



NEWS Release
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Republicans Say Campaign is Being Over-Covered
HILLARY CLINTON MOST VISIBLE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

The 2008 presidential campaign remained a top tier news story last week both in terms of coverage and public interest. The campaign has been one of the top five most covered news stories for much of the year, and public interest has remained fairly consistent. This past week, the national news media devoted 9% of its overall coverage to the campaign, making it the second most heavily covered story of the week, after the Iraq policy debate. Among the public, 16% followed campaign news very closely and 10% listed this as their most closely followed story.

Democratic candidates continue to have a clear advantage over Republican candidates in terms of visibility. When asked which candidates they have been hearing the most about in the news recently, 67% of the public named a Democrat while only 8% named a Republican. Even Republicans themselves name Democratic candidates more readily than GOP candidates by a better than two-to-one margin (54% name a Democratic candidate, 21% name a GOP candidate).

Hillary Clinton leads the pack as the candidate Americans have heard the most about in the news lately. More than four-in-ten (42%) name Clinton, while 22% name Barack Obama. Only 2% name John Edwards. The gap between Clinton and Obama has widened since last month when Clinton was named by 32% of the public and Obama by 20%.

The major Republican presidential candidates remain at the periphery: John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, Mitt Romney, and

<i>Heard the most about in the news lately</i>	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Hillary Clinton	42	38	52	41
Barack Obama	22	15	26	23
John Edwards	2	1	3	3
Bill Richardson	1	*	1	1
John McCain	2	4	1	3
Rudy Giuliani	2	5	1	2
Mitt Romney	2	6	*	1
Fred Thompson	2	6	*	1
Other	4	4	4	3
No answer	<u>21</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>22</u>
	100	100	100	100

Fred Thompson were each named by only 2% of the public. In spite of the public's lopsided perceptions of which party's candidates have been in the news lately, coverage of the candidates has been fairly balanced. For the month of June, 43% of the campaign coverage on national news outlets focused on Democratic candidates, 34% focused on Republicans (another 9% focused on both parties).

Not only are Republican candidates lagging behind in terms of visibility, GOP loyalists are less engaged in the campaign and more critical of campaign coverage. Throughout the year, Democrats have consistently paid closer attention than Republicans to campaign news. In addition, Republicans are much more likely than

<i>Presidential campaign is getting...</i>	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
Too much coverage	32	40	19	37
Too little coverage	18	14	20	21
Right amount of coverage	43	40	56	34
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>
	100	100	100	100

Democrats to believe the presidential campaign is being over-covered by the media. Four-in-ten Republicans say news organizations are giving too much coverage to the campaign. Only 19% of Democrats feel the same way. Among Democrats, a majority (56%) say news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage to the campaign, and one-in-five say they are giving it too little coverage. Independents are closer to Republicans in their views about campaign coverage – 37% say the campaign is receiving too much coverage, 21% say it's getting too little coverage, and 34% say the coverage has been about right.

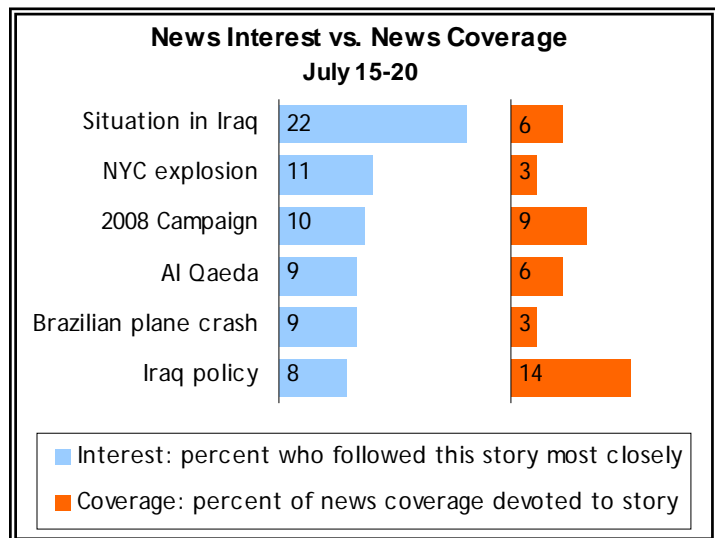
These findings are based on the most recent installment of the weekly *News Interest Index*, an ongoing project of the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. The index, building on the Center's longstanding research into public attentiveness to major news stories, examines news interest as it 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 was collected from July 15-20 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week was collected July 20-23 from a nationally representative sample of 1,040 adults.

Iraq and New York City Blast Top News Interest Index

In the news this week, the national media continued to focus heavily on the debate over future Iraq war policy. This was the top news story in terms of coverage taking up 14% of the overall newshole. Fueling much of the coverage was the all-night Senate session where members of both parties debated exit strategies for the war. The public remained more interested in the situation in Iraq than the policy debate – 28% of Americans followed events in Iraq very closely and 22% listed this as the single news story they followed more closely than any other.

By contrast, 23% of the public paid very close attention to the Iraq policy debate and 8% listed this as their most closely followed story.

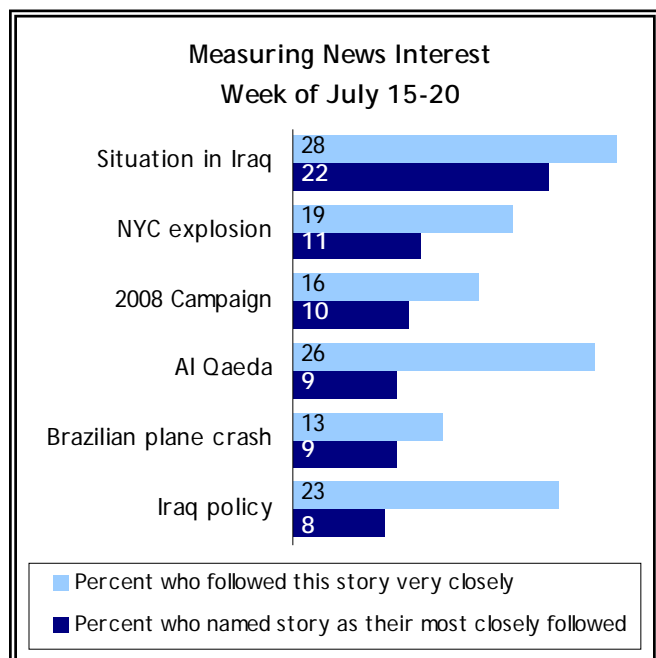
The dramatic explosion caused by an underground steam pipe in New York City generated a significant amount of public interest. Roughly one-in-five Americans followed news about the blast very closely and 11% listed this as their most closely followed story. The media devoted 3% of its overall coverage to the explosion. Interest was much higher in the Northeast than in other parts of the country (30% of those living in the Northeast followed the story very closely).



The Brazilian plane crash that killed nearly 200 people received about the same amount of news coverage as the Manhattan explosion (3% of the newshole) but generated less public interest. Only 13% of the public followed news about the plane crash very closely and 9% listed it as their most closely followed story.

News about the resurgence of Al Qaeda was a top story for the second week in row. Overall 6% of the national newshole was devoted to stories about Al Qaeda and the continued threat it poses to the American homeland. More than a quarter of the public paid very close attention to this story and 9% said it was the story they followed most closely.

The public was generally satisfied with the amount of coverage the media devoted to the week's major stories. A plurality of the public said each of the major news stories had received the right amount



of coverage from news organizations. Nonetheless, nearly three-in-ten Americans (29%) believe reports about Al Qaeda gaining strength have received too little coverage, and 28% say the same about events in Iraq.

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 six 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:

Andrew Kohut, Director
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors
Carolyn Funk, Richard Wike and Kim Parker, Senior Researchers
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JULY 20-23, 2007 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,040

Q.1 There are already many candidates for the 2008 presidential election. Can you tell me the name of the candidate you've heard the MOST about in the news lately? [OPEN-END. RECORD FIRST MENTION ONLY]

		June 1-4, <u>2007</u>	April 27-30, <u>2007</u>	March 16-19, <u>2007</u>
42	Hillary Clinton	32	41	37
22	Barack Obama	20	23	24
3	George W. Bush	1	1	2
2	John Edwards	2	3	1
2	John McCain	2	4	3
2	Rudy Giuliani	4	3	3
2	Fred Thompson	4	*	0
2	Mitt Romney	3	1	1
1	Bill Richardson	--	--	--
1	Other	2	1	4
<u>21</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>30</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>25</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.2 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, 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. News about the current situation and events in Iraq					
Iraq	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 23-26, 2007 ¹	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

¹ From May, 2003 to March 23-26, 2007, the story was listed as "News about the current situation in Iraq."

Q.2 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 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
May, 2003	63	29	6	2	*=100
April 11-16, 2003 ²	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 ³	62	27	6	4	1=100

² From March 20-24, 2003 to April 11-16, 2003, the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
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 ⁴	48	29	15	6	2=100
b. An explosion in New York City caused by an underground steam pipe	19	26	25	29	1=100
c. The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq	23	24	24	28	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	20	30	20	30	*=100
July 6-9, 2007	27	26	23	24	*=100
June 1-4, 2007	20	27	24	27	2=100
May 24-27, 2007	30	32	20	18	*=100
May 18-21, 2007	24	32	19	24	1=100
May 11-14, 2007	25	26	19	29	1=100
May 4-7, 2007	30	31	19	20	*=100
April 27-30, 2007	18	31	21	29	1=100
April 20-23, 2007	22	29	24	25	*=100
April 12-16, 2007	25	29	22	23	1=100
April 5-9, 2007	31	28	20	21	*=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	26	29	21	23	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
January 12-15, 2007: President Bush's proposal to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq	40	33	13	13	1=100
d. Reports that the terrorist network Al Qaeda is gaining strength	26	30	22	21	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	21	36	18	24	1=100
e. A plane crash in Brazil that killed nearly 200 people	13	28	27	31	1=100
f. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election	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

³ 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."

⁴ In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
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, 2007⁵	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 ⁶	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

⁵ January 19-22, 2007 asked about "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

⁶ 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.2 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>Closely</u>	Fairly <u>Closely</u>	Not too <u>Closely</u>	Not at all <u>Closely</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
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
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.3 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 "IRAQ" UNSPECIFIED, PROBE: "Do you mean events IN Iraq or the debate over Iraq POLICY?"]**

- 22 News about the current situation and events in Iraq
- 11 An explosion in New York City caused by an underground steam pipe
- 10 News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 9 Reports that the terrorist network Al Qaeda is gaining strength
- 9 A plane crash in Brazil that killed nearly 200 people
- 8 The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq
- 13 Some other story (SPECIFY)
- 18 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)

100

Q.4 Do you think news organizations are giving too much coverage, too little coverage, or the right amount of coverage to **[INSERT ITEM, ROTATE]**?

		<u>Too much coverage</u>	<u>Too little coverage</u>	<u>Right amount of coverage</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a.	News about the current situation and events in Iraq June 1-4, 2007	18 23	28 23	48 47	6=100 7=100
b.	An explosion in New York City caused by an underground steam pipe	15	16	58	11=100
c.	The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq June 1-4, 2007	23 25	25 21	44 45	8=100 9=100
d.	Reports that the terrorist network Al Qaeda is gaining strength	18	29	45	8=100
e.	A plane crash in Brazil that killed nearly 200 people	7	25	58	10=100
f.	News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election June 1-4, 2007	32 33	18 12	43 47	7=100 8=100