DOES IT MATTER WHERE YOU GET YOUR NEWS?

Fairleigh Dickinson University, December 17, 2018– Garden Staters prefer to get their news by watching rather than reading, according to the most recent statewide survey from the Fairleigh Dickinson University Poll. But people should beware, as not all sources are created equal when it comes to staying informed about important people, events, and in the age of the Trump presidency, scandals.

The most relied up on source for news are cable news networks, such as CNN, Fox News, and MSNBC. A third (33%) report this is as their favored source, with news from a website or app coming in a distant second (23%). The only other source to break double digits are the evening network news programs such as ABC World News Tonight, CBS Evening News, and NBC Nightly News. Print newspapers and radio tie at seven percent each as does the much-discussed-of-late social media news landscape, with seven percent reporting Facebook, Twitter and the like as their preferred source.

Republicans (43%) gravitate toward cable news more than Democrats (27%) and Independents (27%), as Trump supporters over Trump critics (44 v. 26%), whites over nonwhites (35 v. 24%), and anyone 35 to 54 and 55 plus as compared with the 18-34 crowd (30 and 41% v. 15%).

"Two takeaways emerge from our consideration of news sources: First, opinion journalism has a far greater appeal among Republicans than Democrats across the state. And second, with almost half of Millennials (47%) reporting their preference for digital news on the Internet over other sources, it's clear that this will continue to be where the action is when it comes to new and evolving news media platforms," said Krista Jenkins, a professor of politics at Fairleigh Dickinson University and the poll's director.

The same survey asked about specific sources among respondents who selected newspapers, cable news, social networks, and news on the web on an app. Most could not name a specific source, but cable news watchers were more definitive, and Fox News draws the most viewers. Of those who selected cable news as their go to source, 45 percent identified Fox News, with fewer choosing CNN (31%) and MSNBC (17%).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, partisan differences are also evident, with a majority of Fox News watchers identifying as Republican (92%). CNN draws heavily from self-identified Democrats (70%), as does MSNBC (92%). The same is true for attitudes toward President Trump. Fox News viewers heavily support the president (98%); CNN (91%) and MSNBC (93%) attract viewers who are critical of the president.

"The intersection of partisan politics and news is alive and well in the Garden State. Republicans and presidential backers clearly appreciate the defensive posture of Fox News. His detractors and Democrats look for news that is more critical of the president," said Jenkins. "Polarization among voters is reinforced by news sources and news source reinforce polarization among voters."

What do you know and where do you get your news?

In order to gauge how effective the news is in conveying important information to consumers about what's going on in the nation, a series of questions were asked about important personalities and events. Do people know that Paul Ryan is the Speaker of the House? Are they familiar with who is leading the investigation of Donald Trump? And do they know which candidate won the most popular votes in the 2016 election? By and large, the answer to these questions is yes, with sizable majorities answering correctly that the Speakership is held by Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan (69%), that Robert Mueller is heading up the investigation (74%), and that Hillary Clinton won the 2016 popular vote (82%).

However, when the focus is on the relationship between news sources and political knowledge, there are some important differences. Local TV news watchers do the worst with only 28% able to respond to all three questions correctly. Conversely, print newspaper readers do the best, as a full two-thirds (66%) scored the highest on a political knowledge index. Right behind them are cable news viewers (63%).

Beyond basic facts about some important players and events in national politics lies the unique news that surrounds the Trump presidency. As the poll reported previously, respondents were also asked about an array of scandals (four in total). Two involved real events, such as the guilty plea of President Trump's former campaign manager, Paul Manafort, and the resignation of EPA head Scott Pruitt due to concerns over his misuse of taxpayer money. The other two scandals were fictitious and involved the resignation of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo over a breakdown in negotiations with North Korea and leaked tapes from Trump's *The Apprentice* years during which he made insensitive and racist remarks. As we reported previously, a majority knew that Paul Manafort DID plead guilty (54%) and that Scott Pruitt DID resign (55%). However, less than a majority knew that Mike Pompeo DID NOT resign (47%) and that tapes of Donald Trump from *The Apprentice* DID NOT leak (14%).

When we scrutinize scandal knowledge by preferred news sources, again we see differences with print newspapers and cable news watchers doing the best. A third (34%) of print newspaper readers were able to correctly answer at least three out of the four scandal questions correctly, with the same (33%) number of cable news watchers scoring the same. And, as with measures of national political knowledge, local TV news viewers know the least when it comes to Trump scandals. Only about one-in-seven (15%) scored a three or more on the political scandal index.

"Keeping up with news from the White House is like trying to drink from a fire hose. My hat is off to anyone who can keep it straight," said Jenkins.

Interviews were conducted by Clear Insights Group of Lehi, Utah, with professionally trained interviewers using a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection is achieved by computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a landline phone number (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected.

The total combined sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age, sex, and race. 273 interviews were conducted on landlines and 532 were conducted on cellular telephones.

The sample was purchased from Marketing Systems Group and the research was funded by Fairleigh Dickinson University.

Tables

When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?	
Print newspapers	7%
News on the radio	7%
National evening news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	14%
Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC, or Fox	33%
News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	7%
News from a website or app	23%
Don't know (Vol)	3%
Refused (Vol)	1%

		Party ID			Gender		Race/Ethnicity		Age			Education		Trump approval	
		Dem	Repub	Ind	Male	Female	White	Non-white	18-34	35-54	55+	HS/Some coll	College grad	Approve	Disapprove
When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?	1 Print newspapers	9%	4%	9%	8%	5%	8%	2%	3%	4%	11%	2%	9%	3%	10%
	2 News on the radio	5%	9%	8%	7%	7%	7%	5%	7%	8%	7%	7%	7%	8%	5%
	3 Local television news	7%	4%	9%	4%	8%	5%	8%	5%	5%	7%	8%	4%	5%	7%
	4 National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	17%	9%	15%	11%	17%	13%	16%	8%	13%	16%	14%	13%	9%	17%
	5 Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	27%	43%	27%	32%	34%	35%	24%	15%	30%	41%	36%	31%	44%	26%
	6 News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	9%	4%	0%	7%	7%	5%	11%	12%	9%	3%	7%	6%	5%	8%
	7 News from a website or app	23%	23%	24%	27%	18%	22%	29%	47%	28%	12%	18%	26%	21%	25%
	98 (DO NOT READ) Don't know	3%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	4%	3%	3%	2%
	99 (DO NOT READ) Refused	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%

Specific cable news sources [N = 265]						
	All	Dem	Repub	Ind	Trump – approve	Trump - disapprove
Fox News	45%	2%	92%	8%	98%	2%
CNN	31%	70%	15%	15%	9%	91%
MSNBC	17%	92%	7%	2%	7%	93%

Now I'd like to ask you about some events and personalities that have been in the news recently.	
Who is the current Speaker of the House?	
Paul Ryan	69%
Mitch McConnell	11%
Ted Cruz	2%
Don't know (vol)	17%
Refused (vol)	1%
What is the name of the individual leading the investigation of President Trump	
Robert Mueller	74%
Jeff Sessions	6%
Bob Woodward	2%
Don't know (vol)	17%
Refused (vol)	0
Which candidate in the 2016 presidential election won the most popular votes?	
Hillary Clinton	82%
Donald Trump	10%
Jill Stein	0
Don't know (vol)	7%
Refused (vol)	1%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local TV news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
Now I'd like to ask you about some events and personalities that have been in the news recently. Who is the current Speaker of the House?	Paul Ryan	75%	68%	48%	62%	77%	59%	73%	48%	67%
	Mitch McConnell	13%	9%	11%	12%	13%	9%	8%	20%	0%
	Ted Cruz	2%	4%	4%	3%	1%	4%	2%	0%	0%
	(DO NOT READ) Don't Know	9%	20%	37%	24%	9%	28%	16%	32%	17%
	(DO NOT READ) Refused	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	17%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
What is the name of the individual leading the investigation of President Trump?	Robert Mueller	82%	68%	39%	71%	83%	59%	79%	64%	50%
	Jeff Sessions	4%	5%	13%	9%	5%	11%	4%	4%	0%
	Bob Woodward	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%
	(DO NOT READ) Don't Know	13%	25%	46%	16%	10%	30%	14%	32%	33%
	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	17%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
Which candidate in the 2016 presidential election won the most popular votes?	Hillary Clinton	93%	73%	76%	80%	85%	69%	87%	76%	50%
	Donald Trump	2%	9%	20%	12%	10%	22%	7%	8%	17%
	Jill Stein	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	(DO NOT READ) Don't Know	4%	18%	4%	7%	4%	9%	5%	12%	33%
	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	4%	0%

Number of correct political knowledge responses	
0	7%
1	14%
2	24%
3	55%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
# of correct knowledge responses	.00	4%	11%	17%	5%	4%	17%	6%	16%	33%
	1.00	9%	13%	30%	25%	9%	20%	9%	20%	0%
	2.00	21%	34%	24%	22%	23%	22%	26%	24%	33%
	3.00	66%	43%	28%	48%	63%	41%	59%	40%	33%

Correct responses to Trump Scandals	
	All
The Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, recently resigned over negotiations with North Korea. UNTRUE	47%
Remarks Donald Trump made while filming his reality show *The Apprentice* were leaked to the press. UNTRUE	14%
Paul Manafort, President Trump's former campaign manager, recently pled guilty to conspiring against the United States. TRUE	54%
The former head of the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, recently resigned over concerns that he was misusing taxpayer money. TRUE	55%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
The Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo recently resigned over negotiations with North Korea.	1 Happened	16%	16%	13%	29%	15%	11%	11%	16%	17%
	2 Did Not Happen	59%	46%	39%	44%	63%	43%	47%	52%	33%
	3 Not Sure	23%	36%	43%	27%	21%	46%	42%	32%	50%
	9 (DO NOT READ) Refused	2%	2%	4%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
Remarks Donald Trump made while filming his reality show The Apprentice were leaked to the press.	Happened	50%	39%	48%	46%	42%	52%	48%	36%	50%
	Did Not Happen	11%	13%	15%	13%	15%	17%	13%	12%	0%
	Not Sure	36%	41%	33%	40%	41%	30%	37%	52%	33%
	(DO NOT READ) Refused	4%	7%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	17%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
Paul Manafort, President Trump's former campaign manager, recently pled guilty to conspiring against the United States.	Happened	68%	39%	48%	55%	59%	56%	47%	52%	33%
	Did Not Happen	21%	23%	20%	18%	23%	17%	29%	12%	33%
	Not Sure	11%	36%	30%	27%	17%	28%	23%	36%	33%
	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%

		When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn?								
		Print newspapers	News on the radio	Local television news	National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News	Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX	News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter	News from a website or app	Don't know	Refused
The former head of the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, recently resigned over concerns that he was misusing taxpayer money.	Happened	77%	45%	41%	54%	55%	48%	56%	48%	67%
	Did Not Happen	5%	9%	9%	5%	9%	13%	11%	8%	0%
	Not Sure	18%	45%	48%	42%	35%	39%	33%	44%	33%
	(DO NOT READ) Refused	0%	2%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%

Number of correct responses to scandal questions	
0	18%
1	27%
2	31%
3	21%
4	3%

Exact question wording and order

US1 through US2 released October 3, 2018
NJ1 through NJ2 released October 12, 2018
NJ3 through NJ4D and E released October 3, 2018
NJ4A through NJ4C released October 4, 2018
US3 through US4 released October 3, 2018
MW1 through MW4 released October 12, 2018

NEWS1   When you want to get news and information about politics and public affairs, which one of the following best describes where you are likely to turn? [Note: If respondent wants to offer multiple responses, please push for the BEST answer] [READ and ROTATE LIST]
1   Print newspapers   [Ask NEWS2]
2   News on the radio
3   Local television news
4   National evening network television news, such as ABC World News, CBS Evening News, or NBC Nightly News
5   Watching cable television news, such as CNN, MSNBC or FOX   [Ask NEWS2]
6   News from a social networking site, such as Facebook or Twitter   [Ask NEWS2]
7   News from a website or app   [Ask NEWS2]
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

NEWS2   What is the name of the [newspaper, cable news station, social networking site, website or app] that you rely on the most? [Open-ended] [Note: If respondent wants to offer multiple responses, please push for the BEST answer]
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

Now I'd like to ask you about some events and personalities that have been in the news recently.

PK1   Who is the current Speaker of the House?
1   Paul Ryan
2   Mitch McConnell
3   Ted Cruz
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

PK2   What is the name of the individual leading the investigation of President Trump?
1   Robert Mueller
2   Jeff Sessions
3   Bob Woodward
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

PK3   Which candidate in the 2016 presidential election won the most popular votes?
1   Hillary Clinton
2   Donald Trump
3   Jill Stein
8   DK (vol)
9   Refused (vol)

PK4   I'm going to read you some statements about events that may have taken place lately. After I read each one, please tell me if it happened, did NOT happen, or if you're not sure. [ROTATE PK4A THROUGH PK4D]
PK4A   The Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo [pom-PAY-oh] recently resigned over negotiations with North Korea.
PK4B   Remarks Donald Trump made while filming his reality show *The Apprentice* were leaked to the Press
PK4C   Paul Manafort, President Trump's former campaign manager, recently pled guilty to conspiring against the United States.
PK4D   The former head of the Environmental Protection Agency, Scott Pruitt, recently resigned over concerns that he was misusing taxpayer money

1   Did happen
2   Did not happen
3   Not sure
9   Refused (vol)

Weighted sample characteristics
All respondents

Male	49%
Female	51%

Democrat (with leaners)	52%
Republican (with leaners)	33%
Independent	11%

18-34	28%
35-59	35%
60+	35%

White	64%
African-American	11%
Latino	15%
Asian	7%
Other/refused	3%