May 90)
  - 24 The NCAA Basketball playoffs (April 90)
  - 24 Supreme Court decision regarding a person's right to die (July 90)
  - 23 Cyclone that devastated Bangladesh (May 91)
  - 23 Attempt in Idaho to pass a bill that would severely restrict abortions (April 90)
  - 23 Greyhound bus drivers' strike (April 90)
  - 23 Discussion of the reunification of Germany (March 90)
  - 23 The World Series (Nov 89)
  - 22 Protests and demonstrations at abortion clinics in Wichita, Kansas (Oct 91)
  - 22 Congressional hearings about U.S. Persian Gulf policy (Jan 91)
  - 22 Reunification of Germany (Oct 90)
  - 22 Washington Mayor Barry's trial (July 90)
  - 22 The 54 year old Oregon woman suffering from Alzheimers who ended her life by using a suicide machine (July 90)
  - 22 President Bush's visit to Colombia to attend a drug summit (March 90)
  - 22 The Super Bowl (Feb 90)
  - 22 Letter bombings of federal judges (Jan 90)
  - 22 Discoveries made by the spacecraft Voyager 2 (Sept 89)
  - 22 Trial of televangelist Jim Bakker (Sept 89)
  - 22 April hijacking of a Kuwaiti airplane by Shiite Moslems (May 88)
  - 22 Cease fire in the war between Iran and Iraq (Aug 88)
  - 22 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (May 88)
  - 22 Charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games (July 89)

**PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY**

- 21 Alleged rape of a young woman at the Kennedy family's Palm Beach estate (May 91)
- 21 Controversy surrounding the way Roseanne Barr sang the National Anthem at a San Diego Padres baseball game (Aug 90)
- 21 Tensions between Moscow and the Baltic Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania who wish to secede from the Soviet Union (June 90)
- 21 Discussions about German reunification (April 90)
- 21 Political changes taking place in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, East Germany and other countries of Eastern and Central Europe (March 90)
- 21 Scandal involving HUD (Aug 89)
- 20 Mikhail Gorbachev's political problems in the Soviet Union (March 91)
- 20 Resignation of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the election of her successor (Jan 91)
- 20 The murder on a New York subway platform of a Utah man attempting to protect his family from attack by teenage muggers (Sept 90)
- 20 Earthquake in Iran (July 90)
- 20 Gorbachev/Bush summit (Dec 89)
- 20 Attempts by the U.S. government to depose General Noriega in Panama (May 88)
- 20 Post-season baseball playoffs (Oct 89)
  
- 19 THE REPUBLICAN PRIMARY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE (FEB 92)**
- 19 THE DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY IN NEW HAMPSHIRE (FEB 92)**
- 19 Attempts by Congress and the Administration to find ways to reduce the budget deficit (Aug 90)
- 19 Elections in Nicaragua (March 90)
- 19 Coup attempt against the Filipino government (Dec 89)
- 19 Attempts in Congress to repeal the new catastrophic health insurance plan (Oct 89)
- 19 Incidents of racial violence in New York City and Virginia Beach (Sept 89)
- 19 Discussions of a U.S. Soviet arms agreement (Sept 87)
- 18 News about the candidates and election campaigns in your state (Oct 90)
- 18 Special meetings between the Bush Administration and Congressional Leaders to find ways to reduce the federal deficit (June 90)
- 18 Continuing news about the Savings and Loan scandal (June 90)
- 18 Reports about renewed inflation and rising interest rates (May 90)
- 18 Senator Moynihan's proposal to cut social security taxes (Feb 90)
- 18 The stock market crash (May 88)
- 18 Conflict in the Middle East between Palestinians and the Israelis in the occupied territories (May 88)
- 17 President Bush's decision to lift the trade embargo on South Africa (July 1991)
- 17 Racial tension in New York City resulting from the Bensonhurst trial verdict and the black boycott of Korean grocers (June 90)
- 17 Discussions between the American and Japanese governments about trade issues (April 90)
- 17 A custody case involving a mother who went to jail and a little child taken to New Zealand by her grandparents (March 90)
- 17 Nomination of Robert Bork to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court (Sept 87)
- 16 David Duke's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 16 Nomination of David Souter to the U.S. Supreme Court to replace Justice William Brennan (Aug 90)
- 16 Washington DC Mayor Marion Barry's trial ending in a mistrial (Aug 90)
- 16 Financial troubles of Donald Trump (July 90)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 **CHARGES THAT ARK. GOVERNOR CLINTON HAS HAD EXTRA-MARITAL AFFAIRS (FEB 92)**
- 15 President Bush's decision to postpone loan guarantees to Israel (Oct 91)
- 15 Resignation of Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze (Jan 91)
- 15 Senate confirmation of Supreme Court Justice David Souter (Oct 90)
- 15 Controversy over the exclusion of blacks from membership in many country clubs at which national golf championship matches are played (Aug 90)
- 15 Education Summit held by Bush and the nation's Governors (Oct 89)
- 15 Ethics committee's investigation of Speaker of the House Jim Wright (May 89)
- 15 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 87)
- 15 Conflict of interest allegations about Attorney General Ed Meese (May 88)
- 15 Scandal involving HUD (July 89)
- 14 President Bush's educational reform plan (May 91)
- 14 Political unrest and the worsening economic situation in the Soviet Union (May 91)
- 14 Renewed fighting between government and the rebels in El Salvador (Dec 89)
- 14 House approval of a cut in the capital gains tax (Oct 89)
- 14 Spy scandal involving a U.S. Diplomat in Vienna (Aug 89)
- 14 Coverage of Democratic and Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Sept 87)
- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 The BCCI international banking scandal (Oct 91)
- 13 U.S. Department of Education prohibition of racially based college scholarships (Jan 91)
- 13 Worsening economic conditions in the Soviet Union (Sept 90)
- 13 Civil unrest and ethnic violence in Soviet Azerbaijan (Feb 90)
- 13 Resumption of fighting in Nicaragua between the Contras and government forces (Nov 89)
- 13 Elections in Virginia, New Jersey, New York City and other localities (Nov 89)
- 13 News about the Republican candidates for the Presidential nomination (Oct 88)
- 12 Nomination of Robert Gates to head the CIA (Oct 91)
- 12 News about the democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Oct 91)
- 12 Russian President Boris Yeltsin's election victory and visit to the U.S. (July 1991)
- 12 The findings of the committee that investigated five senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (March 91)
- 12 Major League Baseball's decision to force George Steinbrenner to give up active control of the New York Yankees (Aug 90)
- 12 Pledge of Nelson Mandela's African National Congress to end the armed struggle in South Africa (Aug 90)
- 12 Marital breakup of Donald and Ivana Trump (March 90)
- 12 Solidarity's role in governing Poland (July 89)
- 11 **THE CONTROVERSY RE GOVERNOR CLINTON'S JOINING ROTC TO AVOID THE DRAFT IN 1969 (FEB 92)**
- 11 The outbreak of civil war in the former Soviet Republic of Georgia (Jan 1992)
- 11 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 11 Debate in Washington about a new civil rights bill (July 1991)
- 11 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (July 1991)
- 11 The incident in Gaza in which a deranged Israeli killed seven Palestinians and the West bank riots that followed (June 90)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)
- 10 Mario Cuomo's decision not to seek the Democratic presidential nomination (Jan 1992)
- 10 News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 10 Japanese purchase of Rockefeller center in New York City (Dec 89)
- 10 The spending and tax proposals made by Congressman Dan Rostenkowski to help reduce the budget deficit (April 90)
- 10 Academy Awards (April 90)
  
- 9 Purchase of entertainment giant, MCA by the Japanese consumer electronics company, Matsushita (Jan 91)
- 9 The investigation of five U.S. Senators for doing favors for Charles Keating in exchange for campaign contributions (Jan 91)
- 9 Aids conference in San Francisco (July 90)
- 9 May day protests in Moscow (May 90)
- 9 Bankruptcy of Drexel Burnham Lambert Inc. (March 90)
- 9 Trial of Hotel owner Leona Helmsley for tax evasion (Sept 89)
- 9 Stories about the 20th anniversary of the Woodstock Music Festival (Aug 89)
- 8 The resignation of White House Chief of Staff John Sununu (Dec 91)
- 8 Conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Oct 91)
- 8 The release of the Kitty Kelley biography of Nancy Reagan (May 91)
- 8 The murder in New York city of Jewish militant rabbi Meir Kahane (Nov 90)
- 7 First reports from the 1990 U.S. census (Sept 90)
- 7 Pat Buchanan's announcement that he will run for the Republican presidential nomination (Dec 91)
- 6 William Bennett's change of mind about heading the Republican National Committee (Jan 91)
- 6 Continuing political unrest in the Ukraine and in other republics of the Soviet Union (Nov 90)
- 6 United Nations Children's Summit held in New York (Oct 90)
- 6 Elections in Romania (June 90)
- 6 The visit to the United States of Vaclav Havel, the new president of Czechoslovakia (March 90)
- 6 Trip of high ranking officials to China (Jan 90)
- 6 Scandal involving the Japanese Prime Minister and other high ranking officials (May 89)
- 6 The scandal involving Congressman Barney Frank and a male prostitute (Oct 89)
- 5 The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Dec 91)
- 4 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)