

ATTITUDES ABOUT THE MEDIA

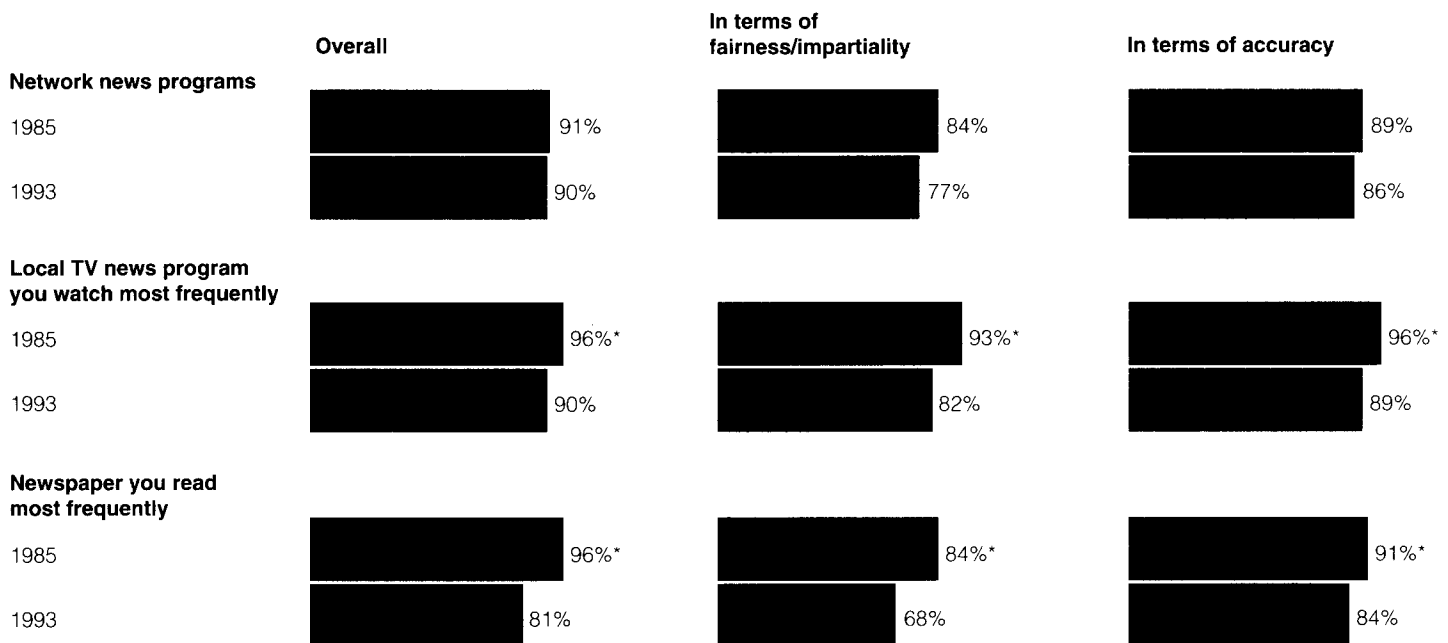
When asked their impressions of the media, Americans give high general marks—albeit slightly lower ones than in the past. Overall, newspapers, magazines, and television news are thought to have a more positive than negative effect on our values.

Question: Overall, how would you rate the job the (network news programs...—programs like ABC World News Tonight, and CNN, and the CBS Evening News, and the NBC Nightly News/local television news program you watch most frequently/local newspaper you read most frequently) are/is doing? Would you say it is very good, or fairly good, or fairly bad, or very bad?

Question: How would you rate the job the (newspaper you read most frequently/network news program.../local television news program you watch most frequently) is/are doing in terms of how fair and impartial it/they is/are to all sides? (response categories same as above)

Question: How would you rate the job the (newspaper you read most frequently/network news program.../local television news program you watch most frequently) is/are doing in terms of how accurately it/they present(s) the news? (response categories same as above)

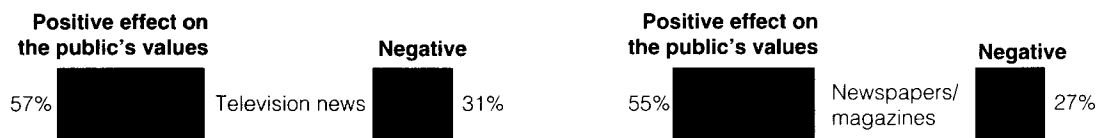
Do/Does a good job...



Note: *The question in the 1985 survey was asked of a prescreened group who said they (read newspapers/watched local television news). The question in the 1993 survey was asked of everyone and the answers of those who volunteered the response that they did not (read newspapers/watch local television news) were excluded from the results.

Source: Surveys by the Los Angeles Times, latest that of March 6-9, 1993.

Question: Do the following aspects of American society have a positive effect or a negative effect on the values of the public, or don't they have much effect?



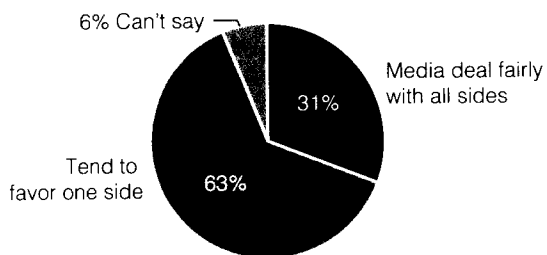
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for Newsweek, September 24-25, 1992.

The Critique...

When the focus moves from the general and superficial to the specific, Americans' criticisms of media performance are sharp. In the public's view, this big, powerful institution tends to favor one side and lets personal preferences influence reporting.

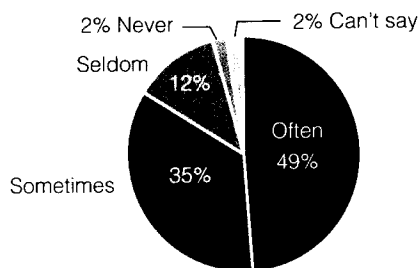
Question: **In presenting the news dealing with political and social issues, do you think that news organizations deal fairly with all sides or do they tend to favor one side?**

In presenting political and social news...



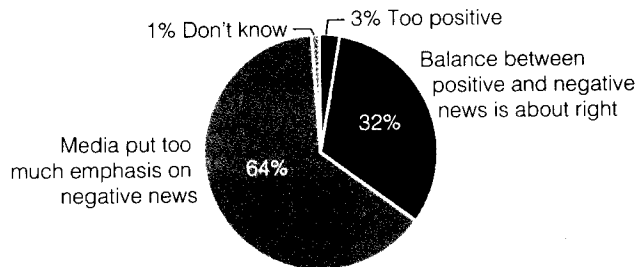
Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Times Mirror Center for the People & the Press, January 3-6, 1992.

Question: **How often do you think members of the news media let their own political preferences influence the way they report the news?**



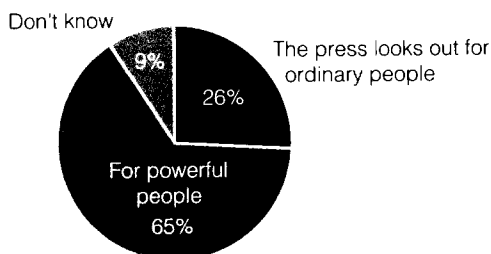
Source: Survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Times Mirror Center for the People & the Press, September 10-13, 1992.

Question: **Generally speaking, do you think the news media put too much emphasis on positive news, or too much emphasis on negative news, or do they strike about the right balance between positive and negative news?**



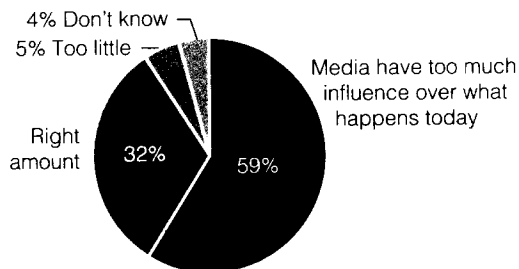
Source: Survey by the Los Angeles Times, March 6-9, 1993.

Question: **Please choose the statement that comes closer to how you personally feel: The press looks out for ordinary people or the press looks out mainly for powerful people?**



Source: Survey by the Los Angeles Times, March 6-9, 1993.

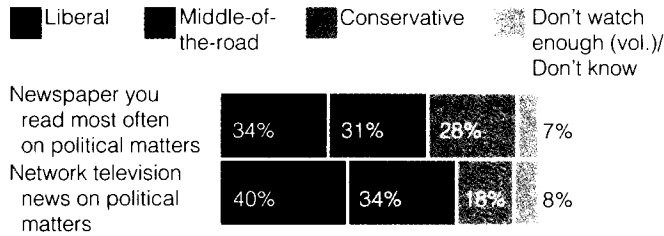
Question: **Generally speaking, do you think the news media have too much influence over what happens today, too little influence over what happens, or do the news media have just about the right amount of influence over what happens today?**



And the Critics

Who are the media critics? Those with higher levels of formal education are the most negative group. (They are also the most attentive.) And Republicans are far more critical than Democrats, not simply on questions that might produce a political response such as the ideological leanings of media, but on media practices generally.

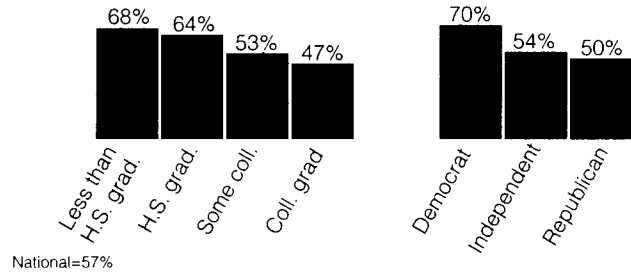
Question: **How would you describe the views of (the newspaper you read most often/network television news) on most matters having to do with politics. Do you generally think of...as very liberal, somewhat liberal, or middle-of-the-road, or somewhat conservative, or very conservative?**



Source: Survey by the Los Angeles Times, March 6-9, 1993.

Question: **Do the following aspects of American society have a positive effect or a negative effect on the values of the public, or don't they have much effect?**

Television news has a positive effect on the values of the public

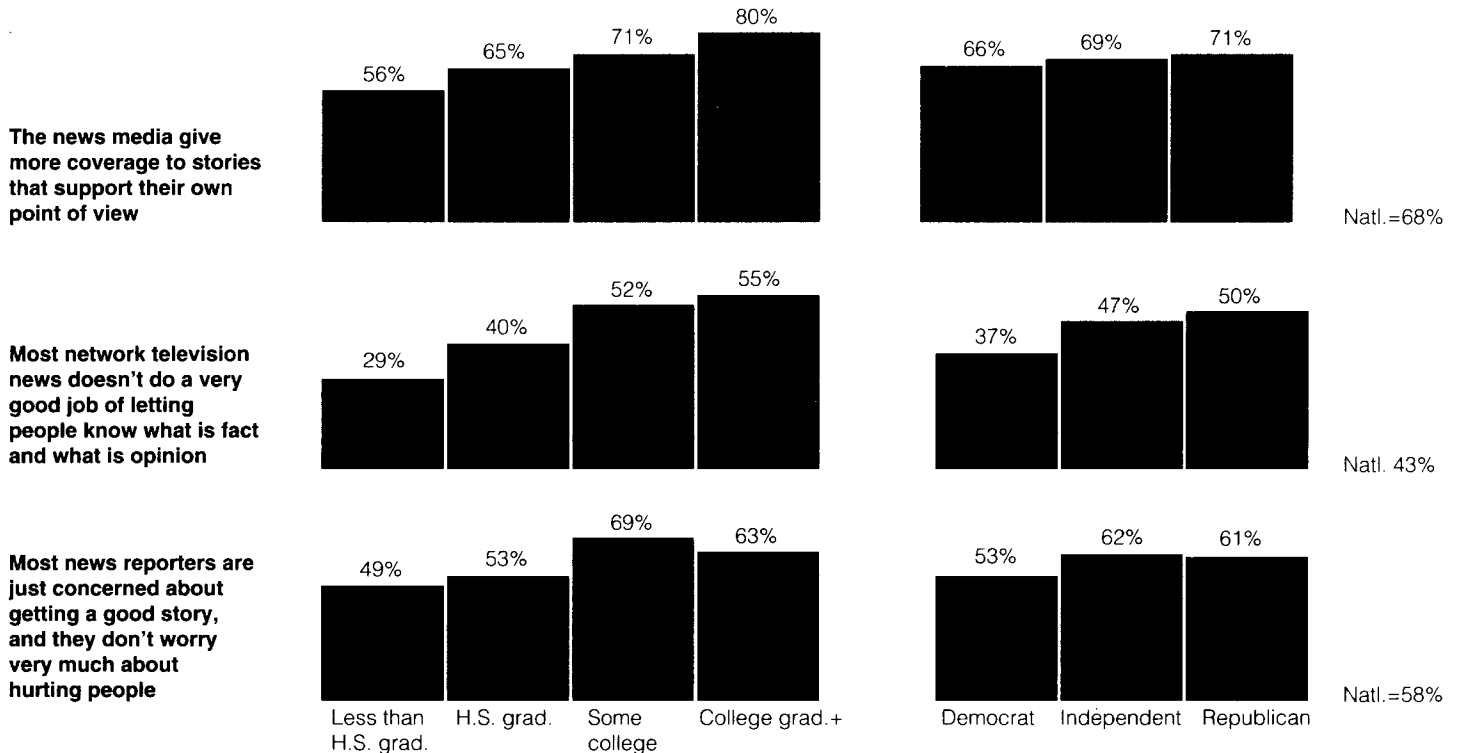


Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for Newsweek, September 24-25, 1992.

Question: **Do you agree or disagree with this statement: The news media give more coverage to stories that support their own point of view than to those that don't.**

Question: **Which of these statements comes closer to how you personally feel: Most network television news is careful to separate fact from opinion, or Most network television news doesn't do a very good job of letting people know what is fact and what is opinion.**

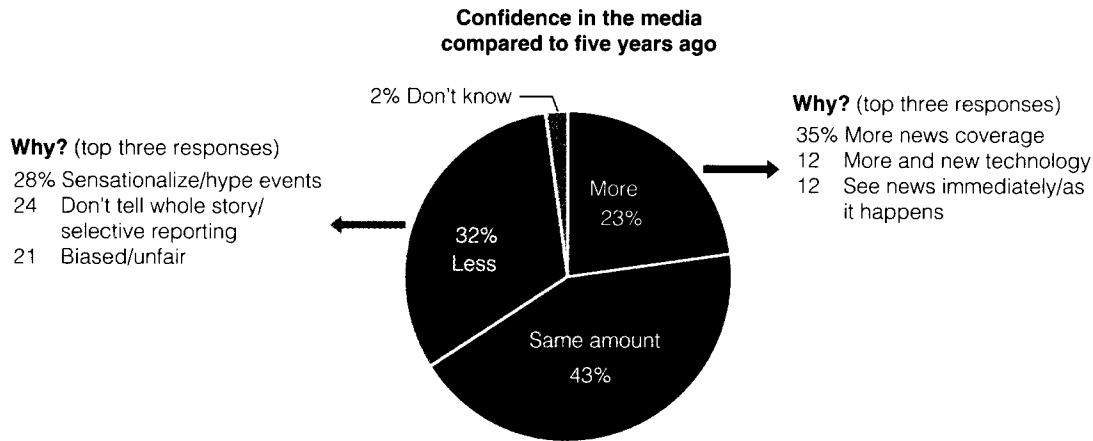
Question: **(Preface same as above) Most news reporters are just concerned about getting a good story, and they don't worry very much about hurting people, or Most news reporters balance their desire to get a good story with concern about hurting people.**



Source: Survey by the Los Angeles Times, March 6-9, 1993.

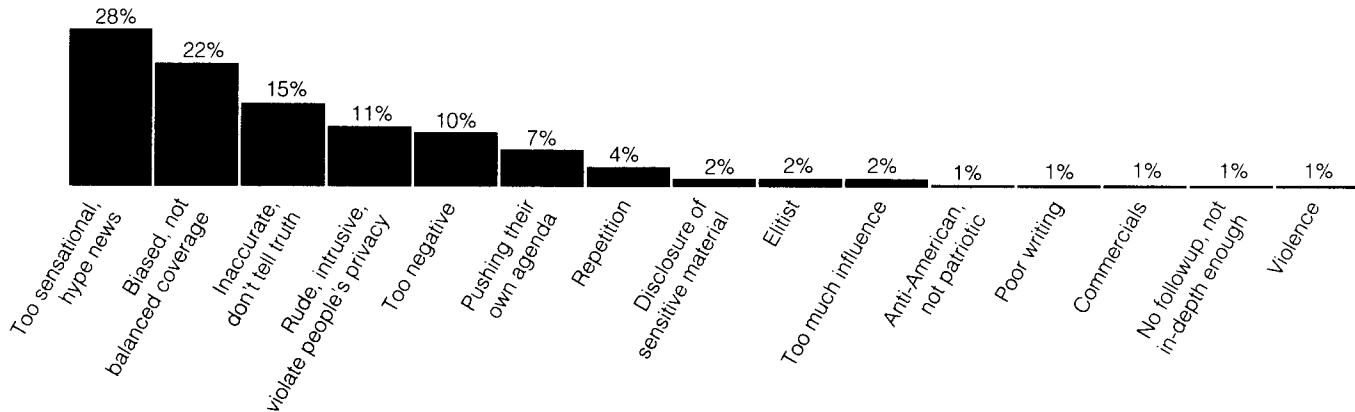
About a third of Americans have less confidence in the media than they had five years ago; 23 percent have more. The sources of increased confidence are technological; the sources of criticism—practices such as hyping the news and selective reporting—are echoed in Americans' biggest complaints about the media.

Question: **Do you have more or less or about the same amount of confidence in the news media today as you did five years ago?**



Note: Another question in the poll asked, "Do you have more or less or about the same amount of confidence in the news media as you did when you first began paying attention to news and current events?" Twenty-five percent said more confidence, 34 percent said about the same amount, and 40 percent said less.
Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, March 6-9, 1993.

Question: **What is your biggest complaint about the news media, that is, could you tell me the one thing that disturbs you the most about the news media? Is there something else that particularly disturbs you about the news media?**



Note: Responses add to more than 100 percent due to multiple responses.
Source: Survey by the *Los Angeles Times*, March 6-9, 1993.