



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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Positive Ratings for Coverage of Financial Crisis
MANY SAY PRESS HAS BEEN TOO TOUGH ON PALIN

Strong majorities of the public say the press has been fair to John McCain, Barack Obama and Joe Biden. But fewer than four-in-ten (38%) say the press has been fair to Sarah Palin. Many more believe the press has been too tough on Palin (38%) than say it has been too easy (21%).

While opinions about Palin coverage are highly partisan, many independents share the view that the press has been too tough on the Alaska governor. Among independents, 41% say the press has been too hard on Palin, 20% say the press has been too easy and 36% say the press has been fair. Republicans overwhelmingly believe the press has been too hard on Palin (63%). Just 7% say the press has been too easy on her. Nearly one-in-five Democrats (18%) agree that coverage of Palin has been too tough.

Press Coverage of the Candidates				
<i>Press coverage of _____ has been...</i>	Total %	Rep %	Dem %	Ind %
John McCain				
Too easy	15	6	22	15
Too tough	23	44	10	21
Fair	60	48	66	61
Don't know	2	2	2	3
	100	100	100	100
Barack Obama				
Too easy	31	55	9	36
Too tough	7	4	9	8
Fair	60	39	81	55
Don't know	2	2	1	1
	100	100	100	100
Sarah Palin				
Too easy	21	7	32	20
Too tough	38	63	18	41
Fair	38	27	47	36
Don't know	3	3	3	3
	100	100	100	100
Joe Biden				
Too easy	23	33	12	26
Too tough	5	4	7	6
Fair	66	58	75	61
Don't know	6	5	6	7
	100	100	100	100

Republicans are not as critical of press coverage of McCain. About half (48%) say the press has been fair to the Arizona senator, while 44% say the press has been too tough and 6% say too easy. Among the general public, six-in-ten say coverage of McCain has been fair.

While most Americans (60%) say coverage of Obama has been fair, many more say it has been too easy than too tough (31% vs. 7%). Democrats overwhelmingly believe their candidate

has been treated fairly (81%). Among Republicans, 55% say the press has been too easy on Obama. Only 39% of Republicans say coverage of the Democratic nominee has been fair. Independents are somewhat less critical of the Obama coverage. On balance, though, independents share the view that the press has been too easy on Obama (36% too easy vs. 8% too tough). Two-thirds of the public says the press has been fair in its coverage of Joe Biden. Among those who see an imbalance, more say the press has been too easy on the Delaware senator.

Public Glued to Campaign News

Public interest in news about the presidential campaign reached a new high last week, though the national news was dominated by coverage of the faltering economy. Fully 57% of the public followed news about the election very closely and another 31% followed developments fairly closely.

	Very <u>Closely</u> %	Fairly <u>closely</u> %	Not too <u>closely</u> %	Not at all <u>closely</u> %	Don't <u>know</u> %
Oct. 3-6, 2008	61	29	7	3	*=100
<i>Election weekend:</i>					
2004	52	36	8	4	*=100
2000	39	44	12	5	*=100
1996	34	45	15	6	*=100
Based on registered voters					

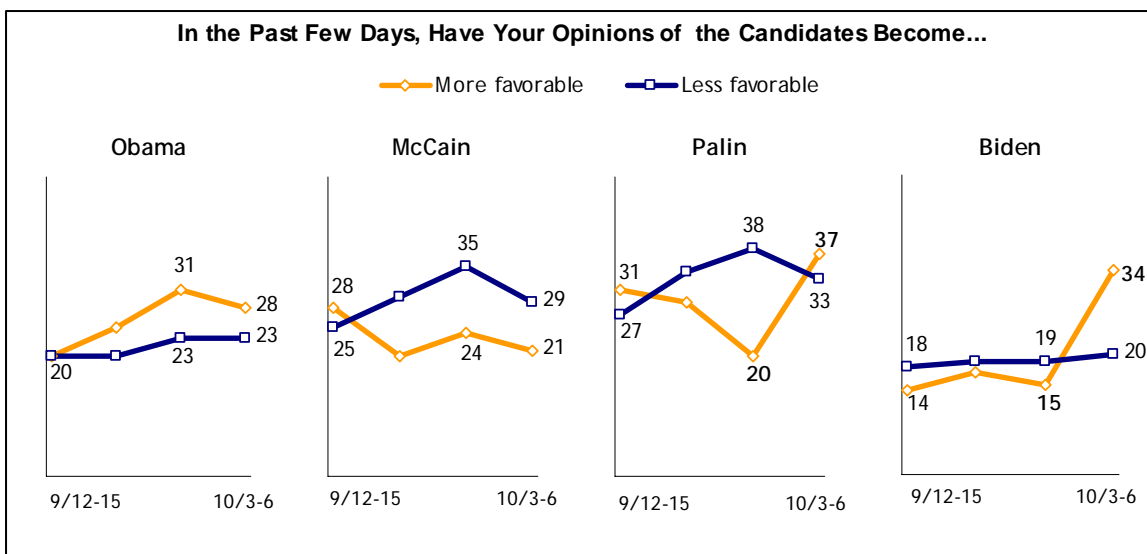
About a month before Election Day, interest in campaign news is higher now than it has been in previous years in the final days before the election. Among registered voters, 61% say they are following campaign news very closely. On election weekend in 2004, 52% of voters were following campaign news very closely the weekend before the election, traditionally the high point of campaign interest. At the end of the 2000 campaign, only 39% of voters were following campaign news very closely in the days leading up to the election.

Fueling the intense interest was the highly anticipated vice presidential debate. Fully 76% of voters say they watched at least part of the debate on television – more than half (53%) say they watched the entire debate and 23% said they watched some of it. That includes roughly equal proportions of Republicans, Democrats and independents. More voters say they watched Palin and Biden debate than watched the first presidential debate the previous week. A poll conducted the weekend of September 27-29 found that 70% watched some or all of the first presidential debate.

The latest Pew Weekly *News Interest Index* survey, conducted Oct. 3-6, shows that the images of both vice presidential candidates improved following the debate. Some 37% say their opinion of Palin has become more favorable in recent days, while 33% say it has become less favorable. Only 27% say their opinion of Palin hasn't changed in recent days. The previous week, changing opinion about Palin was much more negative than positive: 38% said their view

of Palin had become less favorable recently and only 20% said their view had become more favorable. Palin mainly won over Republicans and independents. Among independents, 39% say their opinion of McCain’s running mate has become more favorable recently.

Opinions about Biden, which had been stable in previous weeks, have shifted considerably. More than half of the public (54%) say their views of Biden have changed in recent days. Among that group, the balance is decidedly positive. Roughly a third (34%) say their opinion of Biden has become more favorable in recent days, while 20% say their view of him has become less favorable.



Views of the presidential candidates also fluctuated last week. On balance, changing views of Obama were more positive (28% more favorable vs. 23% less favorable), while changing views of McCain were more negative (29% less favorable vs. 21% more favorable).

Economic News Dominates Public Interest and Media Coverage

The public paid close attention last week to news about the worsening financial crisis and the fate of an economic bailout package in Congress. For the second time in as many weeks, seven-in-ten Americans (69%) reported following news about the condition of the U.S. economy very closely. That strong interest also continued to be bipartisan, attracting the very close attention from roughly equal percentages of Republicans, Democrats and independents.

The intense congressional debate over legislation to use federal funds to stabilize financial markets – which was signed into law last Friday by President Bush – attracted the very close attention of 62% of the public. Americans followed the debate over the financial rescue plan slightly more closely than they followed the presidential campaign (57% very closely).

For the media, economic news was the most heavily covered news item last week and among the biggest stories of the last year and a half. The financial crisis received 45% of the national newshole, according to the *News Coverage Index* prepared by the Pew Research Center's Project for Excellence in Journalism. That made it the most heavily covered non-campaign story since the Virginia Tech shootings in April, 2007.

Reactions to Financial Coverage

The public gives the media relatively good ratings for its coverage of the complicated financial crisis and government efforts to address it. A solid majority (58%) says the press has done an excellent (17%) or good (41%) job in covering recent economic news. Four-in-ten say the press has done only a fair (25%) or poor job (15%).

Moreover, a solid majority of Americans say that the press struck the right balance in how much attention it devoted to the economy. Six-in-

ten (61%) say the story got the right amount of coverage, while 23% say the story received too little coverage. Only 14% say the story has received too much coverage.

While views of media coverage of the financial crisis are more positive than negative, opinions about how the press has covered the government rescue plan are more evenly divided. When asked about media coverage of the government's plan to invest billions to try to keep financial institutions and markets secure, Americans are split between saying the press handled the story about right (44%) and saying it failed to be critical enough in its reporting (42%). Just one-in-ten say that the press was too critical in how it reported on the government's financial plan.

Republicans are more critical than Democrats of the job that the press has done covering overall economic developments: about half (51%) of Republicans rate the coverage as excellent or good, while two thirds (66%) of Democrats rate it excellent or good. Republicans also are more likely than Democrats to say that the economic turmoil has received too much coverage (20% vs. 11%), though a solid majority (62%) of Republicans believe that the media devoted the

Reactions to Coverage Of the Economic Situation				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
<i>Job press has done:</i>				
Excellent	17	12	24	13
Good	41	39	42	41
Only fair	25	32	19	27
Poor	15	14	14	17
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Amount of coverage:</i>				
Too much	14	20	11	14
Too little	23	17	21	30
Right amount	61	62	65	53
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Coverage of gov't rescue plan is...*</i>				
Too critical	10	15	8	10
Not critical enough	42	36	44	41
About right	44	44	45	46
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100
*Question: As you may know the gov't is potentially investing billions to try to keep financial institutions and markets secure. In reporting about this plan, do you think news organizations have been too critical of the gov't plan, not critical enough of the plan, or have news organizations handled this about right?"				

right amount of attention to the subject. On the government’s financial bailout plan specifically, slightly more Democrats (44%) than Republicans (36%) say that the press could have been more critical in how it reported the story.

Paying Attention to Financial News

Americans are aware of many specific aspects of the financial crisis, though some events have registered more widely than others in recent weeks. Almost two-thirds (64%) reported hearing a lot about the Federal Reserve Bank’s loan to AIG insurance company; 59% heard a lot about Lehman Brothers investment bank filing for

<i>How much have you heard about...</i>	A lot %	A little %	Nothing at all %	DK %
AIG loan from Federal Reserve Bank**	64	24	12	*=100
Lehman Brothers bankruptcy**	59	28	13	*=100
Government rescue plan**	58	30	12	0=100
WaMu seizure and sale to JP Morgan*	56	32	12	*=100
Merrill Lynch sold to Bank of America**	49	37	14	*=100
Sale of Wachovia bank	42	42	16	*=100
Report on job losses	37	47	15	1=100
Automakers announcing sales drops	32	52	16	*=100
Reports Calif. may need gov’t loan	20	39	41	*=100

* Asked Sept 26-29, 2008.
**Asked Sept 19-22, 2008.

bankruptcy; and a comparable percentage (58%) heard a lot about the government’s \$700 billion bailout plan.

Fewer Americans reported hearing a lot about a new jobs report last week that showed a loss of more than 150,000 jobs in September (37%) and news from major automakers reporting steep declines in sales (32%). Two-in-ten heard a lot about the state of California requesting a \$7 billion emergency loan from the federal government, while 41% heard nothing at all about this.

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 29 – October 5 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected October 3-6 from a nationally representative sample of 1,006 adults.

Public is Hearing a Lot about the Polls

In a sign of the great attention paid by the media to the election horse race, half of the public (50%) say they have heard a lot about the latest polls on the presidential contest. Roughly four-in-ten (39%) say they are following the polls a little; just one-in-ten (11%) say they have heard nothing at all about what the polls are showing.

Meanwhile, the public is just as familiar with recent political skits on “Saturday Night Live” portraying Palin as they are with the interviews the governor did with CBS’s Katie Couric. Four-in-ten (42%) say they have heard a lot about Tina Fey’s portrayal of Palin on SNL, while 41% have heard a lot about Couric’s interviews with the candidate. Notably, awareness of the Couric interviews increased over the course of the week – only 31% had heard about the interviews the previous week.

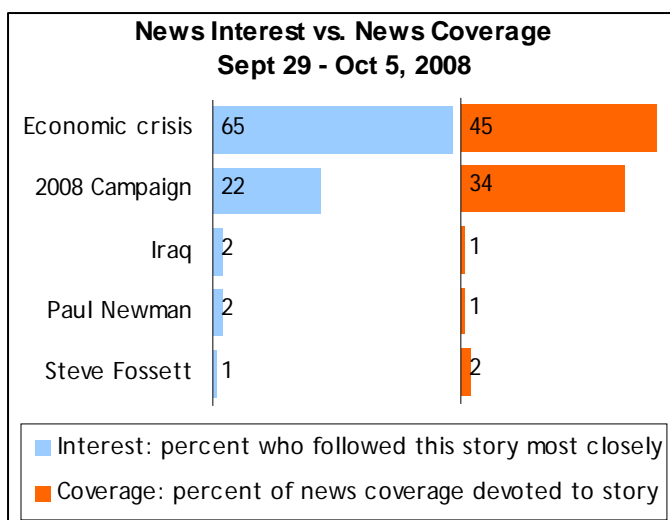
	A lot	A little	Nothing at all	DK
<i>How much have you heard about...</i>	%	%	%	%
Latest presidential race polls	50	39	11	*=100
Palin skit on Saturday Night Live	42	30	27	1=100
Palin-Couric TV interview	41	37	22	*=100
McCain stops campaigning in Michigan	34	34	32	*=100

Among those who have heard about Palin’s interview on CBS, 56% have actually seen some or all of the interview segments – 44% saw them on television, 7% saw them on the internet and 5% saw them on both.

Relatively few Americans heard a lot about John McCain’s decision late in the week to pull his campaign resources out of Michigan. Roughly a third (34%) heard a lot about this and an equal percentage heard a little about it. Democrats were somewhat more likely than Republicans to have heard a lot about McCain’s decision to stop campaigning in Michigan (38% vs. 28%).

Other News of the Week

With the media and the public so highly focused on the economy and the presidential campaign last week, other news stories attracted relatively little attention. While 29% of the public say they followed news about the current situation in Iraq very closely, only 2% listed this as the single news story they were following more closely than any other. The media devoted 1% of its overall coverage to events in Iraq.



One-in-five Americans (19%) paid very close attention to the passing of legendary actor Paul Newman; 2% said this was their most closely followed story. Only 12% followed the discovery of Steve Fossett's missing plane very closely.

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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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
OCTOBER 3-6, 2008 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1,006

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>Sarah Palin¹</u>	<u>Other²</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
October 3-6, 2008	47	26	11	5	11=100
September 26-29, 2008	42	37	5	3	13=100
September 19-22, 2008	39	35	10	5	11=100
September 12-15, 2008	32	41	17	2	8=100
September 5-8, 2008	28	54	10	2	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 candidates [INSERT NAME]. 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? ³ [ROTATE IN BLOCKS: A/B FIRST, FOLLOWED BY C/D]

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not changed</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a. Barack Obama	28	23	47	2=100
September 26-29, 2008	31	23	45	1=100
September 19-22, 2008	25	20	53	2=100

¹ Although the question specifically asks respondents to name a "presidential" candidate, Sarah Palin was accepted, as all responses were volunteered.

² "Other" includes responses for Hillary Clinton.

³ Prior to September 12-15, the question was worded, "Please think about each of the following *presidential* candidates..."

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not change</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
September 12-15, 2008	20	20	58	2=100
September 5-8, 2008	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
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	21	29	47	3=100
September 26-29, 2008	24	35	40	1=100
September 19-22, 2008	20	30	48	2=100
September 12-15, 2008	28	25	45	2=100
September 5-8, 2008	35	24	40	1=100
August 29-31, 2008	28	22	47	3=100
August 22-25, 2008	17	20	60	3=100
August 15-18, 2008	17	21	59	3=100
August 8-11, 2008	14	20	63	3=100
August 1-4, 2008	18	23	57	2=100
July 25-28, 2008	16	19	62	3=100
July 18-21, 2008	17	15	65	3=100
July 11-14, 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.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not change</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
c. Joe Biden	34	20	42	4=100
September 26-29, 2008	15	19	60	6=100
September 19-22, 2008	17	19	55	9=100
September 12-15, 2008	14	18	58	10=100
d. Sarah Palin	37	33	27	3=100
September 26-29, 2008	20	38	38	4=100
September 19-22, 2008	29	34	33	4=100
September 12-15, 2008	31	27	37	5=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; ROTATE ITEMS IN BLOCKS A-C FIRST, FOLLOWED BY D-F] [IF NECESSARY** “Did you follow **[ITEM]** very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. The discovery of missing millionaire Steve Fossett’s plane in a remote area of California	12	26	29	32	1=100
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	69	23	5	3	*=100
September 26-29, 2008	70	22	5	3	*=100
September 19-22, 2008	56	27	12	5	*=100
September 5-8, 2008	44	33	16	7	*=100
August 29-31, 2008	41	34	13	11	1=100
August 15-18, 2008	39	36	15	10	*=100
August 8-11, 2008	39	35	16	10	*=100
August 1-4, 2008	47	34	11	8	0=100
July 25-28, 2008	46	32	10	12	*=100
July 18-21, 2008	45	33	13	9	*=100
July 11-14, 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

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>
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
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 and Iraq	29	33	28	10	*=100
September 5-8, 2008	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

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>
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
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

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 5-9, 2007	33	39	16	11	1=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 23-March 26, 2007⁴	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

⁴ 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>
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*=100
April 11-16, 2003 ⁵	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 ⁶	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 ⁷	48	29	15	6	2=100
d. The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets	62	26	7	5	*=100
September 26-29, 2008	60	22	10	8	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:⁸					
September 19-22, 2008: Wall Street turmoil	49	28	14	9	*=100
September 12-15, 2008: Government takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac	28	35	19	17	1=100
March 20-24, 2008: Bear Stearns buyout	21	26	21	32	*=100
August, 1989: Savings and loan bailout	26	30	20	23	1=100
e. The death of Paul Newman	19	29	28	23	1=100
f. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election	57	31	8	4	*=100
September 26-29, 2008	56	29	10	5	*=100
September 19-22, 2008	47	33	14	6	*=100
September 12-15, 2008	40	38	14	7	1=100
September 5-8, 2008	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

⁵ From March 20-24, 2003 to April 11-16, 2003, the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."

⁶ 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."

⁷ In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."

⁸ September 19-22, 2008 asked about: "Turmoil among major financial institutions on Wall Street." September 12-15, 2008 asked about: "The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac." March 20-24, 2008 asked about: "The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns." August, 1989 asked about: "Passage in Congress of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions."

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 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
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

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>
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, 2007¹⁰	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 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

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>
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
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 Reports about the conditions of the U.S. economy
- 23 The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets
- 22 News about the candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 2 The current situation and events and Iraq
- 2 The death of Paul Newman
- 1 The discovery of missing millionaire Steve Fossett's plane in a remote area of California
- 2 Some other story (SPECIFY)
- 6 Don't know/Refused

100

Q.5 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.	John McCain	15	23	60	2=100
	April 25-28, 2008	20	8	65	7=100
	March 20-24, 2008	18	9	62	11=100
	February 29-March 3, 2008	14	14	64	8=100
	February 1-4, 2008	14	9	63	14=100
b.	Barack Obama	31	7	60	2=100
	April 25-28, 2008	26	17	52	5=100
	March 20-24, 2008	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.	Sarah Palin	21	38	38	3=100
d.	Joe Biden	23	5	66	6=100

Q.6 Did you happen to watch the vice presidential debate between Joe Biden and Sarah Palin (last night/this past Thursday night), or didn't you get a chance to see it? **IF YES, ASK:** How much of the debate did you watch: all of it, some of it, or only a little?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=907]:

		<u>-----Presidential Debates-----</u>		
		<u>McCain/Obama</u>	<u>Bush/Kerry</u>	<u>Gore/Bush</u>
		<u>Sept 27-29, 2008</u>	<u>Early Oct 2004</u>	<u>Early Oct 2000</u>
76	Yes (NET)	70	69	63
53	Yes, all	44	41	32
18	Yes, some	20	22	24
5	Yes, a little	6	6	7
24	No, didn't watch	30	31	37
*	Don't know/Refused	0	*	*
100		100	100	100

QUESTIONS 6A AND 6B PREVIOUSLY RELEASED BASED ON INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED OCTOBER 3-5, 2008

ASK ALL:

Q.7 How likely is it that you will watch the upcoming presidential debate between John McCain and Barack Obama next Tuesday?

BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=907]:

		General Public	-----Based on Registered Voters-----								
		Sept. 19-22, 2008 ¹²	Early Oct 2004	Early Sept 2004	Early Oct 2000	Late Sept 2000	Sept 1996	CBS/NYT			
								1992	1988	1984	
70	Very likely	58	59	61	49	43	43	67	55	55	
18	Somewhat likely, OR	24	29	27	31	31	34	24	27	27	
12	Not likely	18	11	11	19	22	22	8	17	16	
*	DK/Refused (VOL.)	*	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	
<u>100</u>		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	

Now thinking about recent economic news and what's been happening on Wall Street...

Q.8 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering this story [READ]?

17	Excellent
41	Good
25	Only fair
15	Poor
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.9 Do you think news organizations are giving too much, too little, or the right amount of coverage to this story?

14	Too much
23	Too little
61	Right amount
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.10 As you may know, the government is potentially investing billions to try to keep financial institutions and markets secure. In reporting about this plan, do you think news organizations have been too critical of the government plan, not critical enough of the plan, or have news organizations handled this about right?

10	Too critical of the plan
42	Not critical enough of the plan
44	Have handled it about right
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

¹²

September 19-22, 2008 asked: "How likely is it that you will watch the upcoming foreign policy debate between John McCain and Barack Obama this coming Friday, September 26?" In early October, 2004 the question asked: "How likely is it that you will watch either of the upcoming presidential debates between Bush and Kerry this coming Friday, or next Wednesday?" In early September, 2004 the question asked: "How likely is it that you will watch the upcoming presidential debates between John Kerry and George W. Bush?" In late September and early October, 2000 the question asked: "How likely is it that you will watch the upcoming presidential debates between Al Gore and George W. Bush?" In September, 1996 the question asked: "How likely is it that you will watch the upcoming Presidential debates between Bill Clinton and Bob Dole?" The CBS/NYT surveys asked, "How likely is it that you will watch next/this Sunday's debate between ...?" The field dates for the CBS/NYT trends are comparable to the current survey. The 1988 survey is based on the probable electorate.

On another subject...

Q.11 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. Skits on Saturday Night Live with actress Tina Fey playing Sarah Palin	42	30	27	1=100
b. Sarah Palin's TV interview with Katie Couric of CBS News	41	37	22	*=100
September 26-29, 2008	31	37	32	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
September 12-15, 2008: Sarah Palin's interview With Charles Gibson of ABC News	35	32	32	1=100
c. Major U.S. automakers announcing steep drops in auto sales	32	52	16	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
July 3-7, 2008: Ford and General Motors announcing steep drops in auto sales	34	44	22	*=100
d. Wachovia bank being sold to Wells Fargo bank	42	42	16	*=100
e. What the latest polls are showing about the presidential race	50	39	11	*=100
f. John McCain deciding to stop campaigning in the state of Michigan	34	34	32	*=100
g. The release of the latest government report showing the loss of more than 150,000 jobs last month	37	47	15	1=100
h. Reports that the state of California may need an emergency loan of \$7 billion from the federal government	20	39	41	*=100

IF HEARD A LOT OR A LITTLE ABOUT COURIC INTERVIEW (Q.11b=1, 2), ASK [N=805]:

Q.12 Have you actually seen some or all of Sarah Palin's TV interviews with Katie Couric, or have you just heard about them? **[IF YES, ASK:]** Where did you see the interviews, on television or on the internet?

44	Yes, saw them on television
7	Yes, saw them on the internet
5	Yes, saw them on both (VOL.)
43	No, have not seen it
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	