

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
OCTOBER NEWS INTEREST UPDATE
FINAL TOPLINE
Oct 1-3, 2001
N=1,001

Q.1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? [IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>
October, 2001	84	8	8=100
Late September, 2001	86	7	7=100
Mid-September, 2001	80	9	11=100
Early September, 2001	51	34	15=100
August, 2001	50	32	18=100
July, 2001	51	32	17=100
June, 2001	50	33	17=100
May, 2001	53	32	15=100
April, 2001	56	27	17=100
March, 2001	55	25	20=100
February, 2001	53	21	26=100

Q.2 Now I will read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past month. As I read each item, tell me if you happened to follow this news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. **[INSERT ITEM A FIRST; ROTATE ITEMS B THROUGH G]**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a. News about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon in Washington?					
Mid-September, 2001	73	22	4	1	*=100
July, 1996 ¹	74	22	3	1	*=100
June, 1995 ²	69	23	6	2	*=100
January, 1991 ³	58	32	8	2	*=100
b. What's being done in the U.S. to defend against future terrorist attacks?	67	28	4	1	0=100
c. U.S. efforts to form a coalition with other nations to take action against terrorist organizations?	57	30	10	2	1=100
d. How and when the U.S. military might attack terrorist networks?	53	31	12	3	1=100
e. Who carried out the attacks on Sept 11 and how they did it?	52	30	11	5	2=100
f. The economic and financial effects of the attacks?	72	21	4	2	1=100
g. The refugee crisis in Afghanistan and neighboring countries	52	31	10	6	1=100

¹ In July 1996 the question was worded: "the crash of a Paris-bound TWA plane off the coast of New York."

² In June 1995 the question was worded: "the Oklahoma City bombing."

³ In January 1991, the question was worded: "How closely have you been following news about the War in the Gulf?"

Q.3 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon -- excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		Mid- Sept 2001	Jan 1991 ⁴
48	Excellent	56	36
37	Good	33	42
10	Only fair	6	15
3	Poor	3	5
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100

Q.4 Why do you feel that way? [OPEN-END] [PROBE FOR CLARITY. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD ALL IN ORDER OF MENTION]

	Total	Rating of Press Coverage	
		Excellent/Good	Fair/Poor
POSITIVE COMMENT	56	65	4
Content and Information (NET)	22	26	--
Comprehensive / Covered everything	11	13	--
Kept me/the public informed	7	8	--
Detailed, In depth	2	2	--
Accurate, Factual, "Telling it like it is"	1	1	--
Good analysis, provided context	1	1	--
Concise, too the point, no fluff	1	1	--
Amount of Coverage / Timeliness (NET)	15	18	--
Up to date, quick, on top of it	11	12	--
Amount of coverage / on 24-7	5	6	--
Editorial Decisions / Journalistic Practices (NET)	12	14	--
Fair, Balanced, Unbiased, Honest	3	4	--
Showed restraint, not exploitative, not too graphic, not sensationalistic	3	4	--
Resourceful, put in extra effort	2	2	--
Really caring, considerate	1	2	--
Took their time in order to be accurate	1	2	--
No secrets, all information given out	1	1	--
Got Americans involved, bonded the nation	1	1	--
calmed/comforted everyone	1	1	--
Covered those directly affected, put a human face on the story	1	1	--
Put themselves in danger	*	*	--
Other Positive	13	15	--
NEGATIVE COMMENT	25	18	71
Too much coverage, repetition, overkill	7	--	14
Not enough information, wrong focus, hiding things	3	--	8
Giving out too much information	3	--	7
Security issues, Endangering defense/military objectives	2	--	4
Too much opinion/bias, Not balanced	2	--	9
Reporting rumors, conflicting info., not careful enough	2	--	7
Too graphic, damaging to children	1	--	5
Focus on what sells, sensationalistic	1	--	3
Melodramatic, too emotional, exploited human drama	1	--	1
No context, no history	1	--	2
Alarmist, scaring/stressing people	1	--	0
Not doing enough	1	--	2
Too intrusive of victims and families	*	--	2
No real experts, don't know what they're talking about	*	--	1
Other Negative	2	--	8
Uncategorizable Response	15	15	16
Don't know/No answer	8	7	10

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In January 1991, the question asked about "covering the War in the Gulf."

Q.5 Do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, too little coverage to the attacks, or the right amount of coverage?

32 Too much coverage
 2 Too little coverage
 63 Right amount of coverage
3 Don't know/Refused
 100

ASK FORM A ONLY:

Q.6a Have you yourself felt depressed by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

ASK FORM B ONLY:

Q.6b In the past few days, have you yourself felt depressed by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

		TRENDS FOR FORM A:		
<u>Form A</u>	<u>Form B</u>		<u>Mid-Sept 2001</u>	<u>Jan 1991⁵</u>
59	42	Yes	71	50
40	57	No	27	49
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100	100		100	100
(N=476)	(N=525)			

ASK FORM A ONLY:

Q.7a Have you had any difficulty concentrating on your job or your normal activities because of the way you feel about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

ASK FORM B ONLY:

Q.7b In the past few days, have you had any difficulty concentrating on your job or your normal activities because of the way you feel about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

		TREND FOR FORM A:	
<u>Form A</u>	<u>Form B</u>		<u>Mid-Sept 2001</u>
31	21	Yes	49
68	79	No	50
<u>1</u>	*	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>
100	100		100
(N=476)	(N=525)		

ASK FORM A ONLY:

Q.8a Have you had any trouble sleeping because of the way you feel about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

ASK FORM B ONLY:

Q.8b In the past few days, have you had any trouble sleeping because of the way you feel about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

		TREND FOR FORM A:	
<u>Form A</u>	<u>Form B</u>		<u>Mid-Sept 2001</u>
23	18	Yes	33
76	81	No	66
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>
100	100		100
(N=476)	(N=525)		

⁵ In January 1991, the question asked about "the Gulf War."

ASK FORM A ONLY:

Q.9a Have you yourself felt angry about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

ASK FORM B ONLY:

Q.9b In the past few days, have you yourself felt angry about the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon?

Form A	Form B	
87	72	Yes
12	27	No
1	1	Don't know/Refused
100	100	
(N=476)	(N=525)	

Q.10 As a result of the terrorist attacks **[INSERT ITEM; ROTATE]**?⁶

		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Are you reading newspapers more closely	50	49	1=100
	Mid-September, 2001	46	54	*=100
	January, 1991	51	48	1=100
b.	Are you keeping the TV or radio tuned to the news	67	31	2=100
	Mid-September, 2001	81	19	*=100
	January, 1991	81	18	1=100
c.	Are you checking the Internet for news updates	30	69	1=100
	Mid-September, 2001	33	66	1=100
d.	Are you considering canceling an airplane trip or have you already canceled an airplane trip	10	88	2=100
	Mid-September, 2001 ⁷	24	73	3=100
	January, 1991	14	85	1=100
e.	Are you praying more	57	42	1=100
	Mid-September, 2001	69	30	1=100
	January, 1991	65	35	0=100

Q.11 As I read from a list, tell me if you think there has been too much, too little or the right amount of what I mention. First, has there been too much, too little, or the right amount of **[READ AND ROTATE]** **[REPEAT FOR EACH ITEM]** Has there been too much, too little, or the right amount of...

		<u>Too Much</u>	<u>Too Little</u>	<u>Right Amount</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Showing of the flag	8	17	73	2=100
b.	Playing of patriotic songs	10	17	68	5=100
c.	Criticism of the FBI and CIA for failing to stop the attacks	29	24	36	11=100
d.	Discussion of ways to stop terrorists OTHER THAN using military force	11	35	48	6=100
e.	Discussion of the possibility of chemical or biological terrorist attacks	22	30	43	5=100

⁶ In January 1991, the question was worded "As a result of the war in the Gulf are you..."

⁷ In Mid-September 2001, the item was "considering canceling an airplane trip."

Q.11 CONTINUED ...

		<u>Too Much</u>	<u>Too Little</u>	<u>Right Amount</u>	<u>DK/ Ref</u>
f.	Suspicion of people with Middle East backgrounds living in America	36	21	35	8=100
g.	Expressions of religious faith and prayer by political leaders	12	22	60	6=100

Q.12 Do you think Americans who oppose taking military action should be allowed to carry out peaceful protest rallies or should they not be allowed to do this?

71	Should be allowed to protest
24	Should NOT be allowed to protest
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.13 Do you think Americans who say U.S. policies were to blame for the terrorist attacks should or should not be allowed to express their views in the media?

75	Should be allowed to express their views
18	Should NOT be allowed to express their views
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.14 How worried are you that there will soon be another terrorist attack in the United States? **[READ]**

28	Very worried
45	Somewhat worried
15	Not too worried
11	Not at all worried
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.15 What do you think the terrorists are MOST likely to do next? **[READ]**

3	Another attack with airliners
37	An attack using chemical or biological weapons
6	An attack using nuclear weapons
26	-OR- Something else [SPECIFY]
18	Bombing/Attack on public place or infrastructure
*	Economic / High-tech terrorism
4	Other / Assassination / Hostage situation
2	Nothing / Go into hiding
2	Can't imagine / Can't be predicted / Something shocking
<u>28</u>	Don't Know/Refused
100	