

# 2008-2009 Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leaders Study



The 2008-2009 Erdos & Morgan national study of opinion leaders verified that **PBS News and Public Affairs** programming continues to be a trusted source for news and information that opinion leaders turn to on a regular basis. The PBS and public television programs included in the study were *BBC News*, *Charlie Rose*, *Frontline*, *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, *Nightly Business Report*, *NOVA*, *NOW*, *Tavis Smiley* and *Washington Week*.

## Overall Excellence:

*The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* was once again the most “objective” program among opinion leaders, followed closely by *NOVA* and *Washington Week*. *The Newshour* and *NOW* ranked as the most “influential” television programs among opinion leaders. *The Newshour*, *NOW*, *NOVA*, *Charlie Rose*, *Washington Week* and *BBC News* (in that order) were rated the most “credible” of all television sources that reach most opinion leaders. A summary of general study results broken down by program are as follows:

## **Percent (%) of Total Viewers\* Who Find Programs to Be:**

*\*Opinion Leaders who view each program occasionally or regularly. BOLD indicates leader/above average.*

### WEEKDAY NEWS

	<b>Influential</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Credible</b>	<b>Enjoyable</b>
<b>The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer</b>	<b>61.0</b>	<b>66.3</b>	75.6	<b>71.4</b>	52.5
<b>BBC News</b>	39.6	51.7	69.4	<b>63.0</b>	39.6
<b>Tavis Smiley</b>	32.5	24.2	54.0	41.3	33.4
NBC Nightly News	41.8	34.4	82.1	43.2	40.3
<b>Charlie Rose</b>	44.4	48.4	58.6	<b>64.5</b>	65.3
<b>Nightly Business Report</b>	33.9	47.7	64.8	54.7	29.7
ABC World News Tonight	37.5	31.4	78.7	40.0	36.4
CBS Evening News	34.2	27.2	76.5	35.4	33.8

### WEEKLY NEWS (public affairs, opinion, science/technology)

	<b>Influential</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Current</b>	<b>Credible</b>	<b>Enjoyable</b>
Meet the Press	60.6	45.7	75.2	56.1	54.2
<b>Frontline</b>	52.8	50.0	60.5	59.9	55.3
<b>Washington Week</b>	48.7	<b>55.9</b>	75.6	63.8	60.1
<b>NOW</b>	<b>62.7</b>	49.6	70.8	<b>69.8</b>	60.6
Face the Nation	50.1	41.3	68.9	48.4	45.7
This Week with... (ABC)	54.4	33.8	70.1	48.8	56.4
<b>NOVA</b>	44.4	<b>61.6</b>	59.4	<b>68.0</b>	<b>73.7</b>

## Viewership — Overall:

PBS News and Public Affairs programs are appointment television for opinion leaders. *The NewsHour* reaches 36.7% of all opinion leaders, putting it among the top 15 media (print and television) that reach most opinion leaders. With 25% viewership, *BBC News* ranks in the top 25 media (print and television) that reach the most opinion leaders.

	<b>View Regularly</b>	<b>View Occasionally</b>	<b>Total Viewership</b>
NBC Nightly News	20.3	27.8	48.1
ABC World News Tonight	16.7	27.6	44.4
CBS Evening News	12.8	25.5	38.2
<b>The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>36.7</b>
The Daily Show with Jon Stewart	9.7	17.0	26.2
<b>BBC News</b>	<b>6.8</b>	<b>18.2</b>	<b>25.0</b>
<b>NOVA (weekly)</b>	<b>8.2</b>	<b>13.9</b>	<b>22.1</b>
The Colbert Report	7.0	15.6	22.6

## **Viewership — Geographic Preferences:**

*The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer* had high opinion leader viewership in the following areas: CT/NY/NJ (53.7%), Mid-Atlantic (50.6%) and New England (48.7%). *BBC News* was popular in CT/NY/NJ (36.5%) and *Washington Week* did well in DC (25.5%). *NOVA* stands out in the Mountain/Pacific (25.9%) and Pacific (25.9%) regions.

<b>TV VIEWERSHIP</b>	New England/ Mid Atl.	CT/NY/ NJ	DC	DC/VA/ MD	Mid Atlantic	Midwest	South	Mountain/ Pacific	Pacific
BBC News	30.0	36.5	28.1	29.2	34.2	19.2	26.8	21.3	23.6
Charlie Rose	20.7	22.7	15.1	12.6	21.5	13.3	11.2	11.8	15.9
Frontline	19.6	18.5	25.4	18.1	19.3	18.8	17.8	18.5	19.5
The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer	48.7	53.7	37.9	39.1	50.6	28.7	37.3	29.6	30.4
Nightly Business Report	9.9	7.6	9.1	9.4	11.3	10.0	10.3	11.2	11.7
NOVA	21.1	19.3	21.5	21.0	19.0	19.7	21.9	25.9	25.9
NOW	7.2	7.7	4.7	6.0	7.1	7.9	4.1	7.2	6.2
Tavis Smiley	2.3	2.1	8.6	7.4	2.5	5.6	7.0	5.1	6.9
Washington Week	14.5	12.2	25.5	22.5	14.5	16.3	18.2	16.1	15.6

## **Areas of Expertise:**

Nearly half of Congressional Branch opinion leaders (44.8%) and more than a quarter of all private sector opinion leaders tune-in to *The Newshour*, making *The Newshour* a top 25 media in every issues category in the survey among those who influence both private and government issues.

<b>TV VIEWERSHIP</b>	Federal Government				Private Sector					
	Federal Executive Branch	Congress- ional Branch	State, City, County Gov.	Assoc.	Business	Comm. & Media	Education	Law	Healthcare	Science
BBC News	25.0	25.4	19.5	24.5	24.0	29.7	25.0	22.9	27.3	27.6
Charlie Rose	6.3	15.7	11.8	12.2	12.6	22.9	17.0	15.7	17.4	10.5
Frontline	22.3	20.1	24.3	15.8	11.4	25.7	20.5	16.4	20.7	17.7
The Newshour with Jim Lehrer	39.3	44.8	33.0	35.3	29.9	41.7	37.5	37.9	30.6	41.4
Nightly Business Report	8.9	11.9	12.6	7.2	9.6	9.7	11.9	10.7	11.6	9.4
NOVA	23.2	14.2	21.1	18.7	16.8	21.7	27.3	12.1	31.4	29.8
NOW	5.4	6.7	4.0	2.9	4.2	13.1	8.5	2.9	5.0	9.9
Tavis Smiley	9.8	15.7	5.0	4.3	2.4	10.3	5.7	1.4	9.9	3.9
Washington Week	17.9	18.7	12.8	14.4	10.8	22.3	17.6	17.9	15.7	18.2

SOURCE: Opinion Leaders 2008-2009/A National Study of Contemporary Issue Involvement & Media Influence syndicated survey. Based on results of 1,486 completed surveys. Erdos & Morgan estimated there were 538,408 opinion leaders nationwide in the following sectors: executive and congressional branches of the government, state and local government, executives of trade and professional organizations, and persons from the following occupational groups: business, communications and media, education, healthcare, law and science. Opinion leaders, for the purpose of this study, are defined as those individuals whose influence on business; social, political, environmental and educational issues far exceed their numbers in the population. They exercise far-reaching and powerful influences on the opinions of their fellow Americans by framing and defining the issues that will largely determine the future course of the nation.

Please note: The 2008-2009 Erdos & Morgan Opinion Leaders Study also provides data on viewing habits (coverage) for groups that influence specific issues in the private sector. These issues include: business issues; environmental & energy issues; health, education & human services issues; law & legal issues; agricultural issues; defense & national security issues; science & technology issues; economic & financial issues; the arts & media issues; legislative/government policy issues; and trade/global economic issues. For example, viewership data among individuals who influence arts or military and defense spending is available for the PBS programs included in the study as well as other news and public affairs print and television media. Please contact Anna McDonald (703.739.5797 /amcdonald@pbs.org) if you have questions about what data is available or if you would like to obtain issue specific data.