

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
APRIL 17-20, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1004

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; RANDOMIZE] [IF NECESSARY “Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. Barack Obama’s trip to Mexico and Latin America	17	26	25	32	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
April 9-13, 2009: Visit to Turkey and Iraq	23	29	22	26	*=100
April 3-6, 2009: Trip to Europe and meetings with foreign leaders	25	35	21	19	*=100
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	52	30	10	7	1=100
April 9-13, 2009	48	29	13	10	0=100
March 27-30, 2009	48	32	10	10	*=100
March 20-23, 2009	52	34	8	6	*=100
March 13-16, 2009	48	33	9	10	*=100
February 27-March 2, 2009	56	30	8	6	*=100
February 13-16, 2009	55	29	10	6	*=100
January 30-February 2, 2009	52	31	12	5	*=100
January 23-26, 2009	57	30	8	5	0=100
January 16-19, 2009	43	35	13	9	*=100
January 2-4, 2009	42	36	15	7	*=100
December 12-15, 2008	51	33	9	7	*=100
December 5-8, 2008	42	38	13	7	*=100
November 21-24, 2008	59	24	9	8	*=100
November 14-17, 2008	56	29	9	6	*=100
November 7-10, 2008	54	31	8	7	*=100
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

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>
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
December, 2002	38	34	17	10	1=100
February, 2002	35	40	15	9	1=100
January, 2002	30	44	16	9	1=100
December, 2001	37	40	13	8	2=100
Mid-November, 2001	41	36	15	7	1=100
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1=100
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0=100
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1=100
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1=100
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2=100
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*=100
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*=100
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1=100
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*=100
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1=100
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*=100
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1=100
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1=100
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*=100
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1=100
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*=100
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1=100
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*=100
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*=100
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1=100
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*=100
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*=100
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1=100

Q.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>
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. Tea party protests against taxes and government spending	27	25	22	25	1=100
d. The Obama administration relaxing travel restrictions to Cuba	20	30	22	27	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:¹					
February 22-25, 2008: Fidel Castro resigning	18	37	25	20	*=100
August, 2006: Fidel Castro handing control of Cuba to his brother	19	34	23	23	1=100
e. The release of memos describing harsh interrogation techniques used by CIA officials	17	24	22	37	*=100
f. News about attacks on cargo ships by Somali pirates	41	34	13	11	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:²					
April 9-13, 2009: Somali Pirates hijacking a U.S. cargo ship with 20 Americans aboard	34	35	14	17	*=100
Nov. 21-24, 2008: Hijack Saudi supertanker	19	28	23	30	*=100

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.**]

- 34 News about attacks on cargo ships by Somali pirates
- 27 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 9 Tea party protests against taxes and government spending
- 6 Barack Obama's trip to Mexico and Latin America
- 3 The Obama administration relaxing travel restrictions to Cuba
- 2 The release of memos describing harsh interrogation technique used by CIA officials
- 6 Some other story (VOL.)
- 13 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100

¹ February 22-25, 2008, asked about: "Fidel Castro resigning as president of Cuba." August, 2006, asked about: "Fidel Castro handing control of Cuba to his brother because of an illness."

² April 9-13, 2009, asked about: "Somali pirates hijacking a U.S. cargo ship with 20 Americans aboard." November 21-24, 2008, asked about: "Pirates from Somalia hijacking a Saudi Arabian supertanker."

Q.3 In your opinion, are the news organizations you are familiar with being fair or unfair to the Obama administration?

	<u>Fair</u>	<u>Unfair</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
April 17-20, 2009	66	18	16=100
G.W. Bush			
July, 2007	57	32	11=100
April, 2006	56	31	13=100
Early November, 2005	50	31	19=100
Early July, 2003	62	24	14=100
February, 2001	65	19	16=100
Clinton			
Early September, 1998	52	40	8=100
February, 1998	49	44	7=100
September, 1994	67	26	7=100
May, 1994	52	36	12=100
August, 1993	66	21	13=100
June, 1993	51	43	6=100
February, 1993	72	17	11=100
Bush, Sr.			
January, 1992	77	15	8=100
November, 1990	72	15	13=100
January, 1990	76	14	10=100
August, 1989	82	12	6=100
Reagan			
January, 1988	66	21	13=100
January, 1987	67	25	8=100
July, 1985	78	12	10=100

IF "UNFAIR" IN Q.3 (Q.3=2) ASK [N=177]:

Q.4 In what ways are they being unfair? [OPEN END. PROBE FOR SPECIFICS. RECORD UP TO FOUR MENTIONS] Any other ways?

Q.4 RESULTS NOT SHOWN; USED FOR QUALITATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.

ASK ALL:

Q.5 Thinking about television news, which of the following networks, if any, do you think has been TOO CRITICAL in its coverage of Barack Obama? [READ ENTIRE LIST AND ACCEPT MULTIPLE MENTIONS. RANDOMIZE LIST]

- 29 Fox News cable channel
- 11 CNN cable news
- 8 MSNBC cable news
- 4 ABC News
- 4 NBC News
- 3 CBS News
- 2 All have been too critical (VOL.)
- 34 None has been too critical (VOL.)
- 19 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK ALL:

Q.5A And among the same networks, which, if any, do you think has been TOO EASY in its coverage of Barack Obama? **[READ ENTIRE LIST AND ACCEPT MULTIPLE MENTIONS. RANDOMIZE LIST]**

- 16 CNN cable news
- 16 MSNBC cable news
- 15 NBC News
- 14 CBS News
- 13 ABC News
- 5 Fox News cable channel
- 6 All have been too easy (VOL.)
- 30 None has been too easy (VOL.)
- 24 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

On another topic...

Q.6 How much if anything, have you heard about each of the following? Have you heard a lot, a little or nothing at all? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a. The Obama family's new dog, Bo	43	42	14	1=100
NO ITEM B				
c. The murder of an 8-year-old California girl by a Sunday school teacher	50	28	22	*=100
d. A Scottish woman whose singing impressed judges and the audience of a British talent show	40	29	31	*=100
e. Football commentator John Madden announcing his retirement	21	44	34	1=100