

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**NOVEMBER 7-10, 2008 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY**  
**TOPLINE**  
**N=1,005**

Q.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, [INSERT ITEM; 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. California voting to ban gay marriage	<b>18</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:<sup>1</sup></b>					
June 20-23, 2008: <i>Same sex marriage in CA</i>	22	26	25	27	*=100
May 16-19, 2008: <i>CA Supreme Court ruling</i>	19	27	25	28	1=100
May 2004: <i>Gay marriage</i>	20	27	25	27	1=100
March 2004: <i>Gay Marriage</i>	29	33	20	17	1=100
Early-February 2004: <i>Debate over gay marriage</i>	26	32	22	19	1=100
Mid-August 2003: <i>Debate over gay marriage</i>	19	30	22	28	1=100
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	<b>54</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>*=100</b>
October 31-November 3, 2008	63	27	6	4	*=100
October 24-27, 2008	52	35	7	5	1=100
October 17-20, 2008	62	29	6	3	*=100
October 10-13, 2008	65	25	7	3	*=100
October 3-6, 2008	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

<sup>1</sup> June 20-23, 2008 asked about: “The issue of same sex marriage in California.” May 16-19, 2008 asked about: “The California Supreme Court’s decision giving same sex couples the right to marry.” March, 2004 and May, 2004 asked about: “The issue of gay and lesbian marriage.” August, 2003 and February, 2004 asked about: “The debate about allowing gays and lesbians to marry.”

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
<b>November 2-5, 2007</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 19-22, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 10-13, 2007</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>*=100</b>
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
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

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
c. News about the presidential election	<b>60</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 31-November 3, 2008</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 24-27, 2008<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>44</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 17-20, 2008</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 10-13, 2008</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 3-6, 2008</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 26-29, 2008</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 19-22, 2008</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 12-15, 2008</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>September 5-8, 2008</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 29-31, 2008</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 22-25, 2008</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 15-18, 2008</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>August 8-11, 2008</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 1-4, 2008</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 25-28, 2008</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 18-21, 2008</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 11-14, 2008</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>July 3-7, 2008</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 27-30, 2008</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 20-23, 2008</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 13-16, 2008</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 6-9, 2008</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 30-June 2, 2008</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 22-25, 2008</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 16-19, 2008</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>May 9-12, 2008</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 2-5, 2008</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>April 25-28, 2008</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>April 18-21, 2008</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>April 11-14, 2008</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>April 4-7, 2008</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 28-31, 2008</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 20-24, 2008</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 14-17, 2008</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 7-10, 2008</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>February 29-March 3, 2008</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>February 22-25, 2008</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>February 15-18, 2008</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>February 8-11, 2008</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0=100</b>
<b>February 1-4, 2008</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 25-28, 2008</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>January 18-21, 2008</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 11-14, 2008<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>32</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>January 4-7, 2008</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>December 14-17, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>December 7-10, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>November 30 – December 3, 2007</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>November 23-26, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1=100</b>

<sup>2</sup> From January 26-29, 2007 to January 4-7, 2008 and from January 18-21, 2008 to October 27-31, 2008 the story was listed as “News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election.”

<sup>3</sup> January 11-14, 2008 asked about: “News about the New Hampshire primaries and the presidential campaign.”

Q.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
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 <sup>4</sup>	24	27	22	26	1=100
<b>2004 Presidential Election</b>					
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

<sup>4</sup> January 19-22, 2007 asked about: "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

**Q.1 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
Late February, 2004	24	40	23	12	1=100
Early February, 2004 <sup>5</sup>	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
<b>2000 Presidential Election</b>					
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
<b>1996 Presidential Election</b>					
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
<b>1992 Presidential Election</b>					
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

<sup>5</sup> 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.1 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, 1991	10	28	32	30	*=100
October, 1991	12	26	31	29	2=100
<b>1988 Presidential Election</b>					
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
d. Plans for the new Obama administration	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>*=100</b>
e. Reports about the rising unemployment rate	<b>39</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 6-9, 2008</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>*=100</b>
f. News about elections in Congress	<b>23</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
<b>October 24-27, 2008: News about candidates for local and statewide elections</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1=100</b>

Q.2 Which ONE of the stories I just mentioned have you followed most closely, or is there another story you've been following MORE closely? **[DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE. IF RESPONDENT MENTIONS ELECTION, PROBE WITH: "Is that a story about the Presidential election, or news about elections in Congress?"]**

- 39 News about the presidential election
- 29 Reports about the conditions of the U.S. economy
- 12 Plans for the new Obama administration
- 5 Reports about the rising unemployment rate
- 4 California voting to ban gay marriage
- 2 News about elections in Congress
- 3 Some other story (VOL. SPECIFY)
- 6 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100

Thinking about the presidential election...

Q.3 Now that the election is over, are you going to miss following it in the news or not? **[IF YES, ASK: How much will you miss following the election a great deal, somewhat or only a little?]**

- 17 Yes, will miss it
- 4 A great deal
- 7 Somewhat
- 5 Only a little
- 1 Don't know how much (VOL.)
- 82 No, will not miss it
- 1 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100

Q.4 Are you saving a newspaper with headlines about Barack Obama's victory to keep for the future, or not?

23 Yes, saving  
76 No, not saving  
1 Don't know/Refused  
100

Q.5 In following news about the presidential campaign this year, who if anyone was your favorite journalist or commentator? [**OPEN END. ACCEPT UP TO THREE RESPONSES BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE.**]

Total \*  
5 Bill O'Reilly  
3 Tom Brokaw  
3 Sean Hannity  
2 Charles Gibson  
2 Keith Olbermann  
2 Anderson Cooper  
2 Brian Williams  
2 CNN  
2 Wolf Blitzer  
2 Katie Couric  
2 Jon Stewart  
2 George Stephanopoulos  
1 Tim Russert  
1 Fox News Channel  
1 Brit Hume  
1 Chris Matthews  
1 Rachel Maddow  
1 Stephen Colbert  
1 Larry King  
1 Glenn Beck  
1 David Brooks  
1 Diane Sawyer  
1 Rush Limbaugh  
1 National Public Radio  
1 David Gergen  
1 Jim Lehrer  
1 Lou Dobbs  
  
16 Other  
50 None/Don't know

\* Figures total more than 100% because respondents could name more than one journalist.

Q.6 Still thinking about campaign news this year, who if anyone was your LEAST favorite journalist or commentator? [**OPEN END. ACCEPT UP TO THREE RESPONSES BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR MORE THAN ONE.**]

<u>Total</u> *	
6	Bill O'Reilly
5	Katie Couric
3	Fox News Channel
3	Rush Limbaugh
3	Keith Olbermann
3	Sean Hannity
2	Chris Matthews
1	NBC
1	Charles Gibson
1	George Stephanopoulos
1	Wolf Blitzer
1	Tom Brokaw
1	Brian Williams
1	Alan Colmes
1	Pat Buchanan
1	Larry King
11	Other
2	All
60	None/Don't know

\* Figures total more than 100% because respondents could name more than one journalist.