



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 1, 2012

Campaign News Interest on Par With 2008

Colorado Rampage Tops News Interest for July

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Andrew Kohut

President, Pew Research Center

Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock

Associate Directors

Scott Keeter

Director of Survey Research

1615 L St, N.W., Suite 700

Washington, D.C. 20036

Tel (202) 419-4350

Fax (202) 419-4399

www.people-press.org

Campaign News Interest On Par With 2008

Colorado Rampage Tops News Interest for July

In the final two weeks of July, Americans kept a close watch on news about a deadly shooting rampage at a Colorado movie theater, but they also closely tracked news about two long-running stories – the condition of the nation’s economy and the 2012 presidential campaign.

News about the shootings, which left 12 dead and dozens injured, topped the News Interest Index for the month and the story is among the most closely followed so far in 2012.

In the days immediately after the rampage – which took place at a midnight showing of “The Dark Knight Rises” on July 20 – 48% said they followed news about the shootings very closely. In the most recent survey, conducted July 26-29 among 1,010 adults by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 41% say they followed news about the shootings very closely in the previous week.

But Americans also continued to follow news about the condition of the nation’s economy and the 2012 presidential election. In the July 19-22 survey, for example, 39% said they followed news about the condition of the U.S. economy very closely, while 35% said they followed news about the presidential elections this closely.

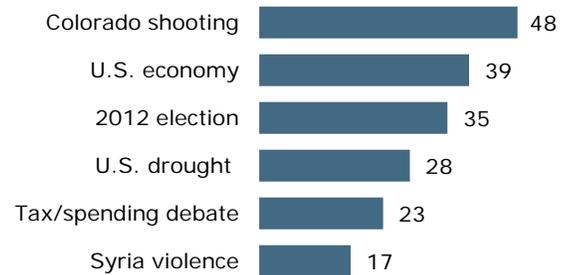
Interest in July’s Top News

% following each story very closely

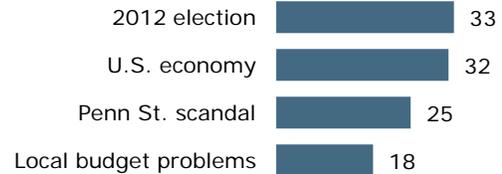
July 26-29



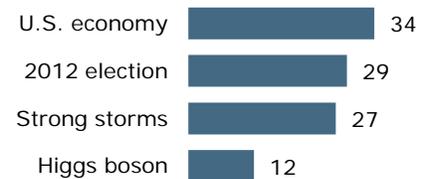
July 19-22*



July 12-15



July 5-8



PEW RESEARCH CENTER July 26-29, 2012; July 19-22, 2012; July 12-15, 2012; July 5-8, 2012. * Colorado shooting was asked only July 20-22, 2012.

Interest in news about the presidential election is now at a level comparable to interest at about the same point in the 2008 campaign. Looking at monthly averages, 30% said they followed election news very closely in July 2008; this July, 31% say this.

The public's interest in the 2012 campaign has fluctuated only slightly so far this year. In 2008, interest rose early in the year as Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton engaged in a primary fight for the Democratic nomination. Interest subsided somewhat mid-year but then climbed as the fall campaign got underway. In October and November, more than half of the public said they were following news about the 2008 campaign very closely.

Percent Following Election News Very Closely Now Similar to 2008



PEW RESEARCH CENTER Numbers represent monthly averages of percentage following election news very closely.

Looking at other news last month, nearly three-in-ten (28%) said in the July 19-22 survey that they very closely followed news about drought conditions across much of the country and its impact on farms and crops. Those in the Midwest (34%) and the South (32%) were somewhat more likely to say they followed this news very closely than those in the Northeast (21%) and those in the West (22%). Earlier in the month in the July 5-8 survey, 27% said they very closely followed news about strong storms in the Midwest and the East and continued power outages.

In the July 12-15 survey, 25% say they very closely followed news about the report on the sex abuse scandal at Penn State University that faulted senior officials for failing to protect children from abuse. Interest in this news was comparable across most demographic groups.

One week later, about a quarter (23%) very closely followed news about the debate in Washington over automatic spending cuts and tax increases that will take effect in January unless Congress acts. Republicans and Democrats expressed similar levels of interest in this story (30% of Republicans and 25% of Democrats said they followed this news very closely).

About two-in-ten (19%) say they very closely followed news about the start of the Summer Olympics in London last week. Four years ago, 24% said they followed news about the opening of the Olympics in Beijing very closely. That number increased to 35% as the competition unfolded.

These findings are based on the most recent installments of the weekly News Interest Index, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories. Survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the past week were collected July 26-29 from a nationally representative sample of 1,010 adults.

About the Surveys

Analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted July 26-29, 2012 among a national sample of 1,010 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (609 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 401 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 190 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,010	3.6 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

Additional analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted July 19-22, 2012 among a national sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (600 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 401 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 191 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,001	3.6 percentage points
Northeast	169	8.8 percentage points
Midwest	230	7.5 percentage points
South	379	5.9 percentage points
West	223	7.6 percentage points
Republicans	239	7.4 percentage points
Democrats	286	6.8 percentage points
Independents	384	5.8 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

Additional analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted July 12-15, 2012 among a national sample of 1,015 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (608 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 407 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 202 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,015	3.6 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

Additional analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted July 5-8, 2012 among a national sample of 1,004 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (601 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 403 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 189 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years

of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin and region to parameters from the March 2011 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and population density to parameters from the Decennial Census. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status, based on extrapolations from the 2011 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size among respondents with a landline phone. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

Group	Sample Size	Plus or minus ...
Total sample	1,004	3.6 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
July 26-29, 2012 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,010

ASK ALL:

PEW.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>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
July 26-29, 2012	32	30	20	19	*
July 19-22, 2012	39	29	16	16	*
July 12-15, 2012	32	33	18	17	1
July 5-8, 2012	34	28	18	19	1
June 28-July 1, 2012	38	28	15	18	1
June 21-24, 2012	33	32	17	17	*
June 14-17, 2012	39	28	15	17	*
June 7-10, 2012	35	32	15	18	*
May 31-June 3, 2012	37	34	13	14	1
May 24-27, 2012	33	31	19	16	1
May 17-20, 2012	35	30	16	19	*
May 10-13, 2012	40	26	16	17	*
May 3-6, 2012	38	29	13	20	*
April 26-29, 2012	34	32	17	16	1
April 19-22, 2012	35	35	13	14	2
April 12-15, 2012	39	28	16	17	1
April 5-8, 2012	37	31	16	16	1
March 29-April 1, 2012	34	33	15	18	1
March 22-25, 2012	36	29	16	18	1
March 15-18, 2012	40	35	11	14	1
March 8-11, 2012	37	32	14	17	*
March 1-4, 2012	41	27	15	17	1
February 23-26, 2012	37	33	14	15	1
February 16-20, 2012	33	32	16	17	1
February 9-12, 2012	42	30	14	13	1
February 2-5, 2012	38	32	16	13	1
January 26-29, 2012	35	31	16	19	*
January 19-22, 2012	35	30	16	19	1
January 12-15, 2012	33	32	14	20	1
January 5-8, 2012	39	31	15	15	*
December 15-18, 2011	36	32	14	16	1
December 8-11, 2011	41	29	13	16	1
December 1-4, 2011	40	33	13	13	1
November 17-20, 2011	35	33	16	15	1
November 10-13, 2011	39	31	15	14	*
November 3-6, 2011	37	31	15	17	1
October 27-30, 2011	38	33	14	15	1
October 20-23, 2011	38	32	14	16	1
October 13-16, 2011	39	32	14	14	*
October 6-9, 2011	43	28	14	14	1
September 29-October 2, 2011	46	26	14	14	*
September 22-25, 2011	44	33	11	11	*
September 8-11, 2011	40	30	15	14	1
September 1-4, 2011	44	30	11	15	*
August 25-28, 2011	44	28	14	13	1
August 18-21, 2011	44	29	12	14	1
August 4-7, 2011	46	30	11	13	1

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
July 28-31, 2011	43	30	13	13	*
July 21-24, 2011	41	32	13	13	1
July 14-17, 2011	41	30	14	14	1
July 7-10, 2011	36	30	15	18	1
June 30-July 3, 2011	38	32	13	16	1
June 23-26, 2011	37	29	15	19	*
June 16-19, 2011	39	33	14	13	*
June 9-12, 2011	39	30	15	16	1
June 2-5, 2011	35	34	17	14	*
May 19-22, 2011	33	34	17	16	*
May 12-15, 2011	32	32	17	18	2
May 5-8, 2011	40	35	15	9	1
April 21-25, 2011	41	33	12	14	*
April 14-17, 2011	44	30	14	12	1
April 7-10, 2011	46	30	14	10	*
March 31-April 3, 2011	42	31	16	11	0
March 24-27, 2011	36	32	17	15	*
March 17-20, 2011	38	32	17	13	*
March 10-13, 2011	40	30	16	13	*
March 3-6, 2011	37	31	17	13	1
February 24-27, 2011	49	29	11	10	*
February 17-20, 2011	35	33	14	17	*
February 10-13, 2011	36	34	13	16	*
February 3-6, 2011	35	37	14	14	*
January 20-23, 2011	37	33	14	15	1
January 13-16, 2011	37	29	15	18	1
January 6-9, 2011	39	37	11	12	1

[SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS:](http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Economy-Trends.pdf) <http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Economy-Trends.pdf>

b. The start of the Summer Olympics in London

July 26-29, 2012	19	25	25	31	1
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TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

February 26-March 1, 2010: <i>The Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada</i>	23	28	28	21	*
February 19-22, 2010	30	25	19	25	*
February 12-15, 2010: <i>The start of the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, Canada</i>	18	23	23	35	1
Aug 22-25, 2008: <i>The Olympic Games in Beijing, China</i>	35	31	19	15	*
August 15-18, 2008	35	31	17	16	1
August 8-11, 2008	24	29	24	23	*
August 1-4, 2008 ¹	13	33	31	23	*
July 25-28, 2008	12	31	29	28	*
April 4-7, 2008	5	18	31	45	1
Early September, 2004: <i>Summer/Athens</i>	25	25	21	29	*
February 12-18, 2002: <i>Winter/Utah</i>	22	30	21	26	1
Early October, 2000: <i>Summer/Sydney</i>	27	28	24	21	*
Early September, 1996: <i>Summer/Atlanta</i>	32	34	20	14	*
July, 1996: <i>Summer/Atlanta</i>	45	30	13	11	1
February, 1992: <i>Winter/France</i>	33	30	19	17	1

c. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential election

July 26-29, 2012	25	28	21	25	1
July 19-22, 2012	35	22	17	25	1

¹ For August 1-4, 2008 and April 4-7, 2008 the story was listed as "News about the upcoming Olympic games in Beijing, China." For July 25-28, 2008 the story was listed as "News about China as the Beijing Olympic Games approach."

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
July 12-15, 2012	33	24	20	23	*
July 5-8, 2012	29	26	20	25	*
June 28-July 1, 2012	32	24	19	25	*
June 21-24, 2012	27	30	17	25	1
June 14-17, 2012	31	30	15	24	*
June 7-10, 2012	30	29	16	25	1
May 31-June 3, 2012	29	28	19	23	1
May 24-27, 2012	32	28	16	24	1
May 17-20, 2012	31	26	19	23	*
May 10-13, 2012	34	23	18	24	*
May 3-6, 2012	29	27	19	24	*
April 26-29, 2012	29	29	18	23	1
April 19-22, 2012	29	29	20	20	1
April 12-15, 2012	32	28	16	23	1
April 5-8, 2012	31	27	18	23	*
March 29-April 1, 2012	23	29	21	27	*
March 22-25, 2012	28	28	18	25	1
March 15-18, 2012	28	31	17	24	*
March 8-11, 2012	28	27	21	23	*
March 1-4, 2012	31	24	20	24	1
February 23-26, 2012	28	29	18	24	1
February 16-20, 2012	25	29	19	25	2
February 9-12, 2012	35	25	18	20	1
February 2-5, 2012	30	27	20	21	1
January 26-29, 2012	28	30	21	21	1
January 19-22, 2012	28	30	17	24	*
January 12-15, 2012	29	29	18	23	1
January 5-8, 2012	29	30	16	25	*
December 15-18, 2011	26	24	20	29	1
December 8-11, 2011	27	27	18	28	*
December 1-4, 2011	25	28	20	26	1
November 17-20, 2011	24	31	21	23	1
November 3-6, 2011	22	31	20	26	1
October 27-30, 2011	21	26	21	30	1
October 20-23, 2011	21	28	22	28	1
October 13-16, 2011	26	29	22	23	1
October 6-9, 2011	25	25	23	27	1
September 29-October 2, 2011	27	26	21	25	*
September 22-25, 2011	25	26	23	25	1
September 15-18, 2011	24	28	21	27	1
September 8-11, 2011	22	26	21	31	*
September 1-4, 2011	22	23	22	32	1
August 25-28, 2011	22	22	22	33	1
August 18-21, 2011	27	26	19	28	1
August 11-14, 2011	19	24	20	36	1
August 4-7, 2011	18	21	22	37	1
July 28-31, 2011	17	27	21	35	1
July 21-24, 2011	17	22	28	32	*
July 14-17, 2011	18	26	27	28	1
July 7-10, 2011	16	23	27	33	1
June 30-July 3, 2011	21	28	24	25	2
June 23-26, 2011	19	26	24	31	*
June 16-19, 2011	23	29	23	25	*
June 9-12, 2011	18	30	22	30	1
June 2-5, 2011	21	31	22	26	*
May 26-29, 2011	20	27	24	28	*
May 19-22, 2011	15	27	24	32	1
May 12-15, 2011	15	22	26	35	1
May 5-8, 2011	16	24	27	32	1

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
April 21-25, 2011	18	26	23	32	1
April 14-17, 2011	20	23	29	27	1
March 24-27, 2011	13	19	26	41	1
March 10-13, 2011	15	21	26	38	0
February 10-13, 2011	16	19	24	40	*
February 3-6, 2011	15	20	23	42	*

[SEE TRENDS FOR PREVIOUS YEARS:](http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Election-Trends.pdf) <http://www.people-press.org/files/2011/11/NII-Election-Trends.pdf>

d. The shooting at a movie theater near Denver,
Colorado

July 26-29, 2012	41	33	16	9	1
July 20-22, 2012 ²	48	25	15	11	1

TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

April 5-8, 2012: <i>A shooting at a small college in Oakland, California, that killed seven people</i>	21	28	25	25	2
March 1-4, 2012: <i>A deadly school shooting near Cleveland</i>	26	31	22	19	1
December 8-11, 2011: <i>Deadly shootings at Virginia Tech University</i>	20	27	29	24	1
August 7-10, 2011: <i>A shooting at a fitness club in Pennsylvania</i>	13	28	25	34	1
June 12-15, 2009: <i>A deadly shooting at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.</i>	26	34	17	23	*
January 13-16, 2011: <i>News about a Congresswoman and others shot in Tucson, Arizona</i>	49	28	12	11	1
April 3-6, 2009: <i>A shooter killing several people at an immigration services center in Binghamton, New York</i>	26	32	19	23	*
March 13-16, 2009: <i>A shooting spree in Alabama that resulted in the death of 11 people</i>	18	33	24	25	*
February 15-18, 2008: <i>The shootings at Northern Illinois University that resulted in the death of 7 people</i>	26	40	19	15	0
February 8-11, 2008: <i>A shooting at a city council meeting in Missouri where six people were killed</i>	13	28	25	33	1
December 14-17, 2007: <i>Shootings at two religious centers in Colorado</i>	17	31	24	27	1
December 7-10, 2007: <i>A shooting at a shopping mall in Omaha, Nebraska where eight people were killed</i>	30	36	18	15	1
October 12-15, 2007: <i>The shooting at a high school in Cleveland, Ohio</i>	22	32	25	20	1
April 20-23, 2007: <i>The shootings at Virginia Tech University that resulted in the death of 33 people</i>	45	37	13	5	*
October, 2006: <i>Recent shootings at schools in Pennsylvania and other states</i>	46	33	12	8	1
March, 2000: <i>The shooting of a 6-year-old girl at a Michigan school</i>	40	38	15	7	*
September, 1999: <i>The shootings in a Jewish community center in Los Angeles</i>	29	34	22	14	1

² Item was asked from July 20-22, 2012 only. N=780.

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Late April, 1999: <i>The shooting of students and teachers by two students at a Colorado high school</i>	68	24	6	2	*
June, 1998: <i>The shooting at a high school in Springfield, Oregon</i>	46	36	14	4	*
March, 1998: <i>The shooting at a middle school in Jonesboro, Arkansas</i>	49	33	12	5	1

PEW.2, PEW.24 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**PEWWP.1 THRU PEW.21 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****NO QUESTIONS PEW.3-PEW.9, PEW.22-PEW.23**

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
July 19-22, 2012 OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,001

ASK ALL:

PEW.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>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy July 19-22, 2012	39	29	16	16	*
b. Political violence in Syria July 19-22, 2012	17	24	23	36	1
June 28-July 1, 2012	13	19	26	42	*
June 14-17, 2012	15	24	21	40	1
May 31-June 3, 2012	12	25	25	37	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
April 12-15, 2012: <i>International efforts to stop political violence in Syria</i>	14	23	25	37	1
April 5-8, 2012	15	21	27	37	1
March 15-28, 2012: <i>Political violence in Syria</i>	16	26	27	30	1
March 8-11, 2012	17	23	23	37	1
February 23-26, 2012	18	24	21	35	1
February 9-12, 2012	17	23	23	36	*
January 12-15, 2012	12	17	26	45	1
August 4-7, 2011: <i>Political violence following uprisings in Syria</i>	10	19	26	44	1
May 5-8, 2011	14	27	30	28	1
June 2-5, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests and violence in some Middle Eastern countries</i>	18	25	25	32	*
April 28-May 1, 2011	18	29	25	27	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries</i>	32	35	16	18	*
January 27-30, 2011	17	26	21	35	*
c. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential election July 19-22, 2012	35	22	17	25	1
d. The debate in Washington over automatic spending cuts and tax increases that will take effect in January unless Congress acts July 19-22, 2012	23	21	22	33	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
February 16-20, 2012: <i>Congress passing a bill to extend payroll tax cuts and unemployment benefits³</i>	24	27	21	27	1

³ The wording of item PEW.1d was changed after the first night of interviewing (February 16, 2012) to reflect Congress passing this legislation. On February 16, 2012, the item wording was "Negotiations in Congress to extend payroll tax cuts and unemployment benefits."

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
August 4-7, 2011: <i>Congress and the president agreeing to cut federal spending and raise the debt limit</i>	46	25	13	14	1
December 16-19, 2010 ⁴ : <i>The extension of tax cuts and unemployment benefits approved by Congress and signed by President Obama</i>	37	27	15	19	1
December 9-12, 2010: <i>The agreement reached between Barack Obama and Congressional Republicans to extend tax cuts and unemployment benefits</i>	37	29	15	17	1
December 2-5, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal income tax cuts passed when George W. Bush was president</i>	39	26	17	17	1
September 16-19, 2010: <i>The debate in Washington over competing Democratic and Republican tax plans</i>	21	24	21	34	*
September 9-12, 2010	16	19	22	42	1
May 8-11, 2009: <i>The debate in Washington over the federal budget</i>	22	28	19	31	*
March 27-30, 2009: <i>Debate over Barack Obama's budget proposal</i>	28	34	18	19	1
February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's budget proposal for next year that raises taxes on wealthy Americans and increases spending on health care, education and other programs</i>	47	34	9	10	*
May, 2003: <i>George W. Bush's tax cut and economic stimulus plan</i>	25	36	22	15	2
February, 2003	26	33	23	16	2
January, 2003	28	34	21	15	2
February, 2002: <i>Debate in Congress over G.W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan</i>	17	31	28	23	1
April, 2001	24	38	20	18	*
February, 2001: <i>G.W. Bush's tax cut plan</i>	31	35	19	14	1
September, 1999: <i>The debate in Washington over how much to cut taxes</i>	18	30	28	23	1
July, 1999	14	34	21	31	*
June, 1997: <i>Competing proposals on ways to cut taxes as part of the recent bipartisan budget agreement</i>	11	27	28	33	1
September, 1992 (RVs): <i>George Bush's plan to improve the economy by cutting government spending and cutting taxes</i>	28	44	18	9	1
e. Drought conditions across much of the country and its impact on farms and crops					
July 19-22, 2012	28	30	19	22	1
August, 1988: <i>The drought and its effects on American farmers (RVs)</i>	49	39	10	2	0
f. The shooting at a movie theater near Denver, Colorado					
July 20-22, 2012 ⁵	48	25	15	11	1

⁴ The wording of item PEW.1c was changed after the first night of interviewing (December 16, 2010), to reflect Congress passing and Obama signing this legislation. On December 16, 2010 the item read "The debate in Washington over extending tax cuts and unemployment benefits."

⁵ Item was asked from July 20-22, 2012 only. N=780.

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
April 5-8, 2012: <i>A shooting at a small college in Oakland, California, that killed seven people</i>	21	28	25	25	2
March 1-4, 2012: <i>A deadly school shooting near Cleveland</i>	26	31	22	19	1
December 8-11, 2011: <i>Deadly shootings at Virginia Tech University</i>	20	27	29	24	1
August 7-10, 2011: <i>A shooting at a fitness club in Pennsylvania</i>	13	28	25	34	1
June 12-15, 2009: <i>A deadly shooting at the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.</i>	26	34	17	23	*
January 13-16, 2011: <i>News about a Congresswoman and others shot in Tucson, Arizona</i>	49	28	12	11	1
April 3-6, 2009: <i>A shooter killing several people at an immigration services center in Binghamton, New York</i>	26	32	19	23	*
March 13-16, 2009: <i>A shooting spree in Alabama that resulted in the death of 11 people</i>	18	33	24	25	*
February 15-18, 2008: <i>The shootings at Northern Illinois University that resulted in the death of 7 people</i>	26	40	19	15	0
February 8-11, 2008: <i>A shooting at a city council meeting in Missouri where six people were killed</i>	13	28	25	33	1
December 14-17, 2007: <i>Shootings at two religious centers in Colorado</i>	17	31	24	27	1
December 7-10, 2007: <i>A shooting at a shopping mall in Omaha, Nebraska where eight people were killed</i>	30	36	18	15	1
October 12-15, 2007: <i>The shooting at a high school in Cleveland, Ohio</i>	22	32	25	20	1
April 20-23, 2007: <i>The shootings at Virginia Tech University that resulted in the death of 33 people</i>	45	37	13	5	*
October, 2006: <i>Recent shootings at schools in Pennsylvania and other states</i>	46	33	12	8	1
March, 2000: <i>The shooting of a 6-year-old girl at a Michigan school</i>	40	38	15	7	*
September, 1999: <i>The shootings in a Jewish community center in Los Angeles</i>	29	34	22	14	1
Late April, 1999: <i>The shooting of students and teachers by two students at a Colorado high school</i>	68	24	6	2	*
June, 1998: <i>The shooting at a high school in Springfield, Oregon</i>	46	36	14	4	*
March, 1998: <i>The shooting at a middle school in Jonesboro, Arkansas</i>	49	33	12	5	1

NO QUESTION PEW.2**PEW.3, PEW.4 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED****PEW.5 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
July 12-15, 2012, OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,015

ASK ALL:

PEW.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>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
July 12-15, 2012	32	33	18	17	1
b. News about state and local budget problems					
July 12-15, 2012	18	28	24	29	1
July 14-17, 2011	27	28	22	22	1
May 26-29, 2011	26	29	19	26	*
March 17-20, 2011	26	29	22	23	1
February 17-20, 2011	28	31	17	23	1
January 6-9, 2011	24	37	18	20	1
June 24-27, 2010	26	35	22	15	1
March 5-8, 2010	31	32	19	18	*
April 9-13, 2009	28	30	21	21	*
c. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential election					
July 12-15, 2012	33	24	20	23	*
d. A report on the sex abuse scandal at Penn State faulting senior officials for failing to protect children from abuse					
July 12-15, 2012	25	31	22	22	1
June 21-24, 2012: <i>The trial of former Penn State football coach Jerry Sandusky on charges that he sexually abused children</i>	20	28	24	27	1
June 14-17, 2012	20	24	27	29	*
December 15-18, 2011: <i>A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University</i>	22	29	23	25	1
December 8-11, 2011	24	29	24	22	1
November 17-20, 2011: <i>A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University</i>	28	31	21	18	1
November 10-13, 2011: <i>A sex abuse scandal at Penn State University resulting in the firing of the school's president and football coach Joe Paterno</i>	34	29	19	18	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
August 18-21, 2011: <i>Recent scandals in college football</i>	10	12	17	61	*
September 16-19, 2010: <i>Pope Benedict's visit to Great Britain and his comments on the Catholic Church's handling of sex-abuse scandals</i>	10	16	26	47	1
April 23-26, 2010: <i>Reports about the Vatican's handling of sex-abuse scandals in the Catholic Church</i>	14	28	29	29	*
March 26-29, 2010	17	24	28	30	*
March 19-22, 2010	8	18	31	42	1

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
June, 2002: <i>Reports of sexual abuses by Catholic priests</i>	38	36	17	8	1
May, 2002: <i>The Pope and American cardinals meeting in Rome about sexual abuse by Catholic priests</i>	27	33	21	18	1
Early April, 2002: <i>Reports of sexual abuses by Catholic priests</i>	27	34	25	13	1
December, 1993	18	32	31	18	1

NO QUESTION PEW.2**PEW.3 THRU PEW.6 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
July 5-8, 2012, OMNIBUS
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,004

ASK ALL:

PEW.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>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy July 5-8, 2012	34	28	18	19	1
b. Strong storms in the Midwest and East and continued power outages July 5-8, 2012	27	32	20	20	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
March 1-4, 2012: <i>Deadly storms and tornadoes in the Midwest</i>	33	31	17	18	1
May 26-29, 2011: <i>Deadly tornadoes in the Midwest</i>	45	33	13	9	*
May 5-8, 2011: <i>Tornadoes and flooding in the South and Midwest</i>	41	37	15	7	*
April 28-May 1, 2011: <i>Deadly storms in the South</i>	45	29	14	12	1
April 21-25, 2011: <i>Deadly storms in the South and Midwest</i>	29	33	18	20	*
June 13-16, 2008: <i>A tornado that killed four Boy Scouts at a camp in Iowa</i>	32	35	17	16	*
May 30-June 2, 2008: <i>Violent storms and tornadoes in the Midwest</i>	30	33	21	15	1
February 8-11, 2008: <i>Violent storms and tornadoes in the South and Midwest</i>	25	42	19	13	1
May 11-14, 2007: <i>Tornadoes and floods in the Midwest</i>	22	35	23	19	1
March 2-5, 2007: <i>Violent storms and tornadoes in the South and Midwest</i>	33	38	18	11	*
May, 1999: <i>Tornadoes in Oklahoma and Kansas</i>	38	40	15	6	1
c. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential election July 5-8, 2012	29	26	20	25	*
d. Scientists announcing the discovery of a new subatomic particle they believe to be the Higgs boson, a basic building block of the universe July 5-8, 2012	12	15	19	52	2
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
September 12-15, 2008: <i>News about the first test of the world's largest supercollider in Geneva, Switzerland</i>	12	17	23	45	3
July, 2000: <i>Scientists discovering how to map the human genetic code</i>	16	28	21	34	1
August, 1998: <i>The cloning of mice by scientists in Hawaii</i>	6	15	24	52	3

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
April, 1997: <i>The cloning of a sheep by a Scottish biologist</i>	17	33	26	23	1
May, 1992: <i>The discovery of scientific evidence of the beginnings of the universe</i>	9	19	30	40	2
May 1990: <i>The deployment of the Hubble space telescope</i>	24	29	21	25	0

NO QUESTION PEW.2**PEW.3 THRU PEW.4 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**