



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
For The People & The Press

NEWS Release
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Campaign Seen as Too Long, Etch A Sketch Gaffe Little Noticed Trayvon Martin Killing Is Public's Top News Story

The growing controversy over the shooting death of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin in Florida was the public's top story last week, though African Americans express far greater interest in news about the killing than do whites.

Overall, a quarter of Americans (25%) say they followed news about the African American teenager killed by a community watch volunteer more closely than any other story. Smaller

percentages say they followed news about the presidential elections (16%) or the economy (15%) most closely, according to the latest weekly News Interest Index survey, conducted March 22-25, 2012, among 1,003 adults by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.

African Americans are more than twice as likely as whites to say that this was their top story (52% vs. 20%). For African Americans, no other story comes close. Whites followed election news about as closely as Martin's death; 19% say this was their top story.

News Interest vs. News Coverage

	News Interest	News Coverage
Death of Trayvon Martin	25	19
2012 elections	16	17
Economy	15	6
Killings in Afghanistan	12	6
NFL/N.O. Saints	8	1
Killings in France	3	5

News interest shows the percentage of people who say they followed this story most closely, Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, March 22-25, 2012. News coverage shows the percentage of news coverage devoted to each story, Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism, March 19-25, 2012.

Looking at a separate measure, 35% of the public says they followed news about the shooting and the still-unfolding controversy *very* closely. Seven-in-ten blacks say this (70%), compared with 30% of whites.

Though the shooting occurred on Feb. 26, the controversy developed into a major national story last week amid debates about racial attitudes and crime, the thoroughness of the police investigation and a Florida law that allows people to defend themselves with deadly force under certain circumstances. News about the incident and its aftermath topped coverage as well, accounting for 19% of the newshole, according to a separate analysis by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism. News about the presidential campaign accounted for 17% of coverage.

The gap between black and white attentiveness to news about the Trayvon Martin story follows a pattern seen in other stories involving questions about race and the law dating back more than 20 years. In March 1991, for example, 66% of African Americans said they very closely followed news about the videotaped beating of Rodney King, captured by Los Angeles police after a car chase. About four-in-ten whites (43%) said they followed this news very closely.

In the current survey, women say they followed news about the Florida killing and the subsequent controversy more closely than men. Four-in-ten women (40%) say they followed developments in the case very closely, compared with 29% of men. About three-in-ten women (31%) say this was the news they followed most closely; 19% of men say this.

Democrats also tracked news about the case more closely than Republicans or independents. Half of Democrats (50%) say they followed this story very closely, compared with 31% of Republicans and 26% of independents. Nearly four-in-ten Democrats (38%) say this was their top story of the week, compared with 15% of Republicans and 21% of independents. The 2012 campaign was the top story for Republicans (27% most closely).

Top Stories by Race

<i>Story followed most closely:</i>	White %	Black %
Trayvon Martin	20	52
2012 elections	19	13
Economy	17	7
Afghanistan	12	3
NFL/N.O. Saints	9	6
French killings	3	4
Other (Vol.)	7	5
Don't know	<u>14</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100
N	742	107

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 22-25, 2012. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Interest in Trayvon Martin Story

<i>Followed news about Trayvon Martin very closely...</i>	%	N
Total	35	1003
White	30	742
Black	70	107
Men	29	474
Women	40	529
18-29	26	151
30-49	33	248
50-64	37	287
65+	40	277
Republican	31	265
Democrat	50	307
Independent	26	344

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 22-25, 2012.

The pattern among partisans largely holds when looking exclusively at whites. Fully 45% of white Democrats say they followed developments in the Martin shooting very closely, compared with 32% of white Republicans and 21% of white independents.

Public Sees Presidential Campaign as Too Negative, Too Long

Nearly six-in-ten Americans (58%) say the presidential campaign so far is too long, about the same as the 57% that said this in January. About three-in-ten (31%) say it has not been too long. In April 2008, about two-thirds (65%) said that the campaign – with primary fights in both parties – was too long.

About half (52%) say the current campaign has been too negative. This is little changed from January (50%) of this year, April 2008 (50%) and March 2004 (47%). About a third (34%) now say the campaign is not too negative.

Half (50%) say the campaign has not been informative, while 40% say it has been. In January, 48% said the campaign was informative, while 45% said it was not.

Currently, 52% say the campaign so far is dull; 38% say it is interesting. That's little changed from January but stands in contrast to April 2008, when about six-in-ten (59%) said the campaign was interesting and 35% saw it as dull.

Evaluating the Campaign

	Mar 2004	April 2008	Jan 2012	Mar 2012
<i>Presidential campaign is...</i>	%	%	%	%
Too long	52	65	57	58
Not too long	44	29	35	31
Neither/DK	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100	100
Too negative	47	50	50	52
Not too negative	47	44	41	34
Neither/DK	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>
	100	100	100	100
Informative	53	--	48	40
Not informative	42	--	45	50
Neither/DK	<u>5</u>	--	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	--	100	100
Interesting	33*	59	36	38
Dull	57	35	55	52
Neither/DK	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>11</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 22-25, 2012. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

*Results from June, 2004.

While overall views on these questions are little changed since January, Republicans are more likely than they were to say the campaign is too long. With the GOP primary fight ongoing, 64% say this, compared with 49% in January. At that point, 60% of Democrats said the campaign was too long; 53% say this today.

On the other hand, Republicans (52%) are more likely than Democrats (36%) or independents (31%) to say the campaign is interesting. More than half of Democrats (55%) and independents (56%) say it is dull; 42% of Republicans say the same.

There is little difference among partisans on the questions about how informative or how negative the campaign has been to this point.

Partisan Differences in Campaign Perceptions

<i>Presidential campaign is...</i>	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Too long	58	64	53	61
Not too long	31	30	35	29
Neither/Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100	100
Too negative	52	51	54	54
Not too negative	34	39	34	32
Neither/Don't know	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>15</u>
	100	100	100	100
Informative	40	47	44	34
Not informative	50	47	47	57
Neither/Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>
	100	100	100	100
Interesting	38	52	36	31
Dull	52	42	55	56
Neither/Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Mar. 22-25, 2012. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Majority Unaware of Etch A Sketch Gaffe

Though the 2012 presidential campaign was the second most closely followed story last week, 55% of the public says they had not heard about one of the week's more prominent election stories: a gaffe by a top strategist for Mitt Romney who said that the candidate would recalibrate his campaign once he wins the GOP nomination, shaking the slate clean like an Etch A Sketch toy.

Just more than four-in-ten (44%) say they heard about the remark, which critics used to hit Romney for shifting his positions on certain issues.

More Republicans heard about the comment than Democrats (52% vs. 41%). Among independents, 47% were aware of aide Eric Fehrnstrom's words.

Fewer than Half Heard About "Etch A Sketch;" Remark Alters Few Opinions About Romney

Romney aide remarked that if he wins the GOP nomination, the campaign will "hit a reset button," to take on Obama, that "it's almost like an Etch A Sketch."

	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
Heard about remark	44	52	41	47
Makes you <u>more</u> likely to support Romney	3	5	1	3
Makes you <u>less</u> likely to support Romney	11	8	16	10
Has no effect on your opinion of Romney	29	36	24	32
Don't know if remark had effect (Vol.)	2	2	1	2
Did not hear about remark	55	48	57	53
Don't know if heard about remark (Vol.)	<u>*</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
	100	100	100	100

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 22-25, 2012. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding.

Among Republicans and independents who heard about the comments, most say the Etch a Sketch remark would not change their view of Romney. Just more than a third of all Republicans (36%) – and 70% of those who had heard about the comment – say it will have no effect on their support for the candidate.

Among all Republicans, nearly one-in-ten (8%) say the remarks make them less likely to support Romney. That amounts to 16% of those who had heard of Fehrnstrom's words. On the other hand, 5% of all Republicans -- and 10% of those who had heard about the comment – say it makes them more likely to support Romney. Responses from independents are similar.

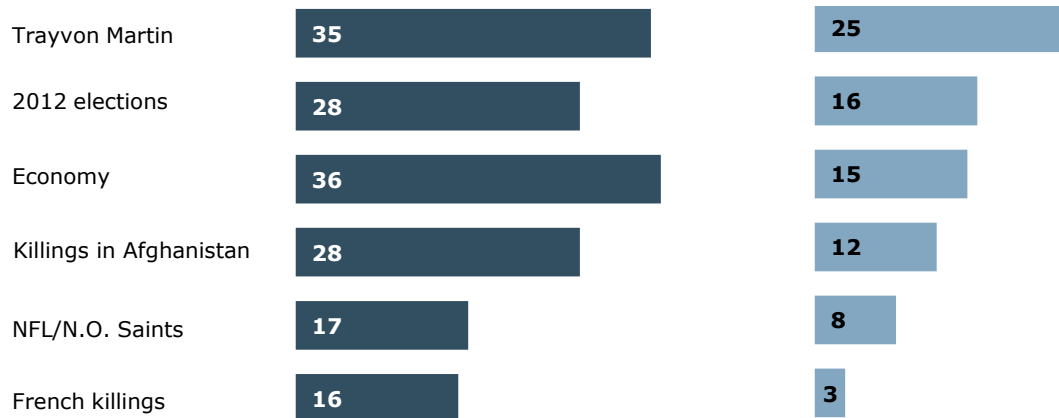
The Week's News

Aside from the Trayvon Martin story and election developments, the public continued to keep a close watch on economic news. Roughly a third (36%) say they followed news about the condition of the U.S. economy very closely, a level little changed in recent months. News about the economy accounted for 6% of coverage.

News Interest

% following each story very closely

Which one story did you follow most closely?



PEW RESEARCH CENTER. March 22-25, 2012.

About three-in-ten (28%) very closely followed news about the U.S. Army staff sergeant charged last week with killing civilians in Afghanistan; 12% say this was the news they followed most closely. News about the incident accounted for 6% of coverage. Including these developments, news about Afghanistan totaled 9% of the newshole.

Nearly two-in-ten (17%) say they very closely followed news about the National Football League suspending several coaches involved in paying bounties to players for injuring opponents when they were with the New Orleans Saints; 8% say this was the news they followed most closely. Nearly a quarter of men (23%) say they followed this news very closely, about double the 11% of women who say this. News about the suspensions made up 1% of coverage analyzed by PEJ.

Just 16% say they very closely followed news about French police killing a man accused of murdering children and adults at a Jewish school; 3% say this was the news they

followed most closely. News about the killings and the deadly standoff with police accounted for 5% of coverage.

These findings are based on the most recent installment of the weekly News Interest Index, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The index, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories, examines news interest as it relates to the news media's coverage. The weekly survey is conducted in conjunction with The Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, which monitors the news reported by major newspaper, television, radio and online news outlets on an ongoing basis. In the most recent week, data relating to news coverage were collected March 19-25, and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected March 22-25, 2012 from a nationally representative sample of 1,003 adults.

About the News Interest Index

The *News Interest Index* is a weekly survey conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press aimed at gauging the public's interest in and reaction to major news events. This project has been undertaken in conjunction with the Project for Excellence in Journalism's *News Coverage Index*, an ongoing content analysis of the news. The News Coverage Index catalogues the news from top news organizations across five major sectors of the media: newspapers, network television, cable television, radio and the internet. Each week (from Monday through Sunday) PEJ compiles this data to identify the top stories for the week. (For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to www.journalism.org.) The News Interest Index survey collects data from Thursday through Sunday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted March 22-25, 2012, among a national sample of 1,003 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (602 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 401 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 181 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers 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.

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 is also 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 within the landline sample. 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	1,003	4.0 percentage points
Non-Hispanic White	742	4.5 percentage points
Non-Hispanic Black	107	11.0 percentage points
Republicans	265	7.0 percentage points
Democrats	307	6.5 percentage points
Independents	344	6.5 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
MARCH 22-25, 2012 NEWS INTEREST INDEX
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,003

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					
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
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	*

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
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. Reports about a soldier accused of killing at least 16 civilians in Afghanistan¹

March 22-25, 2012	28	31	21	19	1
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TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:

March 15-18, 2012: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	27	33	21	18	1
March 1-4, 2012	22	29	25	24	1
February 23-26, 2012: <i>Protests in Afghanistan after NATO personnel burned copies of the Koran</i>	17	22	24	36	1
February 2-5, 2012: <i>The Defense Department announcing its plan to end the U.S. combat mission in Afghanistan</i>	22	31	22	24	1
October 6-9, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	20	28	25	26	1
September 15-18, 2011: <i>Attacks on the U.S. embassy and NATO's headquarters in Afghanistan</i>	16	24	22	37	1
September 1-4, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	17	32	26	25	*
August 11-14, 2011: <i>The 30 U.S. troops killed in Afghanistan in a helicopter attack</i>	39	33	13	14	1
June 30-July 3, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	22	34	24	20	1
June 23-26, 2011: <i>Discussions in Washington about U.S. troop levels in Afghanistan</i>	27	32	20	20	1
June 2-5, 2011: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	20	35	23	21	1
March 3-6, 2011: <i>U.S. airmen killed at an airport in Frankfurt, Germany</i>	16	22	19	42	1
April 1-3, 2011: <i>Deadly protests in Afghanistan after a Florida pastor burned a Koran</i>	15	19	29	36	1
December 16-19, 2010: <i>The Obama administration's review of the Afghanistan war strategy</i>	17	26	25	31	1
December 9-12, 2010: <i>The current situation and events in Afghanistan</i>	24	31	22	22	1
November 18-21, 2010	27	33	21	18	1
October 21-24, 2010	21	34	23	21	1
October 7-10, 2010	21	36	20	22	1
September 30-October 3, 2010	23	37	23	15	1
September 23-26, 2010	29	40	19	11	1
September 9-12, 2010	30	33	20	17	*

¹ The phrase "at least" was added before "16 civilians" on Friday, March 23, 2012, when it became clear the soldier may have killed more Afghans. This change was made in PEW.1b and PEW2.

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>
September 9-12, 2010: <i>Controversy over a Florida pastor's plan, later cancelled, to burn copies of the Koran on September 11th²</i>	33	25	15	25	1
July 29-August 1, 2010	34	35	22	9	*
July 15-18, 2010	22	33	23	22	*
July 8-11, 2010	23	32	24	20	1
July 1-5, 2010	29	34	23	14	1
June 24-27, 2010: <i>General Stanley McChrystal resigning as head of U.S. forces in Afghanistan after being quoted criticizing President Obama and his Afghanistan strategy</i>	28	31	19	21	1
June 17-20, 2010	21	30	27	22	*
May 20-23, 2010	22	33	25	20	*
April 9-12, 2010	21	29	27	22	1
February 19-22, 2010: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	24	36	21	19	*
January 8-11, 2010: <i>Suicide bombing that killed seven Americans at a CIA base in Afghanistan</i>	24	31	27	17	1
December 11-14, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	35	33	18	13	*
December 4-7, 2009: <i>President Obama's decision to send more U.S. troops to Afghanistan</i>	43	33	14	8	1
November 20-23, 2009: <i>The debate over whether to send more troops to Afghanistan</i>	29	31	17	22	1
November 13-16, 2009	29	28	20	22	1
November 6-9, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	22	35	24	18	*
October 30-November 2, 2009	24	32	21	22	*
October 23-26, 2009	32	29	21	18	*
October 16-19, 2009	25	31	20	24	*
September 25-28, 2009: <i>The debate over whether to send more troops to Afghanistan</i>	27	40	17	16	*
September 18-21, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	26	33	25	16	*
September 11-14, 2009	25	35	22	18	1
September 3-6, 2009	23	33	23	21	0
August 7-10, 2009	24	32	23	21	1
March 20-23, 2009	24	32	22	22	*
February 20-23, 2009: <i>The Obama administration's decision to send 17,000 additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan</i>	27	29	24	19	1
January 30-February 2, 2009: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	26	34	24	16	*
January 2-4, 2009	22	33	23	21	1
October 24-27, 2008	28	32	22	17	1
October 10-13, 2008: <i>The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters</i>	19	34	29	18	*
September 12-15, 2008	21	34	25	19	1
August 29-31, 2008	18	27	32	23	*

² On the first night of the field period (September 9) the item was worded: "Plans by a Florida pastor to burn copies of the Koran on September 11th."

PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely	(VOL.) DK/Ref
August 19-22, 2008: <i>A terrorist bombing at the U.S. embassy in Yemen</i>	15	27	31	26	1
July 18-21, 2008: <i>The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters</i>	27	33	24	16	*
July 11-14, 2008	19	28	29	23	1
July 3-7, 2008	19	28	32	21	*
June 20-23, 2008	20	30	30	20	*
March 2-5, 2007: <i>A bombing in Afghanistan near where Vice President Cheney was staying</i>	19	33	26	21	1
June, 2005: <i>Newsweek's retraction of a story about flushing the Koran down a toilet as part of prisoner interrogation</i>	20	29	21	29	1
Late July, 2002: <i>The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan</i>	41	38	13	7	1
June, 2002	38	32	20	9	1
April, 2002	39	39	13	8	1
Early April, 2002	45	37	12	5	1
February, 2002	47	39	8	5	1
January, 2002	51	35	9	4	1
December, 2001	44	38	12	5	1
Mid-November, 2001	49	36	11	3	1
Early November, 2001	45	36	12	6	1
Mid-October, 2001	51	35	10	3	1
October, 2000: <i>The terrorist attack on the navy warship U.S.S. Cole</i>	44	35	12	9	*
August, 1998: <i>The bombing at U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania</i>	27	37	18	18	*
July, 1996: <i>The bombing of a military base in Saudi Arabia</i>	32	36	20	12	*
c. French police killing a man accused of murdering children and adults at a Jewish school in France					
March 22-25, 2012	16	18	25	39	2
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
July 28-31, 2011: <i>A bombing and shooting attack in Norway that killed more than 70 people</i>	24	33	20	23	*
July 23-24, 2011: <i>A bombing and shooting attack in Norway that killed over 90 people</i>	26	31	17	26	1
September, 2004: <i>The killing of Russian school children by Chechen rebels</i>	48	30	11	10	1
d. Controversy over the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an African American teen in Florida					
March 22-25, 2012	35	24	15	26	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
July 31-August 3, 2009: <i>Reports about the arrest of Harvard professor Henry Louis Gates and President Obama's response to the incident</i>	25	26	22	25	2
July 24-27, 2009: <i>The arrest of Henry Louis Gates, a black Harvard professor, at his home after a dispute with a police officer</i>	30	31	17	21	1

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 25-28, 2008: <i>The acquittal of three New York City police officers in the shooting of an unarmed man on his wedding day</i>	13	24	24	38	1
September 21-24, 2007: <i>Demonstrations in Jena, Louisiana, about six black teenagers involved in a schoolyard fight</i>	18	27	25	30	*
April 2001: <i>Rioting in Cincinnati after an unarmed black man was shot by police</i>	24	32	23	20	1
July 2000: <i>The video showing Philadelphia police kicking and beating a carjacking suspect</i>	22	32	22	23	1
March 2000: <i>The acquittal of four New York policemen who shot and killed Amadou Diallo, an African immigrant</i>	28	35	20	17	0
February 1999: <i>The Texas murder trial of a man accused of dragging a black man behind a pickup truck</i>	24	41	20	14	1
May 1993: <i>The Rodney King trial and verdict in Los Angeles</i>	47	34	13	6	*
May 1992: <i>The verdict in the Rodney King case and the riots and disturbances that followed</i>	70	22	5	2	1
March 1991: <i>The videotaped beating by Los Angeles police of a suspect they apprehended in an auto chase</i>	46	30	13	10	1
e. The National Football League suspending coaches who were involved in paying bounties to New Orleans Saints players for injuring opponents					
March 22-25, 2012	17	15	24	43	1
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
August 18-21, 2011: <i>Recent scandals in college football</i>	10	12	17	61	*
July 28-31, 2011: <i>The NFL owners and players reaching a labor agreement</i>	12	16	23	48	1
July 21-22, 2011: <i>A tentative deal in the NFL labor dispute that threatened to delay the football season</i>	11	13	20	55	1
July 27-30, 2007: <i>News about a former NBA referee who is under investigation for betting on games including some he officiated</i>	9	22	24	45	*
September 1989: <i>The banishment of Pete Rose from baseball for life</i>	31	35	20	15	*
July 1989: <i>The charges that Pete Rose has bet on baseball games</i>	22	32	26	20	0
f. News about candidates for the 2012 presidential elections					
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

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
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
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>

ASK ALL:

PEW.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.]**

Mar 22-25

2012

25	Controversy over the shooting death of Trayvon Martin, an African American teen in Florida
16	News about candidates for the 2012 presidential elections
15	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
12	Reports about a soldier accused of killing at least 16 civilians in Afghanistan
	The National Football League suspending coaches who were involved in paying bounties to
8	New Orleans Saints players for injuring opponents
	French police killing a man accused of murdering children and adults at a Jewish school
3	in France
8	Some other story (VOL.)
14	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

PEW.3 How would you describe the presidential election campaign so far – is it **[READ ITEM a. FIRST, THEN RANDOMIZE ITEMS b. THRU d.]**

a.	<u>Interesting</u>	<u>Dull</u>	<u>(VOL.) Neither</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
March 22-25, 2012	38	52	4	7
January 12-15, 2012	36	55	3	5
October 20-23, 2011	35	51	4	10
October 10-13, 2008	71	25	3	1
September 12-15, 2008	68	26	5	1
April 18-21, 2008	59	35	5	1
February 15-18, 2008	70	25	4	1
October 12-15, 2007	37	55	5	3
April, 2007	34	52	6	8
Mid-October, 2004 (RV)	66	28	5	1
Early September, 2004 (RV)	50	42	6	2
June, 2004	33	57	4	6
June, 2000	28	65	4	3
July, 1996	21	73	3	3

b.	<u>Too negative</u>	<u>Not too negative</u>	<u>(VOL.) Neither</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
March 22-25, 2012	52	34	3	11
January 12-15, 2012	50	41	1	7
October 20-23, 2011	44	41	4	11
October 10-13, 2008	55	41	3	1
September 12-15, 2008	43	51	4	2
April 18-21, 2008	50	44	4	2
February 15-18, 2008	28	66	3	3
Mid-October, 2004 (RV)	57	38	3	2
Early September, 2004 (RV)	62	32	1	5
June, 2004	45	46	2	7
Mid-March, 2004	47	47	2	4

c.	<u>Informative</u>	<u>Not informative</u>	<u>(VOL.) Neither</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
March 22-25, 2012	40	50	1	8
January 12-15, 2012	48	45	2	6
October 20-23, 2011	40	49	2	9
October 10-13, 2008	63	34	2	1
September 12-15, 2008	54	41	3	2
February 15-18, 2008	65	31	2	2
Mid-October, 2004 (RV)	73	22	3	2
Early September, 2004 (RV)	63	33	1	3
June, 2004	48	46	2	4
Mid-March, 2004	53	42	2	3

d.	<u>Too long</u>	<u>Not too long</u>	<u>(VOL.) Neither</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
March 22-25, 2012	58	31	3	8
January 12-15, 2012	57	35	2	6
October 20-23, 2011	50	39	2	9
October 10-13, 2008	57	39	3	1
April 18-21, 2008	65	29	5	1
February 15-18, 2008	57	40	*	3
October 12-15, 2007	66	28	3	3
April, 2007	59	32	3	6
Mid-October, 2004 (RV)	51	43	3	2
Early September, 2004 (RV)	53	42	2	3
June, 2004	52	42	2	4
Mid-March, 2004	52	44	1	3

ASK ALL:

PEW.4 This week an aide to Mitt Romney said that if Romney wins the GOP nomination the campaign will "hit a reset button" to take on President Barack Obama in the fall. He said "it's almost like an Etch A Sketch – you can kind of shake it up, start all over again." Had you heard about this remark, or not?

Mar 22-25

2012

44	Yes, heard about
55	No, did not
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK IF HEARD ABOUT (1 IN PEW.4):

PEW.5 What was your reaction to this comment... did it **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**?

BASED ON TOTAL:	BASED ON HEARD ABOUT REMARK:	
Mar 22-5	Mar 22-25	
<u>2012</u>	<u>2012</u>	
3	6	Make you more likely to support Romney
11	25	Make you less likely to support Romney
29	65	Have no effect on your opinion of Romney
2	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
55	--	<i>Did not hear about remark/DK/Ref</i>
N 1,003	501	