

YouGov Survey Results

The Major-Currie Affair

Prepared for The Daily Telegraph

Sample Size: 2113

Fieldwork: September 30-October 2, 2002

		%
	Total	
When the Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher, asked John Major to join her Cabinet in 1987, do you think Mr Major did, or did not, have a duty to tell Mrs Thatcher that he had been having an affair with another government minister, Edwina Currie?		
Yes – he did have a duty	45	
No – he did not	52	
Don't know	3	
In 1990, knowing that he had had an affair with Mrs Currie and that that fact might be revealed at any time, should Mr Major have stood for the leadership of the Conservative Party (in effect, for the prime ministership), or should he not?		
Yes – he should	52	
No – he should not	43	
Don't know	5	
Do you think it probably or improbably that John Major's conduct as Prime Minister was affected by the fact that he had had an affair with Mrs Currie and that that fact might be revealed at any time?		
Yes – probably was affected	37	
No – probably was not	57	
Don't know	6	
As a result of the recent revelations, do you think better of John Major than you did before, or worse, or has it not made any difference?		
Better	7	
Worse	30	
No difference	63	
Don't know	0	
As a result of the revelations, do you think better of Edwina Currie than you did before, or worse, or has it not made any difference?		
Better	3	
Worse	51	
No difference	46	
Don't know	1	
Do you think that Mrs Currie was right or wrong to disclose publicly that she had had an affair with John Major?		
Right	17	
Wrong	72	
Don't know	11	
Do you think that Mr Major was right or wrong to be 'ashamed' of having had an affair with Edwina Currie?		
Right	67	
Wrong	25	
Don't know	8	
Mr Major has said that his wife has since forgiven him for having had the affair. Under similar circumstances, do you think you would, or would not, forgive your spouse or partner?		
Yes – would forgive	30	
No – would not forgive	44	
Don't know	26	

From what you know, why do you think Mrs Currie made the public disclosure that she did?

Because she wanted revenge for Mr Major's failure to promote her after he became Prime Minister	5
Because she simply wanted the truth to come out	4
To make money	17
To attract publicity to herself and her book	71
Don't know	3

As a result of the publicity now surrounding the publication of Mrs Currie's forthcoming book, will you yourself now be more inclined to buy the book, less inclined, or will it not make any difference?

More inclined	3
Less inclined	34
Not make any difference	63

Lord Archer's wife, Mary Archer, responded to the revelation by saying, 'I am a little surprised, not at Mrs Currie's indiscretion, but at a temporary lapse in John Major's taste.' As a result of her comments, do you think better of Lady Archer than you did before, or worse, or has it not made any difference?

Better	19
Worse	27
No difference	54
Don't know	1

Are you, like Lady Archer, 'surprised' that John Major was attracted to Edwina Currie?

Yes	54
No	46

Are you 'surprised' that Edwina Currie was attracted to John Major?

Yes	56
No	44

Do you think that John Major's affair with Edwina Currie should be seen as...?

A purely private matter	63
Something that – because it involved a senior politician – the public had a right to know about at the time	33
Don't know	5

From your own point of view, do you regard the Major-Currie affair, as it has emerged during the past few days, as...?

A serious matter raising serious moral issues	31
A bit of fun to read about in the newspapers	60
Don't know	9

In general, do you think politicians do, or do not, have a duty to observe higher standards of sexual morality than non-politicians?

Yes – do	48
No – do not	47
Don't know	5

Do you think politicians do, as a matter of fact, observe higher standards of sexual morality than non-politicians, or do they behave much like other people, or do they observe lower standards?

Observe higher standards	3
Behave much like other people	71
Observe lower standards	25
Don't know	1

As a result of these recent revelations, do you hold a higher opinion of the Conservative Party than you did before, a lower opinion, or have they not made any difference?

Higher opinion	1
Lower opinion	18
No difference	81

How likely do you think it is that your own vote at the next general election will be influenced by these revelations?

Very likely	2
Fairly likely	2
Not very likely	15
Not at all likely	80
Don't know	1

Do you think there are circumstances in which it is acceptable for a man or a woman to have a single affair in which he or she is unfaithful to his or her partner?

Yes – acceptable	29
No – not acceptable	61
Don't know	10

Do you think there are circumstances in which it is acceptable for a man or a woman to have more than one affair in which he or she is unfaithful to his or her partner?

Yes – acceptable	13
No – not acceptable	80
Don't know	8