

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JULY 2009 POLITICAL SURVEY / MEDIA UPDATE
FINAL TOPLINE
 July 22-26, 2009
 N=1506

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.1 AND Q.2

ASK ALL:

Q.1 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>		Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	28	66	6	September, 2002	41	55	4
June, 2009	30	64	5	Late August, 2002	47	44	9
May, 2009	34	58	8	May, 2002	44	44	12
April, 2009	23	70	7	March, 2002	50	40	10
January, 2009	20	73	7	Late September, 2001	57	34	9
December, 2008	13	83	4	Early September, 2001	41	53	6
Early October, 2008	11	86	3	June, 2001	43	52	5
Mid-September, 2008	25	69	6	March, 2001	47	45	8
August, 2008	21	74	5	February, 2001	46	43	11
July, 2008	19	74	7	January, 2001	55	41	4
June, 2008	19	76	5	October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7
Late May, 2008	18	76	6	September, 2000	51	41	8
March, 2008	22	72	6	June, 2000	47	45	8
Early February, 2008	24	70	6	April, 2000	48	43	9
Late December, 2007	27	66	7	August, 1999	56	39	5
October, 2007	28	66	6	January, 1999	53	41	6
February, 2007	30	61	9	November, 1998	46	44	10
Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7	Early September, 1998	54	42	4
Early January, 2007	30	63	7	Late August, 1998	55	41	4
December, 2006	28	65	7	Early August, 1998	50	44	6
Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8	February, 1998	59	37	4
Early October, 2006	30	63	7	January, 1998	46	50	4
July, 2006	30	65	5	September, 1997	45	49	6
May, 2006	29	65	6	August, 1997	49	46	5
March, 2006	32	63	5	January, 1997	38	58	4
January, 2006	34	61	5	July, 1996	29	67	4
Late November, 2005	34	59	7	March, 1996	28	70	2
Early October, 2005	29	65	6	October, 1995	23	73	4
July, 2005	35	58	7	June, 1995	25	73	2
Late May, 2005	39	57	4	April, 1995	23	74	3
February, 2005	38	56	6	July, 1994	24	73	3
January, 2005	40	54	6	March, 1994	24	71	5
December, 2004	39	54	7	October, 1993	22	73	5
Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6	September, 1993	20	75	5
July, 2004	38	55	7	May, 1993	22	71	7
May, 2004	33	61	6	January, 1993	39	50	11
Late February, 2004	39	55	6	January, 1992	28	68	4
Early January, 2004	45	48	7	November, 1991	34	61	5
December, 2003	44	47	9	Late February, 1991 (Gallup)	66	31	3
October, 2003	38	56	6	August, 1990	47	48	5
August, 2003	40	53	7	May, 1990	41	54	5
April 8, 2003	50	41	9	January, 1989	45	50	5
January, 2003	44	50	6	September, 1988 (RVs)	50	45	5
November, 2002	41	48	11				

Q.1 CONTINUED ...

	Satis- <u>fied</u>	Dis- <u>satisfied</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
May, 1988	41	54	5
January, 1988	39	55	6

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.1 AND Q.2

ASK ALL:

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? **[IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]**

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	54	34	12
June, 2009	61	30	9
Mid-April, 2009	63	26	11
Early April, 2009	61	26	13
March, 2009	59	26	15
February, 2009	64	17	19

NO QUESTION 3

ASK ALL:

Thinking about some issues...

Q.4 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling **[INSERT ITEM, RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS]** How about **[NEXT ITEM]**?

	<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The economy			
July, 2009	38	53	9
June, 2009	52	40	8
Mid-April, 2009	60	33	7
February, 2009	56	24	20
b. Health care policy			
July, 2009	42	43	14
Mid-April, 2009	51	26	23
c. The nation's foreign policy			
July, 2009	47	32	21
June, 2009	57	31	12
Mid-April, 2009	61	22	17
February 2009	52	17	31
d. The federal budget deficit			
July, 2009	32	53	15
Mid-April, 2009	50	38	12

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=760]:

e.F1 Tax policy			
July, 2009	39	42	18
Mid-April, 2009	50	33	17

Q.4 CONTINUED ...

		<u>Approve</u>	Dis- <u>approve</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
f.F1	The situation in Iraq July, 2009	47	38	15

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:

g.F2	Energy policy July, 2009	46	31	22
h.F2	The situation in Afghanistan July, 2009	47	33	19

ASK ALL:

Q.5 What is your opinion of Barack Obama personally – do you like the kind of person he is and the way he leads his life or don't you like the kind of person he is and the way he leads his life?

74	Like
12	Don't like
14	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK IF FORM 1 AND IF LIKE OR DISLIKE(Q5=1,2) [N=652]:

Q.5a What is it about Barack Obama personally that you (like/don't like)? [OPEN END; RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR CLARITY—DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD IN ORDER OF MENTION]

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAY THEY LIKE OBAMA PERSONALLY [N=556]

20	Honest/Has integrity/Direct
16	Family man/Good father/His family
13	Down to earth/"Regular guy"/Relates to the middle class
10	Intelligent/Educated
10	Good speaker/Communicator
10	Trying/Has a plan
7	Demeanor/Temperament/Way he carries himself
5	Leadership
5	Charismatic
4	Approve of his positions/policies/job he's doing
3	New/Different/Not like other politicians
2	Way he thinks
2	Cares/Compassion
1	Work ethic/Hard worker
1	Youthful
1	African American/Multiracial
17	General/Other specific positive character trait
4	Other/Everything
9	Don't know/Refused

Figures add to more than 100% due to multiple response.

DUE TO INSUFFICIENT NUMBER OF CASES [N=96], PERCENTAGES NOT SHOWN FOR THOSE WHO DISLIKE OBAMA PERSONALLY

QUESTIONS 6 AND 7 AND A HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:

Q.8F2 How much, if anything, have you heard about Barack Obama's choice of Sonia Sotomayor to be the next Supreme Court justice? **[READ]**

		June <u>2009</u>
46	A lot	39
33	A little [OR]	38
19	Nothing at all	21
2	Don't know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]	2

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:

Q.9F2 From what you've seen and heard so far, do you think the Senate should or should not confirm Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court?

		<i>Sonia Sotomayor</i> June <u>2009</u>	<i>Samuel Alito</i> Jan <u>2006</u>	Early Dec <u>2005</u>	Nov <u>2005</u>	<i>Harriet Miers</i> Early Oct <u>2005</u>	<i>John Roberts</i> Mid-Sept <u>2005</u>	Early Sept <u>2005</u>
50	Should	50	33	32	40	33	46	35
23	Should not	25	19	19	23	27	21	19
27	Don't know/Refused	25	48	49	37	40	33	46

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.10F2 AND Q.11F2:

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:

Q.10F2 Are you generally optimistic or pessimistic that Barack Obama's policies will improve economic conditions in the country?

		June <u>2009</u>	Early April <u>2009</u>
63	Optimistic	65	66
28	Pessimistic	28	26
9	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7	8

RANDOMIZE ORDER OF Q.10F2 AND Q.11F2:

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:

Q.11F2 Are you generally optimistic or pessimistic that Barack Obama's policies will reduce the budget deficit over the long term?

		June <u>2009</u>	Early April <u>2009</u>
54	Optimistic	55	54
36	Pessimistic	36	36
9	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	9	10

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=760]:

Q.12F1 Since taking office, have Barack Obama's economic policies made economic conditions better, worse, or not had an effect so far?

		June <u>2009</u>	Mid-April <u>2009</u>	March <u>2009</u>
24	Better	26	26	14
21	Worse	16	17	15
46	No effect so far	49	47	64
3	Too soon/early to tell (VOL.)	4	6	4
6	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	4	3

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=760]:

Q.13F1 So far, do you think Barack Obama is **[READ AND RANDOMIZE RESPONSE OPTIONS 1 & 2, WITH OPTION 3 ALWAYS LAST]**

		Mid-April <u>2009</u>	March <u>2009</u>
41	Trying to address too many issues at once	34	35
3	Focusing on too few issues [OR]	4	4
48	Doing about right	56	56
8	Don't know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]	6	5

ASK ALL:

Q.14 When it comes to national policy, who do you think Barack Obama is listening to more... **[READ, RANDOMIZE]**

		June <u>2009</u>	Mid-April <u>2009</u>	March <u>2009</u>	Jan <u>2009</u>
41	Liberal members of his party [OR]	39	40	44	34
31	Moderate members of his party	35	33	30	44
27	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	26	27	26	22

NO QUESTION 15

ASK FORM 1 ONLY:

Q.16 If you were setting government priorities these days, would you place a higher priority on reducing the budget deficit or **[INSERT FIRST ITEM, RANDOMIZE]**? Would you place a higher priority on reducing the budget deficit or **[INSERT NEXT ITEM]**?

ASK FORM 2 ONLY:

Q.17 If you were setting government priorities these days, would you place a higher priority on **[INSERT FIRST ITEM, RANDOMIZE]** or reducing the budget deficit? Would you place a higher priority on **[INSERT NEXT ITEM]** or reducing the budget deficit?

BASED ON TOTAL:

		Spending <u>more</u>	Reducing the budget <u>deficit</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Spending more to make health care more accessible and affordable			
	July, 2009	55	40	5
	Early April, 2009	59	35	6
b.	Spending more to improve the education system			
	July, 2009	57	38	5
	Early April, 2009	58	38	4
c.	Spending more to develop new energy technology			
	July, 2009	41	52	7
	Early April, 2009	49	45	6
d.	Spending more to help the economy recover			
	July, 2009	53	38	9
	June, 2009 ²	48	46	6

² In June, 2009, question was not asked as part of a list.

NO QUESTIONS 18 THROUGH 24, 26 THROUGH 29, 36 THROUGH 38, 41 THROUGH 47

QUESTIONS 25, 30 THROUGH 36, 39 AND 40 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

On a different subject...

Q.48 How much, if anything, have you heard about the bills in Congress to overhaul the health care system?

[READ]

- 41 A lot
- 47 A little [OR]
- 10 Nothing at all
- 1 Don't know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]

ASK ALL:

Q.49 As of right now, do you generally favor or generally oppose the health care proposals being discussed in Congress?

- 38 Generally favor
- 44 Generally oppose
- 18 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

ASK IF Q.49=1,2 [N=1246]:

Q.50 What would you say is the main reason you (favor/oppose) the health care proposals being discussed in Congress? [OPEN END; RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE FOR CLARITY—DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL MENTIONS. IF MORE THAN ONE MENTION, RECORD IN ORDER OF MENTION; UP TO THREE MENTIONS]

BASED ON THOSE WHO FAVOR [N=558]

- 42 Support greater/universal coverage
Control costs/Increase affordability/
- 14 Boost economy
- 13 Need to do something/change
- 9 Personal experiences/reasons
- 7 Help poor/unemployed with health care
- 2 Help children with health care
- 1 Trust/support Obama/Democrats
- 1 Help elderly with health care
- Insurance companies do a bad job/
- 1 Reduce insurance companies' influence
- 11 Other
- 11 Don't know/Refused

BASED ON THOSE WHO OPPOSE [N=688]

- Too expensive/Can't afford it/Will
26 increase deficit and taxes
- Do not want Gov't in health care/
- 18 Socialism/Bureaucracy
- Will reduce quality & access/Take away
9 choice
- Hasn't been explained/Too complex/
- 8 Not well thought out
- Redistributive/Free-ride/People should
6 earn own health care
- 6 Won't work/Current system works
- Distrust Congress/Obama/
4 political process
- 3 Does not work in other countries
- 3 Hurts business/economy/Costs jobs
- 3 Will worsen care for some/Not be fair
- 2 Moving too fast
- Will hurt/won't help me/
- 2 Like what I have
- Disproportionately benefits immigrants
1 and minorities
- 16 Other
- 11 Don't know/Refused

Figures add to more than 100% due to multiple response.

ASK ALL:

Q.51 Now I'd like to ask you about some of the specific proposals being considered to address health care. (First,) Would you favor or oppose **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? What about **[NEXT ITEM]**?

		<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a.	Requiring that all Americans have health insurance, with the government providing financial help for those who can't afford it July, 2009	65	29	6
b.	A government health insurance plan to compete with private health insurance plans July, 2009	52	37	10
c.	Requiring insurance companies to sell health coverage to people, even if they have pre-existing medical conditions July, 2009	79	15	6

ASK ALL:

Q.52 And thinking about some ways to pay for changes to the health care system... Would you favor or oppose **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]**? What about **[NEXT ITEM]**?

		<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
a.	Requiring employers to pay into a government health care fund if they do not provide health insurance to their employees July, 2009	61	33	6
b.	Raising taxes on families with incomes of more than \$350,000 and individuals earning more than \$280,000 July, 2009	63	32	5
c.	Taxing employees whose health insurance benefits are above a certain value July, 2009	25	62	13
d.	Tighter restrictions on what medical procedures Medicare and Medicaid will cover July, 2009	33	58	9

ASK ALL:

Q.53 Who do you trust more when it comes to deciding what kinds of medical procedures should be covered by health insurance? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]** **[INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: PROBE ONCE BEFORE ACCEPTING A VOLUNTEERED RESPONSE]**

- 38 Private insurance companies [OR]
- 32 The government
- 1 Both **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
- 19 Neither **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
- 2 Other **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
- 8 Don't know/Refused **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**

ASK ALL:

Q.54 Are you, yourself, now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan or do you not have health insurance at this time? [**READ IF NECESSARY:** A health plan would include any private insurance plan through your employer or a plan that you purchased yourself, as well as a government program like Medicare or Medicaid]

ASK IF COVERED IN Q54 (Q54=1) [N=1319]:

Q.55 Which of the following is your MAIN source of health insurance coverage? Is it a plan through an employer, a plan you purchased yourself, are you covered by Medicare or Medicaid, some other government program, or do you get your health insurance from somewhere else? [**INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: DO NOT NEED TO READ FULL LIST IF RESPONDENT INTERRUPTS TO ANSWER 1 OR 2, BUT VERIFY** "So your main source of health insurance coverage is not by Medicare, Medicaid or any other form of government insurance?"]

		June <u>2009</u>
81	Covered by health insurance	81
	45 Plan through an employer	
	9 Plan you purchased yourself	
	14 Medicare	
	3 Medicaid	
	4 Other government program	
	4 Somewhere else	
	1 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	
19	Not covered by health insurance	18
*	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	*

NO QUESTIONS 56, 59 THROUGH 64

QUESTIONS 57 AND 58, 65 AND 66 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

ASK ALL:

PARTY In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY, ASK:

PARTYLN As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

				(VOL.) No	(VOL.) Other	(VOL.) DK/ Ref	<i>Lean</i> <i>Rep</i>	<i>Lean</i> <i>Dem</i>
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>			
July, 2009	22	34	37	5	*	2	15	14
June, 2009	25	34	34	3	*	3	11	16
May, 2009	23	39	29	4	*	4	9	14
April, 2009	22	33	39	3	*	3	13	18
March, 2009	24	34	35	5	*	2	12	17
February, 2009	24	36	34	3	1	2	13	17
January, 2009	25	37	33	3	*	2	11	16
December, 2008	26	39	30	2	*	3	8	15
Late October, 2008	24	39	32	2	*	3	11	15
Mid-October, 2008	27	35	31	4	*	3	9	16
Early October, 2008	26	36	31	4	*	3	11	15
Late September, 2008	25	35	34	3	1	2	13	15
Mid-September, 2008	28	35	32	3	*	2	12	14
August, 2008	26	34	34	4	*	2	12	17
July, 2008	24	36	34	3	*	3	12	15
June, 2008	26	37	32	3	*	2	11	16
Late May, 2008	25	35	35	2	*	3	13	15
April, 2008	24	37	31	5	1	2	11	15

PARTY/PARTYLN CONTINUED ...

				(VOL.)	(VOL.)	(VOL.)		
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	No	Other	DK/	<i>Lean</i>	<i>Lean</i>
				<u>preference</u>	<u>party</u>	<u>Ref</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>
March, 2008	24	38	29	5	*	4	9	14
Late February, 2008	24	38	32	3	*	3	10	17
Early February, 2008	26	35	31	5	*	3	11	14
January, 2008	24	33	37	4	*	2	12	18
<i>Yearly Totals</i>								
2008	25.3	35.8	31.7	3.8	.3	3.1	10.5	15.4
2007	25.4	32.9	33.7	4.6	.4	3.1	10.7	16.7
2006	27.6	32.8	30.3	5.0	.4	3.9	10.2	14.5
2005	29.2	32.8	30.3	4.5	.3	2.8	10.2	14.9
2004	29.7	33.4	29.8	3.9	.4	2.9	11.7	13.4
2003	29.8	31.4	31.2	4.7	.5	2.5	12.1	13.0
2002	30.3	31.2	30.1	5.1	.7	2.7	12.6	11.6
2001	29.2	33.6	28.9	5.1	.5	2.7	11.7	11.4
<i>2001 Post-Sept 11</i>	<i>30.9</i>	<i>31.8</i>	<i>27.9</i>	<i>5.2</i>	<i>.6</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>11.7</i>	<i>9.4</i>
<i>2001 Pre-Sept 11</i>	<i>28.2</i>	<i>34.6</i>	<i>29.5</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>.5</i>	<i>2.1</i>	<i>11.7</i>	<i>12.5</i>
2000	27.5	32.5	29.5	5.9	.5	4.0	11.6	11.6
1999	26.6	33.5	33.7	3.9	.5	1.9	13.0	14.5
1998	27.5	33.2	31.9	4.6	.4	2.4	11.8	13.5
1997	28.2	33.3	31.9	4.0	.4	2.3	12.3	13.8
1996	29.2	32.7	33.0	5.2	--	--	12.7	15.6
1995	31.4	29.7	33.4	5.4	--	--	14.4	12.9
1994	29.8	31.8	33.8	4.6	--	--	14.3	12.6
1993	27.4	33.8	34.0	4.8	--	--	11.8	14.7
1992	27.7	32.7	35.7	3.9	--	--	13.8	15.8
1991	30.9	31.4	33.2	4.5	--	--	14.6	10.8
1990	31.0	33.1	29.1	6.8	--	--	12.4	11.3
1989	33	33	34	--	--	--	--	--
1987	26	35	39	--	--	--	--	--

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JULY 2009 POLITICAL SURVEY / MEDIA UPDATE CALLBACK
FINAL TOPLINE
July 27, 2009
N=480

ASK ALL:

Q.1 Generally, how would you say things are these days in your life – would you say that you are very happy, pretty happy, or not too happy?

RESULTS NOT SHOWN

ASK ALL:

Q.2 How much, if anything, have you heard about Barack Obama’s comments regarding the arrest of Henry Louis Gates, a black Harvard professor, at his home after a dispute with a police officer? **[READ]**

46 A lot
33 A little [OR]
19 Nothing at all
2 Don’t know/Refused **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**

ASK ALL:

Q.3 Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama has handled this situation? **[IF NECESSARY CLARIFY: “Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama has handled the dispute between Gates and the police officer?”]**

29 Approve
41 Disapprove
30 Don’t know/Refused **(VOL.)**

ASK ALL:

Q.4 From what you’ve read and heard about what happened during the original incident, who, if anyone, would you say was more at fault? **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**

27 Henry Louis Gates, the professor [OR]
25 James Crowley, the police officer
10 Both equally **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
3 Neither/No one is at fault **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**
36 Don’t know/Refused **[VOL. DO NOT READ]**