

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
August 14-17, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1003

Q.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY “Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]**

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	41	37	11	12	*
August 7-10, 2009	42	34	13	10	*
July 31-August 3, 2009	46	34	11	8	*
July 24-27, 2009	45	35	12	8	*
July 17-20, 2009	43	35	11	11	1
July 10-13, 2009	37	38	13	11	*
July 2-5, 2009	38	35	15	12	*
June 19-22, 2009	42	33	15	10	*
June 12-15, 2009	41	35	12	12	*
June 5-8, 2009	41	34	11	14	*
May 29-June 1, 2009	43	37	11	8	*
May 21-24, 2009	44	35	13	9	*
May 15-18, 2009	44	35	12	8	*
May 8-11, 2009	42	34	12	12	*
May 1-4, 2009	47	36	11	5	1
April 17-20, 2009	52	30	10	7	1
April 9-13, 2009	48	29	13	10	0
March 27-30, 2009	48	32	10	10	*
March 20-23, 2009	52	34	8	6	*
March 13-16, 2009	48	33	9	10	*
February 27-March 2, 2009	56	30	8	6	*
February 13-16, 2009	55	29	10	6	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	52	31	12	5	*
January 23-26, 2009	57	30	8	5	0
January 16-19, 2009	43	35	13	9	*
January 2-4, 2009	42	36	15	7	*
December 12-15, 2008	51	33	9	7	*
December 5-8, 2008	42	38	13	7	*
November 21-24, 2008	59	24	9	8	*
November 14-17, 2008	56	29	9	6	*
November 7-10, 2008	54	31	8	7	*
October 31-November 3, 2008	63	27	6	4	*
October 24-27, 2008	52	35	7	5	1
October 17-20, 2008	62	29	6	3	*
October 10-13, 2008	65	25	7	3	*
October 3-6, 2008	69	23	5	3	*
September 26-29, 2008	70	22	5	3	*
September 19-22, 2008	56	27	12	5	*
September 5-8, 2008	44	33	16	7	*
August 29-31, 2008	41	34	13	11	1
August 15-18, 2008	39	36	15	10	*
August 8-11, 2008	39	35	16	10	*
August 1-4, 2008	47	34	11	8	0
July 25-28, 2008	46	32	10	12	*

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
July 18-21, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
July 11-14, 2008	44	33	12	10	1
June 27-30, 2008	49	31	12	7	1
June 13-16, 2008	42	33	14	11	*
May 9-12, 2008	45	31	13	11	*
May 2-5, 2008	43	31	15	10	1
April 18-21, 2008	41	35	13	10	1
April 4-7, 2008	39	37	12	12	*
March 28-31, 2008	42	36	14	8	*
March 20-24, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
February 29-March 3, 2008	38	35	15	11	1
February 15-18, 2008	37	36	11	16	8
February 1-4, 2008	40	37	14	8	1
January 18-21, 2008	42	31	16	11	*
January 11-14, 2008	36	32	15	16	1
November 2-5, 2007	27	37	16	19	1
October 19-22, 2007	25	34	20	21	*
August 10-13, 2007	28	36	18	18	*
Mid-November, 2006	31	40	17	11	1
December, 2005	35	35	18	11	1
Early November, 2005	35	39	17	9	*
Mid-May, 2005	30	39	19	11	1
January, 2005	35	41	17	7	*
Mid-October, 2004	30	43	16	10	1
Early September, 2004	39	34	15	11	1
Mid-January, 2004	37	41	15	7	*
December, 2003	35	38	14	11	2
November, 2003	40	34	15	10	1
October, 2003	32	39	16	12	1
September, 2003	39	30	18	12	1
March, 2003	40	35	16	8	1
February, 2003	42	33	15	10	*
January, 2003	40	35	13	11	1
December, 2002	38	34	17	10	1
February, 2002	35	40	15	9	1
January, 2002	30	44	16	9	1
December, 2001	37	40	13	8	2
Mid-November, 2001	41	36	15	7	1
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1
b. Debate over health care reform	39	31	15	15	1
TREND FOR COMPARISON:¹					
August 7-10, 2009: <i>Debate in Washington over health care reform</i>	40	27	17	15	1
July 31-August 3, 2009	47	26	14	13	1
July 24-27, 2009	44	28	15	13	*
July 17-20, 2009	33	31	13	21	2
July 10-13, 2009	24	29	20	27	*
June 26-29, 2009	29	26	20	25	1
June 19-22, 2009	28	28	20	23	*
June 12-15, 2009	29	26	18	26	*
May 15-18, 2009: <i>Debate over Obama's health care plans</i>	25	30	20	24	*
March 6-9, 2009: <i>Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling health care</i>	41	32	13	14	*
September, 1994: <i>The Clinton administration's health care reform proposals</i>	32	41	18	9	*
June, 1994	34	40	19	7	*
May, 1994	37	37	16	9	1
January, 1994	38	38	15	9	*
Early January, 1994	40	40	14	6	*
December, 1993	45	35	12	7	1
October, 1993	44	32	17	6	1
September, 1993	49	34	11	6	*
August, 1993: <i>Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton</i>	27	32	25	15	1
June, 1993	28	38	19	15	*
May, 1993	30	30	25	14	1

¹ June 12-15, 2009 to August 7-10, 2009 asked about: "Debate in Washington over health care reform." May 15-18, 2009 asked about: "Debate over Barack Obama's health care plans." March 6-9, 2009 asked about: "Barack Obama proposing a \$630 billion fund for overhauling the U.S. health care system." September, 1993 through September, 1994 asked about: "The Clinton Administration's health care reform proposals." May, 1993 through August, 1993 asked about: "Reports about the White House task force on health care reform headed by Hillary Clinton."

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
c. The current situation and events in Iraq	19	38	23	18	*
TREND FOR COMPARISON²:					
July 2-5, 2009	25	34	20	21	0
April 24-27, 2009	21	35	25	19	*
March 20-23, 2009	25	37	21	17	*
February 27-March 2, 2009	40	37	13	9	1
December 12-15, 2008	24	35	25	16	*
November 21-24, 2008	32	31	24	13	0
November 14-17, 2008	24	33	27	16	*
October 31-November 3, 2008	30	35	22	12	1
October 24-27, 2008	29	35	25	11	*
October 10-13, 2008	23	34	30	13	*
October 3-6, 2008	29	33	28	10	*
September 5-8, 2008	24	37	26	13	*
August 29-31, 2008	22	32	29	16	1
August 22-25, 2008	26	31	27	15	1
August 1-4, 2008	27	40	23	10	*
July 25-28, 2008	28	33	22	17	*
July 18-21, 2008	33	35	20	12	*
July 11-14, 2008	24	35	24	16	1
July 3-7, 2008	25	35	25	15	*
June 20-23, 2008	25	36	24	15	*
May 9-12, 2008	29	35	21	14	1
May 2-5, 2008	26	35	25	13	1
April 25-28, 2008	29	35	23	12	1
April 18-21, 2008	29	39	20	11	1
April 11-14, 2008	25	39	20	15	1
April 4-7, 2008	25	37	23	15	*
March 28-31, 2008	29	40	19	11	1
March 20-24, 2008	30	38	19	13	*
March 14-17, 2008	29	38	23	10	*
March 7-10, 2008	28	39	18	15	*
February 29-March 3, 2008	28	40	19	13	*
February 8-11, 2008	24	35	25	16	*
February 1-4, 2008	28	39	22	11	*
January 25-28, 2008	23	35	26	16	*
January 18-21, 2008	31	33	20	15	1
January 11-14, 2008	25	38	21	16	*
January 4-7, 2008	27	38	20	15	*
December 14-17, 2007	26	32	24	18	*
December 7-10, 2007	28	37	21	14	*
November 23-26, 2007	25	37	21	16	1
November 16-19, 2007	31	37	19	12	1
November 9-12, 2007	29	38	19	13	1
November 2-5, 2007	31	35	18	15	1

² July 2-5, 2009 asked about: "U.S. troops withdrawing from Iraqi cities." February 27-March 2, 2009 asked about "Barack Obama's plan to withdraw most U.S. troops from Iraq by August 2010." From March 20-23, 2009 to April 24-27, 2009 and from March 30-April 2, 2007 through December 12-15, 2008 the story was listed as "The current situation and events in Iraq." From May, 2003 to March 23-26, 2007, the story was listed as "News about the current situation in Iraq." From March 20-24, 2003 to April 11-16, 2003, the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq." From Early October, 2002, to March 13-16, 2003, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq." In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
October 26-29, 2007	28	37	21	13	1
October 19-22, 2007	28	37	20	15	*
October 12-15, 2007	26	36	18	19	1
October 5-8, 2007	29	33	22	16	*
September 28 – October 1, 2007	30	41	18	11	*
September 21-24, 2007	32	38	17	13	*
September 14-17, 2007	31	36	18	15	0
September 7-10, 2007	32	34	20	14	*
August 30 – September 2, 2007	31	34	18	16	1
August 24-27, 2007	34	36	18	12	*
August 17-20, 2007	33	34	18	15	*
August 10-13, 2007	36	37	14	13	*
August 3-6, 2007	29	40	19	12	*
July 27-30, 2007	28	36	19	16	1
July 20-23, 2007	28	34	21	16	1
July 13-16, 2007	25	41	17	16	1
July 6-9, 2007	36	34	18	12	*
June 29-July 2, 2007	32	35	19	13	1
June 22-25, 2007	30	36	18	15	1
June 15-18, 2007	30	37	20	13	*
June 8-11, 2007	32	38	15	14	1
June 1-4, 2007	30	36	20	13	1
May 24-27, 2007	33	36	18	12	1
May 18-21, 2007	36	34	15	14	1
May 11-14, 2007	30	34	18	17	1
May 4-7, 2007	38	37	15	10	*
April 27-30, 2007	27	35	21	16	1
April 20-23, 2007	28	35	22	15	*
April 12-16, 2007	34	33	20	13	*
April 5-9, 2007	33	39	16	11	1
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*
March 23-March 26, 2007	31	38	18	12	1
March 16-19, 2007	34	34	17	15	*
March 9-12, 2007	34	37	16	13	*
March 2-5, 2007	37	37	16	9	1
February 23-26, 2007	36	36	15	13	*
February 16-19, 2007	30	36	19	14	1
February 9-12, 2007	37	34	18	11	*
February 2-5, 2007	38	38	17	7	*
January 26-29, 2007	36	38	15	11	*
January 19-22, 2007	37	34	18	10	1
January 12-15, 2007	38	36	17	8	1
January, 2007	46	40	8	5	1
January 5-8, 2007	40	32	16	12	0
December, 2006	42	39	12	7	*
November 30-December 3, 2006	40	36	13	11	*
Mid-November, 2006	44	38	12	6	*
September, 2006	33	43	14	8	2
August, 2006	41	39	12	7	1
June, 2006	37	43	13	6	1
May, 2006	42	35	15	7	1
April, 2006	43	36	13	7	1
March, 2006	43	38	12	6	1

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
February, 2006	39	42	12	6	1
January, 2006	40	40	12	7	1
December, 2005	45	38	11	5	1
Early November, 2005	41	40	13	6	*
Early October, 2005	43	36	15	6	*
Early September, 2005	32	40	20	7	1
July, 2005	43	37	13	6	1
Mid-May, 2005	42	42	11	5	*
Mid-March, 2005	40	39	14	5	2
February, 2005	38	45	13	4	*
January, 2005	48	37	11	4	*
December, 2004	34	44	15	6	1
Mid-October, 2004	42	38	11	8	1
Early September, 2004	47	37	9	6	1
August, 2004	39	42	12	6	1
July, 2004	43	40	11	6	*
June, 2004	39	42	12	6	1
April, 2004	54	33	8	5	*
Mid-March, 2004	47	36	12	4	1
Early February, 2004	47	38	10	4	1
Mid-January, 2004	48	39	9	4	*
December, 2003	44	38	11	6	1
November, 2003	52	33	9	5	1
September, 2003	50	33	10	6	1
Mid-August, 2003	45	39	10	5	1
Early July, 2003	37	41	13	8	1
June, 2003	46	35	13	6	*
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*
April 11-16, 2003	47	40	10	2	1
April 2-7, 2003	54	34	9	2	1
March 20-24, 2003	57	33	7	2	1
March 13-16, 2003	62	27	6	4	1
February, 2003	62	25	8	4	1
January, 2003	55	29	10	4	2
December, 2002	51	32	10	6	1
Late October, 2002	53	33	8	5	1
Early October, 2002	60	28	6	5	1
Early September, 2002	48	29	15	6	2
d. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's trip to Africa	9	22	28	40	1
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
July 24-27, 2009: Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's trip to India and Southeast Asia	10	20	25	45	1
March 27-30, 2009: Hillary Clinton's recent trip to Mexico to discuss drug violence near the border	14	24	23	39	*
April 19-May 12, 2002: The secretary of state's recent visit to the Middle East	25	32	20	22	1
e. A typhoon that caused flooding and mudslides in Taiwan	7	21	30	41	1
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
April 9-13, 2009: A major earthquake in Italy	18	35	25	22	*

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
May 16-19, 2008: <i>The earthquake in China</i>	30	41	17	12	*
May 9-12, 2008: <i>Reports about the cyclone that hit Burma</i>	23	35	23	19	*
November 2-5, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricane Noel on the Bahamas and Cuba</i>	11	22	31	35	1
September 7-10, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricanes Felix and Henriette on Mexico and Central America</i>	14	29	29	27	1
August 24-27, 2007: <i>The destruction caused by Hurricane Dean in Mexico and the Caribbean</i>	18	39	24	18	1
October, 2005: <i>The earthquake in Pakistan</i>	22	39	23	16	*
January 2005: <i>The earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean</i>	58	32	7	3	*
January 2004: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	16	34	31	19	*
February 2001: <i>The earthquake in India</i>	15	33	31	20	1
March 2000: <i>Flood rescue efforts in Mozambique</i>	10	26	30	34	*
September 1999: <i>The earthquake in Turkey</i>	27	37	23	12	1
November 1998: <i>Hurricane Mitch and the rain and mudslides in Central America</i>	36	36	16	11	1
February 1995: <i>The earthquake in Japan</i>	25	47	20	8	*
May 1991: <i>The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh</i>	23	36	23	17	1
July 1990: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	20	36	28	16	*
f. President Obama's trip to Mexico	9	20	26	44	*
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
July 10-13, 2009: <i>President Obama's trip to Russia and the G-8 Summit in Italy</i>	14	30	24	30	1
April 17-20, 2009: <i>Trip to Mexico and Latin America</i>	17	26	25	32	*
April 9-13, 2009: <i>Visit to Turkey and Iraq</i>	23	29	22	26	*
April 3-6, 2009: <i>Trip to Europe and meetings with foreign leaders</i>	25	35	21	19	*

Q.2 Which ONE of the stories I just mentioned have you followed most closely, or is there another story you've been following MORE closely? [DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.]

46	Debate over health care reform
23	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
7	The current situation and events in Iraq
3	President Obama's trip to Mexico
2	Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's trip to Africa
2	A typhoon that caused flooding and mudslides in Taiwan
7	Some other story (VOL.)
10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

Q.3 Do you think the press has been too critical, not critical enough or fair in the way it has covered Barack Obama?

		June 5-8 <u>2009</u>	Apr 24-27 <u>2009</u>	Mar 27-30 <u>2009</u>	Jan 23-26 <u>2009³</u>	Jan 2-4 <u>2009</u>
23	Too critical	16	15	18	12	11
28	Not critical enough	26	26	24	18	23
43	Fair	53	55	52	64	61
7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	5	4	6	6	5

NO QUESTIONS 4, 5

Q.6 Now I'd like to ask you about where you get most of your news these days. For each item that I read, please tell me if it is something you do regularly, or not. **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

		Yes, <u>regularly</u>	No, not <u>regularly</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
a.	Watch the local TV news June 5-8, 2009	69 66	31 34	* *
b.	Watch the Fox News cable channel June 5-8, 2009	38 38	62 62	* 1
c.	Watch MSNBC cable news June 5-8, 2009	27 25	72 74	1 1
d.	Watch CNN cable news	37	63	*
e.	Watch the national nightly network news on CBS, ABC and NBC June 5-8, 2009	44 40	56 60	1 *
f.	Read the newspaper June 5-8, 2009	54 51	46 49	* *
g.	Listen to radio news June 5-8, 2009	46 44	54 55	* 1
h.	Get news from the internet June 5-8, 2009	55 51	45 49	* *

Q.A Some critics of health care reform legislation say it includes the creation of so called "death panels" or government organizations that will make decisions about who will and will not receive health services when they are critically ill? How much, if anything, have you heard about this? **[READ]**

41	A lot
45	A little
13	Nothing at all
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

³ For Jan. 23-26, 2009, question wording was: "Do you think the press has been too critical, not critical enough or fair in the way it has covered Barack Obama during his first few days in office?" For Jan. 2-4, 2009, question was asked about George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Question wording was: "Do you think the press has been too critical, not critical enough or fair in the way it has covered [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE]?"

IF HEARD A LOT OR A LITTLE (1,2 IN Q.A) ASK [N=895]:

Q.B From what you know, do you think it is true or not true that the health care legislation will create these so called “death panels”?

- 30 True
- 50 Not true
- 20 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
August 13-16, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1002

ASK ALL:

Q.1 What recent news story, if any, have you and your friends been talking about [OPEN END. PROBE ONCE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. RECORD UP TO THREE. RECORD EACH RESPONSE ON SEPARATE SCREEN. DO NOT READ PRECODE LIST. DO NOT SUGGEST ANSWERS]?

55	Health care reform/protests at town hall meetings/debate in Washington/Obama's plan
20	State of the economy
9	Iraq war
3	Mike Vick
3	Michael Jackson
2	Cash for Clunkers
40	Other (VOL. SPECIFY)
20	No answer/Don't know/Refused [VOL.]

Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

QUESTION 2 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE