Changing Channels: Entertainment Television, Civic Attitudes, and Actions

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Princeton Survey Research Associates

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Executive Summary

Americans watch a lot of television, and some would argue that this habit is "dumbing down" the public or contributing to its political and civic apathy. But they might be wrong when it comes to certain kinds of TV. In prime time, nestled among increasingly popular reality shows, chic situation comedies and perennial TV news magazines are highly acclaimed dramas, several of which feature government, civic engagement and other social themes. And people who regularly watch such shows say they are learning something and are inspired by what they see on these programs.

The majority of adults aged 18-49 (66%) say they watch prime time TV shows simply for entertainment, rather than with the intention of learning something from shows in the evening line-up. But when adults in this age group are asked about the specific types of entertainment shows they watch in prime time, and the effects shows have on their attitudes and behavior, important differences emerge. Those who watch at least three out of every four new episodes of shows with government and civic themes are more likely than other TV viewers under age 50 to consider the shows they watch engaging and stimulating.

- Seven in 10 of these regular viewers report they often or sometimes talk with family and friends about the characters, storylines and other content of the shows they watch. That number drops to six in 10 among TV viewers who regularly watch other types of prime time entertainment shows to the exclusion of shows with government and civic themes.

- Regular viewers of shows with these themes are also more likely than other regular prime time TV viewers to feel they learn something from watching entertainment TV shows (35% vs. 18%).

Many adults aged 18-49 indicate that entertainment TV shows depicting government and its workers contribute to their understanding of government and politics. Forty-one percent say they learn "a lot" or "some" about these topics from entertainment TV shows with government themes, such as law enforcement, the White House or public schools. While that is only half the number of people in this age group who say they learn as much about government and politics from TV news (83%), it is twice the number who say they gain understanding of these topics from late night TV talk shows (20%).

- Regular viewers of TV shows with government and civic themes again distinguish themselves from other regular prime time TV viewers. Fully half (52%) say they learn a lot or some from watching these types of shows, compared with 39% of those who do not watch such shows a regular basis.

- Young adults under age 25 appear to likewise benefit from watching prime time dramas with government and civic themes, even more so than from watching late night talk shows, a form of entertainment TV often credited with being an important source of information for young people on these issues. More than half of those aged 18-24 (55%) say they learn a lot or some about government and politics from such dramas, while less than a third (29%) say they learn as much from late night TV talk shows.

While generally entertainment TV shows have a modest effect on the political views and behaviors of people aged 18-49, these programs are affecting more than the learning curve of those who regularly watch shows focused on government, civic engagement and other social themes. Entertainment TV shows are also motivating them to change their ideas and to pursue issues and topics explored on the shows.

- Forty-three percent of these regular viewers say that watching an entertainment TV show has encouraged them to find out more about a particular political or social issue. That percentage drops to 29% among TV viewers who regularly watch other types of prime time entertainment shows to the exclusion of shows with government and civic themes.

- Those who are loyal viewers of shows focused on government and civic themes are also more likely than other regular prime time TV viewers to say an entertainment TV show has changed their way of thinking about a particular political or social issue (31% vs. 21%), as well as their views of government and its workers (29% vs. 17%).

- Again, young adults are similarly influenced by what they see on television. Those aged 18-24 are more likely than older adults to say watching an entertainment TV show encouraged them to find out more about a particular political or social issue (40% vs. 28% aged 25-49) and to register to vote or take voting more seriously (24% vs. 15%).

Television is, however, an important influence on the views of many people, not just on those devoted to certain types of entertainment TV programs. When adults under age 50 are asked whether what they have seen on television or their own personal experiences has had more influence on their views of the federal government, opinion is evenly split.

- Forty-five percent of those aged 18-49 say personal experience is the biggest influence on their views of the federal government, but just as many (44%) say what they have seen on television is the more important factor.

These are among the key findings of a new survey about the effects of entertainment TV shows with government and civic themes on viewers' personal attitudes toward government and levels of civic engagement. This telephone survey was conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates (PSRA) on behalf of the Media, Citizens & Democracy project, which is jointly operated by the Council for Excellence in Government

in Washington, D.C., and the Norman Lear Center of the USC Annenberg School for Communication in Los Angeles, California. One of the goals of the Media, Citizens & Democracy project is to create a resource for the entertainment industry about the portrayals of government, its workers and civic engagement in entertainment programming.

The Entertainment TV Survey project was designed to study the relationships between viewership of network TV programs that focus on civic engagement and government themes or that depict actual civic engagement behaviors and attitudes toward government and government employees. To that end, prime time TV programs that met this definition were identified, in part based on the findings of a content analysis conducted last year for the Council for Excellence in Government by Robert Lichter. Eleven specific "target shows" were selected by the Council and the Norman Lear Center from prime time offerings available in the fall of 2002 on the four major broadcast networks as presenting complex, sophisticated portrayals of government employees and civic engagement storylines.

The target shows included *The District, JAG, Judging Amy,* and *The Agency* on CBS; *Law & Order, Mr. Sterling, The West Wing,* and *Third Watch* on NBC; *Boston Public* and *24* on Fox; and *Alias* on ABC. Regular viewers of target shows were defined as respondents reporting that they watched at least three of every four new episodes aired from September 2002 through the time of the interview. In order to better understand any unique relationships between regular viewership of the target shows and civic behaviors and attitudes toward government there needed to be a control group for comparison purposes of people who watch prime time entertainment TV shows other than the target shows on a regular basis. To create this group, PSRA reviewed recent TV ratings for the period immediately prior to the interviewing period to select the 10 highest rated prime time TV shows among viewers aged 18-49, excluding specials, sports, and other non-series programming. The "top 10" shows included two crime dramas (*CSI* and *CSI: Miami*), a medical drama (*ER*), three sitcoms (*Friends, Everybody Loves Raymond* and *Will & Grace*), and five "reality" shows (*American Idol, The Bachelor/Bachelorette, Joe Millionaire,* and *Survivor*).

A more detailed description of the survey methodology can be found in Appendix A of this report.

Detailed Findings

Target Shows and Their Regular Viewers

The target shows attract a large share of the prime time TV audience under age 50 and have many loyal viewers. And while regular target show viewers appear to attach different meaning or value to what they watch, their overall TV viewing habits and their personal characteristics are similar to those of others who regularly watch entertainment TV during prime time hours.

The Target Shows

Seven in 10 adults under age 50 (70%) watch one or more of the target shows at least occasionally. As Table 1 illustrates there is quite a range in overall viewership of these shows. **Law & Order**, the only target show that ranks among the top rated prime time TV shows, boasts an overall viewership of 44%, including 16% who watch on a regular basis. There is a sharp drop in overall viewership for the remainder of the target shows, though there is still a broad range – from a high of

Table 1: Target Shows Ranked by Percent of Overall Viewership			
	-------------Viewers-------------		
	Total	Regular	Occasional
Law & Order	44	16	28
JAG	25	8	17
The West Wing	25	7	18
Third Watch	23	8	15
Boston Public	23	7	16
Judging Amy	20	5	15
24	19	8	11
The District	18	4	14
Alias	17	5	12
The Agency	12	3	10
Mr. Sterling	6	1	5

25% for **JAG** down to 12% for **The Agency**. In the same way, none of these shows has a regular viewership of more than eight percent. Finally, the critically acclaimed but now cancelled **Mr. Sterling** has an overall viewership of only six percent with a negligible number of regular viewers.

The Regular Viewers

Altogether, 38% of adults under age 50 watch at least one of the target shows on a regular basis, that is, they watch at least three out of every four new episodes of a show. Seventeen percent of these viewers are loyal to two or more target shows, while 21% watch only one. Just 30% of this age group regularly watch one of the top 10 rated shows in prime time but do not watch any of the target shows.

The TV viewing habits of those who regularly watch target shows are similar to those of regular viewers of non-target shows. This is not surprising given that 85% of regular target show viewers also regularly watch at least one of the non-target shows. For example, majorities of both types of regular viewers say they usually watch more prime time entertainment shows on major broadcast networks than they do on cable networks like HBO, Showtime or USA (71% target show and 67% non-target show). In addition, more than half of regular target show viewers (54%) say they watch at least eight hours of

entertainment TV during prime time in an average week, including 34% who say they watch 15 or more hours a week. A similar percentage of regular non-target show viewers (55%) report watching at least eight hours of prime time TV per week, although only 20% report watching 15 or more hours in a typical week.

Regular viewers of target shows are also demographically similar to the group of people who regularly watch prime time shows to the exclusion of the target shows with one exception. One in five target show viewers is black, compared with just six percent of regular non-target show viewers. Conversely, more non-target show viewers than target show viewers are white (73% vs. 63%). This could be due in part to the fact that black people watch more hours of prime time TV generally than whites or Hispanics. Specifically, 38% of blacks report that on average they watch 15 or more hours of prime time TV a week; that percentage decreases significantly among both whites (19%) and Hispanics (20%). Given how many of the prime time hours are filled with the target shows, it stands to reason that black people would represent a larger portion of the collective target show audience.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Regular Viewers of Target Shows		
	Regular Viewers of Target Shows	Regular Viewers of Non-Target Shows
	%	%
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic white	63	73
Non-Hispanic black	19	6
Hispanic	15	12
Gender		
Male	41	47
Female	59	53
Age		
18-24	22	21
25-34	26	32
35-49	50	47
Education		
College graduate	23	28
Some college	31	27
Total no college	46	46

As Table 2 illustrates, however, the background characteristics of the two groups of regular viewers are otherwise quite similar.

What Viewers Learn from Entertainment TV

Compared with regular viewers of the most popular prime time entertainment TV shows, regular viewers of target shows find the programs they watch to be more engaging and stimulating. And while they aren't necessarily looking to learn things from what they watch, target show viewers are more likely to say they learn things from the shows they watch. The youngest segment of the adult population (age 18-24) are both more likely to regularly watch target shows and more likely to report learning from the shows they watch.

Entertainment TV Shows as a Subject of Conversation and General Learning

Seven in 10 (70%) regular viewers of target shows say they often or sometimes talk with friends or family members about the characters, storylines, or other content of the

shows they watch. Fewer (59%) regular viewers of non-target shows say the shows they watch spur conversations with friends and family. By age, young adults age 18-24 are more likely to talk often or sometimes about the content of the shows they watch with friends and family (67% vs. 51% of those age 25-34 and 44% of those age 35-49).

When asked a general question about whether they ever learn anything from watching the prime time shows asked about in the survey – or simply watch them for entertainment – relatively few adults under age 50 (22%) say they ever learn anything from watching. Nonetheless, twice as many regular target show viewers compared with regular viewers of non-target shows (35% vs. 18%) say they have learned something from watching.

Two non-target shows, one that focuses on forensic science in criminal investigations (***CSI***) and another that routinely deals with medical and health issues (***ER***) are mentioned most often when people are asked to name the entertainment TV show from among those asked about in the survey from which they learn the most. Target show ***Law & Order*** ranks third on the list. The size of these shows' audiences, however, is an important reason why they top the list. Of the shows listed in the survey questionnaire, only ***Friends*** has more regular viewers among people age 18-49 than ***CSI*** and ***ER***. And ***Law & Order*** has twice as many regular viewers as any other target show. When audience size is accounted for by breaking out regular viewers of particular shows, two less popular target shows emerge as particularly likely to foster learning:

- 23% of regular viewers of Fox's popular ***Boston Public*** name that show as the one show in particular they learn the most from – comparable to the 25% of regular ***CSI*** viewers who say the same about the #1 rated CBS show. Among the 18-24 age group as a whole, five percent name ***Boston Public*** as the show they most associate with learning, statistically equivalent to the percentage who cite ***Law & Order*** (six percent), ***ER*** (six percent), and ***CSI*** (eight percent).

- 20% of regular viewers of CBS's ***Judging Amy*** name that show as the one show in particular they learn the most from, comparable to the 18% of regular ***Law & Order*** viewers who say the same about the long-running NBC legal drama.

Perceived Learning about Government and Politics from Entertainment TV Shows

More specific questioning about whether people learn things about "government and politics" while watching entertainment TV shows with government themes, makes an even stronger case that the target shows have an impact on learning, and that the youngest segment of the adult population are most likely to learn things from this kind of TV show. Overall, 41% of people age 18-49 say they learn "a lot" or "some" about government and politics from watching "entertainment TV shows with government

themes, such as law enforcement, the White House, or public schools." That is only half the number who say they learn a lot or some about government and politics from "watching TV news" (83%), but it is double the number who say they get such information from another kind of entertainment TV – "late night talk shows" (20%).

Target show viewers distinguish themselves in several ways. First, about half of those who regularly watch target shows (52%) say they learn a lot or some about government and politics from watching shows with government themes. And that percentage rises to 57% among those who watch **two or more** target shows. Regular viewers of non-target shows (39%) are less likely to say they learn as much from this kind of entertainment TV show. Looking at the audiences of specific target shows, 61% of regular **Law & Order** viewers and 60% of regular viewers of **The West Wing** say they learn at least some about politics and government from shows they watch with government themes.

The target shows seem to promote more learning about government and politics than late night talk shows like those hosted by Jay Leno and David Letterman, both overall and among young adults in particular. Less than half of those who describe themselves as regular viewers of Leno-Letterman-type shows (41%) say they learn at least some about government and politics from watching late night talk shows. While it has been reported that such shows are a primary source of political information for many young people, the survey suggests that dramatic TV series like the target shows actually have more impact in educating young people about these subjects. A clear majority (55%) of those age 18-24 say they learn a lot about government and politics from watching entertainment shows with government themes. Less than a third of 18-24 year-olds (29%) say they experience similar learning from watching late night talk shows.

Effects of Entertainment TV Show Viewership on Political Attitudes and Behaviors

In addition to conveying information about government and politics to their regular viewers, the target shows also have a significant effect in encouraging viewers to find out more about specific issues that are part of the storylines, changing viewers' ways of thinking about particular issues, and altering their views toward government. Additionally, certain target shows greatly affect their viewers' attitudes about voting.

- More than four in 10 (43%) regular viewers of target shows say they have been encouraged to find out more about a particular political or social issue as a result of watching an entertainment TV series. By comparison, only three in 10 (29%) regular viewers of non-target shows say they were so influenced, not significantly greater than the number of people who don't watch any target or top 10 show on a regular basis

(23%). Over half the regular viewers of *The West Wing* (57%) and *Judging Amy* (56%) say they have been moved to try to find out more about a particular issue as a result of watching an entertainment TV series.

▪   Three in 10 (31%) regular viewers of target shows say that watching an entertainment TV series has changed their way of thinking about a particular political or social issue. That is significantly greater than the number of regular viewers of non-target shows who have been influenced in this way (21%). Among regular viewers of *The West Wing*, nearly half (47%) say they have changed their thinking on an issue as a result of watching an entertainment TV series.

▪   Close to three in 10 (29%) regular viewers of target shows say that watching an entertainment TV series has changed the way they think about government or people who work for government. Again, the control group of regular viewers of non-target shows is less likely to say they have been so affected (17%). Nearly half (46%) the regular viewers of *The West Wing* say that watching a series has changed their view of government or government employees.

▪   About a third of the regular viewers of *Judging Amy* (33%) and *The West Wing* (31%) say that watching an entertainment TV show has inspired them to register to vote or to take voting more seriously. Regular target show viewers as a whole, however, are no more likely than others to say a TV show has influenced them in this way.

Given the concerns about young people being disengaged from politics and public affairs, it is worth noting that entertainment TV shows like the target shows can make a difference in spurring interest in political matters. Forty percent of those age 18-24 say they have been encouraged to find out more about a particular political or social issue as a result of watching an entertainment TV show.

TV as a Source of Information about Government

The medium of television has a major influence on people's view of the federal government. Among all those age 18-49, about as many say that what they see on television matters more than personal experience in determining their view of government as say personal experience is the more important factor (44% vs. 45%). The subgroup most likely to say television is the bigger influence are those who do not regularly use any news source, be it TV or radio, newspapers or magazines, or the Internet. Fifty-seven percent of the non-regular consumers of news outlets, compared with 43% of regular consumers, say what they see on TV has more impact than personal experiences on their view of the federal government. Demographically, women are more likely than men (49% vs. 39%) and those with no college are more likely than the college educated (50% vs. 39%) to say TV is more important. No significant differences are found by age.

Overall, regular target show viewers are no more likely than regular non-target show viewers (47% and 47%, respectively) to say TV is a more important influence on their view of government than personal experience. Differences are found between the audiences of certain target shows, however. Regular viewers of *Judging Amy*, a predominantly female and less well-educated group, are more likely to identify TV as the bigger influence on their view of the federal government than the highly educated regular viewers of *The West Wing* (62% vs. 39%).

The Accuracy of Entertainment TV Portrayals of Government and Its Workers

The TV viewing public is divided about how accurately entertainment TV shows in general portray government and people who work in government. About four in 10 adults under age 50 say such portrayals are mostly (39%) or very (2%) accurate, while an equal number report that such portrayals are mostly (33%) or very (8%) inaccurate. But when asked about specific types of government-themed shows, the public gives a range of accuracy ratings, with shows with judicial themes getting the highest marks.

Regular viewers of target shows are more likely than regular viewers of non-target shows to perceive TV depictions of government as credible. A majority (58%) say the way entertainment TV shows portray government and people who work in government is accurate, compared with 44% of those who regularly watch non-target shows. Target show viewers who are loyal to two or more of the target shows are especially impressed with the depictions; 64% indicate the shows provide realistic portrayals.

Gender and race or ethnicity are also related to perceptions of these portrayals. Women are more likely than men to say entertainment TV shows provide accurate depictions of government and its workers, as are blacks and Hispanics when compared with whites. Whether someone works for the government themselves or lives with someone who does, however, is not related to perceptions of these portrayals, nor are a person's age or education.

Table 3: The Portrayals of Government And Government Workers On Entertainment TV Shows	
	Percent Saying Very/Mostly <u>Accurate</u>
Regular viewers of:	
Target shows	58
Non-target shows	44
Men	37
Women	46
Non-Hispanic Whites	38
Non-Hispanic Blacks	51
Hispanics	53

Accuracy of Specific Types of Shows

The viewing public's ambivalence about how accurately entertainment TV shows in general portray government and people who work in government is explained somewhat by the range of assessments given for shows focused on specific types of government jobs and workers. Specifically, people who watch the following types of entertainment TV shows at least occasionally were asked to rate the accuracy of the shows' characters and

storylines: shows depicting federal, state or local government; the judicial system, public schools, the military, and the CIA. With the exception of shows about the CIA, majorities of viewers think these types of shows present realistic characters and storylines. Shows with judicial themes like *Law & Order* and *Judging Amy* get the largest percentage of viewers (64%) crediting them with accurately portraying government workers and situations. Such shows are closely followed in the ranking by shows like *JAG* about the military (63%) and those like *Boston Public* about public schools (60%). A somewhat smaller majority of viewers of shows about government such as *The West Wing*, *Mr. Sterling* and *The District* (51%) report such shows provide accurate depictions of government workers and situations. In contrast, just over half of those who watch *Alias* or *The Agency* (55%) report that the character portrayals and storylines in such shows are mostly (45%) or very (10%) *inaccurate*.

Regular viewers – those who watch three or four of every four new episodes – of these specific types of government-themed shows are more likely than the shows' viewers in general to say the characters and storylines are realistic. For example, more than seven in 10 regular viewers of *Judging Amy* (78%) and *Law & Order* (73%) say the portrayals in judicial shows are accurate, notably higher than the share of viewers in general (64%). As another example, while just half of the general viewers of government shows (51%) say the characters and storylines in these shows are accurate, 61% of those who regularly watch *The West Wing* deem portrayals on such shows mostly (47%) or very (14%) accurate. The same pattern is apparent for shows focused on the military and the public schools.

Regression Analysis Shows Entertainment TV Viewership Alone Is a Minor Factor in Civic Engagement and Attitudes toward Government

One of the main goals of the Entertainment TV Survey project was to determine whether a statistical relationship could be demonstrated between watching TV shows such as the target shows that feature government and civic themes and TV viewers' level of civic engagement and their personal attitudes toward government. Previous research has shown that civic engagement and attitudes toward government are each influenced by several demographic and other background characteristics so it was important to consider these existing relationships in examining the relationship between viewership of entertainment TV shows and civic engagement and attitudes toward government. To that end, *multiple linear regression analysis* was used to investigate the pattern of relationships between select background characteristics and civic engagement and attitudes toward

government, respectively.[1] For the purposes of the analysis, several individual types of civic actions (e.g., volunteering and voting) measured in the survey were combined to represent overall "civic engagement;" likewise, several individual views of government (e.g., confidence in federal government and feel government benefits all people) were combined to represent overall "attitudes toward government."

The regression analysis shows that while regularly watching one or more of the target shows initially appears to be somewhat related to one's "civic engagement" and "attitudes toward government," those relationships mostly disappear when other background characteristics are taken into account. Simply put, other background factors such as education, age or ethnicity each have a much stronger influence than TV viewership on these overall behaviors and attitudes.

The one exception is a tenuous relationship between TV viewing habits and political civic engagement which remains even when other characteristics are taken into consideration. Regularly viewing target shows is related to increased participation in activities such as voting, making political contributions and following government affairs; regularly watching non-target shows to the exclusion of the target shows has a negative relationship to engagement in such activities.

While the regression analysis findings might appear contradictory to findings described earlier in this report, particularly those in the section **Effects of Entertainment TV Show Viewership on Political Attitudes and Behaviors,** they are not. Instead, the regression analysis reveals a deeper level of influence on overall civic behavior and attitudes than can be observed by simply looking at the relationship between **one** individual characteristic, for example target show viewership, and **one** individual attitude such as whether or not the government can be trusted.

Other Findings

Government Generally Viewed as Efficient, Especially by 18-24 Year-Olds

A majority of Americans under age 50 (58%) disagree that "when something is run by the government it is usually inefficient and wasteful." Fewer than two in five (38%) take the opposite view that government enterprises are usually hampered by bureaucracy. These findings reflect a more positive view of the government than those observed as recently as 2002. This may be due in part to the fact that portions of the interviewing

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[1]   This statistical technique is helpful in understanding the unique relationship between each individual background characteristic, such as age, education and television viewing habits, and the behavior or attitude of interest (i.e., civic engagement or attitude toward government), while accounting for the impact other characteristics included in the analysis may have on the behavior or attitude of interest. A complete description of the regression analysis is provided in Appendix B of this report.

period took place during the Iraq war, a period when the public was more likely to withhold criticism of the government.

This positive view of how government does its job is widespread. Majorities across major demographic subgroups disagree that government is generally inefficient and wasteful, though some groups are more likely to have this view. Not surprisingly, people who themselves work for the government are less likely to see it as an inefficient operation. Sixty-six percent of government workers disagree that government is inefficient and wasteful, compared with 56% of those who neither work for government themselves nor live with someone who does.

Several other factors influence perceptions of government bureaucracy:

- Adults age 18-24 are more likely than those age 25-49 to disagree that government operations are usually inefficient and wasteful (76% vs. 54%).

- Two-thirds of women (65%) indicate that the government works efficiently; that proportion drops to half among men (51%).

- In addition, more blacks and Hispanics compared with whites perceive the government as efficient (76% and 70% vs. 54%).

- In contrast, adults under age 50 who regularly use the Internet for news (48%) and those who are regular listeners of talk radio (45%) are more likely than others to agree that things run by the government are usually inefficient and wasteful.

Despite a longstanding trend in public opinion studies of Republican criticism of government efficiency, political party identification is not an important influence on this issue. Regular target show viewership is likewise unrelated.

An Endorsement for Careers in Government

A majority of adults under age 50 (72%) say if they had a son or daughter they would like to see a child of theirs take a job in government or public service when they get out of school. In addition, majorities across major demographic subgroups share this opinion, though some groups are even more likely than others to support this idea. More than eight in 10 people who work for federal, state or local government themselves (84%) say they would like to see their child become a civil servant, compared with seven in 10 who do not themselves work in a government job (70%). In addition, Republicans are more likely than Independents (76% vs. 68%) to say they would like to see their child take a job in government, as are men when compared with women (76% vs. 69%).

Unique Characteristics of Selected Target Shows

Since nearly half of regular target show viewers watch two or more of the target shows (17% out of 38%), regular viewers of specific target shows share many demographic characteristics, as well as opinions about issues examined in the survey. There are, however, some characteristics of specific regular viewers that stand out:

- **The West Wing**: Regular viewers of this government drama are highly educated – 38% are college graduates and that includes 17% who have post-graduate or professional training. And since the show depicts an unapologetically Democratic White House perhaps the political party profile of its regular viewership is not surprising. Nearly half of these viewers (49%) are self-identified Democrats, about double the number of their Republican (26%) or Independent (20%) counterparts.

- **Boston Public**: Regular viewers of the only show focused on the workings of a public high school are themselves typically very young – 44% are age 18-24. In addition, this group has the dubious distinction of being more likely than viewers of many other target shows to mistakenly think Simon Cowell is the current White House Chief of Staff; 31% pick Simon, and only 10% correctly pick Andrew Card.

- **Judging Amy**: These regular viewers are small in number but have a distinct profile. Three in four are women (76%) and they are among the oldest group of regular viewers with 72% age 35-49. In addition, 57% have no college education, a figure notably higher than that for regular target show viewers overall (46% no college).

- **JAG**: Regular viewers of this popular military drama have an atypical geographic profile among target shows – more than half of viewers (54%) live in the South and fully four in 10 (40%) live in rural areas. **JAG** also boasts the only audience that is exactly half men (50%) and half women (50%).

Appendix A

Survey Methodology

Summary

The Entertainment TV Survey, sponsored by the Media, Citizens & Democracy Project (MCD), obtained telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,000 people ages 18-49 living in continental United States telephone households. The interviews were conducted in English by Princeton Data Source, LLC from March 25 to May 4, 2003. Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is ±3.6%.

Details on the design, execution and analysis of the survey are discussed below.

Design and Data Collection Procedures

Sample Design

The sample was designed to represent the U.S. population ages 18-49 living in telephone households. Five hundred completes were from callback sample, and five hundred were from standard list-assisted random digit dialing (RDD) sample. The RDD sample was provided by Survey Sampling International, LLC (SSI) according to Princeton Survey Research Associates (PSRA) specifications. For this sample, active blocks of telephone numbers (area code + exchange + two-digit block number) that contained three or more residential directory listings were selected with probabilities in proportion to their share of listed telephone households; after selection two more digits were added randomly to complete the number. This method guarantees coverage of every assigned phone number regardless of whether that number is directory listed, purposely unlisted, or too new to be listed. After selection, the numbers were compared against business directories and matching numbers purged.

Questionnaire Development and Testing

The questionnaire was developed by PSRA in collaboration with MCD staff. In order to improve the quality of the data, the questionnaire was pretested with a small number of respondents using listed telephone numbers. The pretest interviews were monitored by PSRA staff and conducted using experienced interviewers who could best judge the quality of the answers given and the degree to which respondents understood the questions.

Contact Procedures

Interviews were conducted from March 25 to May 3, 2003. As many as 10 attempts were made to contact every sampled telephone number. Sample was released for interviewing in replicates, which are representative subsamples of the larger sample. Using replicates to control the release of sample ensures that complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. It also ensures that the geographic distribution of numbers called is appropriate.

Calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chance of making contact with potential respondents. Each household received at least one daytime call in an attempt to find someone at home. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with a randomly selected eligible households member.

Weighting and Analysis

Weighting is generally used in survey analysis to compensate for patterns of nonresponse that might bias results. The interviewed sample of all adults was weighted to match national parameters for sex, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region (U.S.

Census definitions). These parameters came from a special analysis of the March 2002 Current Population Survey (CPS) that included all continental U.S. telephone households with a person age 18-49.

Weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables using a statistical technique called the ***Deming Algorithm***. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the national population. A first-stage weight was computed for each case which accounts for the number of eligible respondents in each household. Table 1 compares weighted and unweighted sample distributions to population parameters.

Table 1: Sample Demographics

	Parameter	*Unweighted*	*1st Stage Weight*	*Final Weight*
Gender				
Male	49.3	48.2	48.8	49.7
Female	50.7	51.8	51.2	50.3
Age				
18-24	20.6	11.9	12.4	17.8
25-34	29.3	27.2	27.1	30.0
35-44	34.0	43.4	44.0	35.5
45-49	16.2	17.4	16.5	16.7
Education				
Less than HS Grad.	13.4	6.2	6.0	11.3
HS Grad.	34.9	30.2	29.3	34.8
Some College	25.8	27.5	27.9	26.5
College Grad.	25.8	36.2	36.8	27.4
Region				
Northeast	19.4	19.0	18.7	19.7
Midwest	23.3	31.6	32.1	24.2
South	35.1	33.4	33.1	35.5
West	22.2	16.0	16.0	20.6
Race/Ethnicity				
White/not Hispanic	68.1	82.6	83.4	70.9
Black/not Hispanic	11.9	8.1	7.3	11.2
Hispanic	14.3	6.2	6.0	12.6
Other/not Hispanic	5.7	3.1	3.3	5.3

Effects of Sample Design on Statistical Inference

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. PSRA calculates the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called " design effect" or **deff** represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from systematic non-response. The total sample design effect for this survey is 1.31.

PSRA calculates the composite design effect for a sample of size **n**, with each case having a weight, **w**$_i$ as:

$$deff \ = \ \frac{n \sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i^2}{\left(\sum_{i=1}^{n} w_i \right)^2} \qquad \textbf{\textit{formula 1}}$$

In a wide range of situations, the adjusted **standard error** of a statistic should be calculated by multiplying the usual formula by the square root of the design effect ($\sqrt{}$**deff**). Thus, the formula for computing the 95% confidence interval around a percentage is:

$$\hat{p} \pm \left(\sqrt{deff} \ \times 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{\hat{p}(1 - \hat{p})}{n}} \right) \qquad \textbf{\textit{formula 2}}$$

where $\hat{p}$ is the sample estimate and **n** is the unweighted number of sample cases in the group being considered.

The survey's **margin of error** is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample – the one around 50%. For example, the margin of error for the entire sample is ±3.6%. This means that in 95 out every 100 samples drawn using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 3.6 percentage points away from their true values in the population. It is important to remember that sampling fluctuations are only one possible source of error in a survey estimate. Other sources, such as respondent selection bias, questionnaire wording and reporting inaccuracy, may contribute additional error of greater or lesser magnitude.

Response Rate

Table 2 reports the disposition of all sampled telephone numbers ever dialed from both telephone number samples. The response rate estimates the fraction of all eligible respondents

in the sample that were ultimately interviewed. At PSRA it is calculated by taking the product of three component rates:[2]

- Contact rate: the proportion of working numbers where a request for interview was made[3]

- Cooperation rate: the proportion of contacted numbers where a consent for interview was at least initially obtained, versus those refused

- Completion rate: the proportion of initially cooperating and eligible interviews completed

Thus the overall response rate for this survey was 38%.

Table 2: Sample Disposition

	RDD		Callback		Combined	
Total Numbers dialed	5137		2298		7435	
Computer fax	404		86		490	
Other not-working	1634		375		2009	
Additional projected NW	340		63		403	
Working numbers	2759	53.7%	1774	77.2%	4533	61.0%
No answer	113		21		134	
Answering machine	247		154		401	
Callbacks	3		7		10	
Other non-contacts	76		32		108	
Contacted numbers	2320	84.1%	1560	87.9%	3880	85.6%
Initial Refusals	749		591		1340	
Second Refusals	435		253		688	
Cooperating numbers	1136	49.0%	716	45.9%	1852	47.7%
No adult in HH	19		5		24	
Language barrier	156		48		204	
Age screenout	428		134		562	
Eligible numbers	533	46.9%	529	73.9%	1062	57.3%
Interrupted	33		29		62	
Completes	500	93.8%	500	94.5%	1000	94.2%
Response Rate		*38.6%*		*38.1%*		*38.5%*

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[2] PSRA's disposition codes and rate formulas are consistent with the American Association for Public Opinion Research standards.

[3] PSRA assumes that 75% of cases that result in a constant disposition of "No answer" or "Busy" over 10 or more attempts are actually not working numbers.

Topline Results

June 16, 2003

Job #23006

Total sample:	n = 1,000 adults age 18-49
	Margin of error: Plus or minus four percentage points
Age 18-24:	n = 118 adults
	Margin of error: Plus or minus 10 percentage points
Age 25-34:	n = 269 adults
	Margin of error: Plus or minus seven percentage points
Age 35 +:	n = 601 adults
	Margin of error: Plus or minus five percentage points
Regular viewers of target shows[4]:	n = 367 adults
	Margin of error: Plus or minus six percentage points
Regular viewers of non-target shows[5]:	n = 292 adults
	Margin of error: Plus or minus seven percentage points
Not regular viewers[6]:	n = 341 adults
	Margin of error: Plus or minus six percentage points

Dates of interviewing: March 25 – May 4, 2003

Note: Because percentages are rounded they may not total 100%.

Household Introduction and Screening Interview:

HOUSEHOLD INTRODUCTION: Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling for Princeton Survey Research. We're conducting an important national opinion survey, and would very much like to include your household. (May I please speak to someone in your household who is 18 or older?). Here's my first question…

S1.   Are you generally satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

S2.   To make sure our survey includes many different kinds of households, I have a few questions about who lives in your household. Are there any CHILDREN under 18 years of age now living in your household?

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[4] Regular viewers of target shows are defined as those who watched three or four of every four new episodes of any of the following prime time network TV shows from September 2002 through the date of the interview: **Alias**, **Boston Public**, **The District**, **JAG**, **Judging Amy**, **Law & Order**, **Mr. Sterling**, **The Agency**, **The West Wing**, **Third Watch** and **24**.

[5] Regular viewers of non-target shows are defined as those who watched three or four of every four new episodes of any of the following top 10 prime time network TV shows from September 2002 through the date of the interview: **American Idol**, **The Bachelor** or **The Bachelorette**, **CSI**, **CSI: Miami**, **ER**, **Everybody Loves Raymond**, **Friends**, **Joe Millionaire**, **Survivor**, **Will & Grace**.

[6] Not regular viewers (also listed as "Neither" in the topline results) include those who regularly watch neither target shows nor non-target shows, those who do not watch any prime time TV, and those who do not watch TV at all.

S3.   Including yourself, how many adults – age 18 or older – now live in your household?

S4.   *(IF ONE ADULT IN THE HH)* Are you, yourself, over or under age 50?

S5.   *(IF TWO OR MORE ADULTS IN THE HH)* How many of these adults are age 18-49 years old?

S6.   *(IF ONE PERSON AGED 18-49)* For the rest of this survey, I'd like to speak with this person who is 18-49 years old. Would that be you or someone else?

S7.   May I please speak to this person?

S8a.   *(IF TWO OR MORE PERSONS AGED 18-49)* Is there a MALE aged 18-49 in your household?

S8b.   For the rest of this survey, I'd like to speak with the YOUNGEST 18-49 year-old male who is now at home. (Can you please ask him to come to the phone?)

S9.   *(IF NO 18-49 YEAR-OLD MALE/NOT AVAILABLE NOW)* For the rest of this survey, I'd like to speak with the OLDEST 18-49 year-old FEMALE who is now at home/ May I please speak with the OLDEST 18-49 year-old FEMALE who is now at home? (Can you please ask her to come to the phone?)

S10.   *(ONCE SELECTED RESPONDENT ON TELEPHONE)* Hello, my name is
           _____ and I'm calling for Princeton Survey Research. We're conducting an important national opinion survey of people across the country who are age 18-49. Before we start, can you please tell me your age? OR
           Now I have some questions we are asking of people aged 18-49 across the country. Before we start, can you please tell me your age?

Main Interview:

1.   Now I have some questions about the community or town where you live. Overall, how would you rate your community as a place to live? Would you say it is . . . *(READ)*

           34   Excellent
           47   Good
           16   Only fair, OR
            2   Poor?
            1   (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

2. How much of a difference do you believe YOU can personally make in working to solve the problems you see in your community…*(READ)*

> 15 A lot of difference
> 53 Some difference
> 22 Not much difference, OR
>   9 No difference at all?
>   1 (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

3. Now as I read a list of different types of groups that people sometimes volunteer for, please tell me if you spent time volunteering for a group like this in the LAST 12 MONTHS. By volunteering I mean working in some way to help others for no pay. (First,) what about…
    (READ AND RANDOMIZE)

    READ FOR EACH ITEM: Have you volunteered for this kind of (group/organization) IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?

		Yes	No	DK/ Ref.
a.	A religious group	37	63	0
b.	A political organization, campaign or a candidate running for office	10	90	0
c.	A civic or community organization involved in health or social services. This could be an organization to help the poor, elderly, homeless, or a hospital.	32	68	*[7]
d.	An organization involved with youth, children, or education	52	48	0

4. We know that most people don't vote in all elections. Usually between one-quarter to one-half of those eligible actually come out to vote. How often do you vote in local and national elections… *(READ)*

			REGULAR VIEWERS OF…	
TOTAL		Target shows	Non-target	Neither
45	Always	46	42	44
29	Sometimes	30	30	28
6	Rarely, OR	5	6	6
16	Never?	14	19	17
3	(VOL.) Was too young to vote in last election	4	2	2
1	(VOL.) Other ineligibility problem/ Not a citizen	2	0	1
*	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	*	1	*

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[7] An asterisk indicates a value of less than one percent.

5. When there is an election taking place do you generally talk to people about your personal views of the parties or candidates, or not?

    55 Yes
    45 No
     * Don't know/Refused

6. Do you wear a campaign button, put a sticker on your car, or place a sign in front of your house, or aren't these things you do?

    23 Yes
    76 No
     * Don't know/Refused

7. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, did you contribute money to a candidate, political party, or any organization that supported candidates?

    14 Yes
    86 No
     * Don't know/ Refused

8. Now on another subject…We're interested in how much confidence you have in some different institutions to do their jobs. (First,) in general, how much confidence do you have in … *(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*?

    READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: — a lot of confidence, some confidence, not too much, or no confidence at all?

	A lot	Some	Not too much	No confidence	DK/ Ref.
Items a & b always asked first, as a pair, in order					
a. The federal government in Washington	30	50	14	5	*
b. State and local government	17	59	17	6	1
c. The White House	40	38	12	9	1
d. The U.S. Congress	22	55	15	6	2
e. The military	77	19	1	3	1
f. The judicial system	22	54	15	7	2
g. The public schools	25	47	19	7	2
h. Police and law enforcement	50	39	8	3	1
i. Firefighters and rescue workers	87	12	*	*	*

The next few questions are about the FEDERAL government...

9. How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right — just about always, most of the time, or only some of the time?

   13 Just about always
   42 Most of the time
   41 Only some of the time
   3 (VOL.) Never
   1 Don't know/Refused

10. Some people think criticism of the way the federal government does its job is justified; others think the government often does a better job than it is given credit for. Which comes closer to your view?

   43 Criticism is justified
   50 Often does a better job
   7 Don't know/Refused

11. For this next question, even if you're not sure of your answer, just give me your best guess. Do you happen to know which of the following four men is CURRENTLY the White House Chief of Staff? Is it...*(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*

   20 Andrew Card *– correct answer*
   20 John Podesta
   18 Simon Cowell
   10 Leo McGarry
   33 (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

12. Now I'm going to read a few statements about the government IN GENERAL. As I read each one, please tell me if you agree or disagree with it. Here's the (first/next,) one...*(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*

   PROMPT IF NECESSARY: Do you agree or disagree (with this statement)?

	Agree	Disagree	DK/ Ref.
a. When something is run by the government it is usually inefficient and wasteful	38	58	4
b. The government is really run for the benefit of all people	60	39	1
c. The federal government is too powerful	45	52	3
d. Most elected officials are trustworthy	44	54	3

13. Which of the following has had MORE influence on your view of the federal government…
(READ AND ROTATE CATEGORIES)

		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…		
		Target shows	Non-target	Neither
TOTAL				
44	What you have seen on TV (or)	47	47	43
45	Things you have personally experienced (or)	41	43	47
9	(VOL.) Both equally	11	9	8
2	Don't know/Refused	1	1	2

14. In general, how much confidence do you have in the wisdom of the American people when it comes to making political decisions…*(READ)*

    18 A lot of confidence
    59 Some confidence
    19 Not too much, OR
    4   No confidence at all?
    1   (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

15. If you had a son or daughter, would you like to see them take a job in government or public service when they get out of school?

    72 Yes
    22 No
    6   Don't know/Refused

16. Some people follow what's going on in government and public affairs most of the time, whether there's an election or not. Others aren't that interested. Do you follow what's going on in government and public affairs…*(READ)*

    32 Most of the time
    56 Some of the time
    11 Rarely, OR
    1   Never?
    *   (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

17.   Some people tell us they learn things about government and politics from watching certain kinds of TV shows. Please tell me how much, if anything, you learn about government and politics from watching each of the following types of shows. (First/next,) how much do you learn from …*(READ ITEMS IN ORDER)*

READ FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN REPEAT AS NECESSARY: –– a lot, some, only a little or nothing at all?

	A lot	Some	Only a little	Nothing at all	(VOL) Don't watch	DK/ Ref.
a. TV news	40	43	13	3	1	*
Age 18-24:	40	51	9	0	0	0
Age 25-34:	38	42	14	5	*	0
Age 35-49:	41	42	13	3	1	*
b. Entertainment TV shows with government themes, such as law enforcement, the White House or public schools	8	33	25	29	4	*
Age 18-24:	12	44	22	22	*	0
Age 25-34:	10	28	28	28	6	*
Age 35-49:	6	34	23	32	5	1
c. Late night TV talk shows	4	16	20	48	12	*
Age 18-24:	8	21	27	39	5	0
Age 25-34:	3	15	23	49	10	0
Age 35-49:	2	14	17	50	16	*

18.   Now I'm going to read you a short list of things that some people have done to express their views. For each one I read, please just tell me whether or not you have ever done it. (First,) have you ever… *(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*?

19.　Have you done this IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, or not?

		Total ever	In last 12 months	Never done activity	DK/ Ref.
			--DONE ACTIVITY--		
a.	Contacted or visited a public official – at any level of government – to express your opinion	38	20	61	*
b.	Contacted a newspaper or magazine to express your opinion on an issue	24	13	76	*
c.	Called in to a radio or television talk show to express your opinion on a political issue, even if you did not get on the air	16	10	83	*
d.	Taken part in a protest, march, or demonstration	18	6	82	*
e.	Worked as a canvasser, going door to door for a political or social group or candidate	11	3	89	*
Items f & g always asked as a pair, in order					
f.	Signed a written petition about a political or social issue	59	29	41	*
g.	Signed an e-mail petition about a political or social issue	20	17	80	*
Items h & i always asked as a pair, in order					
h.	Bought a product or service because you like the social or political values of the company that produces or provides it	35	25	65	*
i.	NOT bought a good or service because of the conditions under which the product is made, or because you dislike the conduct of the company	61	46	39	1
Items j & k always asked last, as a pair, in order					
j.	Personally walked, ran, or bicycled for a charitable cause – this is separate from sponsoring or giving money to this type of event	47	16	53	*
k.	Done anything else to help raise money for a charitable cause	57	39	43	*

20. We'd like to know how often you watch or listen to certain TV and radio shows. Please tell me if you watch or listen to each of the following regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never. (First,) how often do you… *(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*?
PROMPT AS NECESSARY: — regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never?

Items a & b always asked first, as a pair, in order

	Regularly	Some-times	Hardly ever	Never	DK/ Ref.
a. Watch the NATIONAL network evening news on ABC with Peter Jennings, CBS with Dan Rather, or NBC with Tom Brokaw	31	37	18	15	*
b. Watch local TV news about the area where you live	57	28	9	6	*
c. Watch cable news networks like CNN, Fox News Channel, or MSNBC	45	34	8	12	*
d. Watch TV morning shows like *Today*, *Good Morning America*, or *The Early Show*	20	24	18	39	0
e. Watch evening news magazine shows like *60 Minutes*, *20/20*, or *Dateline*	19	48	18	14	*
f. Watch late night TV talk shows like Jay Leno or David Letterman	10	24	25	41	0
g. Watch Oprah Winfrey's afternoon talk show	5	16	15	64	*
h. Watch TV shows with topical humor like *Saturday Night Live* or *Mad TV*	14	25	21	40	0
i. Listen to news on the radio	40	35	12	12	*
j. Listen to radio talk shows that invite listeners to call in and discuss current events and politics	21	27	19	32	*

21.   How often, if ever, do you go online to get…*(READ ITEMS IN ORDER)* – regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never?

	Regularly	Some-times	Hardly ever	Never	DK/ Ref.
a. Local, national or international news	26	25	19	30	0
b. Information about government or politics	14	23	21	41	0

22.   Please tell me how often, if ever, you read each of the following kinds of publications. (First,) how often do you read… *(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*?
PROMPT AS NECESSARY: – regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never?

	Regularly	Some-times	Hardly ever	Never	DK/ Ref.
a. A daily newspaper	48	30	13	9	*
b. News magazines like *Time*, *Newsweek* or *U.S. News*	11	32	25	31	0
c. Publications like the *National Enquirer* or the *Star*	2	8	12	78	*
d. Personality magazines like *People*, *US* or *Entertainment Weekly*	7	23	24	46	*

23.   Thinking about everything you watch on television, on an average day, about how many hours per day do you spend watching TV? *RECORD NUMBER OF HOURS.*

        4   None/Don't watch TV
       20   1 hour or less
       25   2 hours
       21   3 hours
       29   4 hours or more
        1   Don't know/Refused

24.   Prime time TV shows are usually on the air between 8PM and 11PM *(IF CENTRAL TIME ZONE:* 7PM and 10 PM) in the evening. Prime time includes both weekday evenings, Monday through Friday, and Saturday and Sunday evenings. In an average WEEK, about how many hours IN TOTAL do you usually spend watching PRIME TIME TV shows? (Just your best estimate. It doesn't have to be exact.) *RECORD NUMBER OF HOURS.*

        IF NECESSARY, HELP FIGURE OUT THE NUMBER: If you watch about an hour a night, that would be seven hours, if you watch three hours a night, that would be 21 hours.

       10   None/Don't watch any prime time TV
       21   1 to 3 hours
       25   4 to 7 hours
       23   8 to 14 hours
       21   15 hours or more
        1   Don't know/Refused

25.   When you watch entertainment shows on prime time TV, do you usually watch more shows on major broadcast networks, that is ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox, OR do you usually watch more shows on cable networks like HBO, Showtime or USA?

| | | *REGULAR VIEWERS OF…* | | | --------*AGE*-------- | | |
TOTAL		Target shows	Non-target	Neither	18-24	25-34	35-49
58	Usually watch more shows on the major networks	71	67	50	60	59	57
23	Usually watch more shows on cable networks	21	21	24	29	22	22
7	(VOL) About even/About the same number on network and cable	6	12	8	9	7	7
1	(VOL) Don't watch entertainment TV shows in prime time/Only watch PBS etc.	1	0	2	0	1	2
1	Don't know/Refused	1	*	1	0	1	1
10	Don't watch any prime time TV	0	0	15	3	10	12

26.   I'm going to read you some prime time TV shows that have been on network television this season. Please tell me which, if any, of these shows you have watched at least once since September 2002. (First,) have you watched…*(READ AND RANDOMIZE)* (at least once since September 2002)? *IF NECESSARY, CLARIFY:* We're only interested in whether you have watched the show in its main prime time slot, not at other times on secondary or cable networks. Have you watched (show) at this time (at least once since September 2002)?

27.   We're interested in how often you watch these shows. Out of every four NEW episodes of… *(INSERT SHOW)*, how many do you usually watch?
PROMPT FOR FIRST ITEM, THEN AS NECESSARY: – one out of every four new episodes, two out of four, three out of four, or four out of four?

Note: *"Regular viewers" are respondents who say they watch at least three out of every four new episodes of a given show. "Occasional viewers" are those who say they watch one or two out of every four new episodes. "Non-viewers" include respondents who do not watch a given show, those who do not watch any prime time TV, and those who do not watch TV at all.*

		-------WATCH THE SHOW-------			TOTAL NON-VIEWERS
		Total viewers	Regular viewers	Occasional viewers	
a.	**Alias**	17	5	12	84
b.	**Boston Public**	23	7	16	77
c.	**The District**	18	4	14	83
d.	**JAG**	25	8	17	76
e.	**Judging Amy**	20	5	15	80
f.	**Law and Order**	44	16	28	57
g.	**Mr. Sterling**	6	1	5	95
h.	**The Agency**	12	3	10	88
i.	**The West Wing**	25	7	18	75
j.	**Third Watch**	23	8	15	77
k.	**24**	19	8	11	81
l.	**American Idol**	47	19	27	54
m.	**The Bachelor** or **The Bachelorette**	35	11	24	66
n.	**CSI**	44	19	25	56
o.	**CSI: Miami**	31	12	19	69
p.	**ER**	50	21	28	51
q.	**Everybody Loves Raymond**	51	17	34	50
r.	**Friends**	58	22	36	42
s.	**Joe Millionaire**	39	14	25	61
t.	**Survivor**	38	14	24	63
u.	**Will & Grace**	44	13	32	56

TV VIEWERSHIP SUMMARY

TOTAL		------------AGE------------		
		18-24	25-34	35-49
38	Total regular viewers of target shows	47	34	37
17	Watch two or more target shows	21	15	16
21	Watch only one target show	27	19	21
30	Total regular viewers of other prime time shows	35	32	27
32	All others	17	34	36

28. Thinking about the prime time TV shows you just told me you have watched, how frequently, if ever, do you talk with friends or family members about the characters, story lines, or other content of these shows … **(READ)**

TOTAL		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…			--------AGE--------		
		Target shows	Non-target	Neither	18-24	25-34	35-49
19	Often	29	24	13	26	22	16
31	Sometimes	41	35	25	41	29	28
25	Hardly ever, OR	20	29	28	22	24	26
13	Never	10	12	15	9	13	15
*	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	*	0	0	0	0	*
12	Non-viewers	0	0	19	3	12	15

29. Do you feel you LEARN something from watching any of these shows, or do you watch them simply for entertainment?

TOTAL		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…			--------AGE--------		
		Target shows	Non-target	Neither	18-24	25-34	35-49
22	Yes, learn something	35	18	14	27	18	21
66	No, watch simply for entertainment	64	82	67	69	69	63
1	Don't know/ Refused	1	0	*	1	1	*
12	Non-viewers	0	0	19	3	12	15

30. Still thinking about the shows you told me you have watched…Which show or shows, in particular, do you feel you learn something from?

8	*CSI*
6	*ER*
5	*Law & Order*
2	*JAG*
2	*Boston Public*
2	*Judging Amy*
2	*CSI: Miami*
2	*The West Wing*
1	*Friends*
1	*Third Watch*
1	*The District*
1	*24*
1	*Alias*
1	*Everybody Loves Raymond*
*	*American Idol*
*	*Mr. Sterling*
*	*The Bachelor* or *The Bachelorette*
*	*Survivor*
*	*Joe Millionaire*
0	*The Agency*
0	*Will & Grace*
*	Don't know/Refused
66	Don't learn anything from the shows
12	Non-viewers

Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses

31. Thinking about the way entertainment TV shows portray government and people who work in government these days, do you think these portrayals are … *(READ)*

TOTAL		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…			GOVT. WORKERS		
		Target shows	Non-target	Neither	Resp. personally	Other in HH	None
2	Very accurate	3	2	2	2	1	2
39	Mostly accurate	55	41	30	38	42	39
33	Mostly inaccurate, OR	32	39	33	32	37	32
8	Very inaccurate?	4	11	11	11	7	8
2	(VOL) Don't watch shows about government	1	4	3	3	2	2
3	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	4	2	2	3	2	3
12	Non-viewers	0	0	19	10	9	13

32. In general, how accurate do you think the characters and storylines in TV shows like ***The West Wing***, ***Mr. Sterling***, and ***The District*** are in portraying what actually happens in government? *(READ IF NECESSARY)*

Total based on all those who watch West Wing, Mr. Sterling, or The District (n=347)

		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…
TOTAL		_West Wing_
5	Very accurate	14
46	Mostly accurate	47
30	Mostly inaccurate, OR	26
7	Very inaccurate?	8
11	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	6

33. In general, how accurate do you think the characters and storylines in TV shows like ***Law & Order*** and ***Judging Amy*** are in portraying what actually happens in the judicial system? *(READ IF NECESSARY)*

Total based on all those who watch Law & Order or Judging Amy (n=488)

		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…	
TOTAL		_Law & Order_	_Judging Amy_
9	Very accurate	13	18
55	Mostly accurate	60	60
23	Mostly inaccurate, OR	18	15
7	Very inaccurate?	8	4
6	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	2	3

34. In general, how accurate do you think the characters and storylines in TV shows like ***Boston Public*** are in portraying what actually happens in the public schools? *(READ IF NECESSARY)*

Total based on all those who watch Boston Public (n=208)

		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…
TOTAL		_Boston Public_
16	Very accurate	24
44	Mostly accurate	41
29	Mostly inaccurate, OR	26
10	Very inaccurate?	7
2	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	2

35. In general, how accurate do you think the characters and storylines in TV shows like **JAG** are in portraying what actually happens in the military? **(READ IF NECESSARY)**

Total based on all those who watch JAG (n=240)

		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…
TOTAL		*JAG*
11	Very accurate	27
52	Mostly accurate	58
26	Mostly inaccurate, OR	12
7	Very inaccurate?	3
5	(DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused	1

36. In general, how accurate do you think the characters and storylines in TV shows like **Alias** and **The Agency** are in portraying what actually happens in the CIA? **(READ IF NECESSARY)**

Based on all those who watch Alias or The Agency (n=230)

 5 Very accurate
25 Mostly accurate
45 Mostly inaccurate, OR
10 Very inaccurate?
16 (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

37.   Please tell me if watching an entertainment TV show has ever affected YOU in each of the following ways. (First,) has watching an entertainment TV series ever…*(READ AND RANDOMIZE)*

		Yes	No	DK/ Ref.	Non- viewers
a.	Encouraged you to find out more about a particular political or social issue	31	57	*	12
	Regular viewers of target shows:	43	57	0	0
	Regular viewers of non-target shows:	29	70	1	0
	Not regular viewers:	23	57	1	19
	Age 18-24:	40	57	*	3
	Age 25-34:	33	55	0	12
	Age 35-49:	26	59	1	15
b.	Changed your way of thinking about a particular political or social issue	22	65	1	12
	Regular viewers of target shows:	31	69	0	0
	Regular viewers of non-target shows:	21	77	3	0
	Not regular viewers:	16	63	2	19
	Age 18-24:	26	68	3	3
	Age 25-34:	23	64	*	12
	Age 35-49:	19	65	1	15
c.	Encouraged you to register to vote or take voting more seriously	17	71	1	12
	Regular viewers of target shows:	22	77	1	0
	Regular viewers of non-target shows:	19	80	1	0
	Not regular viewers:	13	67	1	19
	Age 18-24:	24	71	1	3
	Age 25-34:	16	72	0	12
	Age 35-49:	14	70	1	15
d.	Changed the way you think about government or people who work for the government	19	68	1	12
	Regular viewers of target shows:	29	71	*	0
	Regular viewers of non-target shows:	17	81	2	0
	Not regular viewers:	13	66	1	19
	Age 18-24:	25	71	*	3
	Age 25-34:	19	68	1	12
	Age 35-49:	16	67	1	15

SUMMARY OF "YES" RESPONSES TO Q37A-D

		REGULAR VIEWERS OF…			--------AGE--------		
TOTAL		Target shows	Non- target	Neither	18- 24	25- 34	35- 49
44	"Yes" to one or more items a-d in Q37	58	47	24	52	46	40

Demograpics

Finally, I have just a few questions so we can describe the people who took part in our survey…

D1.   **RECORD RESPONDENT'S SEX:**

    50   Male
    50   Female

D2.   Do YOU work for federal, state or local government – for example, as a public school teacher, police officer, firefighter, or other government job?

D3.   Does anyone else in your household work for federal, state or local government?

    27   Total government employee households
        15   Respondent
        12   Other member of household
    72   No one in household works for government
     1   Don't know/Refused

D4.   In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

    34   Republican
    31   Democrat
    29   Independent
     3   (VOL.) No party/Not interested in politics
     1   (VOL.) Other party
     2   Don't know/Refused

D5.   How often do you go to church, synagogue, or some other place of worship? Would you say . . . **(READ)**

     3   Daily
    38   About once week
    13   About once a month
    23   Several times a year, OR
    22   Don't you go to worship services?
     1   (DO NOT READ) Don't know/Refused

D6.   Are you the parent or guardian of any children under age 18 now living in your household?

    56   Yes
    44   No
     0   Don't know/Refused

D7.   What is the last grade or class you completed in school? (DO NOT READ)

   1   None, or grade 1 to 8
   10   High school incomplete (Grades 9-11)
   31   High school graduate, Grade 12, or GED certificate
   4   Business, technical, or vocational school AFTER high school
   26   Some college or university work, but no four-year degree
   18   College or university graduate (BA, BS or other four-year degree received)
   9   Post graduate or professional schooling after college (including work towards an MA, MS, PhD, JD, DDS, or MD degree)
   *   Refused

D8.   Are you of Hispanic or Latino background, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or other Spanish background?

   12   Yes
   87   No
   *   Refused

D9.   What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, American Indian, or some other race?

   IF R SAYS HISPANIC OR LATINO, PROBE: Do you consider yourself a WHITE (Hispanic/Latino) or a BLACK (Hispanic/Latino)?

   78   White
   13   Black or African-American
   3   Asian or Pacific Islander
   1   American Indian or Alaskan Native
   2   Mixed-race
   1   Other
   1   Don't know
   1   Refused

D10.   Last year, that is in 2002, approximately what was your total family income from all sources, before taxes – just tell me when I get to the right category. ***(READ)***

   5   Less than $10,000
   7    $10,000 to under $20,000
   10   $20,000 to under $30,000
   13   $30,000 to under $40,000
   17   $40,000 to under $60,000
   24   $60,000 to under $100,000
   13   $100,000 or over
   4   Don't know
   8   Refused

USR CODE FROM SAMPLE:

27 Urban
53 Suburban
20 Rural

END OF INTERVIEW. THANK RESPONDENT: That completes the interview. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Appendix B

Detailed Description of the Regression Analysis

Regression Analysis: What and Why?

Previous research has shown that civic engagement and attitudes toward government are each influenced by several demographic and other background characteristics so it was important to consider these existing relationships in examining the relationship between viewership of entertainment TV shows and civic engagement and attitudes toward government. To that end, **multiple linear regression analysis** was used to investigate the pattern of relationships between select background characteristics and civic engagement and attitudes toward government, respectively. This statistical technique is helpful in understanding the unique relationship between each individual background characteristic, such as age, education and television viewing habits, and the behavior or attitude of interest (i.e., civic engagement or attitude toward government), while accounting for the impact other characteristics included in the analysis may have on the behavior or attitude of interest.

The regression analysis clarifies the strength of the **association** between television viewing habits and civic engagement and attitudes toward government, and also identifies those characteristics that have a significant relationship with each. It is important to note, however, that the analysis does not explain **causality** between the selected set of background characteristics and civic engagement and attitudes toward government; for example, it does not determine whether certain characteristics cause people to become more civically engaged or whether people who are more civically engaged are more likely to have certain characteristics.

Regression Modeling of Civic Engagement

A composite measure of civic engagement was created that gave respondents points for several types of civic engagement activities asked about in the survey: recent volunteer work (past 12 months), recent civic actions (contacting public officials, signing petitions, protesting, etc., in the past 12 months), voting behavior, political contributions, and interest in government affairs. This scale of civic engagement ranged from zero to 10, where zero represents no engagement activities and 10 represents highly engaged.[8]

In addition to overall civic engagement as defined above, separate measures of political civic engagement and non-political civic engagement were created and used in separate regression analyses. The political engagement measure is based on the subset of activities directly related to electoral politics: voting behavior, political contributions, and interest in government affairs. The non-political civic engagement measure includes only recent volunteer activities and recent civic actions related to boycotts and charity events. Both of these scales ranged from zero (no engagement) to six (highly engaged).

As Table 1 shows, some level of civic engagement is fairly widespread among adults under age 50. Nearly a quarter report participating in seven or more of the civic activities asked about in the survey, including seven percent who have done nine or 10 in the past year. Many (46%) indicate a moderate level of participation having done three to six of the activities, about half of whom have done five out of 10 (23%). Roughly a third report that they have done no more than two (23%) or none (nine percent) of the activities.

Table 1: Overall Civic Engagement Scale

	% Who Score
High (7-10 points)	22
Moderate (3-6 points)	46
Low (0-2 points)	32

The two distinct engagement scales reveal a disparity in the level of participation in political versus non-political activities among adults age 18-49. While the non-political scale shows a fairly even distribution across all scores, from low engagement in non-political activities such as volunteerism to high engagement, most adults in this age group are concentrated at the lower end of the political engagement scale (See Table 2). Given what we know

Table 2: Non-Political and Political Engagement Scales

	% Who Score
Non-Political	
High (4-6 points)	31
Moderate (2-3 points)	34
Low (0-1 points)	35
Political	
High (4-6 points)	17
Moderate (2-3 points)	32
Low (0-1 points)	51

[8]   A complete definition of the dependent variable created to measure civic engagement, including survey question numbers, and definitions of the independent variables used in the analysis are provided in the Technical Addendum to this Appendix.

about difference in voting behavior and other directly electoral behaviors among younger and older Americans this might be expected in a group that excludes those age 50 and older.

Regression Results for Civic Engagement

In order to judge how efficient the regression analysis might be in explaining the relationship between regular viewership of the target shows and civic engagement, we first examined the "bi-variate correlations" between each of the characteristics that were included in the regression. Bi-variate correlations indicate how closely associated one characteristic is with another, when no other characteristics are taken into account. The bi-variate correlations[9] between television viewing habits, demographic characteristics, and the different measures of civic engagement are low, indicating fairly weak relationships among these variables.

Correlations between civic engagement (overall, political, and non-political) and the entertainment television viewership variables (target shows and non-target shows) are particularly low and only one of them is statistically significant – the negative correlation between political engagement and non-target show regular viewership.[10] The correlations between civic engagement and demographic characteristics show somewhat stronger associations and are statistically significant.

For all three types of civic engagement the strongest correlations with demographic characteristics are with education and feelings of personal efficacy. For non-political civic engagement, church attendance is more highly correlated than other background characteristics, while for political civic engagement, age is also more highly correlated than other demographic variables, as are consumption of hard news and talk radio.[11]

Given the bi-variate results for the characteristics associated with civic engagement, it is not surprising that the regression results do not show very strong associations among the composite civic engagement measures, TV viewership, and demographics. As Table 3 illustrates, the "best model" results in an adjusted R^2 of .28 – indicating that the variables in the model are able to explain 28% of the variance in overall civic engagement. This is considered a weak association.

Even though the overall relationship is weak, several characteristics stand out as being significantly associated with increased civic engagement. These include having more years of formal education, regularly attending church, expressing strong feelings of

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[9]   Pearson correlation coefficients.
[10] See the Technical Addendum for the specific Pearson correlation coefficients for these variables.
[11] These correlations are all statistically significant at the 95% confidence level.

personal efficacy, regularly listening to talk radio, regularly consuming hard news, being older, not being Hispanic, being white, identifying as either Republican or Democrat, and having a less positive attitude toward the government. The relative importance of these characteristics indicates that education is the one most strongly associated with civic engagement, a finding consistent with other research in this area. Church attendance and personal efficacy are the next most important, followed by use of talk radio, hard news consumption, and ethnicity which are about equal in their relative importance among these variables. The remaining characteristics are the least important among the significant factors associated with overall civic engagement. And, the analysis does not reveal a significant association between regularly watching either target or non-target TV shows and overall civic engagement.

Separate analysis of political and non-political engagement reveals weaker and slightly different relationships, although many characteristics play a significant role in both types of engagement. Compared with the overall civic engagement model, non-political engagement includes gender as a significant factor (women are more likely to be engaged in non-political civic activities than men) but race, party identification, age, and attitude toward government are not significantly associated with this type of engagement. Increased church attendance stands out as the most important factor relative to the others, probably because of increased volunteerism through religious institutions. In contrast, significant factors unique to political engagement include gender (men are more likely than women to be engaged in political civic activities), not being an Independent, and both viewership variables (being a regular viewer of the target shows and ***not*** being a regular viewer of the non-target shows). Education again stands out as the most important factor relative to the others, although for political engagement hard news and talk radio are the next most important factors.

Table 3: Significant Factors Related to Civic Engagement Based on Regression Analysis

	------------Type of Engagement-----------		
	Overall Civic	Political	Non-Political
Demographics			
Age	●	●	
Sex		●	●
Education	✦	✦	●
Race	●	●	
Ethnicity (Hispanic)	●	●	●
Church attendance	●		✦
Republican	●		
Democrat	●		
Independent		●	
Attitudes			
Feelings of personal efficacy	●	●	●
Attitudes toward government	●	●	
News consumption			
Hard news	●	●	●
Talk radio	●	●	●
TV Viewership			
Regular viewer of one or more target shows		● *(positive)*	
Regular viewer of one or more non-target shows		● *(negative)*	
Adjusted R^2 (% of variance explained)	0.28	0.21	0.23

Note: An" ✦ " indicates the characteristic to the left is the most strongly associated with type of engagement.

Regression Modeling of Attitudes toward Government

A composite measure of attitudes toward government was created that could be used as a collective measure of people's overall trust and confidence in government; as designed, it did not account for people's attitudes about the role of government or its responsibilities to society. This measure gave respondents one point for each of the following perceptions of government asked about in the survey: having "a lot of confidence" in the federal government; trusting the government "just about always" or "most of the time;" agreeing with the statements "the government is run for the benefit of all people" and "most elected officials are trustworthy;" and disagreeing with the statement "the federal government is too powerful."[12] The scale of attitudes toward

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[12] In an initial phase of the analysis, another measure was included in the model: disagreeing with the statement "when something is run by the government it is usually inefficient and wasteful." This measure was ultimately removed from the attitudes toward government composite variable because the model was more stable and worked more efficiently when it was excluded.

government ranged from zero to five, where zero represents a negative attitude toward government and five represents a very positive attitude toward government.[13]

As Table 4 shows, attitudes toward government are fairly evenly divided among adults under age 50. About a third have positive attitudes with a score of at least four, including 14% who get the top score of five. Another third indicate mixed feelings about the government scoring a two or three on the scale. A slightly larger percentage express mostly or completely negative views of the government; 19% score a one on the scale by giving just one positive opinion about government, while 18% score a zero by giving none.

Table 4: Attitudes Toward Government Scale	
	% Who Score
Positive (4-5 points)	32
Mixed 2-3 points)	31
Negative (0-1 points)	37

Regression Results for Attitudes toward Government

The analysis of attitudes toward government was very similar to that of civic engagement, using the same demographic and viewership characteristics, with one additional viewership variable. Because previous research suggests that some Americans, especially younger people, get information about politics and government from late night talk shows and those with topical humor, being a regular viewer of late-night TV was added to the subset of TV viewing characteristics. As with the civic engagement analysis, the first step in the attitudes toward government analysis was to examine the bi-variate correlations between each of the characteristics included in the regression. The correlations between television viewing habits, demographics, and the composite measure of attitudes toward government are very low, indicating very weak linear relationships between these variables.

There are only five characteristics that show strong correlations with attitudes toward government: Republican party identification, race, personal efficacy, Democratic party identification, and employment with the government. In addition, only four other characteristics show statistically significant bi-variate relationships with attitudes toward government and these correlations are **very** small: church attendance, education, Independent party identification, consumption of hard news, and regular viewer of target shows.[14]

The results of the regression analysis show very weak associations among the composite measure for attitudes toward government, TV viewership, and demographics.

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[13]   A complete definition of the dependent variable created to measure attitudes toward government, including survey question numbers, and definitions of the independent variables used in the analysis are provided in the Technical Addendum of this report.

[14]   See the Technical Addendum for the specific Pearson correlation coefficients for these variables.

At best, a subset of the background characteristics explains only 16% of the variance in attitudes toward government, that is, why some people's attitudes are more positive than others. By comparison, the characteristics in the weakest model among the measures of civic engagement, specifically political engagement, explain 21% of the variance in that measure; and the characteristics in the overall civic engagement model explain 28% of the variance.

Even with such a generally weak relationship among the variables, several characteristics are significantly (if not strongly) associated with more positive attitudes toward government. These include: identifying as Republican,[15] being white, expressing strong feelings of personal efficacy, working for the government (either self or someone else in the household), being a regular consumer of hard news, being younger, and not being a regular listener of talk radio.

The relative importance of these characteristics indicates that those most strongly associated with attitudes toward government are race and party identification as a Republican, which are about equal in their impact. Personal efficacy is somewhat less important and is followed by employment with the government and age. The remaining characteristics – consumption of hard news and talk radio – are the least important among the significant factors associated with attitudes toward government. Finally, the analysis indicates there is no significant relationship between regularly watching either target or non-target shows and attitudes toward government.

Technical Addendum

A multiple linear regression analysis was conducted using SPSS. Numerous models were tested and evaluated, including stepwise and simultaneous entry of independent variables, with the goal of determining the most parsimonious model with the best fit for the data. In preparation for the multiple regression analysis, correlations among the variables were evaluated as well as one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests to more fully understand the bi-variate relationships between the independent and dependent variables in the regression analysis.

The dependent and independent variables in the analysis are described below as well as the regression results. All of these analyses were conducted using weighted data.

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[15] The relationship between general trust and confidence in the federal government and political party identification is markedly different today than it was a few years ago, now that the GOP controls the White House and both chambers of the U.S. Congress. In this survey of 18-49 year-olds, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say they trust the government in Washington always or most of the time (72% vs. 46%). These figures contrast sharply with the findings of a 1998 Pew Research Center poll of the 18 and older population that found Republicans *less likely* than Democrats to express a high level of trust in the federal government (33% vs. 48%).

Description of Dependent Variables Tested

1) Total Civic Engagement – Political and Non-Political

The variable was created by giving each respondent ONE point for each of the following:

- Each organization they volunteered for in the last 12 months – 0,1,2,3+ [Q3]
- Each civic action they took in the last 12 months – 0,1,2,3,4+ [Q19]
- Voting almost always [Q4=1]
- Making a political contribution [Q7=1]
- Following government affairs most of the time [Q16=1]

The variable runs from 0 to 10, 0=low civic engagement and 10=high civic engagement. The reliability of the scale is .63.

2) Non-Political Civic Engagement

The variable was created by giving each respondent ONE point for each of the following:

- Each organization they volunteered for in the last 12 months – 0,1,2,3+ [Q3]
- Each of four specific civic actions they took in last 12 months –0, 1,2,3+ [Q19, I, H, J, K]

The variable runs from 0 to 6, 0=low engagement and 6=high civic engagement. The reliability of the scale is .58.

3) Political Civic Engagement

The variable was created by giving each respondent ONE point for each of the following:

- Each civic action they took in last 12 months – 0,1,2,3+ [Q19 A-G]
- Voting almost always [Q4=1]
- Making a political contribution [Q7=1]
- Following government affairs most of the time [Q16=1]

The variable runs from 0 to 6, 0=low civic engagement and 6=high civic engagement. The reliability of the scale is .55.

4) Attitude toward Government

The variable was created by giving one point in an additive scale for each of the following:

- A lot of confidence in the federal government [Q8a]
- Trust in government always or most of the time [Q9]
- Agree that government is for the benefit of all [Q12b]
- Disagree that the government is too powerful [Q12c]
- Agree that most elected officials are trustworthy [Q12d]

This scale does not include the item "government is inefficient and wasteful" (Q12a) because the reliability analysis of this scale was slightly reduced when the item was included. The scale ranges from 0 to 5 where 0 is negative attitude toward government and 5 is positive attitude toward government. The reliability of the scale is .723.

Description of Independent Variables Tested

Viewership Variables: Target Shows

1) Full count of the number of target shows of which respondent is a regular viewer "Regular viewer" is defined as watching three or four out of four new shows.
2) Recoded count of regular viewership of target shows:
   0= not regular viewer of any of the 11 target shows
   1= regular viewer of one or more of the target shows
3) Individual target shows with large enough sample sizes to analyze separately (0=non-viewer; 1=viewer regular or occasional)

Viewership Variables: Non-Target Shows, News, and Talk Radio

1) Full count of the number of non-target shows of which respondent is a regular viewer. "Regular viewer" is defined as watching three or four out of four new shows.
2) Recoded count of regular viewership of non-target shows:
   0= not regular viewer of any of the non-target shows
   1= regular viewer of one or more of the non-target shows
3) Consumer of "hard news" based on a count of "regularly" responses to National news (Q20a), local news (Q20b), cable news (Q20c), listen to news on the radio (Q20i), online for news (Q21a), read daily newspaper (Q22a), read weekly news magazines (Q22b). This was recoded into 0-3 is not a regular consumer of hard news and 4+ is a regular consumer of hard news.
4) Consumer of "soft news" based on a count of "regularly" responses to either Morning news (Q20d) or evening news magazine shows (Q20e).
5) Regular listener defined as "regularly" listens to talk radio (Q20j).
6) Regular viewer of late night shows defined as "regularly" watches late night talk shows such as Leno or Letterman or shows with topical humor such as **Saturday Night Live** or **Mad TV** (Q20f, q20h).

Demographic Characteristics

1) Age [S10]
2) Sex [SEX]
3) Education [D7]
4) Race [D9]
5) Ethnicity [D8]
6a) Republican [D4]
6b) Democrat [D4]
6c) Independent [D4]
7) Work for government [D2/D3] 1=Respondent or household member works for government 0=no one works for government
8) Parent of children under 18 living in household [D6]
9) Personal efficacy [Q2]
10) Church attendance [D5]
11) Attitude toward government based on a scale created with the following variables: Confidence in government (Q8a) reversed; Trust in government (Q9) reversed; Government inefficient and wasteful (Q12a); Government is run for the benefit of all (Q12b) reversed; Federal government is too powerful (Q12c); Most elected officials trustworthy (Q12d) reversed 1=disagree, 3=agree. The scale runs from 0=negative attitude toward government to 15=positive attitude.

Regression Results

The results of the regression analysis are given below. Each characteristic listed is associated with greater civic engagement. The adjusted R2 indicates the amount of the variance in civic engagement that is explained by this group of independent variables. The variables listed below have statistically significant regression coefficients. The standardized regression coefficient (beta) gives an idea of the *relative* importance of each variable given the effects of the other independent variables in the model.

Total Civic Engagement

Adjusted R2 = .275

The following characteristics are associated with increased total civic engagement:

- Higher education   beta = .248
- Increased church attendance   beta = -.189
- Strong feelings of personal efficacy   beta = -.173
- Regular talk radio listener   beta = .142
- Regular consumer of hard news   beta = .141
- Not Hispanic   beta = -.123
- White   beta = .088
- Democrat   beta = .086
- Republican   beta = .077
- Negative attitude toward government   beta = -.077
- Increased age   beta = .058

Political Civic Engagement

Adjusted R2 = .212

The following characteristics are associated with increased political civic engagement:

- Higher education   beta = .220
- Regular consumer of hard news   beta = .178
- Regular talk radio listener   beta = .159
- Strong feelings of personal efficacy   beta = -.106
- Increased age   beta = .098
- Not Independent   beta = -.093
- Not Hispanic   beta = -.091
- White   beta = .089
- Regular viewer of target shows   beta = .074
- Negative attitude toward government   beta = -.074
- Not regular viewer of non-target shows   beta = -.068
- Male   beta = -.060

Non-Political Civic Engagement
Adjusted R2 = .234

The following characteristics are associated with increased total non-political civic engagement:

- Increased church attendance   beta = -.247
- Higher education   beta = .217
- Strong feelings of personal efficacy   beta = -.178
- Not Hispanic   beta = -.127
- Regular talk radio listener   beta = .108
- Female   beta = .075
- Regular consumer of hard news   beta = .068

Attitudes toward Government
Adjusted R2 = .156

- White   beta = .224
- Republican   beta = .213
- Strong feelings of personal efficacy   beta = -.143
- Work for the government   beta = .119
- Younger   beta = -.113
- Regular consumer of hard news   beta = .097
- Not a regular listener of talk radio   beta = -.085