NOBODY IS FORCED to enter politics. Those who do so, do so willingly. Yet it has been said that many qualified individuals leave political office because of the tremendous degree of public scrutiny. Other qualified individuals refuse to run for office altogether because of this scrutiny. Most Americans believe that voters in a democracy are entitled to know important facts about the lives of their political leaders. The question is, what is an important fact?

Record your answers below. Use another sheet of paper, if necessary.

1. If a married politician is involved in a romantic relationship with someone other than his or her spouse, do you feel that is the public's business? Explain.

2. If a politician is heavily in debt and is having trouble managing personal financial matters, do you feel that is the public's business? Explain.

3. If a politician has a drinking problem, do you feel that is the public's business?

Explain.

4. If a close relative of a politician (for example, the politician's brother or mother) was in trouble with the law, do you feel that is the public's business? Explain.

5. Why do television news programs give us so much information about politicians' personal lives?

6. In the chart below, create a general set of rules for what sorts of issues involving politicians are our business, and what sorts of issues are not.