

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
December 18-21, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1018

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 | | | | | |
| December 18-21, 2009 | 45 | 31 | 14 | 10 | 0 |
| December 11-14, 2009 | 42 | 31 | 14 | 13 | * |
| December 4-7, 2009 | 41 | 36 | 13 | 9 | 1 |
| November 13-16, 2009 | 38 | 33 | 14 | 15 | * |
| October 30-November 2, 2009 | 34 | 32 | 17 | 16 | * |
| October 23-26, 2009 | 44 | 30 | 15 | 10 | 1 |
| October 9-12, 2009 | 41 | 29 | 16 | 13 | * |
| October 2-5, 2009 | 44 | 30 | 15 | 11 | 0 |
| September 25-28, 2009 | 44 | 37 | 10 | 10 | * |
| September 18-21, 2009 | 44 | 34 | 15 | 7 | * |
| September 11-14, 2009 | 45 | 32 | 14 | 9 | * |
| September 3-6, 2009 | 41 | 31 | 15 | 13 | * |
| August 28-31, 2009 | 45 | 30 | 13 | 12 | 1 |
| August 21-24, 2009 | 50 | 27 | 13 | 10 | 1 |
| August 14-17, 2009 | 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 | * |

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> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 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 | * |
| 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 |

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> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 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 |
| 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 | | | | | |
| December 18-21, 2009 | 42 | 27 | 16 | 14 | * |
| December 11-14, 2009 | 42 | 30 | 15 | 14 | * |
| December 4-7, 2009 | 42 | 28 | 15 | 14 | 1 |
| November 20-23, 2009 | 42 | 29 | 14 | 15 | * |
| November 13-16, 2009 | 38 | 26 | 17 | 17 | 1 |
| November 6-9, 2009 | 35 | 28 | 15 | 22 | 1 |
| October 30-November 2, 2009 | 32 | 26 | 19 | 23 | * |
| October 23-26, 2009 | 40 | 27 | 16 | 17 | 1 |
| October 16-19, 2009 | 36 | 28 | 15 | 21 | * |
| October 9-12, 2009 | 37 | 29 | 14 | 19 | 1 |
| October 2-5, 2009 | 39 | 29 | 16 | 16 | * |
| September 25-28, 2009 | 45 | 31 | 12 | 12 | 0 |
| September 18-21, 2009 | 44 | 26 | 19 | 11 | * |
| September 11-14, 2009 | 44 | 27 | 14 | 15 | * |
| September 3-6, 2009 | 40 | 26 | 16 | 17 | 0 |
| August 28-31, 2009 | 40 | 28 | 17 | 14 | 1 |
| August 21-24, 2009 | 49 | 24 | 12 | 15 | 1 |
| August 14-17, 2009 | 39 | 31 | 15 | 15 | 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> |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| 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 | 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 |
| c. President Obama's plan to move Guantanamo detainees to a prison in Illinois | | | | | |
| December 18-21, 2009 | 22 | 29 | 22 | 26 | * |
| TREND FOR COMPARISON: | | | | | |
| January 23-26, 2009: <i>President Obama's order to close the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba</i> | 33 | 36 | 18 | 13 | * |
| August 8-11, 2008: <i>The trial of Osama bin Laden's former driver at Guantanamo military base</i> | 5 | 15 | 33 | 46 | 1 |
| June 13-16, 2008: <i>The U.S. Supreme Court ruling that foreign terror suspects held at Guantanamo Bay have the right to challenge their confinement</i> | 21 | 23 | 24 | 32 | * |

¹ June 12-15, 2009 through 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> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| d. News about Tiger Woods | | | | | |
| December 18-21, 2009 | 13 | 27 | 31 | 29 | * |
| TREND FOR COMPARISON: | | | | | |
| December 4-7, 2009: <i>News about Tiger Woods' car accident</i> | 19 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 1 |
| February 27-March 2, 2009: <i>News that Tiger Woods is returning to golf after recovering from knee surgery</i> | 11 | 17 | 27 | 45 | * |
| June 20-23, 2008: <i>News that Tiger Woods will be having knee surgery following his victory in the U.S. Open</i> | 15 | 24 | 27 | 33 | 1 |
| e. Reports about swine flu and the vaccine | | | | | |
| December 18-21, 2009 | 25 | 32 | 24 | 18 | 0 |
| November 20-23, 2009 | 29 | 33 | 21 | 17 | * |
| November 13-16, 2009 | 34 | 31 | 21 | 15 | * |
| November 6-9, 2009 | 32 | 35 | 24 | 10 | * |
| October 30-November 2, 2009 | 33 | 33 | 22 | 12 | * |
| October 23-26, 2009 | 43 | 30 | 17 | 9 | * |
| October 16-19, 2009 | 32 | 35 | 18 | 14 | 0 |
| October 9-12, 2009 | 38 | 35 | 16 | 11 | * |
| September 18-21, 2009 ² | 34 | 31 | 25 | 9 | * |
| September 11-14, 2009 | 30 | 36 | 21 | 12 | * |
| September 3-6, 2009 | 26 | 32 | 25 | 17 | 0 |
| August 28-31, 2009 | 26 | 33 | 22 | 18 | * |
| May 21-24, 2009 | 30 | 39 | 21 | 11 | * |
| May 8-11, 2009 | 34 | 36 | 19 | 11 | * |
| May 1-4, 2009 | 43 | 37 | 15 | 4 | 1 |
| April 25-27, 2009 | 25 | 30 | 19 | 26 | * |
| f. The international meeting about climate change in Copenhagen | | | | | |
| December 18-21, 2009 | 16 | 23 | 25 | 35 | * |
| December 11-14, 2009 | 17 | 24 | 23 | 36 | * |

² From August 28-31, 2009 through September 18-21, 2009 question was worded "Reports about swine flu and the availability of a vaccine." May 21-24, 2009 and May 8-11, 2009 asked about: "Reports about swine flu in the U.S. and elsewhere." For May 1-4, 2009 the story was listed as: "The outbreak of swine flu in different parts of the world." For April 25-27, 2009 the story was listed as: "Reports of swine flu in Mexico and the U.S."

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.**]

- 37 Debate over health care reform
- 18 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 14 News about Tiger Woods
- 11 Reports about swine flu and the vaccine
- 5 International meeting about climate change in Copenhagen
- 2 President Obama's plan to move Guantanamo detainees to a prison in Illinois
- 6 Some other story (**VOL.**)
- 7 Don't know/Refused (**VOL.**)

Q.3 Thinking now about the issue of health care, from what you've seen and heard, do you think a health care reform bill will pass over the next year or not?

| | <u>Yes, will</u> | <u>No, will not</u> | <u>DK/ Refused</u> |
|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| December 18-21, 2009 | 61 | 34 | 5 |
| December 11-14, 2009 | 56 | 38 | 6 |
| December 4-7, 2009 | 52 | 35 | 14 |
| November 20-23, 2009 | 52 | 37 | 11 |
| November 13-16, 2009 | 49 | 37 | 14 |
| November 6-9, 2009 | 48 | 40 | 11 |
| October 30-November 2, 2009 | 47 | 39 | 14 |
| October 23-26, 2009 | 53 | 40 | 7 |
| October 16-19, 2009 | 57 | 38 | 5 |
| October 9-12, 2009 | 45 | 46 | 9 |