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For The People & The Press

NEWS Release

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States' Budget Woes Connecting With Public
AMERICANS MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ECONOMY, BUT NOT BUSH
TAX CUT

Also Inside ...

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- ! No SARS panic
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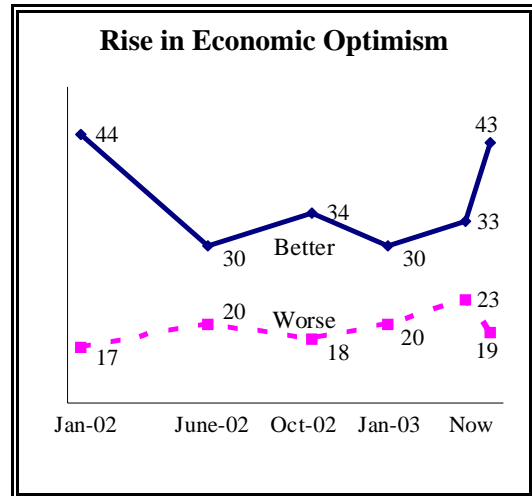
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States' Budget Woes Connecting With Public
AMERICANS MORE OPTIMISTIC ABOUT ECONOMY, BUT NOT BUSH TAX CUT

With the war in Iraq over, Americans are feeling more optimistic about a turnaround in the national economy, and a greater number than at the beginning of the year think that President Bush is doing as much as he can to improve economic conditions. But the president's tax cut proposal continues to be a non-starter for the public. Just a quarter of Americans say they have been following news about the president's tax cut plan very closely, and just 40% approve of it.

These are the findings of the latest nationwide Pew Research Center survey of 1,201 Americans, conducted April 30-May 4, which shows the percentage of Americans expecting the economy to be better off next year rising to 43% from as low as 30% in January and 33% about a month ago.



But the public is less upbeat about Bush's tax plan. A solid majority (56%) say the tax cuts will mainly benefit wealthy people, compared with just 21% who believe it will be fair to everyone. Asked about the possible impact of the tax cut, most Americans (51%) believe it will increase the federal budget deficit. About four-in-ten believe the tax cut will boost the economy and create jobs (44%), and roughly the same number expect it will force the government to reduce domestic spending (42%). Fewer than a quarter (23%) expect the plan will significantly reduce the taxes they pay. Viewing the proposal as an economic stimulus is by far the most important factor in public support for the tax cut.

While the public has become more optimistic about the national economy, there is considerable awareness of the budget crisis facing many state governments. Public interest in news about state budgetary problems tends to be limited, but fully half of the survey respondents said they believed that government spending on social programs in their state had been cut this year. In states with especially severe budget shortfalls, as many as 64% have taken note of smaller state budgets for health, education and other social programs.

Supporters, Opponents See Tax Cut Differently

	Total	<i>Bush tax cut</i>	
		App-rove	Dis-approve
<i>Tax cut is likely to...</i>	%	%	%
Increase the deficit	51	43	65
Boost the economy	44	71	18
Force spending cuts	42	46	43
Reduce your taxes	23	38	12
Will be fair to all	21	44	4
Number of cases	(1201)	(481)	(448)

George W. Bush's approval rating stands at 65%, which is somewhat below his 72% rating in mid-April, as the war in Iraq was winding down. The president's personal image is very strong: Asked for one-word descriptions of George Bush, people's responses are overwhelmingly positive – many describe him as “honest” or “good,” while others cite his leadership and confidence. “Arrogant” is the top negative associated with Bush. Personal evaluations of this president are more uniformly positive than was the case for Bill Clinton, who got mixed personal evaluations even as he was getting high marks for his job performance. By roughly two-to-one (52% to 27%) people use clearly positive words in their descriptions of the president, with 9% using somewhat neutral language.

One Worders for Bush	
<i>Bush Approvers</i>	
	<u>Frequency*</u>
Honest	28
Good	20
Leader/leadership	16
Confident	12
Courageous	12
Great	12
Christian	11
Determined	11
Integrity	11
<i>Bush Disapprovers</i>	
Arrogant	15
Cowboy	8
Idiot	7
Incompetent	4
* The number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are NOT percentages.	

Iraq continues as the top news interest story of the month, but attention in reports on SARS epidemic also has been substantial. About four-in-ten (39%) say they have been following stories on the mysterious respiratory virus very closely, which is slightly more than followed stories last year on the West Nile Virus (34%). However, personal concern over SARS has not grown in the past week. About four-in-ten (37%) say they are least somewhat worried about contracting the disease, which is unchanged from a Gallup survey in late April.

About three-in-ten Americans (31%) are paying very close attention to the Laci Peterson murder case. But even more people (39%) say the media is providing too much coverage of the story – just 11% think the media is under covering the case. Among recent high-profile crime stories polled, the O.J. Simpson murder case in 1994 attracted the highest interest (48% followed very closely). As the first major Democratic debate was taking place in South Carolina, interest in news about the race for the nomination was low – just 27% were either very (8%) or fairly interested. This is considerably below levels of interest in the nomination races at comparable points in the 1996 and 2000 election cycles. Fully 41% say they have paid no attention at all to the Democratic race, up from 34% four years ago and 26% in 1995.

Low Interest in Democratic Race			
<i>Nomination</i>	<i>How closely followed...</i>		
	<u>Very</u>	<u>Fairly</u>	<u>Total</u>
<i>Race News</i>	%	%	%
May, 2003	8	19	27
June, 1999	11	25	36
June, 1995	11	31	42

Divided Over Economy's Future

The public is increasingly divided along political and demographic lines in its expectations for the nation's economy. More than half of those (53%) in households earning more than \$50,000 annually expect an economic turnaround in the next year, which is a significant surge in optimism from late-March/early-April. But the outlook in households earning under \$50,000 annually has changed little over this same time span (37% optimistic, up from 32%).

Similarly, there is an 18-point gap in economic expectations between college graduates (53% optimistic), and those with no more than a high school diploma (35%). There was only a seven-point difference between these same groups a month ago (38% to 31%).

The partisan gap in economic expectations, which has persisted throughout Bush's presidency, also has grown dramatically. Fully 63% of Republicans believe the economy will improve over the next year, up from 49% last month. Democratic views of the economy have not changed significantly – and are much more negative. Just a quarter of Democrats expect economic improvement over the next year, little changed from a month ago (23%). More Democrats (31%) say things will get worse over the next 12 months, and 41% expect no significant changes.

Growing Optimism Gaps			
	<i>% saying nation's economy will get better</i>		
	Early April	Early May	<i>Change</i>
Total	33	43	+10
Men	40	48	+8
Women	27	37	+10
White	35	49	+14
Non-white	28	20	-8
College grad	38	53	+15
Some college	33	54	+21
H.S. or less	31	35	+4
\$75,000 or more	39	54	+15
\$50-74,999	35	53	+18
\$30-49,999	31	38	+7
Under \$30,000	32	37	+5
Republican	49	63	+14
Democrat	23	25	+2
Independent	28	44	+16
Northeast	34	39	+5
Midwest	30	51	+21
South	39	36	-3
West	28	50	+22

Economic Expectations and Opinion of Tax Cut

These economic divisions have political ramifications for the president's political image, as well as for his proposed tax plan. While economic optimism has risen, perceptions of the president's efforts on the economic front are unchanged from a month ago – 42% say he is doing as much as he can to improve the economy, while 53% believe he could do more.

Americans are also divided over the president's tax proposal – 40% approve, 37% disapprove, while 23% offered no opinion. In addition to being heavily influenced by partisanship, public views on the tax cut are highly related to economic evaluations. Those who expect the economy to improve favor the president's proposal by three-to-one (60% approve/20% disapprove),

but those who expect things to get worse oppose it by an even larger margin (14% approve/67% disapprove). And people who think the economy will remain largely unchanged are also unconvinced of the need for the tax cut (29% approve/44% disapprove). To some extent, this pattern reflects partisan differences in economic outlook, but the gap is nearly as large even when party affiliation is accounted for.

The public's doubts about the president's tax proposal are linked to perceptions of its consequences. Fully 85% of those who are against the tax cut say it will mainly benefit the wealthy, while just 32% of proponents agree. Conversely, 71% of the plan's supporters believe it will boost the economy and create jobs, compared with just 18% of opponents who see this happening.

Divides over Bush Tax Cut			
	Ap- prove %	Dis- approve %	DK %
Total	40	37	23=100
<i>Economy will...</i>			
Get better	60	20	20=100
Stay the same	29	44	27=100
Get worse	14	67	19=100
<i>Party identification</i>			
Republican	62	14	24=100
Democrat	23	59	18=100
Independent	37	37	26=100

There are smaller, but significant, differences over other aspects of the proposal. Though supporters are more likely than opponents to say their taxes will go down (38% to 12%), a majority on both sides expects no personal benefit. A solid majority of tax-cut critics (65%) say it will increase the budget deficit, but more than four-in-ten of the plan's proponents (43%) believe this is likely. And interestingly, roughly the same proportion of tax cut supporters (46%) and opponents (43%) believe the legislation will force the government to reduce domestic spending. Presumably, many of the bill's supporters believe this is a good thing, while opponents probably see this as a problem.

A significant minority of Americans (23%) declined to offer an opinion of the president's tax plan. Fully eight-in-ten in this group say they have heard little (37%) or nothing (43%) about the kinds of taxes the president has proposed cutting. These Americans are skeptical that the tax cut will be fair (51% say it will benefit the wealthy, just 9% say it will be fair), and very few (15%) think they personally will benefit substantially from a tax cut. But these undecideds have not made up their minds about whether a tax cut is likely to boost the economy (40% say yes, 42% say no), or increase the federal budget deficit (41% say yes, 31% say no).

State Budget Crises: Awareness, Little Impact

The impact of the current economic slump on state budgets has become apparent to much of the American public – particularly in states facing the most severe economic problems. But so far, the state budget crisis is not having much of an impact on the national political agenda.

Overall, 26% of Americans say they are following news about state budget problems very closely, and another 34% are following fairly closely – the public’s interest in this story is roughly comparable to its interest in the president’s tax cut plan and North Korea’s nuclear weapons program, though it ranks well below Iraq and SARS on the public’s news agenda.

People living in states with the most severe budget problems, such as California and New York, are following the story more closely, and recognize the impact of the budget problems on health, education and other social programs. Fully two-thirds of residents of states facing the most extreme budgetary shortfalls say that spending on programs is being cut. This is far higher than in states facing much more modest economic problems, such as Florida and Arkansas.

But there is no evidence that these state fiscal problems are having an impact on the way people view national politics. Americans express the same levels of economic optimism in all states, regardless of the severity of the state’s budgetary problems, and support for the president’s tax cut proposal also appears unrelated to perceptions of state financial difficulties.

More Say Bush Influenced By Conservatives

The president’s job approval remains very strong following the war in Iraq, with 65% approving of his performance in office, and 27% disapproving. This reflects a notable spike in the president’s approval rating from mid-March, prior to the start of the war (55%). But unlike the president’s handling of the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, which brought him near universal approval from Republicans, Democrats and independents, the war in Iraq has not narrowed the partisan gap on the president’s performance. Currently, as many Democrats disapprove the president’s job performance (45%) as approve (46%).

There also is a growing perception, among both liberals and conservatives, that the president is more closely tied with conservative wing of the Republican Party, rather than the party’s moderate faction. Just under half of all respondents (49%) say Bush listens more to conservative members of his party, up from 41% in January of this year, and

State Budget Problems Resonate				
<i>--State Level of Fiscal Stress--</i>				
<i>Perceptions of state spending...</i>	<u>Severe</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Mod.</u>	<u>Low</u>
	%	%	%	%
Less than last year	64	51	49	33
More	11	15	12	22
Same	13	20	27	24
Don't know	<u>12</u>	<u>14</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>21</u>
	100	100	100	100
Number of cases	(235)	(427)	(337)	(202)
Fiscal stress measured by size of deficits. See Survey Methodology for details.				

Who Does Bush Listen To?			
	<u>Conser-</u>	<u>Mod-</u>	<u>DK</u>
	<u>vatives</u>	<u>erates</u>	<u>%</u>
	%	%	%
Total	49	32	19=100
<i>Republicans</i>			
Conservative	54	27	19=100
Moderate & Liberal	35	50	15=100
<i>Democrats</i>			
Conserv & Moderate	53	35	12=100
Liberal	66	26	8=100

38% in January 2002. The percentage saying Bush listens more to conservatives is now as high as in January 2001, shortly after the president took office. Only about a third of Americans (32%) say Bush listens more to moderate Republicans.

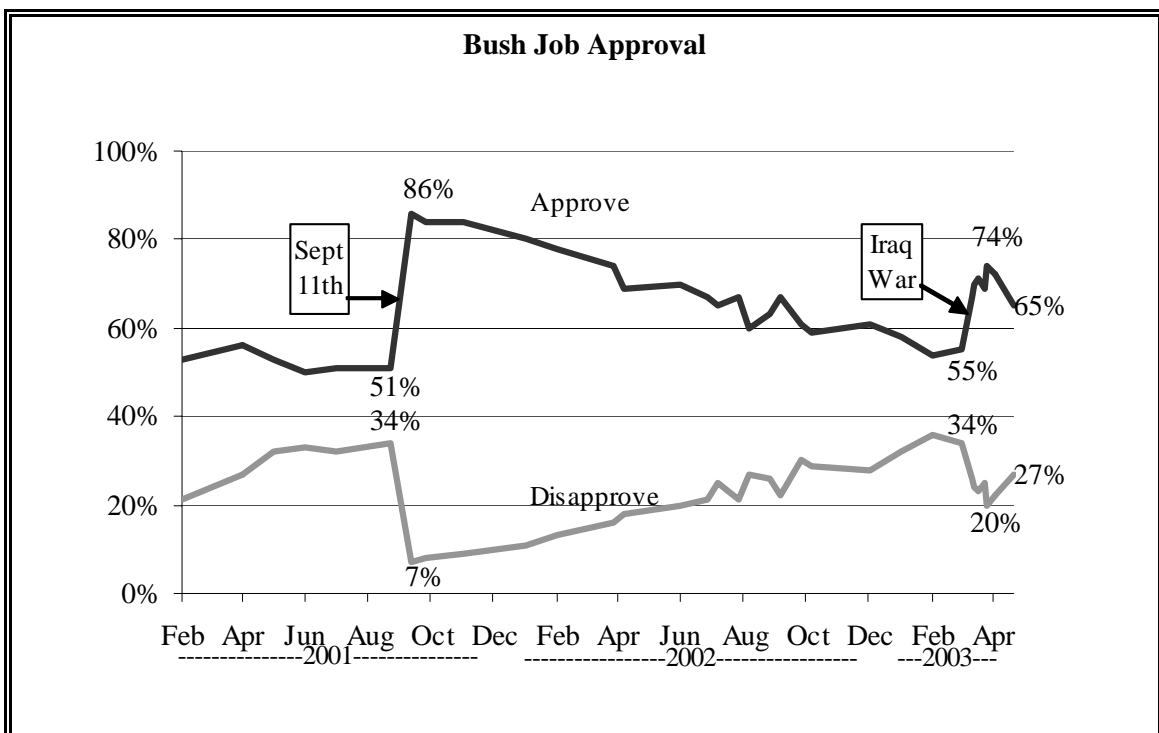
Most conservative Republicans (54%) believe Bush listens more to conservative voices, while half of moderate members of the party see the president as being influenced more by moderates. Liberal Democrats are the most likely to think the president listens primarily to conservatives within his party, with fully two-thirds (66%) holding this view.

Iraq Improves Bush’s Image

There is little doubt, however, that the war in Iraq has improved the president’s image. By three-to-one (65%-22%), the public says the war in Iraq has helped, not hurt, the war on terrorism, and among those who think it helped, the president receives a resounding 81% approval rating.

Moreover, the one-word descriptions the public uses to describe the president reflect his role as commander-in-chief. In addition to being described as “honest” and a “leader,” terms that many used to describe Bush during the 2000 presidential campaign, some of the most common positive terms Americans use to describe him are “confident,” “courageous,” “determined,” “patriotic,” and “decisive.” Among the president’s detractors, “arrogant,” “cowboy,” and “idiot” are the most common descriptions provided.

The president’s current job approval rating of 65% is ten-points higher than in mid-March, before the start of military action in Iraq. Within the past month, it reached a peak of 74% in polling the day U.S. troops successfully captured Baghdad.



Iraq Tops News Interest Index

Once again, the situation in Iraq leads the monthly news interest index, with 63% of the public following this story very closely. Republicans are more likely to pay very close attention to this story (71% very closely) than Democrats or independents (62%, 60% respectively). A majority of respondents (55%) believes news organizations have been giving this story the right amount of coverage, while a third (34%) think there has been too much coverage.

SARS is the second most closely followed news story this month, with 39% paying very close attention, and another 39% watching it fairly closely. The SARS story receives uniform attention throughout the country, though women are following it slightly more closely than are men (43% very closely vs. 36%).

Public interest in SARS is similar to last year's coverage of the West Nile virus last summer (34% followed very closely). Among health-related issues, only the November 2001 Anthrax scare, with its links to the broader issue of terrorism, received significantly higher public attention (47% followed very closely).

Overall, six-in-ten Americans (59%) feel news organizations are giving SARS the right amount of coverage, and there is no sign that the public is feeling saturated by SARS coverage. Just 18% say there has been too much coverage of the disease; the same percentage says there has been too little coverage.

Three-in-ten Americans (31%) are closely following the murder of Laci Peterson, the pregnant California woman whose husband has been charged in her death. Women are tracking this story significantly more than men (40% vs. 22%).

Non-whites are following the Peterson story much more closely than whites (42% vs. 28%). In addition, whites are more likely than minorities to say that news organizations are giving too much coverage to this story (42% vs. 28%). Overall, 39% of Americans say Laci Peterson's murder has received too much coverage, while 39% feel there has been an adequate amount of coverage and just 11% say there has been too little news attention.

Public interest in this story is on par with attention to the case of the Houston mother who drowned her children in a bathtub in 2001, the 1997 murder trial of a British au pair, and the 1990

Top Disease Stories	
	<u>Followed Very Closely</u>
	<u>%</u>
Reports of anthrax {11-01}	47
<i>Spread of SARS {5-03}</i>	39
West Nile virus {9-02}	34
Foot-and-mouth outbreak {3-01}	22
Asian bird flu outbreak {1-98}	19
Worldwide AIDS epidemic {8-01}	19
AIDS epidemic in Africa {7-00}	19
Mad cow disease in Europe {8-01}	18
Plague outbreak in India {10-94}	11

incident involving Charles Stuart, who murdered his pregnant wife in Boston and blamed it on an African-American. However, the O. J. Simpson arrest in 1994 remains the most closely-watched crime story of recent years (48% very closely).

Attention to news about North Korea's nuclear weapons program has declined somewhat since March; a third of the public followed this story very closely then (34%), compared with 27% in the current survey.

Interest in the president's tax plan has not changed significantly since early this year (25% very closely now, compared with 28% in January). Married people have followed Bush's economic plan more closely than have unmarried Americans (30% vs. 19%).

Only about one-in-ten Americans (12%) are paying very close attention, and 24% are paying fairly close attention to recent debates about affirmative action programs. Non-whites are much more likely to be interested in this news story than are whites (21% following very closely vs. 10%). African-Americans and Hispanics are about as likely to track this story very closely (24% and 20%, respectively). Interest in reports on affirmative action is lower than in the summer of 1995, when 20% followed such stories very closely, and 32% somewhat closely.

Only 8% of Americans are following the race for the Democratic presidential nomination very closely. Not surprisingly, Democrats are more interested in the contest for the nomination than are Republicans (11% vs. 4%). But independents are as interested as Democrats, with 10% of independents following very closely. There is no evidence that residents of states with early primaries or caucuses – such as Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina or Michigan – are paying any closer attention to the race for the nomination than are people in the rest of the country.

Top Murder Stories	
	Followed <u>Very Closely</u> %
O.J. Simpson arrest {6-94}	48
Houston woman drowned kids {7-01}	31
Laci Peterson murder {5-03}	31
British au pair trial {11-97}	29
Charles Stuart murder/suicide {2-90}	29
Disappearance of Chandra Levy {9-01}	26
Gianni Versace murder {8-97}	24
Texas dragging/murder trial {2-99}	24
Hockey Dad in Massachusetts {1-02}	20
Menendez brothers conviction {3-96}	14
* For stories where news interest was tracked over months the highest interest measure is shown above	

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for the *May News Interest Index* survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates among a nationwide sample of 1,201 adults, 18 years of age or older, during the period April 30 - May 4, 2003. Based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on Form 1 (N=602) the sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points; for Form 2 (N=599) the sampling error is plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

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.

For the analysis of public perceptions of state budget cuts, states were sorted into four categories based on the size of their projected deficits in fiscal year 2004, as a percentage of their general fund budget. This categorization was created with data compiled by the National Conference of State Legislatures in their April 2003 *State Budget Update*.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY IN DETAIL

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed). The design of the sample ensures this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone numbers in the U.S. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing one or more residential listings.

The sample was released for interviewing in replicates. Using replicates to control the release of sample to the field ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. The use of replicates also insures that the regional distribution of numbers called is appropriate. Again, this works to increase the representativeness of the sample.

At least 10 attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making a contact with a potential respondent. All interview breakoffs and refusals were re-contacted at least once in order to attempt to convert them to completed interviews. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the "youngest male 18 or older who is at home." If there is no eligible man at home, interviewers asked to speak with "the oldest woman 18 or older who is at home." This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

Non-response in telephone interview surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis. The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 2001). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone. The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters.

PERCENT FOLLOWING EACH NEWS STORY "VERY CLOSELY"

	Current Situation <u>in Iraq</u>	SARS Spread <u>from Asia</u>	Murder of Laci <u>Peterson*</u>	N. Korea's Nuclear <u>Program*</u>	State Govt. Budget <u>Problems*</u>	Bush Tax Cut <u>Plan*</u>	Affirmative Action <u>Debate</u>	Democratic Presidential <u>Nomination* (N)</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Total	63	39	31	27	26	25	12	8	(1201)
Sex									
Male	62	36	22	25	25	29	12	7	(577)
Female	63	43	40	28	26	20	12	9	(624)
Race									
White	64	38	28	27	25	22	10	8	(1021)
Non-white	61	42	42	29	29	33	21	9	(169)
Black	63	47	43	31	23	34	24	11	(80)
Age									
Under 30	59	32	17	23	20	12	10	7	(205)
30-49	66	42	33	27	27	27	13	5	(440)
50-64	68	46	32	33	29	28	15	12	(322)
65+	59	38	36	33	30	32	10	8	(225)
Education									
College Grad.	70	44	28	29	31	33	16	7	(420)
Some College	62	33	35	23	26	18	9	11	(305)
H.S. Grad	63	42	35	30	22	25	11	8	(382)
<H.S. Grad.	54	36	26	22	24	20	12	6	(87)
Region									
East	60	46	27	22	21	17	14	6	(236)
Midwest	60	40	29	26	28	23	10	10	(279)
South	62	37	34	30	25	26	13	9	(423)
West	68	37	31	28	34	30	11	6	(263)
Party ID									
Republican	71	40	34	28	24	25	8	4	(391)
Democrat	62	44	36	28	30	30	19	11	(347)
Independent	60	37	24	28	25	21	11	10	(379)

* Based on split samples; Ns do not apply.

Question: 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?

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MAY 2003 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FINAL TOPLINE
April 30 - May 4, 2003
N=1201

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>
May, 2003	65	27	8=100
April 10-16, 2003	72	22	6=100
April 9, 2003	74	20	6=100
April 2-7, 2003	69	25	6=100
March 28-April 1, 2003	71	23	6=100
March 25-27, 2003	70	24	6=100
March 20-24, 2003	67	26	7=100
March 13-16, 2003	55	34	11=100
February, 2003	54	36	10=100
January, 2003	58	32	10=100
December, 2002	61	28	11=100
Early October, 2002	61	30	9=100
Mid-September, 2002	67	22	11=100
Early September, 2002	63	26	11=100
Late August, 2002	60	27	13=100
June, 2002	70	20	10=100
April, 2002	69	18	13=100
February, 2002	78	13	9=100
January, 2002	80	11	9=100
Mid-November, 2001	84	9	7=100
Early 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
June, 2001	50	33	17=100
April, 2001	56	27	17=100
February, 2001	53	21	26=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=602]:

Q.2F1 Please tell me what one word best describes your impression of George W. Bush. Tell me just the ONE best word that describes him. **[OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “DON’T KNOW”. ACCEPT UP TO TWO RESPONSES, BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR SECOND RESPONSE]**

<i>Top Bush Descriptions</i>	Frequency*
	May 2003
Honest	29
Good	21
Arrogant	20
Leader/Leadership	16
Great	13
Confident	12
Courageous	12
Aggressive	11
Christian	11
Determined	11
Integrity	11
Patriot/Patriotic	10
Cowboy	9
Competent	8
Decisive	8
Idiot	8
President	8
Strong	8
Adequate	7
Excellent	7
Fair	7
Dedicated	6
Honorable	5
OK/Okay	5
Powerful	5

* The "Frequency" column is the number of respondents who offered each response; the numbers are not percentages.

ASK ALL:

Q.3a A year from now, do you expect that economic conditions in the country as a whole will be better than they are at present, or worse, or just about the same as now?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Same</u>	Don't Know/ <u>Refused</u>
May, 2003	43	19	35	3=100
March 28-April 1, 2003	33	23	37	7=100
January, 2003	30	20	44	6=100
Early October, 2002	34	18	42	6=100
June, 2002	30	20	46	4=100
January, 2002	44	17	36	3=100
January, 2001*	18	33	44	5=100
June, 2000	15	24	55	6=100
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	16	22	57	5=100
Early September, 1998	18	17	61	4=100
May, 1990	18	31	45	6=100
February, 1989	25	22	49	4=100
September, 1988 (RVs)	24	16	51	9=100
May, 1988	24	20	46	10=100
January, 1988	22	26	45	7=100
January, 1984* (RVs)	35	13	49	3=100

* *Newsweek*

Q.3b In your opinion, is President Bush doing as much as he can to improve economic conditions or do you think he could be doing more?

		March 28 -					-- Bush, Sr. --	
		April 1	Jan	Early Oct	June	Jan	March	Jan
		<u>2003</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1992</u>
42	Doing as much as he can	41	33	31	33	48	21	21
53	Could be doing more	52	61	63	62	46	76	76
<u>5</u>	Can't say	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.4 As best you know, is your STATE government spending more, less, or about as much as it did last year on health, education, and other social programs?

15	More
50	Less
21	About as much as last year
<u>14</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.5 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; ROTATE OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]

SUMMARY TABLE		Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/Ref
a.	News about the current situation in Iraq	63	29	6	2	*=100
b.	The lung disease called "SARS" ...	39	39	15	6	1=100
f.	The murder of Laci Peterson ...	31	31	21	16	1=100
d.	North Korea's nuclear weapons program	27	40	22	11	*=100
h.	News about government budget problems in your state	26	34	19	20	1=100
e.	George W. Bush's tax cut and economic stimulus plan	25	36	22	15	2=100
g.	Debate over eliminating affirmative action programs	12	24	28	34	2=100
c.	The race for the Democratic presidential nomination	8	19	31	41	1=100

TRENDS

a.	News about the current situation in Iraq	63	29	6	2	*=100
	April 11-16, 2003 ¹	47	40	10	2	1=100
	April 2-7, 2003	54	34	9	2	1=100
	March 20-24, 2003	57	33	7	2	1=100
	March, 2003 ²	62	27	6	4	1=100
	February, 2003	62	25	8	4	1=100
	January, 2003	55	29	10	4	2=100
	December, 2002	51	32	10	6	1=100
	Late October, 2002	53	33	8	5	1=100
	Early October, 2002	60	28	6	5	1=100
	Early September, 2002 ³	48	29	15	6	2=100
	Early January, 1991	59	31	7	2	1=100
b.	The lung disease called "SARS" that has spread from Asia	39	39	15	6	1=100

¹ From March 20 to April 16, 2003 the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."

² From October 2002 to March 2003, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq."

³ In Early September 2002 the story was listed as "...U.S. will invade Iraq." In Early January 1991 the story was listed as "Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and the presence of U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf."

		Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/Ref
ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=602]:						
c.F1	The race for the Democratic presidential nomination	8	19	31	41	1=100
	January, 2003 ⁴	14	28	29	28	1=100
	March, 1992	35	40	16	9	*=100
	January, 1992	11	25	36	27	1=100
	December, 1991	10	28	32	30	*=100
	October, 1991	12	26	31	29	2=100
	November, 1987	15	28	35	21	1=100
d.F1	North Korea's nuclear weapons program	27	40	22	11	*=100
	March, 2003	34	34	19	12	1=100
	February, 2003	33	34	18	13	2=100
	January, 2003	33	34	18	14	1=100
	Late October, 2002 ⁵	25	31	23	20	1=100
	June, 1994	27	33	26	14	*=100
ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=599]:						
e.F2	George W. Bush's tax cut and economic stimulus plan	25	36	22	15	2=100
	February, 2003	26	33	23	16	2=100
	January, 2003	28	34	21	15	2=100
	February, 2002 ⁶	17	31	28	23	1=100
	April, 2001	24	38	20	18	*=100
	February, 2001	31	35	19	14	1=100
	February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*=100
	September, 1992 (RVs)	28	44	18	9	1=100
f.F2	The murder of Laci Peterson, the pregnant California woman whose husband has been charged in her death	31	31	21	16	1=100
ASK ALL:						
g.	Debate over eliminating affirmative action programs	12	24	28	34	2=100
	August, 1995 ⁷	20	32	24	23	1=100
ASKED MAY 2-4 ONLY [N=601]:						
h.	News about government budget problems in your state	26	34	19	20	1=100
	Early October, 2002	25	36	24	15	*=100

⁴ In January 2003 the story was listed as "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2004." In January 1992, December 1991, October 1991, and November 1987 the story was listed as "News about the Democratic candidates for the Presidential nomination."

⁵ In Late October 2002 the story was listed as "North Korea's admission that it has been secretly developing nuclear weapons." In June 1994 the story was listed as "Reports about North Korea's building of nuclear weapons and refusal to allow UN inspections."

⁶ In February 2002 and April 2001 the story was listed as "The debate in Congress over George W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan." In February 2001 the story was listed as "George W. Bush's tax-cut plan." In February 1993 the story was listed as "Bill Clinton's economic plan." In September 1992 the story was listed as "George Bush's plan to improve the economy by cutting government spending and cutting taxes?" Results are based on registered voters.

⁷ In August 1995 the story was listed as "Proposals to eliminate affirmative action programs."

Q.6 Do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage, too little coverage, or the right amount of coverage to [INSERT ITEM, ROTATE. OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]

		<u>Too much coverage</u>	<u>Too little coverage</u>	<u>Right amount coverage</u>	<u>Don't Know/Refused</u>
a.	News about the current situation in Iraq April 2-7, 2003 ⁸	34 39	8 4	55 55	3=100 2=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=602]:

b.F1	The lung disease called "SARS" that has spread from Asia April 2-7, 2003	18 8	18 33	59 55	5=100 4=100
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ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=599]:

c.F2	The Laci Peterson murder	39	11	39	11=100
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On a different subject...

Q.7 When it comes to national policy, who do you think George W. Bush is listening to more... [READ, ROTATE]

		<u>Jan 2003</u>	<u>Jan 2002</u>	<u>Jan 2001</u>
49	Conservative members of his party OR	41	38	48
32	Moderate members of his party	35	40	37
<u>19</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>24</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>15</u>
100		100	100	100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=602]:

Q.8F1 In order to overcome past discrimination, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs designed to help blacks, women and other minorities get better jobs and education?

		<u>Aug 1995</u>
63	Favor	58
29	Oppose	36
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>
100		100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=599]:

Q.8F2 In order to overcome past discrimination, do you favor or oppose affirmative action programs, which give special preferences to qualified blacks, women and other minorities in hiring and education?

		<u>Aug 1995</u>
57	Favor	46
35	Oppose	46
<u>8</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>8</u>
100		100

ASK ALL:

Q.9 George W. Bush has proposed a major tax cut package that is currently being discussed in Congress. How much, if anything, have you heard about the kinds of taxes he has proposed cutting? [READ, IN ORDER]

19	A great deal
34	Some
27	Not much
19	Nothing at all
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused [DO NOT READ]
100	

⁸ In April 2003 the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."

Q.10 Do you approve or disapprove of George W. Bush's tax proposal?

		April 2001 ⁹	Feb 2001
40	Approve	60	43
37	Disapprove	34	34
23	Don't know/Refused	6	23
100		100	100

Q.11 Do you think the tax cuts will generally be fair to everyone, OR will the tax cuts mainly benefit some people much more than others?

IF 2 "BENEFIT SOME MORE THAN OTHERS" IN Q.11 ASK:

Q.12 Who will mainly benefit from the tax cuts: the wealthy, the middle class, or the poor?

		Feb 2001 ¹⁰	Sept 1999
21	Will be fair	26	12
70	Benefit some people much more than others	65	82
56	Wealthy	51	66
8	Middle class	8	7
3	Poor	2	5
1	Other (VOL.)	1	1
2	Don't know/Refused	3	3
1	Other (VOL.)	1	2
8	Don't know/Refused	8	4
100		100	100

ASK ALL:

Q.13 Regardless of whether you favor or oppose the tax cut proposal, do you think the tax cut is likely to [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE] or not? Do you think the tax cut is likely to [NEXT ITEM] or not?

		Yes	No	Don't Know
a.	Significantly reduce the taxes you yourself pay	23	70	7=100
b.	Boost the economy and create jobs	44	48	8=100
c.	Force the government to reduce domestic spending	42	46	12=100
d.	Increase the federal budget deficit	51	36	14=100

G.11a Do you think the war in Iraq has helped the war on terrorism, or has it hurt the war on terrorism?

		April 8-9 2003 ¹¹	Early Oct 2002
65	Help	63	52
22	Hurt	22	34
6	No effect (VOL)	--	--
7	Don't know/Refused	15	14
100		100	100

⁹ In April 2001 the question was worded "As you may know, George W. Bush has proposed a 1.6 trillion dollar tax cut. Do you approve or disapprove of this proposal?"

¹⁰ In February 2001 the question was preceded by "If George W. Bush's tax bill becomes law..." In September 1999 the question was preceded by "As you may know, there has been discussion in Washington recently about a major tax cut that would take place over the next 10 years. If this bill becomes law..."

¹¹ In April 2003 the question was worded "Do you think the war in Iraq will help the war on terrorism, or will it hurt the war on terrorism?" In Early October 2002 the question was worded "If the U.S. uses military force in Iraq, do you think this will help the war on terrorism, or will it hurt the war on terrorism?"

On a different subject...

Q.14 How much, if anything, have you heard about a recent Supreme Court case dealing with the University of Michigan's admissions program that takes RACE into account, as well as grades, activities and other factors when deciding who to admit. Have you heard a lot, a little, or nothing at all about this case?

18	A lot
36	A little
46	Nothing at all
*	Don't know/Refused
<u>100</u>	

Q.15 All in all, do you think affirmative action programs designed to increase the number of black and minority students on college campuses are fair, or unfair?

		<u>Form 1*</u>	<u>Form 2</u>
47	Fair	46	49
42	Unfair	41	42
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>13</u>	<u>9</u>
100		100	100

* On Form 1 Q.15 preceded Q.16. On Form 2 Q.16 preceded Q.15.

Q.16 All in all, do you think these programs are a good thing or a bad thing? **[IF RESPONDENT NEEDS QUESTION REPEATED, ASK IN FULL: All in all, do you think affirmative action programs designed to increase the number of black and minority students on college campuses are a good thing or a bad thing?]**

		<u>Form 1</u>	<u>Form 2</u>
60	Good thing	59	60
30	Bad thing	30	30
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>
100		100	100

Q.17 In your own personal career and education, have you ever been helped or hurt by an affirmative action program, or has this never affected you? **[IF "YES", PROBE: "Helped or hurt?" IF "DON'T KNOW" ENTER AS DK WITHOUT PROBING]**

16	Yes
4	Helped
11	Hurt
1	Both (VOL.)
82	No, not personally affected
2	Don't know (VOL.)
<u>0</u>	Refused (VOL.)
100	

Q.18 When a member of a minority group achieves success in business or education ... just your impression ... do most people think they got ahead because of racial preferences, or do most people think they got ahead because of their skills and abilities?

27	Because of racial preferences
62	Because of their skills and abilities
4	Both / Mixed (VOL.)
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=602]:

G.21F1 As you may know, people in several countries in Asia and Canada have recently died from a new disease known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS. How worried are you that you or someone in your family will be exposed to SARS -- very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not worried at all?

		<i>Gallup</i>
		<u>April</u>
		<u>2003</u>
9	Very worried	10
28	Somewhat worried	27
29	Not too worried	39
34	Not worried at all	24
*	No opinion (VOL)	*
<u>100</u>		<u>100</u>

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=599]:

G.22F2 One last question about the new disease known as Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS. How worried are you that you or someone in your family will be exposed to SARS -- very worried, somewhat worried, not too worried, or not worried at all?

12	Very worried
23	Somewhat worried
31	Not too worried
32	Not worried at all
<u>2</u>	No opinion (VOL)
<u>100</u>	