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## **WACO AND KING COVERAGE FAULTED**

**Times Mirror News Interest Index  
May 1993**

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## WACO AND KING COVERAGE FAULTED

In expressing significant doubts about press performance on the two most closely followed news events of the past month, at least two out of five Americans felt the press was too critical of the Clinton Administration and the FBI for their handling of the Waco, Texas cult tragedy. And one in three complained the media was one-sided in covering the second Rodney King beating trial, usually by favoring the prosecutor.

Roughly one out of every two Americans followed those two events *very closely*, but fewer than one in five gave the media *excellent* grades for its reporting efforts. A much larger portion complained that those stories received *too much* coverage.

And in a harsh retrospective judgment, a majority said the press contributed to the Los Angeles riots after the first King trial because its coverage "encouraged people to go out and join the rioting."

Other highlights of the *Times Mirror News Interest Index* of 1,009 adults conducted April 29 to May 2, 1993, were:

F The civil war in Bosnia finally achieved a significant level of public attentiveness as President Clinton signalled his willingness to commit U.S. forces to stop the "ethnic cleansing." Almost one in four Americans, 23%, said they followed this story very closely, up from 15% in both January and February and from 10% last September.

F Interest in the U.S. economy, in contrast, slackened noticeably, from 49% in February to 37% now. An even smaller portion of the public, 27%, said it followed very closely Republican opposition to Clinton's economic stimulus package. These figures represent the lowest level of public concern about the economy in 18 months, but remain well above the pre-recession level in May, 1990, when fewer than 20% were paying attention to national economic news stories.

F Health care reform continues to be followed very closely by a significant portion (30%) of the public, up slightly from February (28%) despite the absence of hard news (other than unofficial reports) from Hillary Rodham Clinton's task force.

F The Administration's order to allow women to serve in combat military roles was followed very closely by 27% of the public. Somewhat surprisingly, fewer women than men expressed such a high level of interest, 25% vs. 29%, in the subject. In fact, only on news about health care reform were women more attentive than men.

F Only 16% of the public followed the Gay March on Washington very closely, and essentially the same proportion of the public, 15%, volunteered that the event received too much coverage. In contrast, several months earlier, 45% of respondents said they followed the Administration's efforts to lift the ban on gays in the military very closely.

### *KING AND KORESH*

The second King trial and the inferno at Waco overshadowed all other stories in public interest during the period. The events were followed very closely by 47% and 50% of respondents, respectively, ratings which few other events in recent years can match. In comparison, initial showings of the King videotaped beating by four policemen in early 1991 was followed very closely by 46%, for example. A year later, the first King trial and the ensuing riots, including spectacular video of looting, beatings and burnings of Los Angeles, were followed very closely by an enormous 70% of the public.

The press received relatively low grades for coverage of the recent events. Only 16% said the reporting on Waco was excellent, 17% said coverage of King was excellent. A higher

proportion of respondents -- 21% and 30%, respectively -- said coverage was only fair. Last year, the public was more positive about coverage of the first King trial and riots: 22% said excellent, 22% said only fair.

Editorial criticism of the Clinton Administration and of the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the assault on the Branch Davidian compound is not echoed by the public. Respondents were split on whether the criticism was too harsh or about right. Roughly two out of five said it was too critical of the Administration for the decision to attack and of the FBI for the way the attack was carried out. But a similar proportion said the criticism was just about the right amount.

*Press Criticism On Waco Tragedy*

<u>Amt. of Criticism:</u>	<u>Of Clinton Admin.</u>	<u>Of FBI</u>
Too Critical	40	43
Not Critical Enough	12	13
About Right	42	37
Don't Know	6	7
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
	(505)	(504)

*PRESS BIAS SEEN*

The media was even more pointedly criticized for its coverage of the King trial. Most of the public (54%) felt the coverage was fair, but 34% of all said it was one-sided. Far more blacks than whites followed the event very closely (73% to 44%), but the same percentage of both found press coverage unbiased.

Of those who saw bias, almost two out of three felt it favored the prosecution rather than the defense. Three times more whites and Hispanics complained that the prosecution was favored. Conversely, more than twice as many blacks saw press prejudice favoring the policemen on trial.

The public declined to give the press much credit for trying to avoid creating a tense atmosphere in Los Angeles by its coverage of the second trial. Respondents split 47% to 43% on whether or not news organizations did as much as they could in this respect.

Harshest judgment of media performance came on whether the press shared the blame for the extent of the Los Angeles riots following the first King trial. Asked whether the "nature of the coverage" encouraged participation in the riots, far more respondents said yes than no (56% to 32%). Racial differences were very sharp on this question, however: most whites said yes (58% to 29% no), but most blacks said no (53% to 39% yes).

The public also said, although by a narrow margin, that the press made it appear that most black residents condoned rather than opposed the rioting. Fully 44% said condoned, 37% said opposed.

## Press Coverage Of Second King Trial

<i>Q.10/10b Were news organizations fair in the way they covered the recent Rodney King trial and if not, who did they favor:</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Race:</i>		
		<i>Whites</i>	<i>Blacks</i>	<i>Hispanics</i>
Fair	54	54	55	51
One-sided	34	34	31	43
Favored Prosecution	20	22	7	20
Favored Defense	11	9	23	18
Can't Say	3	3	1	5
Don't know	12	12	14	6
	100	100	100	100
	(1009)	(846)	(85)	(62)

*Q.13 Did the nature of the coverage of the riots in 1992 encourage people to join the rioting:*

Yes	56	58	39	52
Yes/maybe/qualified (VOL)	4	5	3	3
No	32	29	53	37
Don't know	8	8	5	8
	100	100	100	100

### *OTHER NEWS AWARENESS*

The public showed a surprisingly high level of interest in the opening of the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC. Fully 31% of Americans said they had *heard a lot* about the event.

Slightly fewer (26%) heard a lot about a document found in Russia which claimed that many more American POW's were held in Vietnam, and 22% heard a lot about a water parasite-caused flu outbreak in Milwaukee. But 34% of the public heard a lot about a California teenage gang that made a sport of sexual conquest of young girls.

In contrast, only 12% had heard a lot about a survey that found only 1% of men are homosexual.

# PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Waco, Texas Incident	Rodney King Trial and Verdict	Reports About the Condition Of the U. S. Economy	Reports On White House Task Force On Health Care Reform	Republican Opposition To Clinton's Economic Stimulus Package	N
Total	50	47	37	30	27	(1009)
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	47	45	41	26	33	(501)
Female	52	50	34	34	21	(508)
<b>Race</b>						
White	50	44	37	29	27	(846)
*Hispanic	55	58	39	27	34	(62)
Black	51	73	37	43	29	(85)
<b>Age</b>						
Under 30	46	54	22	17	16	(236)
30-49	46	49	42	30	27	(419)
50+	57	42	44	40	35	(340)
<b>Educational</b>						
College Grad.	45	45	50	33	38	(292)
Other College	51	47	38	29	27	(257)
High School Grad.	48	46	38	29	21	(349)
< High School Grad.	56	53	23	31	25	(107)
<b>Region</b>						
East	43	45	39	36	28	(205)
Midwest	51	45	37	27	24	(273)
South	54	46	36	33	27	(360)
West	47	55	39	24	30	(171)
<b>Party ID</b>						
Republican	50	41	36	25	31	(286)
Democrat	53	56	35	39	26	(322)
Independent	47	45	42	26	26	(344)

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...

	Decision Allowing Women To Serve In Combat Roles	Debate On Use of U.S. Air Strikes Against Serb Forces	War In Bosnia	Civil March On Washington	Gay Voter Referendum In Russia	N
Total	27	24	23	16	10	(1009)
<b>Sex</b>						
Male	29	30	28	17	13	(501)
Female	25	18	19	15	8	(508)
<b>Race</b>						
White	26	24	23	16	10	(846)
*Hispanic	40	30	29	20	10	(62)
Black	36	21	28	24	11	(85)
<b>Age</b>						
Under 30	22	17	17	17	7	(236)
30-49	26	26	24	13	9	(419)
50+	31	27	28	20	14	(340)
<b>Educational</b>						
College Grad.	28	28	28	17	17	(292)
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# **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The survey results are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,009 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period April 29 - May 2, 1993. 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.



## SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed). The design of the sample ensures this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone households in the U.S. Estimates of the number of telephone households within each county are derived from 1990 Census data on residential telephone incidence that have been updated with state-level information on new telephone installations and county-level projections of the number of households. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing three or more residential listings.

The sample was released for interviewing in replicates. Using replicates to control the release of sample to the field ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample.

At least three attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making a contact with a potential respondent. All interview breakoffs and refusals were re-contacted at least once in order to attempt to convert them to completed interviews. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the "youngest male 18 or older who is at home". If there is no eligible man at home, interviewers asked to speak with "the oldest woman 18 or older who lives in the household". This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

Non-response in telephone interview surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis.

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 1992). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone.

The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters. After an optimum sample balancing solution is reached, the weights were constrained to fall within the range of 1 to 5. This constraint is useful to ensure that individual respondents do not exert an inordinate effect on the survey's overall results.

# **THE QUESTIONNAIRE**

TIMES MIRROR CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS  
NEWS INTEREST INDEX  
April 29 - May 2, 1993  
N=1,009

INTRODUCTION: Hello, I am \_\_\_\_\_ calling from the Princeton Survey Research Associates from Princeton, New Jersey. 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.2 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. (READ AND ROTATE LIST) How closely did you follow news stories about ... (READ SCALE IF NECESSARY)?

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not Too Closely</u>	<u>Not at All Closely</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. The civil war in Bosnia	23	34	28	13	2=100
February, 1993	15	32	33	20	*=100
January, 1993	15	33	30	22	*=100
September, 1992	10	27	31	31	1=100
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	37	38	18	6	1=100
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*=100
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*=100
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1=100
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1=100
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*=100
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1=100
c. The voter referendum in Russia	10	20	36	32	2=100
d. The Rodney King trial and verdict in Los Angeles	47	34	13	6	*=100
e. The Waco, Texas incident	50	37	10	3	*=100
f. The Clinton administration's decision to allow women to serve in naval and air combat roles	27	36	25	11	1=100
g. Republican opposition to Bill Clinton's economic stimulus package	27	32	21	19	1=100
h. Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton	30	30	25	14	1=100
i. The Gay march on Washington	16	25	27	31	1=100
j. The debate about whether to use US airstrikes against Serbian forces in Bosnia	24	32	27	16	1=100

Q.3 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. The civil war in Bosnia	8
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	8
c. The voter referendum in Russia	1
d. The Rodney King trial and verdict in Los Angeles	16
e. The Waco, Texas incident	39
f. The Clinton administration's decision to allow women to serve in naval and air combat roles	1
g. Republican opposition to Bill Clinton's economic stimulus package	6
h. Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton	10
i. The Gay march on Washington	2
j. The debate about whether to use US airstrikes against Serbian forces in Bosnia	2
CAN'T SAY	$\frac{7}{100}$

Q.4 Of all the stories mentioned, which of them, if any, received too much coverage? (DO NOT READ LIST, ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES, BE SURE TO PROMPT FOR "ANY OTHERS". PROBE FOR WHICH BOSNIA ITEM, IF NEEDED).

	<u>TOO MUCH COVERAGE</u>
a. The civil war in Bosnia	4
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	2
c. The voter referendum in Russia	1
d. The Rodney King trial and verdict in Los Angeles	26
e. The Waco, Texas incident	42
f. The Clinton administration's decision to allow women to serve in naval and air combat roles	2
g. Republican opposition to Bill Clinton's economic stimulus package	2
h. Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton	3
i. The Gay march on Washington	15
j. The debate about whether to use US airstrikes against Serbian forces in Bosnia	2
CAN'T SAY	26

**IF RESPONDENT SAID '99' CAN'T SAY IN Q.3, 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.3); excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		<u>Rodney King Trial</u>	<u>Waco Texas Incident</u>	<u>Health Care Task Force</u>	<u>NET Bosnia</u>
15	Excellent	17	16	14	17
46	Good	41	52	43	48
26	Only Fair	30	21	32	25
9	Poor	8	8	8	6
<u>4</u>	Don't Know	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100
(953)		(150)	(385)	(114)	(112)

**I WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU SOME SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ABOUT PRESS COVERAGE OF THE RODNEY KING TRIAL...**

Q.10 Generally, do you think that news organizations were fair in the way they covered the recent Rodney King trial or do you think they tended to favor one side over the other?

Q.10b In your opinion, did they tend to favor Rodney King and the prosecutors side, or did they tend to favor the side of the LA police and their defense attorneys?

54	Fair
34	One-sided
20	Favored Prosecutor
11	Favored Defense attorney
3	Can't say
<u>12</u>	Can't say
100	

**ASK ALL**

Q. 11 Do you think that news organizations covering the trial did as much as they could to avoid creating a tense atmosphere in Los Angeles or not?

47 Did as much as they could

43 Did not

$\frac{10}{100}$  Not sure

Q. 13. Thinking back to the FIRST Rodney King trial, do you think that the nature of the coverage of the riots in 1992 encouraged people to go out and join the rioting or not?

56 Yes

4 Yes, maybe qualified (VOL)

32 No

$\frac{8}{100}$  Don't know/Refused

Q. 14 Did news organizations make it seem that most black residents CONDONED the riots last time, or did news organizations make it seem that most black residents WERE OPPOSED to the riots last time?

44 Condoned riots

37 Opposed riots

$\frac{19}{100}$  Not sure

**A QUESTION ABOUT PRESS COVERAGE OF THE INCIDENT IN WACO, TEXAS...**

**FORM 1**

Q. 15 Do you think the press has been too critical of the Clinton Administration for what happen in Waco, Texas, not critical enough or do you think that the press has handled this about right?

40 Press too critical

12 Not critical enough

42 About right

$\frac{6}{100}$  Don't know/Refused  
(505)



**FORM 2**

Q.15 Do you think the press has been too critical of the FBI for what happened in Waco, Texas, not critical enough or do you think that the press has handled this about right?

- 43 Press too critical
- 13 Not critical enough
- 37 About right
- $\frac{7}{100}$  Don't know/Refused  
(504)

**NOW I WANT TO ASK YOU ABOUT SOME THINGS THAT HAVE BEEN IN THE NEWS. NOT EVERYONE WILL HAVE HEARD OF THEM**

Q.17 As I read a list of names, places or events, tell me if you have heard a lot about it, something about it or never heard of it?

	<u>Heard A lot About it</u>	<u>Heard Something About it</u>	<u>Never Heard of</u>	<u>DK</u>
a. A survey that found that only 1% of men are homosexual	12	30	57	1=100
b. A document discovered in Russia seeming to show that there were many more POW's held in Vietnam than were freed in 1974	26	54	19	1=100
c. A parasite in the water that caused an outbreak of flu in Milwaukee	22	34	43	1=100
d. A gang of teenage athletes in California that made a sport of sexual conquest of young girls	34	36	29	1=100
e. <b>(SKIP ITEM E)</b>				
f. The opening of the Holocaust Museum in Washington DC	31	40	28	1=100

Q.20 In the Presidential election this past November, did things come up which kept you from voting, or did you happen to vote? (IF VOTED: Who did you vote for?)

24 Bush

33 Clinton

12 Perot

1 Voted, don't remember for whom

24 Did not vote

$\frac{6}{100}$  No answer/Refused

# TIMES MIRROR DATABASE

## PUBLIC ATTENTIVENESS TO MAJOR NEWS STORIES (1986 - 1993)

### PERCENT FOLLOWED VERY CLOSELY

- 80 Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger (July 86)
- 73 Destruction caused by the San Francisco earthquake (Nov 89)
- 70 Verdict in Rodney King case and following riots and disturbances (May 92)
- 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 Hurricane Andrew (Sept 92)
- 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 Deployment of U.S. Forces to Somalia (Jan 93)
- 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 *WACO, TEXAS INCIDENT (MAY 93)*
- 50 Opening of the Berlin Wall between East and West Germany (Nov 89)
- 50 Flight of the space shuttle (Oct 88)
- 49 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Mar 93)
- 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)
- 49 Bill Clinton's economic plan (Mar 93)
- 48 TWA hostage crisis that took place last summer in Beirut, Lebanon (July 86)
- 47 *RODNEY KING TRIAL AND VERDICT IN LOS ANGELES (MAY 93)*
- 47 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Apr 92)
- 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)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 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)
- 45 Bill Clinton's attempts to lift the ban on gays in the military (Mar 93)
- 44 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 92)
- 44 The release of the last American hostages being held in Lebanon (Dec 91)
- 43 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Sept 92)
- 43 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Dec 91)
- 43 News about the presidential campaign in 1988 (Oct 88)
- 42 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy (Jan 93)
- 42 The presidential election campaign (Sept 92)
- 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 (May 92)
- 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 *REPORTS ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE U.S. ECONOMY (MAY 93)*
- 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 Congressional check bouncing scandal (Apr 92)
- 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 Race for the Democratic presidential nomination (Apr 92)
- 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)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 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 The Presidential election campaign (May 92)
- 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)
- 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 *REPORTS ABOUT THE WHITE HOUSE TASK FORCE ON HEALTH CARE REFORM HEADED BY HILLARY CLINTON (MAY 93)*
- 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 Accounts about U.S. troops in Somalia (Mar 93)
- 28 Creation of White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton (Mar 93)
- 28 Supreme Court deliberations re legality of PA abortion restrictions (May 92)

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
VERY CLOSELY

- 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 *REPUBLICAN OPPOSITION TO BILL CLINTON'S ECONOMIC STIMULUS PACKAGE (MAY 93)*
- 27 *THE CLINTON ADMINISTRATION'S DECISION TO ALLOW WOMEN TO SERVE IN NAVAL AND AIR COMBAT ROLES (MAY 93)*
- 27 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)
- 26 Russia and the U.S. reach an agreement to sharply reduce their nuclear arsenals (Jan 93)
- 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 DEBATE ABOUT WHETHER TO USE U.S. AIRSTRIKES AGAINST SERBIAN FORCES IN BOSNIA (MAY 93)*
- 24 Controversy over Zoe Baird and Kimba Wood hiring illegal aliens (Mar 93)
- 24 Bill Clinton's cabinet choices and other high level appointments (Jan 93)
- 24 Race for the Republican presidential nomination (Apr 92)
- 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 *CIVIL WAR IN BOSNIA (MAY 93)*

PERCENT FOLLOWED  
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- 23 George Bush's presidential pardon of Weinberger and five others involved in Iran Contra affair (Jan 93)
- 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 Bill Clinton's economic conference in Little Rock with leading economists, policy experts and business leaders (Jan 93)
- 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)
- 21 U.S. and its allies establishing a no fly zone over the skies of southern Iraq (Sept 92)
- 21 Execution in CA of convicted killer Robert Alton Harris (May 92)
- 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)

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- 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 Tennis star Arthur Ashe's announcement that he has AIDS (May 92)
- 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 *THE GAY MARCH ON WASHINGTON (MAY 93)*
- 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)
- 16 Dispute between the President and Congress over allowing Chinese students to remain in America (Feb 90)
- 15 The civil war in Bosnia (Mar 93)
- 15 The civil war in Bosnia (Jan 93)
- 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 Resignation of head of national United Way on charges of financial wrong-doing (Apr 92)
- 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)



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- 14 Pending divorce between Mike Tyson and Robin Givens (Oct 88)
- 13 Attacks on foreigners in Germany by neo-nazis (Jan 93)
- 13 Debate and discussion about the free trade agreement between the U.S., Mexico and Canada (Sept 92)
- 13 Referendum on ending white rule in South Africa (Apr 92)
- 13 Celebration of Earth Day (May 92)
- 13 End of UAW strike against Caterpillar Tractor (May 92)
- 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 Announcement from London that marriage between Prince Charles and Diana is over (Jan 93)
- 11 Civil War and famine in Somalia (Sept 92)
- 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)
- 11 Legalization of banned black opposition groups in South Africa and the promise to free Nelson Mandela (Feb 90)
- 10 *THE VOTER REFERENDUM IN RUSSIA (MAY 93)*
- 10 Israel's expulsion of 400 muslim fundamentalists following the murder of an Israeli soldier in the West Bank (Jan 93)
- 10 Civil war in Bosnia (Sept 92)
- 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)

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- 10 Academy Awards (April 90)
- 9 Discovery of scientific evidence of the beginnings of the universe (May 92)
- 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 Trial of alleged N.Y. mafia boss John Gotti (Apr 92)
- 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 Stock market crash in Japan (May 92)
- 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 Scandals in the British royal family involving the Duchess of York - Fergie and Princess Diana (Sept 92)
- 5 The conflict between the Yugoslavian Republics (Dec 91)
- 4 Marital break-up of Prince Andrew and Sarah Ferguson (Apr 92)
- 4 Dismissal of Pakistan's Prime Minister Bhutto by Pakistan's President (Aug 90)
- 4 Civil war in Cambodia (May 90)
- 3 Woody Allen and Mia Farrow's family breakup (Sept 92)
- 2 Tom Cruise's separation from his wife (April 90)