

SURVEYS: Hill/Timms-Ferrara

Angelou and Spike Lee—praised for receiving very high scores. At one point, Lee asked what he would get for “winning.” Moreover, the inclusion of black responses in the totals tended to overstate the liberalism of Americans. Some of the findings that were presented for all respondents should have been presented only for whites, for whom the items were designed.

THE NBC NEWS/WALL STREET JOURNAL POLL By Lois Timms-Ferrara

The *Wall Street Journal* and NBC News have hired Peter Hart and Associates and the Coldwater Corporation, headed up by Robert Teeter, to conduct their polling. The two major media firms have been conducting polls together since 1985. Until this summer NBC News had maintained a fully-staffed polling unit, but cost cutting has prompted the network to pursue other avenues.

Robert Teeter is best known for his work with Republican politicians, and Peter Hart with Democrats. The pairing of two pollsters of different partisan backgrounds to conduct research for a major television news network and national newspaper is unprecedented. According to Albert R. Hunt, Washington Bureau Chief at the *Wall Street Journal*, either firm could have been selected independent of the other. The choice to invite both firms was made to guard against any public perception of political imbalance in the *WSJ*/NBC polls. A spokeswoman for Coldwater Corporation said that Teeter was approached and asked if he would consider working on a joint effort with Hart. She added that their partisan differences would have little impact on the work they do together. Hart said he thinks the arrangement will work well, and that his political differences with Teeter will merely bring another positive dimension to the work.

As for the mechanics of the new collaboration, representatives from NBC News and the *Journal* will meet with Teeter and Hart to discuss the content of upcoming surveys. The two pollsters will then develop the questionnaire together. One of the firms will conduct all of the interviews for a particular survey and compile the numbers. Teeter and Hart will again meet to analyze the data and report on the results.

Hunt says to expect much of the same type of subject coverage in the new venture as in the earlier collaboration, with a slightly greater tilt toward economic questions. In addition to conducting polls that cover the fast-breaking news stories and some core questions that will be regularly monitored, NBC News and the *Journal* will be doing quarterly studies that concentrate on basic questions of economics, politics, social issues, and cultural-lifestyle matters.

The first Hart-Teeter survey was done September 16-19, with Hart responsible for the data collection. This study focused on the drug question and how Americans view various proposals to deal with it. Other subjects touched on by the survey included abortion, ratings of the president, ratings of Congress (performance and ethics), and views on professional sports betting.
