PUBLIC TRUST IN JOURNALISM AND MEDIA: ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM 1970 TO 2015

By Lee B. Becker & Mengtian Chen
James M. Cox Jr. Center for International Mass Communication Training and Research
Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication, University of Georgia

Kettering Foundation Working Paper [2016:2]
February 1, 2016

© Charles F. Kettering Foundation, Inc., 2016. All rights reserved. All or portions of this work are the result of a collaboration with the Charles F. Kettering Foundation. No use whatever of the material in whole or in part may be made without the express written consent of the Kettering Foundation. Any interpretations and conclusions in this work are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Charles F. Kettering Foundation, its staff, directors, or officers.
Introduction

Gallup released its two reports on trust and confidence in the news media in September and June of 2015, and the message was the same.

The percentage of Americans saying they have a great deal or fair amount of trust and confidence in the mass media was at its lowest point since the initiation of the Gallup Governance Survey in 1972.\(^1\)

The percentage of Americans saying they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in newspapers was at one of its lowest points since that question was first asked in 1973 as part of Gallup’s annual tracking of Confidence in Institutions.\(^2\)

The percentage of Americans with this same level of confidence in television news also was near its lowest point since that question was first asked in 1993.

The low level of evaluation of the media by the American public is well documented by these two ongoing Gallup surveys. These surveys also document that the decline in trust and confidence in the media is accompanied by drops in trust and confidence in other American institutions and in government itself.

The reports from these Gallup surveys leave unanswered a number of questions. Are the two Gallup surveys unusual, or do other surveys of American public opinion show the same picture? Do the declines in public confidence in the media deviate from the overall trend for other institutions in any way, or do these simply reflect general patterns that are largely out of the control of the media.

---

\(^1\)www.gallup.com/poll/185927/americans-trust-media-remains-historical-low.aspx
\(^2\)www.gallup.com/poll/183593/confidence-institutions-below-historical norms.aspx?g_source=&g_medium=&g_campaign= tiles
institutions? If the declines in public evaluations of the media deviate from general patterns in any way, what might explain those deviations?

This report addresses those three questions.
Methodological Overview

The Gallup Governance Survey and the Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey together are the longest running gauges of public opinion on the media, and the data they produce are the most cited and analyzed. The surveys have employed a sampling methodology across time that has met scientific standards and has evolved as survey sampling has changed to reflect economic changes in the industry and changes in society.

The surveys also have used a standard question across time.

The Governance Survey asks:

In general, how much trust and confidence do you have in the mass media—such as newspapers, TV, and radio—when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly—a great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

The Confidence in Institutions Survey has used this question:

I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, personally have in each one—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little. Included on the list is newspapers and television news.

We began our investigation by attempting to learn what other questions have been asked by other survey organizations, or even by Gallup, that would put the responses to these two surveys into context. We wanted to know whether the Gallup findings were consistent with what other organizations were reporting and what other questions might tell us about public assessments of the media.
We also searched for additional data on public assessments of other institutions in society so we could determine how assessments of the media might deviate from the overall trends.

Finally, we gathered data about media investments in newsgathering that might help explain any deviations in media assessments from the overall assessments of media institutions, if such deviations existed.

**Databases.** We searched the following survey research archives to find relevant survey data: The Roper Center at the University of Connecticut and Cornell University; the Pew Research Center in Washington, DC; the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) at the University of Michigan; the Odum Institute at the University of North Carolina; and Polling the Nations, a commercial online database of public opinion poll questions.

We used the following key words in our search: mass media, news organization, journalism, news sources, news practice, use of news, newspaper, radio, television news, and Internet news.

We then created a database that included for each match the title of the survey or source, survey firm, or sponsor (if available), year, population, and sample size, the search term, and the question asked. We excluded questions asked about the public’s opinions about or consumption of specific news reports or stories.

As a second step, we identified questions asked on at least five years by the same firm and for which at least some data were available for 2000 or later.
Survey Data Sources. Using these criteria, we identified the following data sources:

Gallup Governance Survey: Starting in 1972, Gallup asked a series of questions about governance that are repeated, often on an annual basis. As part of these surveys, respondents are asked how much trust and confidence they have in the executive branch, in the judicial branch, and in the legislative branch of the federal government, and how much confidence they have in the state and local government. In addition, they are asked how much trust and confidence they have in mass media—such as newspaper, television and radio—when it comes to reporting the news fully, accurately, and fairly.

Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey: Starting in 1973, Gallup has asked a series of questions, often annually, about confidence in institutions in the United States. In 1973, respondents were told: “I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Would you tell me how much respect and confidence you, yourself, have in each one—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?” The word respect was dropped in 1975. The question has remained the same since. The list of institutions about which the respondent was asked has varied quite widely over the years, but it has contained a core set of institutions. Included in that core are the church or organized religion, the military, the US Supreme Court, banks, public schools, newspapers, Congress, television news, organized labor, the presidency, and the police. The items have been randomized in some surveys but not in all.

Gallup Business and Industry Survey: Starting in 2001, Gallup began asking the public about its overall opinion of various business and industry sectors in the
United States. Respondents were asked: “For each of the following business sectors in the United States, please say whether your overall view of it is very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative.” These business and industry sectors included accounting, the advertising and public relations industry, the airline industry, the automobile industry, banking, the computer industry, education, electric and gas utilities, farming and agriculture, the grocery industry, the health-care industry, the Internet industry, the legal field, the movie industry, the oil and gas industry, the pharmaceutical industry, the publishing industry, the real estate industry, the restaurant industry, the retail industry, the sports industry, the telephone industry, the television and radio industry, the travel industry, and the federal government.

Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standards Survey: Since 1976, Gallup has been asking the public about its evaluation of the honesty and ethical standards of people in different fields. Respondents were asked: “Please tell me how would you rate the honesty and ethical standards of people in different fields—very high, high, average, low, or very low?” The list of occupations about which the respondents were asked has varied over the years, but it has contained a core set of occupations, including journalists, TV reporters, advertising practitioners, bankers, business executives, car salespeople, clergy, college teachers, engineers, lawyers, members of Congress (representatives and senators), medical doctors, and police officers.

Pew Political Survey: Since 1985, the Pew Research Center has included in its surveys questions about the public’s overall opinions of some organizations and institutions in the United States. Included were the federal government in
Washington, state governments, local governments, labor unions, Congress, the military, business corporations, the US Supreme Court, and the news media. The responses were categorized into “very favorable, mostly favorable, very unfavorable, mostly unfavorable, never heard of, and can't rate.”

Pew Biennial Media Consumption Survey: Since 1996, the Pew Research Center has conducted a biennial media consumption survey and asked people about their habits of consuming news. Before 1996, the Times Mirror Center, the forerunner of the Pew Research Center, asked some of the same questions. Specifically, respondents were asked about whether they read newspapers, watch any TV news programs, or listen to news on the radio regularly. Respondents also were asked to report the time spent on those media, whether they enjoy keeping up with the news, and the different types of news they are likely to follow.

The General Social Survey: Since 1973, the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago has included on the General Social Survey (GSS) questions about confidence in institutions in the United States, including banks and financial institutions, major companies, organized religion, education, the executive branch of federal government, organized labor, press, medicine, television, the US Supreme Court, the scientific community, Congress, and the military. In addition, the GSS included questions about news sources and news consumption.

State of the First Amendment Survey: Each year since 1997, the Newseum Institute’s First Amendment Center has conducted a survey covering various topics including perceptions of news media bias and press freedom. Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree with statements such as: “Overall, the news
media tries to report the news without bias”; “It is important for our democracy that
the news media act as a watchdog on government”; and, “Journalists should be
allowed to keep a news source confidential.” In terms of press freedom, the surveys
asked: “Overall, do you think the Press in America has too much freedom to do what
it wants, too little freedom to do what it wants, or is the amount of freedom the
press has about right?”

**News Investment Data Sources.** No direct measures of media investment in
news are available. As a substitute, we used data on size, gender, and minority
status of the newsroom staff of daily newspapers from the annual survey of the
American Society of News Editors (ASNE). We used data on television newsroom
staff size from the surveys of Robert Papper for the Radio Television Digital News
Association (RTDNA).

We used data on percent of local television revenue from news from RTDNA,
newspaper advertising revenue from the Newspaper Association of America, local
television advertising from the Pew Research Center State of the News Media 2015
database, the number of newspapers and newspaper circulation from *Editor and
Publisher*, the number of employees in media organizations generally from the US
Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the annual salaries paid to entry-level employees in
media organizations from the Annual Survey of Journalism and Mass
Communication Graduates conducted at the University of Georgia.
Data File. We created a data matrix that contained the actual survey responses, by response category, for each of these surveys. We inputted the data in the form of percentage. The data were organized by year, so that the row in the data matrix reflected the year of the survey, and each of the data points was in a column. In those few cases where we had multiple surveys for the same year by the same survey company using the same question, we selected the survey field data that closely matched those of other surveys in the series.

We input the additional data on investment into this data matrix as well.
Findings

Public Evaluations of Media. Our search of the databases turned up 167 questions that had been asked at least once that met our search criteria. The earliest of these was a question in 1958 on media consumption asked by the University of Michigan Survey Research Center in a survey on consumer attitudes and behavior. We did not include subsequent single-item media use questions in the count of 167. The first questions on evaluation of the media were asked in the Governance Survey by Gallup in 1972. Most of the questions were asked only a small number of times. We found 44 questions that were asked at least five times, meeting our second criterion for inclusion.

The Gallup Governance Survey and Confidence in Institutions Survey are, as noted above, most often cited. The results of the Governance Survey are shown in Chart 1. The results of the Confidence in Institutions Survey are shown in Chart 2. Chart 1 documents the dramatic decline in trust and confidence in the mass media from 68 percent with a great deal or fair amount of trust and confidence in 1972 to 40 percent in 2015. Chart 2 shows that the percentage of citizens with a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in newspapers dropped from 39 percent in 1973 to 24 percent in 2015. The percent with a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in newspapers did increase from 1994 to 2000, but that increase was followed by a decrease in confidence. Those with a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in television news dropped from 46 percent in 1993 to 21 percent in 2015.
The General Social Survey began its battery of questions on confidence in institutions in 1973 and included the measures of confidence in the press and in television. Those trends are shown in Chart 3. The percentage of respondents saying they had a great deal of confidence in the press in 1973 was 23 percent. That figure dropped to 8 percent in 2014. There is no evidence in Chart 3 of the increase in confidence in the press from 1994 to 2000 shown in Chart 2. The percent with a great deal of confidence in television in the General Social Survey dropped from 18 percent in 1973 to 10 percent in 2014.

Gallup has another survey of long duration that asks respondents to evaluate the honesty and ethical standards of people in various occupations. Journalists were first included on the list of evaluated occupations in 1976, and that year 33 percent of the respondents said they would rate the honest and ethical standards of journalists very high or high. As Chart 4 shows, that figure dropped to 24 percent in 2012, the last time the question was asked. Gallup began asking about newspaper reporters and television reporters in addition to journalists in 1981, when 30 percent of those surveyed ranked newspaper journalists as very high or high, and 36 percent evaluated television journalists very high or high. Chart 5 shows that those figures dropped to 21 and 20 percent respectively in 2013.

Gallup has another series, the Honesty and Ethical Standards Survey begun in 2001, which rates industries or what Gallup calls business sectors. The question asks the respondent whether she or he has a positive or negative view of the listed industries. Publishing and radio-television have been included each year. As Chart 6 shows, the percentage of the population with a very positive or somewhat positive
view of the publishing industry has dropped from 47 percent to 40 percent from 2001 to 2015. The percentage with a similar view of radio-television has been stable, with 42 percent giving that rating in 2001 and 44 percent using those terms in 2015.

The Pew Research Center also has asked respondents to evaluate institutions on a favorability scale. In nine of the annual surveys, the news media was one of the listed institutions. In 1997, as Chart 7 shows, 50 percent of the respondents rated the news media as very favorable or mostly favorable. That figure dropped to 40 percent in 2008, the last year news media was included in the survey.

Over the years, Pew also has asked respondents whether news organizations get the facts straight or whether stories and reports are often inaccurate. The data in Chart 8 show that the percent thinking the news organizations get the facts straight dropped from 55 in 1985 to 26 in 2013. Pew found that 25 percent of its survey respondents in 1989 said that there was a great deal of political bias in news coverage. As Chart 9 shows, that figure jumped to 37 percent in 2012. Pew has asked a number of other questions of a similar vein. For example, the percentage of respondents in Chart 10 who say journalists are highly professional has declined from 72 percent in 1985 to 60 percent in 2013. Gallup found in 2001 that 40 percent of its respondents reported that the political views of the news media were just about right as opposed to too liberal or too conservative. In 2014, as Chart 11 shows, that figure dropped to 34.

Chart 12 shows the dramatic decline in the percentage of the population that reported reading a newspaper every day from 1972 to 2014, based on the General Social Survey. In 1972, 68 percent of the respondents reported everyday readership.
In 2014, the figure was 25 percent. Similarly, Pew reports that the percent of respondents who read a newspaper, watched a television news program, or listened to a radio news program regularly declined in each case from 1990 to 2012, though the drop for newspapers was most pronounced, as Chart 13 shows.

The conclusion is quite clear. The decline in public support for the news media shown in the Gallup Governance Survey and the Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey is replicated in surveys by other organizations and by other Gallup surveys.

**Public Evaluations of Institutions Generally.** One of the difficulties in assessing the significance of the downward trends in public assessments of journalists and the media is the documented decline in public trust and confidence in a wide range of institutions, including those of government.

This trend is reflected in Chart 14, which is based on data from the Gallup Governance Survey. Consistent with the trend shown for the media in Chart 1, trust and confidence in the executive and legislative branches of the federal government also have declined markedly. The drop for the executive branch was from 73 percent of the public expressing a great deal or fair amount of confidence in 1972 to 45 percent in 2015. For the legislative branch, the drop was from 71 percent to 32 percent. Support for the judicial branch of the federal government declined more modestly, from 66 percent to 53 percent.

This pattern is repeated in Chart 15, which shows data from the Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey. The comparable data for newspapers and television news are in Chart 2. Of the 11 institutions listed, all but 2 show declines in
confidence. The first exception is confidence in the military, which increased from 58 percent with a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in 1975 to 72 percent in 2015. The second exception is for police, where confidence was at the same level (52 percent) when the institution was first listed in the battery of items in 1993 and in 2015, though there has been variability over the years. Confidence in all three branches of the federal government declined, as did confidence in banks, big business, and even organized religion.

Findings from the General Social Survey question on confidence in institutions mirror those from the Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey, as Chart 16 shows. The parallel data for the two media items in the General Social Survey are in Chart 3. The General Social Survey shows declines for 9 of the 11 institutions in Chart 16, with the military and the scientific community being the only institutions bucking the trend. For the scientific community, the change was slight. The percent of citizens with a great deal of confidence in the military in 1973 was 32, and that number increased to 50 percent in 2014. All three branches of government showed declines in the General Social Survey, as in the Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey.

Finally, Chart 17 documents the general decline in public assessment of occupations, based on data from the business sector survey of Honesty and Ethical Standards. The parallel data for the assessment of journalists are in Charts 4 and 5. The percentage of the public with very high or high ratings of the honesty or ethical standards of 7 of the 12 occupations declined, though in some cases only slightly. For two, there was no change from the initial asking of the question until the most
recent asking. For three—police officers, medical doctors, and pharmacists—there was an increase. Public ratings of the honesty and ethical standards of members of Congress dropped from 15 percent in 1976 to 7 percent in 2014. For US Senators, the drop was from 19 percent to 14 percent.

It is clear from these charts that the decline in assessments of media organizations and journalists has to be understood in the context of an overall societal shift toward more critical assessments of institutions and occupations. Media organizations and journalists may be able to counter those trends, as some institutions and occupations have done, but the performance of journalists and news media should be understood in the context of the overall shifts surrounding them.

To see the assessments of the media organizations and of journalists in this broader context, we standardized the scores for these organizations and for journalists based on the scores for other organizations and occupations across the time period of the three Gallup surveys and of the General Social Survey. We chose these surveys because of the longevity of the data series and because of the variability in objects of public assessment. In the case of the Governance Survey and the General Social Survey, in which data were consistent across years with only minor exception, we created averages that reflected the number of institutions evaluated each year. In the case of the Confidence in Institutions and Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standards Surveys, where great variability exists in what was assessed, we selected the set of objects for inclusion based on their availability for the years for which the media measures were available.
The simplest of these data sets, the Governance Survey, can be used to elaborate on the technique. Each year we summed the evaluations for the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of the federal government and for the media. We then computed the average of these four evaluations for each year. Next we took the raw score, that is, the percent with a great deal and fair amount of trust and confidence in each of these four and subtracted from each the mean score for the four institutions for that year. Chart 18 shows the average deviation score for the four measures in the Governance Survey across the 1972 to 2015 period. The legislative branch of the federal government, the executive branch of the federal government, and the mass media all score below the mean. The judicial branch scores score above the mean across those years. The news media item has the lowest score of the set. When we plot out those deviation scores across time in Chart 19, however, we see that the media were evaluated less negatively relative to the three government bodies in recent years.

Chart 20 shows this same analysis for the Confidence in Institutions Survey. On average, newspapers and television news score below the average for all institutions evaluated. As Chart 21 shows, however, the public is less critical of the media in recent years than it was a few years ago.

Chart 22 shows this pattern for the General Social Survey. Newspapers and television are evaluated quite negatively relative to the other institutions. Chart 23 shows that there has been slight improvement in recent years.

Chart 24 shows that journalists are evaluated quite critically relative to other occupations in the Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standards Survey. Car salespersons
and advertising practitioners are worse. Chart 25 shows that the 2012 evaluation of journalists was better than the 2000 evaluation.

Across all four of these measures, the picture is a complex one in which the media organizations and journalists are viewed critically relative to other institutions and occupations. Of course, that relative assessment could change with the addition or subtraction of comparison points. In contrast with the picture of negative assessments of the media and the journalists from the analysis of the general trends, these standardized trends suggest a more positive picture in which the media criticism is moderating somewhat relative to other institutions and occupations in the more recent years.

Correlations of Media Evaluations. We began our examination of correlates of media evaluations by looking for measures of the evaluations with the largest number of data points. The General Social Survey measured confidence in the press and in television 28 times. The Gallup Confidence in Institutions measured confidence in newspapers and in television news 23 times. We focused our analyses on these two surveys.

The two GSS measures were correlated .60 with each other, using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, which has a range from -1.00 to +1.00. The two Gallup measures were correlated .47. In the 12 years that both surveys measured these two institutions, the GSS press item was correlated only .21 with the Gallup newspaper item. The GSS television item was correlated only .22 with the Gallup television news item. So the measures offer some differences in
terms of wording and time periods and some independence from each other, making them appropriate for the analysis of correlates.

Chart 26 shows the relationship between the size of the daily newspaper newsroom based on the ASNE annual survey going back to 1979 and the deviation scores for the Confidence in Institutions measures going back to 1993 and the GSS measures going back to 1973. The Confidence in Institutions data go back to 1993 rather than 1973 because television news was added that year. The newsroom staff size is probably the best possible measure of newspaper investment in the news product, and the ASNE data show a dramatic decline in staff size starting in 2002.

Confidence in newspapers also dropped dramatically during this time period, even in comparison with declines at other institutions, as measured by the deviation score, but confidence in newspapers began to recover in 2004 compared to other institutions, and confidence in newspapers has moved in the positive direction (closer to the average decline) erratically since. The General Social Survey measures of confidence show the decline in confidence going back a longer period of time, even when newsroom size was slightly growing or constant. And the GSS measure does not show the dramatic decline against the mean after 2001. The GSS measure does show an improvement in assessment of the press in recent years, mirroring roughly the improvement shown in the Gallup measure. Both the Gallup and GSS measures produce 23 years in which there is overlap in data with ASNE, and the correlations show almost no relationship, with .06 for the Gallup data and -.11 for the GSS data.
Chart 27 plots the median television newsroom size, based on RTDNA data, against the Gallup measure of confidence in television news and the General Social Survey measure of confidence in television. For both of the confidence measures, deviation scores are once again used. The RTDNA data are the most comparable to the ASNE data. The RTDNA data show increases in local newsroom size, though unevenly, since 2000. These are matched slightly by both the Gallup deviation scores and the GSS scores, but the fit is far from perfect. The Gallup data match with the RTNDA data for 13 years, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is -.05. The GSS measures match only 6 years, and the correlation coefficient is .28.

We repeated these analyses using the Bureau of Labor Statistics data on total publishing employment numbers and total television employment numbers. The relationships were slightly positive for newspapers, meaning there was a slight relationship between positive movement in the deviation score and employment level. For television, the relationship was actually negative.

We also looked at salary levels paid to entry-level employees and measures of industry revenue. None of these is clearly and consistently correlated with the deviation scores.

Finally, we redid the analyses using the unstandardized measures of confidence from both the Gallup Confidence in Institutions Survey and the General Social Survey. The picture does not become clearer. The Gallup Confidence in Institutions measure of newspaper confidence is modestly correlated with newsroom size, with a correlation of .43 over 33 comparison points. For the General
Social Survey measure, however, the correlation is .09 for 23 data points. With the 
Gallup confidence measure, the correlation with confidence in television news is 
-.46, while it is .13 with the GSS measure.

One relationship that is clear from these analyses is between the confidence 
measures and actual use of the media. Confidence in newspapers based on the 
Gallup measure (unstandardized) is correlated .80 with daily readership of a 
newspaper from the General Social Survey and with regular readership from the 
Pew Biennial Media Consumption Survey. Chart 28 shows the relationship. If the 
GSS measure is used, these correlations are .86 and .49 respectively. For the Gallup 
measure of confidence in television news, the correlation is .81 with regular 
television news viewing, based on the Pew survey, as shown in Chart 29. For the GSS 
measure of confidence in television generally, the correlation with regular television 
news viewing is .33. The picture is much the same if deviation scores are used, 
though the relations are more moderate.
Conclusions

The data analysis leads to the following conclusions.

The public is very critical of journalists and of the news media. It hardly matters what question is asked. The actual performance of those in journalism and of their organizations is viewed critically by citizens.

The public has become more critical of journalists and of news organizations over time. Trust and confidence have decreased, as has the sense that journalists are ethical.

Journalists and the news media are not alone in being evaluated critically. The public also has negative assessments of other institutions, particularly of governmental institutions. The public is especially critical of Congress and the executive branch of the federal government. And that assessment has gotten more negative across time.

Not all occupations and institutions are evaluated negatively, and not all are more critically assessed now than in the past. The public highly evaluates doctors and pharmacists and believes they are more ethical now than in the past. Confidence in the military is high and has increased over time.

In comparison with other occupations and institutions, journalists and the news media actually have experienced smaller declines in public assessments than the average in recent years. So, while the public remains critical and has become more critical, its level of criticism has declined relative to criticism of other occupations and institutions.
The pattern of change in the way the public assesses journalists and news media is not linked across time to what would seem to be likely predictors of those changes. Newspapers in particular have cut staff. Revenue is down. Salaries are static. But these do not predict to the declines in public assessment.

Use of the news media is in sharp decline, paralleling the declines in assessment of journalists and their organizations. It is not possible to say that one of these precedes the other, given the data at hand. It could be that the public makes less use of products it does not evaluate highly, or it could be it has decided it does not evaluate products it no longer uses.

What can be done—if anything—to reverse the trends in use and assessment isn’t clear from these analyses. What is clear is that a democracy cannot function if its citizens do not have information about the world in which they live. So we have a crisis, and we need to find ways to address it. Those ways probably include both improvements in the assessments on the part of the public of journalists and their organizations and in the exploration of alternatives to traditional journalism and traditional media organizations as a means of delivering news to citizens.
Chart 1: Gallup Trust and Confidence in Mass Media

% “Great deal” and “Fair amount”
Gallup Confidence in Newspapers and Television News

% “Great deal” and “Quite a lot”

Chart 2
Chart 3

General Social Survey Confidence in Press and TV

% “Great Deal”
Chart 4
Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standard Evaluation – Journalists
% “Very high” and “High”
Chart 5

Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standard Evaluation – TV Reporters and Newspaper Reporters

% “Very high” and High


TV Reporters
Newspaper Reporters
Chart 6
Gallup Industry Evaluations – Radio and Television Industry, Publishing Industry

% “Very positive” and “Somewhat positive”
Chart 9
Pew Evaluation of Political Bias in News Coverage

% “Great deal”
Chart 13

Pew Media Consumption Habits

% Read newspaper/Watch TV news programs/Listen to news on the radio regularly
Chart 14
Gallup Trust and Confidence in Federal Government

% “Great deal” and “Fair amount”
Chart 15

Gallup Confidence in Institutions

% “Great deal” and “Quite a lot”
Chart 16
General Social Survey Confidence in Institutions

% “Great deal”

- Banks and Financial Institutions
- Major Companies
- Organized Religion
- Education
- Exec. Branch of Federal Government
- Organized Labor
- Medicine
- Supreme Court
- Scientific Community
- Congress
- Military
Chart 17
Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standard Evaluation – 12 Occupations

% “Very high” and “High”
Chart 18
Gallup Trust and Confidence in Mass Media and Government Deviation Score

% “Great deal” and “Fair amount”

-8 -6 -4 -2 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14

Legislative
Judicial
Executive
Mass Media
Chart 19

Gallup Trust and Confidence in Mass Media Deviation Score

% “Great deal” and “Fair amount”
Chart 20

Gallup Confidence in Institutions

Deviation Score

% “Great deal” and “Quite a lot”

-30 -20 -10 0 10 20 30 40

Supreme Court
Presidency
Police
Medical System
Public Schools
Organized Labor
Military
Congress
Church
Big Business
Banks
TV News
Newspaper
Chart 21
Gallup Confidence in Newspaper and Television News Deviation Score
% “Great deal” and “Quite a lot”
Chart 22
General Social Survey Confidence in Institutions Deviation Score

% “Great Deal”

Military
Congress
Scientific Community
Supreme Court
Medicine
Organized Labor
Executive Brand
Education
Religion
Major Companies
Banks
TV
Press
Chart 23: General Social Survey Confidence in Press and TV Deviation Score

% "Great Deal"
Chart 24

Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standard Evaluation Deviation Score

% “Very high” and “High”

- Stockbrokers
- Senators
- Police Officers
- Pharmacists
- Members of Congress
- Medical Doctors
- Lawyers
- Clergy
- Car Salespeople
- Business Executives
- Bankers
- Advertising Practitioners
- Journalists

Deviation Score Range:
Chart 25
Gallup Honesty and Ethical Standard Evaluation – Journalists

% “Very high” and “High”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Journalists Deviation Score</th>
<th>Overall Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 26
Total Newspaper Newsroom Workforce Correlation with Deviation Score of Media Evaluations
Chart 27
Median Number of TV Local News Staff Correlation with Deviation Score of Media Evaluations

- Confidence in Press Great deal (GSS)
- Confidence in TV News Great deal/Quite a lot (Gallup)
- Confidence in TV (GSS)
- Median Number of TV Local News Staff
Chart 29
TV News Watching Correlation with Confidence in TV and Television News
The Kettering Foundation is an independent, nonpartisan research organization rooted in the American tradition of cooperative research. Everything Kettering researches relates to one central question: what does it take for democracy to work as it should? Chartered as an operating corporation, Kettering does not make grants. The foundation’s small staff and extensive network of associates collaborate with community organizations, government agencies, researchers scholars, and citizens, all of whom share their experiences with us.

Dayton Headquarters  
200 Commons Road  
Dayton, OH 45459  
800.221.3657

Washington Office  
444 North Capitol Street, NW  
Suite 434  
Washington, D.C., 20001  
202.393.4478

New York Office  
6 East 39th Street  
9th Floor  
New York, NY, 10016  
212.686.7016