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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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Public Interest in Economic News Reaches 15-Year High
OBAMA AND WRIGHT CONTROVERSY DOMINATE NEWS CYCLE

Barack Obama’s March 18th speech on race and politics is arguably the biggest political event of the campaign so far. Fully 85% of Americans say they heard at least a little about Obama’s speech, and most (54%) say they heard a lot about it. Not surprisingly, Barack Obama has been far and away the most visible of the presidential candidates over the past week – 70% say they have heard more about him in the news than the other candidates, compared with 15% who cite Hillary Clinton and just 3% who say they have heard the most about John McCain. As recently as three weeks ago, Obama and Clinton were equally visible in the news.

Roughly half of Americans (49%) saw videos of Reverend

Wright’s sermons, and roughly the same number (51%) watched Barack Obama’s speech about race and politics last week. Television was the predominant source for video of these news items, however the internet also played a role. One-in-ten Americans say they saw Obama’s speech online (7% on the internet only, 3% both on TV and the internet). About the same number (12%) report having seen Wright’s sermons online.

Race Speech and Reverend Wright are Most Visible Election Events				
	<i>How much have you heard...</i>			
	A lot	A little	Nothing at all	DK
	%	%	%	%
<i>Last week’s events**</i>				
Obama race & politics speech	54	31	15	*=100
Rev. Wright videos	51	28	21	*=100
McCain Iraq & Middle East trip	22	49	28	1=100
McCain Iran/al Qaeda error	17	39	43	1=100
<i>Previous weeks’ events***</i>				
McCain and female lobbyist	48	33	19	*=100
Ferraro’s comments	40	35	24	1=100
Obama plagiarism charges	39	35	26	*=100
Rumors Obama is Muslim	38	41	19	2=100
Clinton 3:00 am ad	38	24	37	1=100
Possible Clinton/Obama ticket	37	46	17	*=100
Bush endorsing McCain	36	39	24	1=100
Michelle Obama comments	35	25	39	1=100
Fla. and Mich. primary question	34	43	22	1=100
Rev. Wright videos {Mar 14-17}	31	36	33	*=100
S. Power “monster” comment	29	34	36	1=100
Obama’s ties to Rezko	20	35	44	1=100
Clinton tax returns	19	33	47	1=100
Nicholson ad for Clinton	9	27	63	1=100

** Survey conducted March 20-24
 *** Surveys conducted March 14-17, March 7-10 and Feb 22-25.

The impact of these events on Obama's overall image appears to be mixed. Three-in-ten Americans (30%) say their opinion of Obama has grown less favorable in recent days, but another 22% say their opinion of him has grown more favorable.

One measurable effect of Obama's speech on race in America was to increase the visibility of Reverend Wright's sermons. In the days leading up to Obama's Tuesday speech, just 31% of Americans had heard a lot about Wright's sermons. But over the past weekend, 51% reported hearing a lot about them.

[For more analysis of the impact of these events on views of Obama, see the accompanying report, ["Obama Weathers the Wright Storm, Clinton Faces Credibility Problem"](#) released March 27, 2008 by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press.]

	Seen video of Wright sermons %	Watched Obama's speech %
Yes	49	51
On TV	37	39
On internet	2	7
Both	10	3
Other	0	2
Haven't seen	29	33
DK/Haven't heard	<u>22</u>	<u>16</u>
	100	100

Opinion of Obama	Total %	Saw Obama speech		Saw Wright sermons	
		Yes %	No* %	Yes %	No* %
Less favorable	30	32	28	39	21
More favorable	22	28	17	21	23
Hasn't changed	46	39	52	38	53
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100

* Includes those who had not even heard about Obama's speech or Wright's sermons.

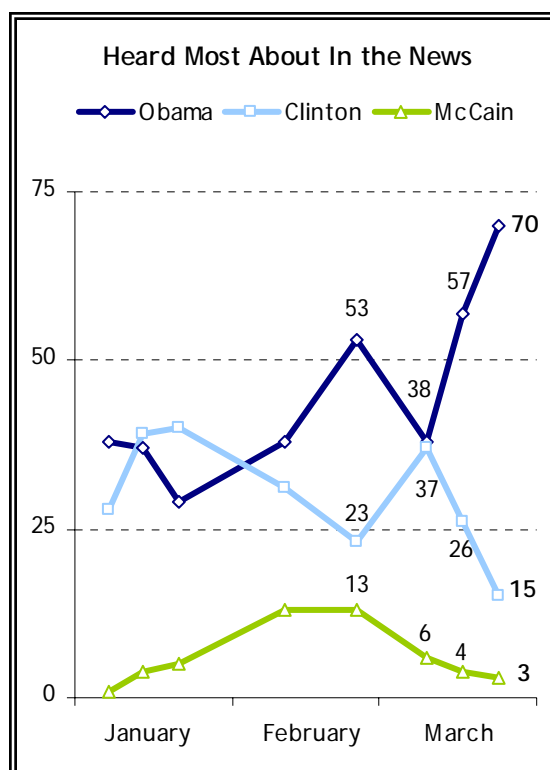
Obama Dominates Public Visibility and Campaign Coverage

Throughout the first three months of the year, Obama and Clinton have been far more visible than the other presidential candidates, and this overwhelming focus on the Democratic contest continues. In the current poll, Obama is by far the candidate that the public has been hearing the most about in the news. Fully, 70% have heard more about Obama in the last week than any other candidate. This is consistent with the balance of the press coverage, according to the Campaign Coverage Index conducted by the Project for Excellence in Journalism. Last week, Obama was the featured news maker in 72% of all campaign news stories, his highest coverage level this year.

Only 15% said that Sen. Clinton was the candidate they have been hearing the most about. The gap between Obama's and Clinton's visibility has grown substantially over the last two weeks from roughly equal visibility in early March, when 38% had been hearing most about Obama, 37% about Clinton. The drop in Clinton's public visibility is also consistent with the amount of coverage her campaign received in recent weeks. The share of campaign coverage in which Clinton was the featured candidate fell from 60% three weeks ago to 51% in the following week and down to 30% this past week, according to the Campaign Coverage Index conducted by the Project for Excellence in Journalism.

Though John McCain has sewn up the Republican nomination, he continues to lag far behind Obama and Clinton in public visibility. Only 3% of the public named John McCain as the candidate they heard most about in the news recently. This too is consistent with the findings of the Campaign Coverage Index, which found just 17% of campaign news stories giving a substantial amount of coverage to McCain, compared with 30% for Clinton and 72% for Obama.

Fewer Americans heard about Senator McCain's visit to Iraq and the Middle East than heard about Obama's speech or the Rev. Wright videos. Only about one-in-five Americans heard a lot about either McCain's trip to the Middle East (22%) where he planned to strengthen his foreign policy credentials or his potentially damaging misstatement linking Iran with al Qaeda (17%).



Press Coverage of Obama Seen As Fair

While Americans are hearing a lot from the press about recent events and controversies surrounding the leading major party candidates, public opinion about the tone of campaign coverage has changed very little over the course of the last month. In fact, relatively few criticize the press for bias in coverage either for or against the candidates. Most voters say that the press treatment of each of the three candidates has been fair.

On balance, more Americans believe coverage of Obama has been too easy on him (23%) than say it has been too tough (15%). A substantial number of Republicans (37%) continue to believe that the press is going easy on Obama (down slightly from 42% in early March). Conversely, among Democrats the number who believe that the coverage of Obama has been too tough increased from 7% in early March to 19% now.

For presumptive Republican nominee John McCain more than six-in-ten Americans (62%) say that the press has treated his campaign fairly and fewer than one-in-ten (9%) call the coverage of McCain too tough. Comparable to the other candidates, almost one-in-five (18%) says the press has been too easy on McCain. Partisanship continues to drive views of the tone of coverage. A larger share of Democrats (25%) than Republicans (7%) believe that the press is going too easy on.

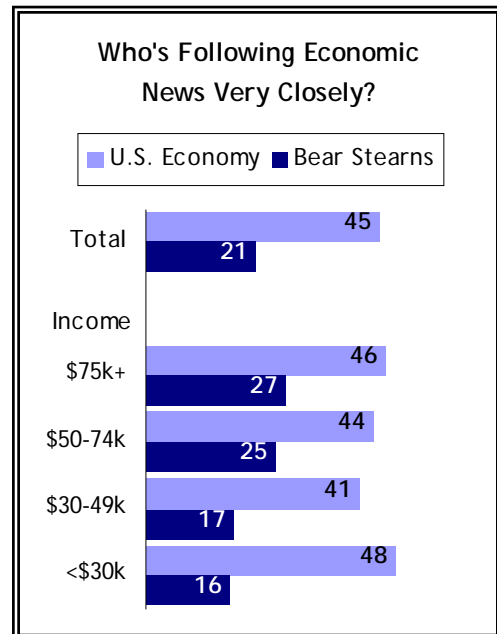
Where opinions may have changed over the course of March about the tone of campaign coverage occurs among Democrats and independents who lean Democratic. Among this group, a majority (61%) say the press coverage of Obama has been fair. However, the share of Democrats and Democratic leaners saying that coverage of his campaign has been too tough increased significantly over the last three weeks (11% to 19%) in the aftermath of steady news coverage about controversial remarks by Obama's former pastor and the Senator's speech on race and politics in America.

<i>Press coverage of _____ has been...</i>	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Barack Obama				
Too easy	23	37	17	21
Too tough	15	11	19	14
Fair	55	45	58	57
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100
Hillary Clinton				
Too easy	21	29	15	23
Too tough	17	9	26	15
Fair	55	54	56	54
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100
John McCain				
Too easy	18	7	25	21
Too tough	9	15	5	8
Fair	62	68	62	58
Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>13</u>
	100	100	100	100

Surging Interest in Troubled U.S. Economy

Public attention to reports about the condition of the U.S. economy reached a 15 year high last week with 45% of the public following this news very closely. This is up from two weeks prior when 38% reported following news about the U.S. economy very closely and substantially higher than last fall when less than three-in-ten followed U.S. economic news very closely. The last time the condition of the U.S. economy drew this much attention was in February 1993 when 49% of the public said they followed economic news very closely.

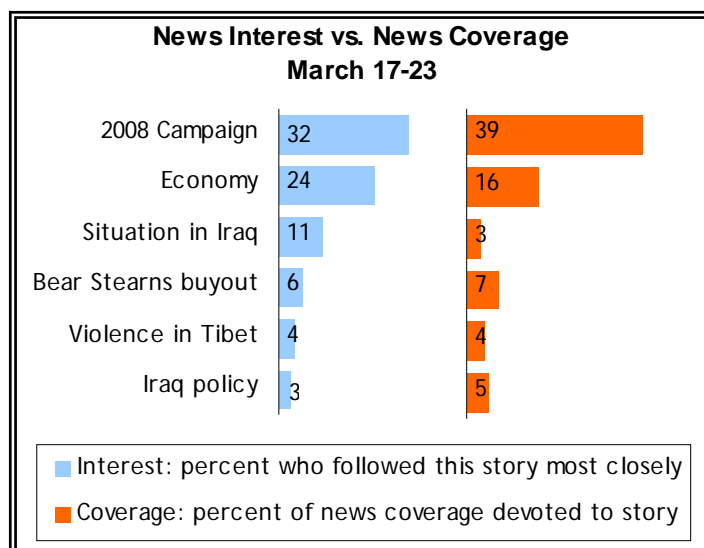
The big economic news story last week was the buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns by J.P. Morgan Chase with the financial backing of the Federal Reserve. Almost half of the public said that they followed news about the buyout either very closely (21%) or fairly closely (26%), but the story attracted far less interest than the condition of the U.S. economy in general (78% very or fairly closely). Those in the top income tiers paid closer attention to news about the Bear Stearns buyout than did those with lower annual incomes. Among those earning \$75,000 annually, 27% reported following this story very closely compared to 17% of those earning between \$30,000 and \$49,999 and 16% of those earning less than \$30,000. Income differences do not affect the level of attention paid to the condition of the U.S. economy in general.



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 agenda. 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 was collected from March 17-23 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week was collected March 20-24 from a nationally representative sample of 1,015 adults.

Campaign Tops News Interest

One-in Three Americans (34%) paid very close attention to news about the presidential campaign and roughly the same proportion (32%) listed this as their most closely followed story of the week. Republicans and Democrats followed campaign news equally closely last week. Coverage of the campaign well surpassed all other major stories. Campaign coverage accounted for 39% of the newshole and was particularly dominant on cable news television, where the campaign made up three-quarters (73%) of all news.



The Iraq war was the public's third most closely followed story last week (11% called it their top story). Three-in-ten continue to follow news about the situation in Iraq very closely, generally unchanged from recent surveys. Public interest in the Iraq policy debate, which was back in the news last week largely because of the 5th anniversary of the war, was unchanged from its level in early December. One-in-five (21%) followed the Iraq policy debate very closely and 3% said this was the story they followed most closely. The national news media devoted 3% of its overall coverage to events in Iraq and 5% to the Iraq policy debate.

There was relatively little public interest in violent protests in Tibet against the Chinese government. Overall, just 12% say they paid very close attention to this story, roughly equal to the number who followed the news about pro-democracy protests in Burma last fall (13% followed Burma very closely). Just 4% listed violence in Tibet as their most closely followed story while, for the national news media, stories about China and Tibet were the third biggest news story of the week accounting for 4% of total coverage.

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 Sunday through Friday) PEJ will compile this data to identify the top stories for the week. The News Interest Index survey will collect data from Friday through Monday to gauge public interest in the most covered stories of the week.

Results for the weekly surveys are based on telephone interviews among a nationwide sample of approximately 1,000 adults, 18 years of age or older, conducted under the direction of ORC (Opinion Research Corporation). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3.5 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, and that results based on subgroups will have larger margins of error.

For more information about the Project for Excellence in Journalism's News Coverage Index, go to www.journalism.org.

About the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of eight projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MARCH 20-24, 2008 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1,015

Q.1 Apart from who you support, which presidential candidate have you heard the most about in the news in the last week or so? [OPEN-END. RECORD FIRST MENTION ONLY.]

		March 14-17, <u>2008</u>	March 7-10, <u>2008</u>
70	Barack Obama	57	38
15	Hillary Clinton	26	37
3	John McCain	4	6
1	Other (SPECIFY)	2	4
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>11</u>	<u>15</u>
100		100	100

Q.2 Thinking about [INSERT CANDIDATE; ROTATE]. In the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of (him/her), a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of (him/her) changed lately?

	More <u>favorable</u>	Less <u>favorable</u>	Opinion has <u>not changed</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
a. Hillary Clinton	16	25	57	2=100
b. Barack Obama	22	30	46	2=100
c. John McCain	18	18	61	3=100

Q.3 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 ITEMS] [IF NECESSARY "Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?"]

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
a. The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns	21	26	21	32	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
Feb. 8-11, 2008: Microsoft bids on Yahoo	10	22	23	44	1=100
Aug. 3-6, 2007: Murdoch's purchase of Wall Street Journal/Dow Jones	7	17	22	54	*=100
January, 2000: AOL-Time Warner merge	17	28	27	26	2=100
December, 1998: Exxon-Mobil merger	8	26	27	38	1=100
December, 1998: AOL-Netscape merger	6	19	23	50	2=100
June, 1998: Chrysler-Daimler Benz merger	12	22	27	38	1=100
September, 1995: Time Warner-Turner Broadcasting Merger	6	23	32	37	2=100
August, 1995: Purchase of ABC by Disney	10	24	35	30	1=100
January, 1991: Purchase of MCA by Japanese electronics company, Matsushita	9	20	32	38	1=100
b. Violent protests in Tibet against the Chinese government	12	27	26	35	*=100

Q.3 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					
September 28-October 1, 2007: <i>Burma</i> <i>Protests</i>	13	27	20	39	1=100
c. News about the current situation and events in					
Iraq	30	38	19	13	*=100
March 14-17, 2008	29	38	23	10	*=100
March 7-10, 2008	28	39	18	15	*=100
February 29-March 3, 2008	28	40	19	13	*=100
February 8-11, 2008	24	35	25	16	*=100
February 1-4, 2008	28	39	22	11	*=100
January 25-28, 2008	23	35	26	16	*=100
January 18-21, 2008	31	33	20	15	1=100
January 11-14, 2008	25	38	21	16	*=100
January 4-7, 2008	27	38	20	15	*=100
December 14-17, 2007	26	32	24	18	*=100
December 7-10, 2007	28	37	21	14	*=100
November 23-26, 2007	25	37	21	16	1=100
November 16-19, 2007	31	37	19	12	1=100
November 9-12, 2007	29	38	19	13	1=100
November 2-5, 2007	31	35	18	15	1=100
October 26-29, 2007	28	37	21	13	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	28	37	20	15	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	26	36	18	19	1=100
October 5-8, 2007	29	33	22	16	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	30	41	18	11	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	32	38	17	13	*=100
September 14-17, 2007	31	36	18	15	0=100
September 7-10, 2007	32	34	20	14	*=100
August 30 – September 2, 2007	31	34	18	16	1=100
August 24-27, 2007	34	36	18	12	*=100
August 17-20, 2007	33	34	18	15	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	36	37	14	13	*=100
August 3-6, 2007	29	40	19	12	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	28	36	19	16	1=100
July 20-23, 2007	28	34	21	16	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	25	41	17	16	1=100
July 6-9, 2007	36	34	18	12	*=100
June 29-July 2, 2007	32	35	19	13	1=100
June 22-25, 2007	30	36	18	15	1=100
June 15-18, 2007	30	37	20	13	*=100
June 8-11, 2007	32	38	15	14	1=100
June 1-4, 2007	30	36	20	13	1=100
May 24-27, 2007	33	36	18	12	1=100
May 18-21, 2007	36	34	15	14	1=100
May 11-14, 2007	30	34	18	17	1=100
May 4-7, 2007	38	37	15	10	*=100
April 27-30, 2007	27	35	21	16	1=100
April 20-23, 2007	28	35	22	15	*=100
April 12-16, 2007	34	33	20	13	*=100
April 5-9, 2007	33	39	16	11	1=100

¹ September 28-October 1, 2007 asked about: "Pro-democracy protests by Buddhist monks in Burma."

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 23-March 26, 2007²	31	38	18	12	1=100
March 16-19, 2007	34	34	17	15	*=100
March 9-12, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 2-5, 2007	37	37	16	9	1=100
February 23-26, 2007	36	36	15	13	*=100
February 16-19, 2007	30	36	19	14	1=100
February 9-12, 2007	37	34	18	11	*=100
February 2-5, 2007	38	38	17	7	*=100
January 26-29, 2007	36	38	15	11	*=100
January 19-22, 2007	37	34	18	10	1=100
January 12-15, 2007	38	36	17	8	1=100
January, 2007	46	40	8	5	1=100
January 5-8, 2007	40	32	16	12	0=100
December, 2006	42	39	12	7	*=100
November 30-December 3, 2006	40	36	13	11	*=100
Mid-November, 2006	44	38	12	6	*=100
September, 2006	33	43	14	8	2=100
August, 2006	41	39	12	7	1=100
June, 2006	37	43	13	6	1=100
May, 2006	42	35	15	7	1=100
April, 2006	43	36	13	7	1=100
March, 2006	43	38	12	6	1=100
February, 2006	39	42	12	6	1=100
January, 2006	40	40	12	7	1=100
December, 2005	45	38	11	5	1=100
Early November, 2005	41	40	13	6	*=100
Early October, 2005	43	36	15	6	*=100
Early September, 2005	32	40	20	7	1=100
July, 2005	43	37	13	6	1=100
Mid-May, 2005	42	42	11	5	*=100
Mid-March, 2005	40	39	14	5	2=100
February, 2005	38	45	13	4	*=100
January, 2005	48	37	11	4	*=100
December, 2004	34	44	15	6	1=100
Mid-October, 2004	42	38	11	8	1=100
Early September, 2004	47	37	9	6	1=100
August, 2004	39	42	12	6	1=100
July, 2004	43	40	11	6	*=100
June, 2004	39	42	12	6	1=100
April, 2004	54	33	8	5	*=100
Mid-March, 2004	47	36	12	4	1=100
Early February, 2004	47	38	10	4	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	48	39	9	4	*=100
December, 2003	44	38	11	6	1=100
November, 2003	52	33	9	5	1=100
September, 2003	50	33	10	6	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	45	39	10	5	1=100
Early July, 2003	37	41	13	8	1=100
June, 2003	46	35	13	6	*=100
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*=100

²

From May, 2003 to March 23-26, 2007, the story was listed as "News about the current situation in Iraq."

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
April 11-16, 2003 ³	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 13-16, 2003 ⁴	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 ⁵	48	29	15	6	2=100
d. The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq	21	29	25	25	*=100
November 30-December 3, 2007	23	28	21	28	*=100
November 16-19, 2007	23	30	21	25	1=100
November 2-5, 2007	21	29	23	26	1=100
October 26-29, 2007	21	25	25	28	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	21	28	20	31	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	19	23	22	36	*=100
October 5-8, 2007	20	28	23	29	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	22	32	22	24	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	25	28	20	27	*=100
September 14-17, 2007⁶	25	27	20	27	1=100
September 7-10, 2007	25	27	22	26	*=100
August 30-September 2, 2007	22	27	20	31	*=100
August 24-27, 2007	25	30	19	25	1=100
August 3-6, 2007	21	33	20	26	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	24	28	20	27	1=100
July 20-23, 2007	23	24	24	28	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	20	30	20	30	*=100
July 6-9, 2007	27	26	23	24	*=100
June 1-4, 2007	20	27	24	27	2=100
May 24-27, 2007	30	32	20	18	*=100
May 18-21, 2007	24	32	19	24	1=100
May 11-14, 2007	25	26	19	29	1=100
May 4-7, 2007	30	31	19	20	*=100
April 27-30, 2007	18	31	21	29	1=100
April 20-23, 2007	22	29	24	25	*=100
April 12-16, 2007	25	29	22	23	1=100
April 5-9, 2007	31	28	20	21	*=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	26	29	21	23	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
January 12-15, 2007: President Bush’s proposal to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq	40	33	13	13	1=100

³ From March 20-24, 2003 to April 11-16, 2003, the story was listed as “News about the war in Iraq.”

⁴ From Early October, 2002, to March 13-16, 2003, the story was listed as “Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq.”

⁵ In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as “Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq.”

⁶ September 14-17, 2007 asked about “General David Petraeus’s report to Congress about how things are going in Iraq.”

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
e. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	45	33	13	9	*=100
February 29-March 3, 2008	38	35	15	11	1=100
February 15-18, 2008	37	36	11	16	8=100
February 1-4, 2008	40	37	14	8	1=100
January 18-21, 2008	42	31	16	11	*=100
January 11-14, 2008	36	32	15	16	1=100
November 2-5, 2007	27	37	16	19	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	25	34	20	21	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	28	36	18	18	*=100
Mid-November, 2006	31	40	17	11	1=100
December, 2005	35	35	18	11	1=100
Early November, 2005	35	39	17	9	*=100
Mid-May, 2005	30	39	19	11	1=100
January, 2005	35	41	17	7	*=100
Mid-October, 2004	30	43	16	10	1=100
Early September, 2004	39	34	15	11	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	37	41	15	7	*=100
December, 2003	35	38	14	11	2=100
November, 2003	40	34	15	10	1=100
October, 2003	32	39	16	12	1=100
September, 2003	39	30	18	12	1=100
March, 2003	40	35	16	8	1=100
February, 2003	42	33	15	10	*=100
January, 2003	40	35	13	11	1=100
December, 2002	38	34	17	10	1=100
February, 2002	35	40	15	9	1=100
January, 2002	30	44	16	9	1=100
December, 2001	37	40	13	8	2=100
Mid-November, 2001	41	36	15	7	1=100
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1=100
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0=100
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1=100
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1=100
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2=100
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*=100
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*=100
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1=100
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*=100
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1=100
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*=100
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1=100
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1=100
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*=100
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1=100
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*=100
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1=100
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*=100
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*=100
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1=100
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*=100
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*=100
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1=100

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1=100
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*=100
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*=100
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*=100
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1=100
f. News about candidates for the 2008					
presidential election	34	37	18	11	*=100
March 14-17, 2008	40	37	16	7	*=100
March 7-10, 2008	39	36	15	9	1=100
February 29-March 3, 2008	43	34	14	9	*=100
February 22-25, 2008	42	37	13	8	*=100
February 15-18, 2008	44	36	10	10	*=100
February 8-11, 2008	39	37	15	9	0=100
February 1-4, 2008	37	35	16	12	*=100
January 25-28, 2008	36	37	14	12	1=100
January 18-21, 2008	36	34	18	12	*=100
January 11-14, 2008⁷	32	31	19	17	1=100
January 4-7, 2008	33	36	19	11	1=100
December 14-17, 2007	25	34	22	19	*=100
December 7-10, 2007	24	35	22	19	*=100
November 30 – December 3, 2007	23	35	23	19	*=100
November 23-26, 2007	20	33	26	20	1=100
November 16-19, 2007	26	33	21	19	1=100
November 9-12, 2007	21	33	25	21	*=100
November 2-5, 2007	27	30	21	21	1=100
October 26-29, 2007	21	34	26	19	*=100
October 19-22, 2007	23	32	22	23	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	13	31	26	30	*=100
October 5-8, 2007	22	30	24	24	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	21	34	25	20	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	24	31	22	23	*=100
September 14-17, 2007	22	31	24	23	*=100
September 7-10, 2007	18	34	26	22	*=100
August 30-September 2, 2007	19	35	21	25	*=100
August 24-27, 2007	22	28	24	26	*=100
August 17-20, 2007	19	27	24	30	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	23	32	21	24	*=100
August 3-6, 2007	19	31	25	25	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	19	32	22	26	1=100
July 20-23, 2007	16	26	30	27	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	17	29	27	27	*=100
July 6-9, 2007	24	29	24	22	1=100
June 29-July 2, 2007	20	32	25	23	*=100
June 22-25, 2007	18	31	21	30	*=100
June 15-18, 2007	17	32	26	25	*=100
June 8-11, 2007	19	30	24	26	1=100
June 1-4, 2007	16	27	32	24	1=100
May 24-27, 2007	22	33	23	22	*=100
May 18-21, 2007	18	31	24	27	*=100
May 11-14, 2007	18	30	23	28	1=100

⁷ From January 11-14, 2008 the story was listed as “News about the New Hampshire primaries and the presidential campaign.”

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
May 4-7, 2007	23	34	21	21	1=100
April 27-30, 2007	14	30	29	26	1=100
April 20-23, 2007	18	28	27	27	*=100
April 12-16, 2007	18	28	27	27	*=100
April 5-9, 2007	25	30	26	19	*=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	20	29	27	23	1=100
March 23-26, 2007	20	32	22	26	*=100
March 16-19, 2007	15	28	29	27	1=100
March 9-12, 2007	24	30	23	23	*=100
March 2-5, 2007	19	31	26	23	1=100
February 23-26, 2007	22	33	24	21	*=100
February 16-19, 2007	18	32	22	27	1=100
February 9-12, 2007	24	30	24	21	1=100
February 2-5, 2007	24	36	22	18	*=100
January 26-29, 2007	24	33	23	20	*=100
January 19-22, 2007⁸	24	27	22	26	1=100
2004 Presidential Election					
November, 2004 (RVs)	52	36	8	4	*=100
Mid-October, 2004	46	30	12	11	1=100
August, 2004	32	38	16	14	*=100
July, 2004	29	37	18	15	1=100
April, 2004	31	33	19	16	1=100
Mid-March, 2004	35	34	18	13	*=100
Late February, 2004	24	40	23	12	1=100
Early February, 2004 ⁹	29	37	20	13	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	16	30	27	26	1=100
Early January, 2004	14	32	30	23	1=100
December, 2003	16	26	27	30	1=100
November, 2003	11	26	34	28	1=100
October, 2003	12	27	28	32	1=100
September, 2003	17	25	30	27	1=100
Mid-August, 2003	12	27	27	33	1=100
May, 2003	8	19	31	41	1=100
January, 2003	14	28	29	28	1=100
2000 Presidential Election					
Early November, 2000 (RVs)	39	44	12	5	*=100
Mid-October, 2000 (RVs)	40	37	15	8	*=100
Early October, 2000 (RVs)	42	36	15	6	1=100
September, 2000	22	42	21	15	*=100
July, 2000	21	38	20	20	1=100
June, 2000	23	32	23	21	1=100
May, 2000	18	33	26	23	*=100
April, 2000	18	39	22	20	1=100

⁸ January 19-22, 2007 asked about "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

⁹ From May 2003 to Early February 2004 and in March 1992, the story was listed as "The race for the Democratic nomination." In January 2003, the story was listed as "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2004." In September 2000, Early September and July 1996, and May 1992, the question asked about "the presidential election campaign." In January, March and April 1996, the story was listed as "News about the Republican presidential candidates." In August 1992, the story was listed as "News about the presidential election." In July 1992, the story was listed as "News about the presidential campaign." In January 1992, the story was listed as "News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination." In 1988, the story was introduced as being from "this past year" and was listed as "News about the presidential campaign in 1988."

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
March, 2000	26	41	19	13	1=100
February, 2000	26	36	21	17	*=100
January, 2000	19	34	28	18	1=100
December, 1999	16	36	24	23	1=100
October, 1999	17	32	28	22	1=100
September, 1999	15	31	33	20	1=100
July, 1999	15	38	24	22	1=100
June, 1999	11	25	29	34	1=100
1996 Presidential Election					
November, 1996 (RVs)	34	45	15	6	*=100
October, 1996	31	39	18	12	*=100
Early September, 1996	24	36	23	17	*=100
July, 1996	22	40	23	14	1=100
March, 1996	26	41	20	13	*=100
January, 1996	10	34	31	24	1=100
September, 1995	12	36	30	22	*=100
August, 1995	13	34	28	25	*=100
June, 1995	11	31	31	26	1=100
1992 Presidential Election					
October, 1992 (RVs)	55	36	7	2	0=100
September, 1992 (RVs)	47	36	11	6	*=100
August, 1992 (RVs)	36	51	11	2	0=100
July, 1992	20	45	26	9	*=100
May, 1992	32	44	16	8	*=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
1988 Presidential Election					
October, 1988 (RVs)	43	44	11	2	*=100
August, 1988 (RVs)	39	45	13	3	*=100
May, 1988	22	46	23	6	3=100
November, 1987	15	28	35	21	1=100
September, 1987	14	34	37	14	1=100

Q.4 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.]**

- 32 News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 24 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 11 The current situation and events in Iraq
- 6 The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Sterns
- 4 Violent protests in Tibet against the Chinese government
- 3 The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq
- 6 Some other story (SPECIFY)
- 14 Don't know/Refused

100

On another subject...

Q.5 How do you get most of your news about the presidential campaign? From television, from newspapers, from radio, from magazines, or from the internet? [ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS: IF ONLY ONE RESPONSE IS GIVEN, PROBE FOR ONE ADDITIONAL RESPONSE]

NOTE: Totals may exceed 100% because of multiple responses.

	<u>Tele- vision</u>	<u>News- papers</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Maga- zines</u>	<u>Inter- net</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
March 20-24, 2008	72	25	12	3	26	1	1
Late December, 2007	71	30	13	4	26	3	2
November, 2006 ¹	69	34	17	2	15	6	3
November, 2004	78	39	17	3	18	4	2
Mid-October, 2004	76	28	15	2	10	3	2
Early September, 2004	80	41	18	3	17	3	1
Early January, 2004	79	39	15	2	13	2	2
November, 2002	66	33	13	1	7	7	2
November, 2000 (RVs)	70	39	15	4	11	1	*
June, 2000	65	27	11	2	5	2	2
February, 2000	73	33	15	2	7	2	1
January, 2000	75	31	12	3	6	3	1
November, 1996 (RVs)	72	60	19	11	3	4	1
September, 1996	75	44	14	5	2	2	1
April, 1996	81	48	21	6	2	3	1
February, 1996	85	56	21	5	2	1	1
November, 1992 (RVs)	82	57	12	9	n/a	6	1
September, 1992	83	49	13	5	n/a	4	1
June, 1992	84	55	18	7	n/a	4	*
May, 1992	86	51	17	6	n/a	3	1
March, 1992	83	48	14	4	n/a	3	*
February, 1992	80	49	18	4	n/a	3	1

IF '1' TELEVISION AS EITHER 1ST OR 2ND RESPONSE IN Q.5 ASK:

Q.6 On television, do you get most of your campaign news from [READ AND RANDOMIZE. ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL]

BASED ON TOTAL:

- 19 Local news programming
- 26 Network news, like ABC, CBS and NBC
- 22 CNN cable news
- 10 MSNBC cable news
- 18 The Fox News cable channel
- 1 Other (VOL-DO NOT READ)
- 1 DK/Ref. (VOL-DO NOT READ)

1 November trends are from the Pew Internet & American Life Project.

Thinking about the presidential campaign...

Q.6A Would you say the press has been too easy, too tough or fair in the way it has covered [INSERT NAME; RANDOMIZE]?

		<u>Too easy</u>	<u>Too tough</u>	<u>Fair</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a.	Hillary Clinton	21	17	55	7=100
	February 29-March 3, 2008	19	18	58	5=100
	February 1-4, 2008	24	20	48	8=100
b.	Barack Obama	23	15	55	7=100
	February 29-March 3, 2008	28	8	58	6=100
	February 1-4, 2008	23	8	61	8=100
c.	John McCain	18	9	62	11=100
	February 29-March 3, 2008	14	14	64	8=100
	February 1-4, 2008	14	9	63	14=100

Q.7 How much if anything have you heard about each of the following? Have you heard a lot, a little or nothing at all? [READ ITEMS. ROTATE ALL BUT ITEM e.]

		<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a.	Barack Obama's recent speech about race and politics	54	31	15	*=100
	NO ITEM b.				
c.	John McCain's recent trip to Iraq and the Middle East	22	49	28	1=100
d.	John McCain incorrectly suggesting that Iran is supplying weapons to Al Qaeda	17	39	43	1=100
e.	Videos of sermons by Reverend Jeremiah Wright, the former pastor of Barack Obama's church in Chicago	51	28	21	*=100
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
	March 14-17, 2008: Videos of the pastor of Barack Obama's church in Chicago preaching to the congregation	31	36	33	*=100

IF Q.7e=1,2 ASK (ALL OTHERS SKIP TO Q.11) [N=782]:

Q.8 Have you seen any video of these sermons or not? [IF YES, ASK: Where have you seen the videos: on television, on the internet or both?]

BASED ON TOTAL:

37	Yes, on television
2	Yes, on internet
10	Yes, Both
0	Other (VOL.)
29	No, haven't seen videos
0	Don't know/Refused
<u>22</u>	Haven't heard about sermons
100	

NO QUESTIONS 9-10.

IF Q.7a=1,2 ASK: [N=830]

Q.11 You mentioned that you heard something about Barack Obama's speech about race and politics. Did you actually watch his speech, or did you just hear or see reports about it in the news? **[IF YES, ASK]:** Did you watch the speech on television or on the Internet?

BASED ON TOTAL:

39	Watched on television
7	Watched on the internet
3	Watched Both [VOL. DO NOT READ]
2	Other [SPECIFY]
33	Just heard or saw reports about the speech
*	Don't know/refused
<u>16</u>	Haven't heard about Obama's speech
100	