



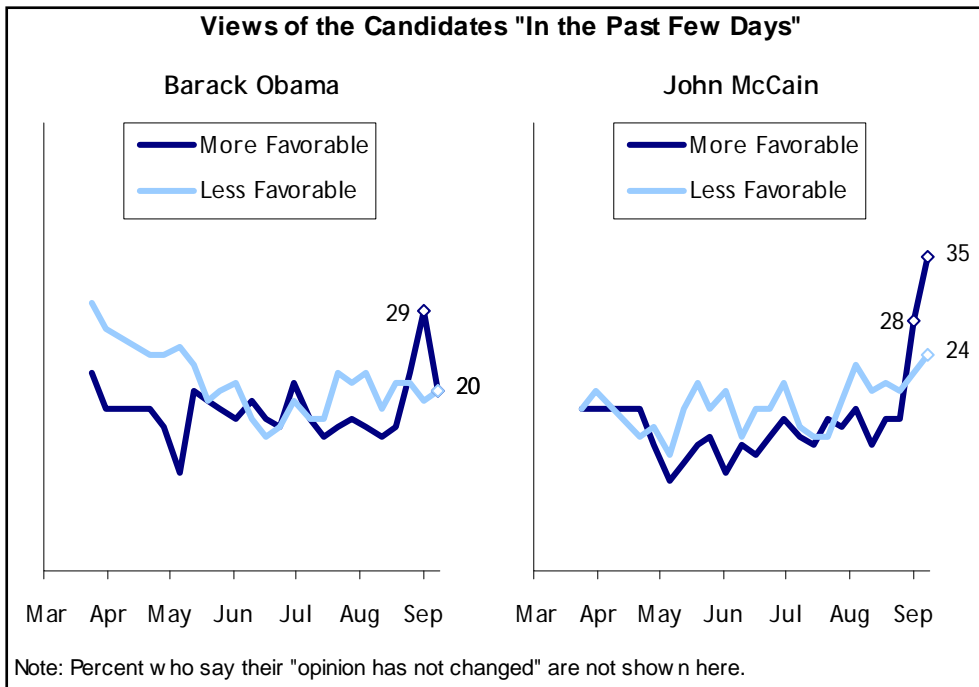
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Palin Press Coverage: Fair and Important
McCAIN'S IMAGE IMPROVES - WITH BIG ASSIST FROM PALIN

The American public paid a lot of attention to the presidential campaign last week as the Republican Party took center stage. More than half watched at least some television coverage of the Republican convention in St. Paul, and the speech by GOP vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin stands out as the highlight of the event. And perhaps as a consequence, by the end of the week, John McCain's image had improved significantly.

In a poll conducted September 5-8, 35% say their opinion of McCain has become more favorable in recent days, while 24% say their opinion of the Republican nominee has become less favorable. This marks the second week in a row where changing opinions of McCain have been more positive than negative. For her part, Palin appears to have helped boost McCain's image, and her convention speech drew a highly favorable response. However, only a narrow majority (52%) says she is qualified to serve as president, while 39% say she is not qualified.



McCain's image has improved primarily among Republicans, 65% of whom say their opinion of the GOP presidential nominee has become more favorable in recent days. While McCain's big week moved Republicans' opinions, there was little change in the views of Democrats and independents.

	Aug 29-31		Sept 5-8		Change in % More
	More Fav %	Less Fav %	More Fav %	Less Fav %	
Total	28	22	35	24	+7
Republicans	53	8	65	6	+12
Democrats	10	37	16	43	+6
Independents	27	20	29	23	+2
Men	32	23	33	28	+1
Women	24	21	37	21	+13

Question: In the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of _____, a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of him changed lately?

McCain's image also improved among women. Nearly four-in-ten (37%) women say their opinion of McCain has become more favorable in recent days – up from 24% the previous week. Among men, 33% say their view of McCain has improved in recent days; this compares with 32% who said the same the previous week.

Obama's image was largely unchanged last week. While 20% say they have come to have a more favorable opinion of him in recent days, an identical percentage says their opinion is less favorable; most people (59%) say their opinion of Obama has not changed. A week earlier, just after the Democratic convention, 29% said their opinion of Obama had improved recently compared with 19% who said their view of him had become less favorable.

Lukewarm Reaction to McCain's Speech

While his image was clearly boosted in the wake of the GOP convention, there is little public enthusiasm about McCain's convention speech. Among those who were able to rate the speech, only 19% thought it was excellent, another 43% said it was good, and 38% judged it only fair or poor. Even most Republicans who saw McCain's speech were hesitant to rate it as excellent. Most rated it good (50%) or only fair (16%).

Ratings of convention speeches:	Obama %	Palin %	McCain %
Excellent	48	45	19
Good	35	31	43
Only fair	13	16	27
Poor	4	8	11
	100	100	100

* Based on those who watched at least a little of each convention and expressed an opinion about the speeches.

Barack Obama's convention speech was much better received by the public. Among those who could rate Obama's speech, 48% rated it as excellent and another 35% thought it was good. Just 17% said it was only fair or poor. Fully 66% of Democrats thought Obama's speech was excellent.

Reactions to Sarah Palin’s acceptance speech were far more positive than reactions to McCain’s speech and comparable with the response to Obama’s speech. Overall, 45% of those who could rate Palin’s speech said it was excellent, while another 31% said it was good.

Republicans were extremely enthusiastic about Palin’s convention speech. About eight-in-ten Republicans (81%) who saw the speech rated it excellent. The Alaska governor’s speech was also well received by independents. A solid majority of independents who could rate Palin’s speech said it was either excellent or good (75%), while only 25% said it was fair or poor. However, only 55% of Democrats gave the speech an excellent or good rating.

Palin’s Qualifications

A narrow majority of Americans (52%) say Sarah Palin is qualified to serve as president if it becomes necessary; 39% say she is not qualified and 9% are undecided. Republicans overwhelmingly believe Palin is qualified (84%); by contrast, two-thirds of Democrats (66%) say she is not qualified. By a modest margin (49% to 40%), independents say Palin is qualified to serve as president if necessary.

Qualified to Serve as President?				
	Aug 1988*		Aug 2008	
	Quayle	Bentsen	Palin	Biden
Yes	41	62	52	66
No	40	16	39	22
Don’t know	19	22	9	12
	100	100	100	100

* Based on registered voters.

Substantially more people say Democratic vice presidential nominee Joe Biden is qualified to serve as president than say the same about Palin (66% vs. 52%). Large majorities of Democrats (82%) and independents (64%) say Biden is qualified to be president, as do 51% of Republicans.

Twenty years ago, voters were evenly divided over whether GOP vice presidential nominee Dan Quayle was qualified to step in as president. Shortly after George H.W. Bush announced that Quayle would be his running mate, just 41% of the public thought Quayle was qualified to serve as president, just as many (40%) said he was not qualified. Quayle was judged even more harshly in the weeks following his nomination. Quayle’s rival, Democratic vice presidential nominee Lloyd Bentsen, was widely viewed as qualified to serve as president.

There is no gender gap in views about Palin’s readiness to be president; men and women are equally likely to say she is qualified to serve if necessary. Opinions do differ, however, according to level of education. While just 49% of those who attended college say Palin is qualified to serve as president, as many as 59% of those with less education think she could step into the job if necessary. Just the opposite is true for Joe Biden: college graduates are among the most likely to think the Delaware senator is prepared to be president.

GOP Convention Highlights

Palin’s acceptance speech – and her presence on the GOP ticket – were clearly the highlights of the GOP convention. Among those who watched at least a little of the convention coverage, fully half cited Palin’s speech as the convention highlight, while an additional 5% cited either the presence of a woman on a major party ticket (4%) or the selection of Palin as the vice presidential nominee (1%). Nearly three times as many people cited Palin’s speech as the GOP convention highlight as cited McCain’s address (50% vs. 17%). A week earlier, 38% cited Obama’s speech as the highlight of the Democratic convention.

An overwhelming majority of Republicans who watched at least a little of the convention coverage (70%) named Palin’s speech as the GOP convention highlight, compared with just 15% who cited McCain’s speech. Slightly more than a third of Democrats (35%) also said Palin’s speech was the convention highlight; about a quarter of Democrats (26%) said there was no GOP convention highlight. Women were more likely than men to say that Palin’s speech was the convention’s highlight (56% vs. 43%).

Public’s Convention Highlights			
<i>Republican convention</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Democratic convention</i>	<i>%</i>
Sarah Palin’s speech	50	Barack Obama’s speech	38
John McCain’s speech	17	Hillary Clinton’s speech	16
Woman on major party ticket	4	Bill Clinton’s speech	7
Rudy Guillian’s speech	2	Michelle Obama’s speech	6
Fred Thompson’s speech	2	That it’s over/the end	3
Cindy McCain’s speech	1	Joe Biden’s speech	3
That it’s over/the end	1	Ted Kennedy’s speech	3
Joe Lieberman’s speech	1	Democrats unify for Obama	1
Selection of Palin as VP	1	The turnout/public attention	1
Other	5	Seeing black nominated	1
There was no highlight	18	Other	6
Don’t know/Refused	5	There was no highlight	16
		Don’t know/Refused	10

Open-ended question based on those who watched at least a little convention coverage. Figures add to more than 100% because multiple responses permitted.

Convention Viewership

A solid majority of the public (56%) say they watched all or most (23%) of the Republican convention or some of the coverage (33%). A week earlier, somewhat fewer (46%) said they watched at least some of the Democratic convention.

Roughly half of Democrats (49%) say they watched at least some of the GOP convention. That compares with just 30% of Republicans who watched at least some of the Democratic convention.

For their part, Republican enthusiasm for the GOP convention may have grown over the past several weeks. In a Pew survey last month, fewer Republicans than Democrats said they were very interested in watching their party's convention

(39% vs. 51%). However, when the conventions aired, Republicans were just as likely as Democrats to say they watched at least some of the coverage of their party's convention (69% of Republicans vs. 67% of Democrats). See ["Strong Advance Interest in Democratic Convention,"](#) August 21, 2008.

<i>How much of the Rep convention did you watch?</i>	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
All or most	23	35	16	19
Some of it	33	34	33	33
Just a little	23	15	28	24
None of it	21	16	23	24
Don't know	* 100	* 100	0 100	0 100

<i>How much of the Dem convention did you watch?</i>	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
All or most	22	12	40	13
Some of it	24	18	27	25
Just a little	25	34	19	26
None of it	29	36	14	36
Don't know	* 100	0 100	0 100	0 100

Getting to Know Sarah Palin

News about Sarah Palin dominated campaign news coverage last week. According to Pew's Project for Excellence in Journalism, Palin was featured prominently in 60% of campaign stories. Palin garnered more media coverage than McCain, who was featured in 52% of campaign stories, and much more than Obama and Biden combined (24%). The media's focus

<i>How much have you heard about...</i>	A lot %	A little %	Nothing at all %	DK %
Palin's pregnant daughter	69	21	9	1=100
Palin's record on reform and gov't spending as governor	35	48	17	*=100
Questions about vetting process	33	43	23	1=100
Trooper investigation	30	41	28	1=100

on the GOP ticket made McCain the most visible presidential candidate for the first time since Pew's Weekly News Interest began tracking candidate visibility in March of this year.

Beyond focusing on the historic nature of Palin's selection to be McCain's running mate, much of the media's coverage dealt with Palin's background – both personal and professional. The public picked up on various storylines to differing degrees. News that Palin's 17 year-old-daughter is pregnant registered widely with the public. Nearly seven-in-ten (69%) say they heard a lot about Palin's daughter, making the story one of the year's top campaign events. More people say they heard a lot about Palin's pregnant daughter than about speeches by Rev. Jeremiah Wright, Obama's former pastor, in May (62%).

Only about half as many Americans heard a lot about Palin's record on reform and government spending as governor of Alaska as heard about her pregnant daughter: 35% heard a lot about this and another 48% heard a little. Republicans were much more likely than Democrats to have heard a lot about this aspect of Palin's background (45% vs. 31%).

A third of the public has heard a lot about questions regarding how well the McCain campaign reviewed Palin's background before selecting her as the vice presidential nominee; 43% have heard a little about this. Only three-in-ten have heard a lot about the investigation into whether Palin used her influence as governor to attempt to have her ex-brother-in-law removed from the state police force. Fully 28% have heard nothing at all about this.

Views of Palin Coverage

McCain's surprise pick of Palin dramatically shifted the focus of the media to this largely unknown newcomer to the national stage. The public is closely divided over whether the amount of coverage of Palin's background has been appropriate, and over whether the coverage has been fair or unfair.

Nearly half of Americans (47%) say news organizations are devoting about the right amount of coverage to Palin's background, while 43% say news organizations are giving this story too much coverage; just 7% say Palin's background has received too little coverage.

Half say that news coverage of Palin has been fair while slightly fewer (46%) say it has been unfair. Notably, public opinion about the amount and quality of news coverage of Palin is

	Aug 1988 Quayle	Aug 2008 Palin
<i>Amount of coverage*...</i>	%	%
Too much	69	43
Too little	2	7
Right amount	26	47
DK	3	3
	100	100
<i>Coverage has been...</i>		
Fair	39	50
Unfair	55	46
DK	6	4
	100	100
<i>Important to learn about candidates' background**?</i>		
Important to learn	56	70
Not related to ability to serve	38	27
DK	6	3
	100	100

* Respondents asked about "reporting of Sarah Palin's background;" "reporting of Dan Quayle's past."
 ** "Details of Sarah Palin's background;" "details of Dan Quayle's past."

more positive than it was for coverage of Quayle in August 1988. Shortly after Bush named Dan Quayle as his running mate, questions were raised about his level of experience and his service in the National Guard during the Vietnam War. In August 1988, about two-thirds (69%) thought news organizations were giving too much coverage to issues surrounding Quayle's past, while 26% said they thought the amount of coverage had been about right. A majority (55%) said news organizations had been unfair in their coverage of Quayle, while 39% said they had been fair.

In general, most Americans (70%) say it is important to learn about the details of Palin's background so they can judge whether she would be a good vice president. In Quayle's case, far fewer (56%) said it was important to learn about his past in order to judge whether he would make a good vice president.

There is a stark partisan divide in views about the fairness of press coverage of Palin. By 65% to 30%, Republicans believe that news organizations have been unfair in their coverage of Palin. Democrats, by nearly an identical margin (66% to 30%), say the coverage has been fair. Roughly half of independents (51%) see the coverage as fair, while 44% see it as unfair.

But there are only slight partisan differences in opinions about the amount of coverage of Palin's background. And comparably large majorities of Democrats (72%), independents (70%) and Republicans (70%) say it is important to learn about Palin's background in order to judge whether she would be a good vice president.

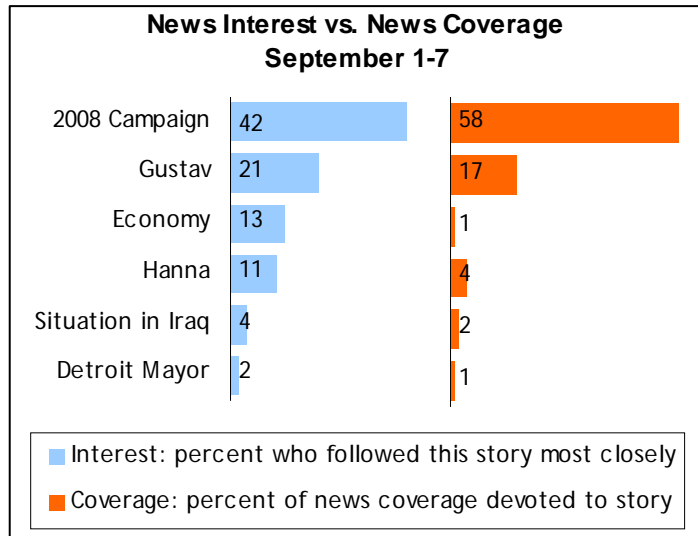
Men are about as likely as women to say that coverage of Palin has been fair (52% vs. 48%). There are no major gender differences in views of the amount of coverage or whether it is important to learn details about her background.

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 were collected from September 1-7 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected September 5-8 from a nationally representative sample of 1,004 adults.

News Interest Index

News about the 2008 presidential campaign topped the public's interest and the media's agenda last week. More than four-in-ten (42%) Americans cited the campaign as the story they were following most closely during a week in which the media devoted 58% of all news coverage to campaign stories.

Hurricane Gustav and to a lesser extent Tropical Storm Hanna were also big stories last week. One-in-five (21%) cited Gustav as their top story while one-in-ten (11%) were most interested in news about Hanna. Gustav accounted for 17% of the newshole and Hanna another 4%.



In other news last week, the economy continued to capture public interest with 44% of the public following economic news very closely and 13% calling it their most closely followed story. News about the Iraq war attracted the very close attention of one-four (24%) and the resignation of Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick was followed very closely by 10% of the public.

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 seven 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:

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Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
SEPTEMBER 5-8, 2008 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1,004

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]

	<u>Barack Obama</u>	<u>John McCain</u>	<u>Other¹</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
September 5-8, 2008	28	54	12	6=100
August 29-31, 2008	81	11	2	6=100
August 22-25, 2008	77	11	3	9=100
August 15-18, 2008	62	19	4	15=100
August 8-11, 2008	69	15	5	11=100
August 1-4, 2008	76	11	4	9=100
July 25-28, 2008	77	9	3	11=100
July 18-21, 2008	76	10	2	12=100
July 11-14, 2008	72	10	5	13=100
July 3-7, 2008	71	11	3	15=100
June 27-30, 2008	75	10	5	10=100
June 20-23, 2008	74	12	4	10=100
June 13-16, 2008	69	12	7	12=100
June 6-9, 2008	67	2	23	8=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	54	5	28	13=100
May 22-25, 2008	51	8	29	12=100
May 16-19, 2008	59	4	27	10=100
May 9-12, 2008	52	2	38	8=100
May 2-5, 2008	57	2	31	10=100
April 25-28, 2008	46	3	39	12=100
April 18-21, 2008	55	4	29	12=100
April 11-14, 2008	51	8	26	15=100
April 4-7, 2008	45	6	35	14=100
March 28-31, 2008	53	4	32	11=100
March 20-24, 2008	70	3	16	11=100
March 14-17, 2008	57	4	28	11=100
March 7-10, 2008	38	6	41	15=100

Q.2 Please think about each of the following presidential candidates [INSERT NAME. ROTATE]. In the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of him, a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of him changed lately?

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not changed</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a. Barack Obama	20	20	59	1=100
August 29-31, 2008	29	19	50	2=100
August 22-25, 2008	22	21	54	3=100
August 15-18, 2008	16	21	60	3=100
August 8-11, 2008	15	18	64	3=100
August 1-4, 2008	16	22	60	2=100
July 25-28, 2008	17	21	59	3=100
July 18-21, 2008	16	22	60	2=100
July 11-14, 2008	15	17	64	4=100

¹ For September 5-8, "Other" includes 10% who volunteered Sarah Palin. In previous weeks, "Other" includes responses for Hillary Clinton.

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	More <u>Favorable</u>	Less <u>Favorable</u>	Opinion has <u>Not change</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
July 3-7, 2008	17	17	62	4=100
June 27-30, 2008	21	19	56	4=100
June 20-23, 2008	16	16	66	2=100
June 13-16, 2008	17	15	64	4=100
June 6-9, 2008	19	17	61	3=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	17	21	58	4=100
May 22-25, 2008	18	20	60	2=100
May 16-19, 2008	19	19	59	3=100
May 9-12, 2008	20	23	55	2=100
May 2-5, 2008	11	25	59	5=100
April 25-28, 2008	16	24	58	2=100
April 18-21, 2008	18	24	54	4=100
March 28-31, 2008	18	27	52	3=100
March 20-24, 2008	22	30	46	2=100
b. John McCain				
August 29-31, 2008	35	24	40	1=100
August 22-25, 2008	28	22	47	3=100
August 15-18, 2008	17	20	60	3=100
August 8-11, 2008	17	21	59	3=100
August 1-4, 2008	14	20	63	3=100
July 25-28, 2008	18	23	57	2=100
July 18-21, 2008	16	19	62	3=100
July 11-14, 2008	17	15	65	3=100
July 3-7, 2008	14	15	66	5=100
July 3-7, 2008	15	16	64	5=100
June 27-30, 2008	17	21	58	4=100
June 20-23, 2008	15	18	65	2=100
June 13-16, 2008	13	18	66	3=100
June 6-9, 2008	14	15	65	6=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	11	20	64	5=100
May 22-25, 2008	15	18	63	4=100
May 16-19, 2008	14	21	62	3=100
May 9-12, 2008	12	18	67	3=100
May 2-5, 2008	10	13	71	6=100
April 25-28, 2008	14	16	65	5=100
April 18-21, 2008	18	15	61	6=100
March 28-31, 2008	18	20	57	5=100
March 20-24, 2008	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 impact of Hurricane Gustav on the Gulf Coast	42	35	17	6	*=100
August 29-31, 2008	33	30	23	14	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
July 25-28, 2008: <i>Dolly (Texas coast)</i>	19	29	29	23	*=100
November 2-5, 2007: <i>Noel (Bahamas and Cuba)</i>	11	22	31	35	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>
September 7-10, 2007: <i>Felix and Henriette</i> (Mexico and Central America)	14	29	29	27	1=100
August 24-27, 2007: <i>Dean</i> (Mexico and Caribbean)	18	39	24	18	1=100
November, 2005: <i>Wilma</i> (Mexico and Florida)	34	37	21	8	*=100
September, 2005: <i>Katrina</i> (New Orleans and Gulf Coast)	70	21	7	2	*=100
July, 2005: <i>Recent hurricanes</i> (Gulf coast)	38	37	17	8	*=100
September, 2003: <i>Isabel</i>	47	28	15	10	*=100
Early October, 2002: <i>Recent hurricanes</i> (Gulf of Mexico and Louisiana)	38	34	18	10	*=100

b. Reports about the condition of the U.S.
economy

August 29-31, 2008	44	33	16	7	*=100
August 15-18, 2008	41	34	13	11	1=100
August 8-11, 2008	39	36	15	10	*=100
August 1-4, 2008	39	35	16	10	*=100
July 25-28, 2008	47	34	11	8	0=100
July 18-21, 2008	46	32	10	12	*=100
July 11-14, 2008	45	33	13	9	*=100
July 4-7, 2008	44	33	12	10	1=100
June 27-30, 2008	49	31	12	7	1=100
June 13-16, 2008	42	33	14	11	*=100
May 9-12, 2008	45	31	13	11	*=100
May 2-5, 2008	43	31	15	10	1=100
April 18-21, 2008	41	35	13	10	1=100
April 4-7, 2008	39	37	12	12	*=100
March 28-31, 2008	42	36	14	8	*=100
March 20-24, 2008	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

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>
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
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
c. The current situation and events in Iraq	24	37	26	13	*=100
August 29-31, 2008	22	32	29	16	1=100
August 22-25, 2008	26	31	27	15	1=100
August 1-4, 2008	27	40	23	10	*=100
July 25-28, 2008	28	33	22	17	*=100
July 18-21, 2008	33	35	20	12	*=100
July 11-14, 2008	24	35	24	16	1=100
July 3-7, 2008	25	35	25	15	*=100
June 20-23, 2008	25	36	24	15	*=100
May 9-12, 2008	29	35	21	14	1=100
May 2-5, 2008	26	35	25	13	1=100
April 25-28, 2008	29	35	23	12	1=100
April 18-21, 2008	29	39	20	11	1=100
April 11-14, 2008	25	39	20	15	1=100
April 4-7, 2008	25	37	23	15	*=100
March 28-31, 2008	29	40	19	11	1=100
March 20-24, 2008	30	38	19	13	*=100
March 14-17, 2008	29	38	23	10	*=100
March 7-10, 2008	28	39	18	15	*=100

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>
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
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 23-March 26, 2007 ²	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

² From May, 2003 to March 23-26, 2007, the story was listed as “News about the current situation in Iraq.”

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>
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
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

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."

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>
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. Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick resigning from office and pleading guilty to criminal charges	10	22	27	41	*=100
March 28-31, 2008⁶	6	17	28	48	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:⁷					
February, 1990: Marion Barry arrest	28	40	19	13	0=100
e. Tropical storm Hanna ⁸	34	37	19	10	0=100
f. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election	45	39	12	4	*=100
August 29-31, 2008	45	32	15	8	*=100
August 22-25, 2008	31	36	22	11	*=100
August 15-18, 2008	25	41	19	14	1=100
August 8-11, 2008	27	38	22	13	*=100
August 1-4, 2008	30	42	19	9	*=100
July 25-28, 2008	30	34	21	15	*=100
July 18-21, 2008	30	35	21	14	*=100
July 11-14, 2008	28	34	22	15	1=100
July 3-7, 2008	25	35	23	17	*=100
June 27-30, 2008	39	33	18	10	*=100
June 20-23, 2008	28	38	22	12	*=100
June 13-16, 2008	35	35	20	10	*=100
June 6-9, 2008	38	35	17	10	*=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	30	35	21	14	*=100
May 22-25, 2008	32	37	20	11	*=100
May 16-19, 2008	33	37	19	10	1=100
May 9-12, 2008	35	36	18	11	*=100
May 2-5, 2008	27	35	23	14	1=100
April 25-28, 2008	34	37	18	11	*=100
April 18-21, 2008	29	41	19	10	1=100
April 11-14, 2008	31	37	22	10	*=100
April 4-7, 2008	33	36	17	14	*=100
March 28-31, 2008	31	41	18	10	*=100
March 20-24, 2008	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

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

⁶ For March 28-31, 2008, the story was listed as "Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick's legal troubles."

⁷ February, 1990 asked about: "The arrest of Washington's Mayor Barry on drug use charges."

⁸ For trend on Gustav and other hurricanes, see Q.3a.

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>
January 18-21, 2008	36	34	18	12	*=100
January 11-14, 2008 ⁹	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
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, 2007 ¹⁰	24	27	22	26	1=100

⁹ January 11-14, 2008 asked about: “News about the New Hampshire primaries and the presidential campaign.”

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>
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 ¹¹	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
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

¹⁰ January 19-22, 2007 asked about: "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

¹¹ 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...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
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.]**

- 42 News about the candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 21 The impact of Hurricane Gustav on the Gulf Coast
- 13 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 11 Tropical storm Hanna
- 4 The current situation and events in Iraq
- 4 Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick resigning from office and pleading guilty to criminal charges
- 2 Some other story (SPECIFY)
- 3 Don't know/Refused
- 4
- 100

Q.5 Thinking about the Republican convention in St. Paul, how much of the television coverage of the convention did you watch? Did you watch all or most of the coverage, some of it, just a little, or none of it?

	<u>Democratic Convention</u>
23 All or most	22
33 Some of it	24
23 Just a little	25
21 None of it	29
* Don't know/Refused	*
100	100

ASK Q.6 THROUGH Q.8 ONLY OF THOSE WHO WATCHED AT LEAST A LITTLE CONVENTION COVERAGE (Q.5=1-3) [N=804]:

Q.6 For you, what was the highlight of the Republican convention? [OPEN-END; ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES BUT DO NOT PROBE.]

- 50 Sarah Palin's speech
- 17 John McCain's speech
- 4 Seeing a woman on a major party ticket
- 2 Rudy Guiliani's speech
- 2 Fred Thompson's speech
- 1 Cindy McCain's speech
- 1 That it's over/the end
- 1 Joe Lieberman's speech
- 1 Selection of Sarah Palin as the vice presidential nominee
- 5 Other (SPECIFY)
- 18 There was no highlight
- 5 Don't know/Refused

Q.7 How would you rate John McCain's speech at the convention? Would you say it was excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

		<i>Obama's speech</i>
16	Excellent	42
36	Good	31
23	Only fair	11
9	Poor	3
15	Did not see speech (VOL. DO NOT READ)	12
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>
100		100

Q.8 How would you rate vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin's speech at the convention? Would you say it was excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

- 41 Excellent
- 28 Good
- 14 Only fair
- 8 Poor
- 8 Did not see speech (VOL. DO NOT READ)
- 1 Don't know/Refused
- 100

**ASK ALL:
ROTATE Q.9 AND Q.10**

Q.9 Based on what you know about the Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin, do you think she is qualified to serve as PRESIDENT if it becomes necessary, or not?

		<i>Dan Quayle</i>	
		<i>-RVs-</i>	<i>-RVs-</i>
		Sept	Aug
		<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>
52	Yes, qualified	34	41
39	No, not qualified	47	40
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>19</u>	<u>19</u>
100		100	100

Q.10 Based on what you know about the Democratic vice presidential nominee Joe Biden, do you think he is qualified to serve as PRESIDENT if it becomes necessary, or not?

		<i>Lloyd Bentsen</i>	
		<i>-RVs-</i>	<i>-RVs-</i>
		Sept	Aug
		<u>1988</u>	<u>1988</u>
66	Yes, qualified	68	62
22	No, not qualified	16	16
<u>12</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>16</u>	<u>22</u>
100		100	100

Q.11 Thinking back over the last week and the reporting of Sarah Palin's background, do you think news organizations have given this story too much coverage, too little coverage, or about the right amount?

		<i>Dan Quayle</i>	
		<u>Aug 1988¹²</u>	
43	Too much coverage		69
7	Too little coverage		2
47	About the right amount		26
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused		<u>3</u>
100			100

Q.12 Do you think news organizations have been fair or unfair to Sarah Palin in their coverage of her?

		<i>Dan Quayle</i>	
		<u>Aug 1988</u>	
50	Fair		39
46	Unfair		55
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused		<u>6</u>
100			100

Q.13 Apart from the WAY news organizations are reporting the story, do you think it is important that voters learn about the details of Sarah Palin's background in order to judge whether she would be a good vice president, or do you think the details of her background are not related to her ability to serve as vice president?

		<i>Dan Quayle</i>	
		<u>Aug 1988¹³</u>	
70	Important to learn about Palin		56
27	Not related to her ability to serve		38
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused		<u>6</u>
100			100

¹² In August 1988 the question was worded: "Thinking back over the last week and the reporting of Dan Quayle's past, do you think news organizations have...?"

¹³ In August 1988, the question was worded: "Apart from the WAY news organizations are reporting the story, do you think it is important that voters learn about the details of Dan Quayle's past in order to judge whether he would be a good vice president...?"

Now I'm going to ask you about a few specific aspects of Sarah Palin's background...

Q.14 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 ITEMS]**

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. News that Sarah Palin's 17 year-old daughter is pregnant	69	21	9	1=100
b. The investigation into whether Sarah Palin used her influence to attempt to remove her ex-brother-in-law from the state police force	30	41	28	1=100
c. Sarah Palin's record on reform and government spending as Governor of Alaska	35	48	17	*=100
d. Questions about how well the McCain campaign reviewed Sarah Palin's background before selecting her as the vice presidential nominee	33	43	23	1=100