



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
 Thursday, August 2, 2007

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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Cable and Network TV Worst Offenders

PUBLIC BLAMES MEDIA FOR TOO MUCH CELEBRITY COVERAGE

An overwhelming majority of the public (87%) says celebrity scandals receive too much news coverage. This criticism generally holds across most major demographic and political groups. Virtually no one thinks there is too little coverage of celebrity scandals.

When asked who is most to blame for the amount of coverage these kinds of stories receive, a majority of the public points to the media. Fully 54% of those who say celebrity news is over-covered also believe news organizations are to blame for giving these stories so much coverage. Roughly a third (32%) say the public is to blame for paying so much attention to them, and another 12% say the media and the public are both equally to blame.

Men and women generally agree on this question, although women tend to follow tabloid stories more closely than do men (52% of men and 55% of women blame news organizations for all the coverage). Republicans and Democrats also agree on this issue – though Republicans are often more critical of media practices (57% of Republicans and 52% of Democrats blame the media for too much tabloid news).

One noteworthy difference in opinion on the question of who is to blame for tabloid news coverage can be seen across age groups. Young people blame the public more than the news media. Nearly half of those under age 30 say it's the public's appetite for scandal news that

Celebrity Scandals: Who's to Blame for all the Coverage?	
<i>Celebrity scandals receive...</i>	<i>%</i>
Too much news coverage	87
Too little news coverage	2
Right amount of news coverage	8
Don't know	3
	100
<i>Who's to blame for the amount of coverage?*</i>	
News organizations for covering them	54
Public for paying attention	32
Both	12
Neither	1
Don't know	1
	100
*Based on those who said celebrity scandals receive too much coverage.	

spurs the amount of coverage, 31% say news organizations are to blame. Among those over age 30, large majorities blame the media, while less than 30% blame the public.

Throughout 2007 there has been no shortage of news involving Hollywood celebrities. Paris Hilton’s brief but memorable stint in jail became a national news story earlier this summer. During the first week in June, when she was briefly released from jail and then sent back, 4% of the national news was devoted to the story and 12% of the American public said the Hilton saga was the story they were following more closely than any other. Earlier in the year, Anna Nicole Smith’s death was an even bigger story. During the two days immediately following Smith’s death, nearly a quarter of the news from all sectors (24%) was devoted to this story. Public interest did not match the amount of coverage, and 61% of Americans said the story was being over-covered. Nonetheless, there was a core audience for the story that stuck with it throughout the next few weeks.

The vast majority of coverage of this year’s biggest celebrity scandals – namely Anna Nicole Smith’s death and Paris Hilton’s legal problems – could be seen on cable television news. During those first two days after Smith’s death fully half of cable news coverage was devoted to this story, making it by far the most heavily covered story of the week on cable. Similarly, the Paris Hilton story was featured much more prominently on cable TV news than on other sectors. In the week she was released and then sent back to jail, Hilton was the number three story on cable TV. It was the eighth most heavily covered story on network TV news and it didn’t make the top ten in the nation’s newspapers.

When asked which types of news organizations give celebrity scandals the most coverage, the public points to television but does not make a clear distinction between cable and network TV. Roughly a third (34%) say cable news networks such as CNN, MSNBC and the Fox News channel are the biggest purveyors of celebrity news. Another 27% say that the big three network news outlets give these stories the most coverage. Internet news websites are cited by 15% of the public, 8% name newspapers and 4% point to radio news programs.

Who Leads the Way In Celebrity Coverage?	
<i>Who gives celebrity stories the most coverage?</i>	<u>%</u>
Cable news	34
Network news	27
Internet news websites	15
Newspapers	8
Radio news	4
Other	2
None	1
Don't know	<u>9</u>
	100

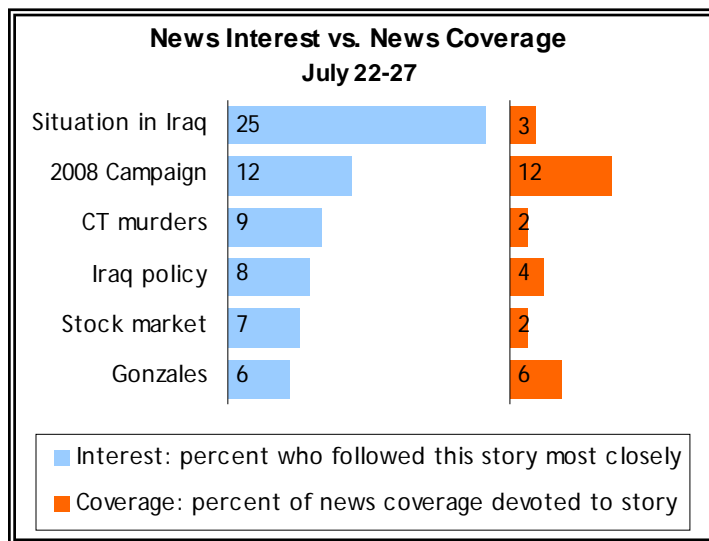
Democrats are more likely to say cable news has the most celebrity coverage, as opposed to network news (37% say cable, 25% say network). Republicans are evenly split on the issue (31% cable, 30% network). Young people are among the most likely to list cable as the worst offender – 40% of those under age 30 say cable news has the most celebrity coverage, only 17% point to network news.

One of the most recent celebrity scandals, Lindsay Lohan’s arrest on a second drunken driving charge, generated little interest from the public. Only 8% followed this story very closely last week, another 19% followed the story fairly closely.

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 22-27 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week was collected July 27-30 from a nationally representative sample of 1,027 adults.

Iraq and Campaign Top News Interests

In the news this week, the public’s interests and the news media’s agenda were not completely in sync. Interest in the Iraq war remained high, in spite of relatively little coverage of events on the ground. Fully a quarter of the public said the Iraq war was the single news story they followed more closely than any other last week, making it the public’s top news story. At the same time the national news media devoted 3% of its overall coverage to the war, making it the sixth most heavily covered news story of the week. The public’s sustained interest in the war, even during weeks where there the coverage is sparse, highlights the importance Americans place on the story.



The Iraq policy debate received slightly more news coverage last week than events on the ground in Iraq (4% of the newshole). Roughly a quarter of the public paid very close attention to the policy debate and 8% listed it as their most closely followed story of the week.

The 2008 presidential campaign was the most heavily covered news story last week. The majority of the campaign coverage was focused on the Democratic debate sponsored by CNN and YouTube where ordinary citizens submitted questions to the candidates via videotape. Nearly one-in-five Americans followed campaign news very closely and 12% said this was the story they followed most closely.

The second most heavily covered news story of the week involved Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and the controversy surrounding his recent statements to Congress. The national news

media devoted 6% of its overall coverage to this story. Public interest in this story remains relatively low, as the focus has expanded from Gonzales's involvement in the firing of eight U.S. attorneys to questions about whether he misled Congress on important national security issues. This past week 15% of the public followed the Gonzales story very closely, unchanged from last month and down slightly from late-March and early-April when 22% were following the story very closely. Republicans and Democrats are following this story in nearly equal proportions – a change from earlier months when Democrats were tracking the story much more closely than Republicans.

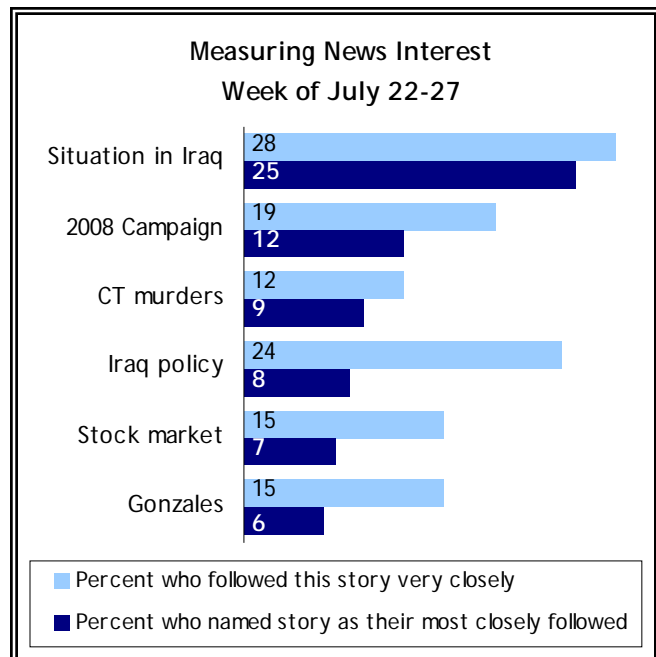
The gruesome murders of a mother and her two daughters in Cheshire, Connecticut drew a relatively large news audience last week. Although only 12% said they followed the story very closely, 9% listed this as the story they followed most closely, making it the number three story in terms of news interest. Overall, the national news media devoted 2% of its coverage to this story.

News about last week's stock market plunge was followed very closely by 15% of the public, 7% listed the stock market's recent ups and downs as their most closely followed story. The national media devoted

Interest in Gonzales Remains Flat

Following story...

	Very Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%
July 27-30, 2007	15	26	22	36	1=100
June 15-18, 2007	15	26	24	35	*=100
April 20-23, 2007	18	21	28	32	1=100
April 5-9, 2007	22	26	24	28	*=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	22	25	22	30	1=100
March 23-26, 2007	20	28	24	28	*=100
March 16-19, 2007	19	24	22	35	*=100



2% of its overall coverage to stock market news.

Sports Scandals Hit the Front Page

Several sports scandals have become national news stories in recent weeks. The most prominent story involves allegations that NFL quarterback Michael Vick was involved with illegal dog fighting. One-in-five Americans (21%) followed this story very closely last week another 27%

	---Following the story---					Don't know %
	Very Closely %	Fairly Closely %	Not too Closely %	Not at all Closely %		
Michael Vick dog fighting allegations	21	27	22	29	1=100	
Barry Bonds' home run record/controversy	12	19	24	45	*=100	
NBA referee betting on games	9	22	24	45	*=100	

followed it fairly closely. The national news media devoted 2% of its overall coverage to the Vick story.

The controversy surrounding Barry Bonds' baseball career as he comes close to breaking Hank Aaron's career home run record hasn't generated as much news coverage as the Vick allegations, nor is the public as interested in this story (12% followed this story very closely). News about a former NBA referee who is under investigation for betting on games including some he officiated has drawn the very close attention of 9% of the public, another 22% are following that story fairly closely.

Men are following the Vick story more closely than are women (26% vs. 17% very closely). The racial gap on this story is significant with 32% of blacks following very closely compared to 20% of whites. Young men are among the most interested in the Bonds story – 22% of men under age 50 are following the story very closely. Blacks and whites are about equally interested news about Bonds.

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:

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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
JULY 27-30, 2007 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,027

Q.1 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?”]**

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. News about the current situation and events in					
Iraq	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
April 5-9, 2007	33	39	16	11	1=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	34	37	16	13	*=100
March 23-26, 2007¹	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

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

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>
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
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. Questions about whether Attorney General Alberto Gonzales was honest in his testimony to Congress about national security issues and the firing of eight federal prosecutors

	15	26	22	36	1=100
June 15-18, 2007⁵	15	26	24	35	*=100
April 20-23, 2007	18	21	28	32	1=100
April 5-9, 2007	22	26	24	28	*=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	22	25	22	30	1=100

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

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.”

⁵ From March 16-19, 2007 to June 15-18, 2007, the story was listed as “Questions about how the White House and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales were involved in the firing of eight federal prosecutors.”

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>
March 23-26, 2007	20	28	24	28	*=100
March 16-19, 2007	19	24	22	35	*=100
March 9-12, 2007⁶	9	17	22	52	*=100
c. The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq					
July 20-23, 2007	24	28	20	27	1=100
July 13-16, 2007	23	24	24	28	1=100
July 6-9, 2007	20	30	20	30	*=100
June 1-4, 2007	27	26	23	24	*=100
May 24-27, 2007	20	27	24	27	2=100
May 18-21, 2007	30	32	20	18	*=100
May 11-14, 2007	24	32	19	24	1=100
May 4-7, 2007	25	26	19	29	1=100
April 27-30, 2007	30	31	19	20	*=100
April 20-23, 2007	18	31	21	29	1=100
April 12-16, 2007	22	29	24	25	*=100
April 5-9, 2007	25	29	22	23	1=100
March 30-April 2, 2007	31	28	20	21	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
January 12-15, 2007: President Bush's proposal to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq	26	29	21	23	1=100
40	33	13	13	1=100	
d. The murder of a mother and her two daughters in Connecticut after their house was broken into and burglarized					
	12	20	19	48	1=100
e. Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market					
March 2-5, 2007⁷	15	26	21	37	1=100
Early September, 2002	21	28	25	26	*=100
Late July, 2002	27	30	20	22	1=100
March, 2001	33	33	15	18	1=100
Mid-October, 2000	27	27	18	27	1=100
April, 2000	20	26	23	31	1=100
Early April, 2000	18	28	23	31	*=100
March, 2000	19	29	20	32	*=100
March, 1999	23	29	21	26	1=100
January, 1999	18	29	22	31	*=100
Early September, 1998	24	28	19	28	1=100
Mid-August, 1998	32	31	20	17	*=100
January, 1998	17	23	21	39	*=100
Early November, 1997	21	25	23	31	*=100
Mid-November, 1997	16	29	22	33	*=100
September, 1997	25	36	18	20	1=100
April, 1997	14	22	23	40	1=100
February, 1996	17	21	22	40	*=100
	12	20	25	42	1=100

⁶ March 9-12, 2007 asked about "The firing of eight federal prosecutors by the Justice Department."

⁷ March 2-5, 2007 asked about "The recent drop in the U.S. stock market." In Early November, 1997, the story was listed as "Thinking about last Monday when the stock market dropped, how closely did you follow what was happening?" From February, 1996 to Mid-November, 1997, the story was listed as "Recent major ups and downs in the stock market."

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>
f. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election	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, 2007⁸	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 ⁹	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

⁸ January 19-22, 2007 asked about "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

⁹ 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...

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

- 25 News about the current situation and events in Iraq
- 12 News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 9 The murder of a mother and her two daughters in Connecticut after their house was broken into and burglarized
- 8 The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq
- 7 Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market
- 6 Questions about whether Attorney General Alberto Gonzales was honest in his testimony to Congress about national security issues and the firing of eight federal prosecutors
- 11 Some other story (SPECIFY)
- 22 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100

Now thinking about some other kinds of things...

Q.3 How closely have you been following [READ AND ROTATE] would you say 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. Allegations that NFL quarterback Michael Vick was involved with illegal dog fighting	21	27	22	29	1=100
b. News about a former NBA referee who is under investigation for betting on games including some he officiated	9	22	24	45	*=100
c. Controversy about Barry Bonds' baseball career as he comes close to breaking the homerun record	12	19	24	45	*=100
d. Lindsay Lohan's recent arrest for drunk driving	8	19	23	49	1=100

On another subject...

Q.4 Did you happen to hear about a recent Democratic debate where ordinary people submitted video questions through YouTube for the candidates to answer? [IF YES, ASK: Did you watch the debate itself, or did you just hear or see reports in the news?]

- 13 Yes, watched the debate
- 42 Yes, heard/saw reports but did not watch it
- 44 No, haven't heard about it
- 1 Don't know/Refused
- 100

IF HEARD ABOUT IT (Q.4=1,2), ASK [N=599]:

Q.5 Compared to other debates you've seen or heard about, do you think this YouTube debate was better, worse or about the same in terms of [READ AND ROTATE]?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>About the same</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a. Helping you learn more about the candidates	28	12	53	7=100
b. Addressing a wide range of topics	30	9	51	10=100

Q.5 CONTINUED...

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	About the <u>same</u>	DK/ <u>Refused</u>
c. Asking the candidates challenging questions	29	12	50	9=100
d. Being interesting and entertaining	34	12	44	10=100

ASK ALL:

On another subject...

Q.6 Recently, there have been a number of scandals involving such celebrities as Britney Spears, Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan. Do you think these kinds of stories receive too much, too little or the right amount of news coverage?

87 Too much
 2 Too little
 8 Right amount
3 Don't know/Refused
 100

IF "TOO MUCH" (Q.6=1), ASK [N=905]:

Q.7 Who do you think is MOST to blame for the amount of coverage these kinds of stories receive [**READ AND ROTATE**]?

54 The news organizations for covering them so much
 OR
 32 The American public for paying so much attention to them
 12 Both [**DO NOT READ**]
 1 Neither [**DO NOT READ**]
1 Don't know/Refused [**DO NOT READ**]
 100

ASK ALL:

Q.8 Which types of news organizations do you think give these kinds of celebrity stories the most coverage [**READ AND ROTATE; ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE**]?

34 Cable news networks such as CNN, MSNBC and the Fox News channel
 27 Network news such as ABC, CBS and NBC
 15 Internet news websites
 8 Newspapers
 4 Radio news programs
 2 Other [**SPECIFY**] [**DO NOT READ**]
 1 None [**DO NOT READ**]
9 Don't know/Refused [**DO NOT READ**]
 100