



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:  
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## Public Wants More Coverage of U.S. Troops **IRAQ NEWS: LESS DOMINANT, STILL IMPORTANT**

News about the Iraq war does not dominate the public's consciousness nearly as much as it did last winter. Currently, just 16% of Americans name the Iraq war as the news story that first comes to mind when asked what has been in the news lately. In December and January, a period when U.S. policy toward Iraq and President Bush's troop surge drew extensive news coverage, far greater numbers named the Iraq war as the first story that came to mind.

More generally, public interest in news about the situation in Iraq is now less than it was earlier this year or in 2006. Since June, about 30% of the public, on average, said they have followed news about the situation in Iraq very closely. In 2006 and the first two months of this year, about 40% on average paid very close attention to Iraq news.

Nonetheless, Iraq remains a major news story in the public's view. For 29 of the past 41 weeks, it has been the leading story in the weekly *News Interest Index*. Moreover, Iraq is consistently rated as the most important problem facing the nation. In an early October survey by the Gallup Organization, 33% cited the situation in Iraq as the most important problem facing the nation, far more than named any other issue. That number is down somewhat from last winter, although consistent with measures from the spring and summer.

News coverage of Iraq, like public interest in the situation there, is now significantly less than it was at the start of the year. In January, roughly a quarter of the overall newshole (26%) in newspapers, TV newscasts, websites and radio was devoted to news about Iraq. In October, the

### **First News Story That Comes to Mind**

Nov 2-5, 2007

1. Iraq (16%)
2. California wildfires (13%)
3. 2008 campaign (10%)

Jan 12-15, 2007

1. Iraq (55%)
2. Kidnapped boys in MO (7%)
3. Winter weather (5%)

Jan 5-8, 2007

1. Iraq (34%)
2. President Ford's death (9%)
3. Saddam hanging (8%)

Dec. 14-18, 2006

1. Iraq (39%)
2. Mount Hood (10%)
3. Winter weather (3%)

Three most mentioned news stories  
in an open-ended question.

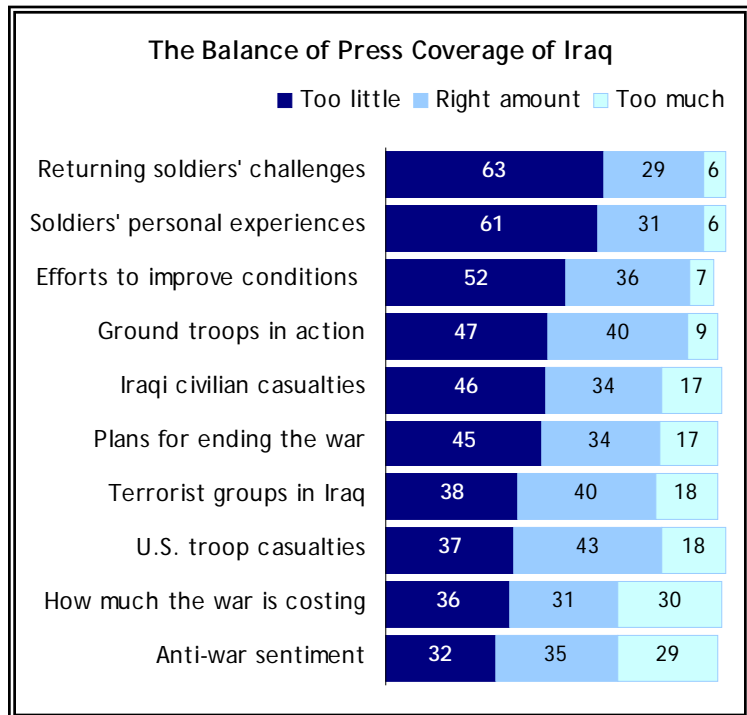
war received only half as much coverage on average (13%), according to data compiled by the Project for Excellence in Journalism’s *News Coverage Index*.

The diminished press coverage of Iraq is an important factor in the falloff in news interest, given that most Americans say they “come across” war news without looking for it, rather than seeking out news about the Iraq war. Overall, 75% of the public says they come across news about the war when they are not actively seeking it out, compared with just 20% who say they go looking for war news.

While public interest in the Iraq war has declined since the beginning of the year, a growing number of Americans say news organizations are devoting too little, rather than too much, coverage to the war. A third of Americans say news organizations are undercovering the war, a 10-point increase since June (23%). In particular, the public believes that the challenges and experiences of U.S. soldiers – both while serving in Iraq and after returning to the United States – are receiving too little news coverage.

Fully 63% say that “the challenges faced by some U.S. soldiers returning from Iraq” have received too little news coverage; about the same number (61%) say that reports about soldiers’ personal experiences have been undercovered. A majority (52%) also says that efforts to improve conditions in Iraq are getting too little coverage.

Smaller pluralities believe news organizations have focused too little on ground troops in action in Iraq (47%), Iraqi civilian casualties (46%) and plans for ending the war (45%).



There are some aspects of the war that sizable minorities believe are overcovered. Three-in-ten say the press has given too much coverage to how much the war costs, while about the same number (29%) says that anti-war sentiment has been overcovered. However, even on those stories, as many or more say the press has provided too little coverage as say they have been overcovered.

Overall evaluations of press coverage of the Iraq war remain fairly negative. While 44% say the press has done an excellent or good job covering the war, a majority (53%) say the press has done only a fair or poor job (with nearly a quarter saying poor). These press ratings have remained relatively stable throughout this year, though they are much lower than the ratings the press received in the early months of the war.

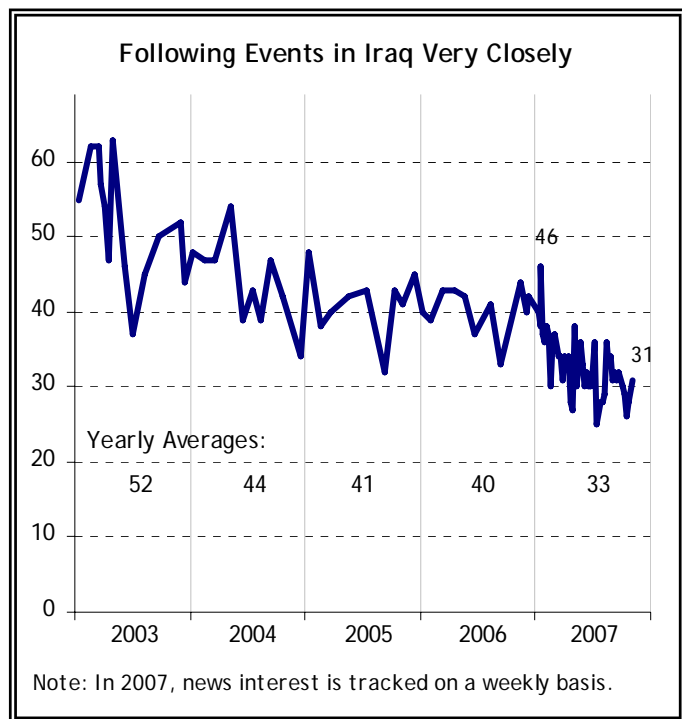
In late March and early April 2003, during the combat phase of the war, 78% of the public said the press was doing an excellent or good job covering the war in Iraq, only 19% said they were doing a fair or poor job. Currently, Republicans are slightly more critical than Democrats of the job the press is doing (57% of Republicans say the press is doing a fair or poor job vs. 50% of Democrats).

### Iraq Interest Over Time

Public interest in the Iraq war peaked during the conflict's early phase in the spring of 2003, and began to decline after the Pentagon declared an end to major combat operations. For the year in 2003, 52% of Americans followed news from Iraq very closely on average.

Overall interest fell to 44% in 2004, on average, with the highest level of interest measured in April and May of that year, amid the insurgency in Fallujah and reports of prisoner abuse at Abu Ghraib (54% very closely). Throughout 2005 and 2006, public attentiveness to the situation in Iraq fluctuated in response to news events, but on average about four-in-ten followed the story very closely in both years.

In the first 10 months of 2007, public interest in Iraq has averaged 33% in the weekly *News Interest Index*. Interest was significantly greater during January, when Bush announced a major troop increase in Iraq, than it has been in recent weeks. In the current survey, 31% say they are following news about the situation in Iraq very closely, while 20% named it as the story they followed *most* closely last week.



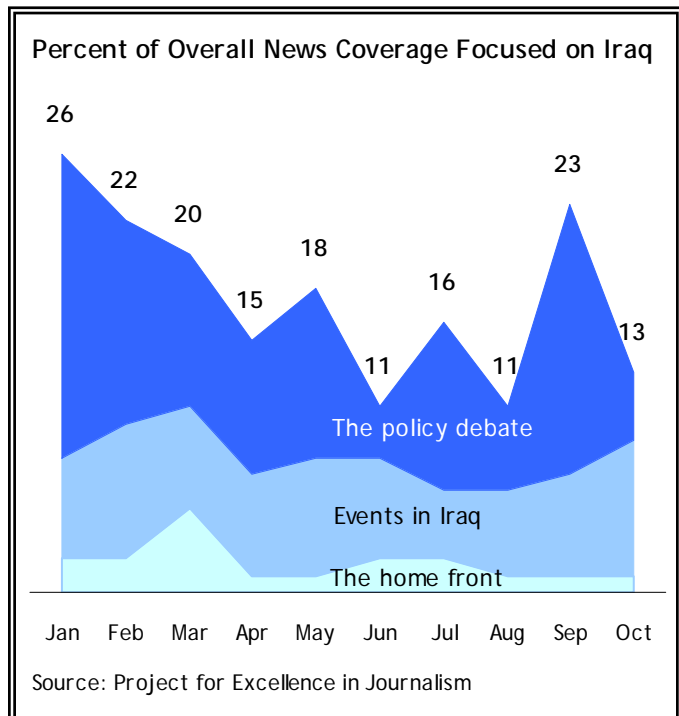
Although interest in Iraq news has declined this year, it has been the top story in the weekly *News Interest Index* far more often than any other story. Last week, however, about as many people named the 2008 election as cited the Iraq war as the story they followed most closely (22% vs. 20%). A week earlier, the California wildfires were the dominant story in terms of news interest: roughly four times as many named the wildfires as the week’s top story as cited the war in Iraq (46% vs. 12%).

For the past few years, there has been a modest but consistent partisan gap in news interest about the war. The differences in the current survey are fairly typical in this regard: 35% of Democrats say they have followed news about the situation in Iraq very closely, compared with 31% of independents and 27% of Republicans.

### Tracking News Coverage

News coverage of Iraq during 2007 also was higher in January than it has been for most of the period since then. In January, news organizations devoted 26% of the overall newshole to three main elements of the Iraq story – the Iraq policy debate, events in Iraq, and news about the homefront – according to data collected by the Project for Excellence in Journalism for its *News Coverage Index*.

The amount of time devoted to Iraq news declined markedly over the spring and summer. In both June and August, for instance, just 11% of the total newshole on average was spent on Iraq coverage, about half of the amount of coverage, or less, that news organizations devoted to Iraq during the first three months of 2007.

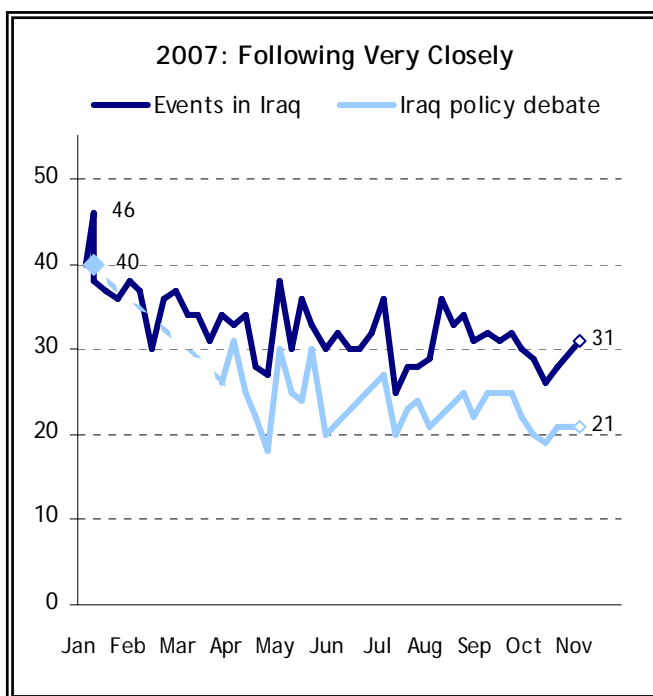


Iraq coverage increased sharply in September as news organizations focused extensively on Gen. David Petraeus’ long-awaited progress report on Iraq. That month, nearly a quarter of the newshole (23%) was devoted to Iraq news on average; during the week of Petraeus’ testimony before Congress (Sept. 9-14), fully 36% of news coverage was about the Iraq policy debate.

Since then, however, news coverage of Iraq has declined to about the same levels as in the summer. In October, just 13% of all coverage was devoted to Iraq news, about half the amount from just a month earlier (23%).

The track of news coverage for the year shows that the Iraq policy debate has consistently received more coverage than have events in Iraq, according to the PEJ data. Indeed, during the two months in which news organizations have provided the greatest amount of overall news coverage of Iraq – January and September – the bulk of that coverage has been focused on the policy debate rather than on events in Iraq. In January, of the 26% of news coverage on Iraq, 18% was focused on the policy debate, while just 6% of the coverage was of news about events in Iraq. That was the case in September as well, when news organizations devoted more than twice as much coverage to the Iraq policy debate than to events in Iraq (16% vs. 6%).

Despite this imbalance in the coverage, the public has consistently expressed greater interest in news about events in Iraq than it has about the policy debate in Washington. Even in mid-September, shortly after Petraeus delivered his testimony, more Americans said they were following events in Iraq very closely than said the same about Petraeus' report (31% vs. 25%).



The only point this year when the public showed a great deal of interest in the Washington policy debate was in mid-January, shortly after Bush's announcement that he was sending more troops in Iraq (40% very closely). Even then, however, as many or more people said they were following news about events in Iraq very closely.

### Public Wants to Hear the Soldiers' Stories

News coverage about the Iraq homefront – stories about returning soldiers and their families and the treatment of injured troops – is overshadowed by the amount of coverage of both the Iraq policy debate and events in Iraq. However, these clearly are subjects the public wants to hear more about. Fully 63% say they think the press is giving too little coverage to the challenges faced by some U.S. soldiers returning from Iraq. Nearly as many (61%) say the press is giving too little coverage to reports about the personal experiences of soldiers.

The public's interest in conditions facing returning soldiers was evident in the response to the scandal at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in March of this year. At the height of the Walter Reed story, 31% of the public said they followed this story very closely. Perhaps more striking, 24% volunteered the Walter Reed scandal as the story of the week that received too little coverage, far more than the number citing any other of that week's stories (See "Public Tunes In To Walter Reed Story," March 15, 2007).

The idea that news about U.S. troops is getting too little coverage also represents a rare point of agreement between Democrats and Republicans. Six-in-ten Democrats and 63% of Republicans say the press has given too little coverage to the personal experiences of soldiers. Similarly, 65% of Democrats and 61% of Republicans say the challenges facing returning soldiers have received too little coverage.

	Rep	Dem	Ind	R-D gap
<i>Too little coverage of...</i>	%	%	%	
Anti-war sentiment in U.S.	14	49	33	-35
Cost of war	19	52	37	-33
U.S. troop casualties	25	53	33	-28
Iraqi civilian casualties	28	56	55	-28
Plans for ending U.S. involvement	30	55	52	-25
Challenges facing returning soldiers	61	65	65	-4
Ground troops in action	49	50	45	-1
Personal experiences of soldiers	63	60	60	+3
Terrorist groups in Iraq	39	34	40	+5
Efforts to improve conditions in Iraq	60	49	50	+11

But in several other areas of coverage – including stories about anti-war sentiment, the cost of the war, U.S. troop casualties, Iraqi casualties and plans for ending U.S. involvement in Iraq – there are vast partisan differences in views of the amount of news coverage. In each of these cases, far more Democrats than Republicans say news organizations are giving the issue too little coverage.

There also is a partisan gap in opinions about the amount of coverage devoted to efforts to improving conditions in Iraq. But here, more Republicans than Democrats want to see more coverage: 60% of Republicans say the press is giving too little attention to efforts to improve conditions in Iraq, compared with 49% of Democrats.

## Many Want More Iraq Coverage

On balance, the public believes that news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage to the war generally. However, the number of people saying the press gives the war too little coverage has increased since June.

Overall, 43% say that news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage to the war in Iraq, while 33% think they are giving the war too little coverage, and 18% say news organizations have given the war too much coverage.

<i>Press coverage of the war:</i>	<u>June</u> %	<u>July</u> %	<u>Nov</u> %
Too much	23	18	18
Too little	23	28	33
Right amount	47	48	43
Don't know	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>6</u>
	100	100	100

Currently, nearly twice as many say the war is being undercovered as say it is being overcovered (33% vs. 18%). In June, as many people said that news organizations were giving the war too much coverage as said the war was being undercovered (23% each).

Republicans and Democrats are in agreement over the amount of coverage the media is devoting to Iraq. While a plurality of both groups says news organizations are giving the right amount of coverage to the war in Iraq, growing minorities say the press is paying too little attention to the war. More than a third of Republicans (34%) and Democrats (35%) express this view.

## Less Emotionally Involved in Iraq News?

More than four-in-ten Americans (44%) say that the people they know are becoming less emotionally involved in news from Iraq than they once were. That represents a modest increase since April 2006 in the percentage expressing this view (37%), though the current measure is identical to June 2005.

However, the impression that people may be disengaging from the war has increased over the long term. In March 2004, only about a quarter (26%) said people they knew had become less emotionally involved with news about the war.

	<u>May</u> <u>2004</u> %	<u>Aug</u> <u>2004</u> %	<u>Jan</u> <u>2005</u> %	<u>June</u> <u>2005</u> %	<u>Apr</u> <u>2006</u> %	<u>Nov</u> <u>2007</u> %
<i>People are becoming...</i>						
Less emotionally involved	26	36	35	44	37	44
More emotionally involved	33	19	19	15	21	20
About the same	36	41	44	36	38	32
Mixed/Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100

## Internet News Audience More Critical

In general, people rely on the same sources for news about the war as for news about other subjects. Fully 60% say television news their main source for information about Iraq, with 32% relying on cable news and 28% network news.

Roughly one-in-six Americans (16%) say they mostly rely on the internet for news about the Iraq war, which is greater than the numbers who mostly rely on either newspapers (11%) or the radio (9%). Nearly three-in-ten Americans (28%) younger than 30 rely mostly on the internet, more than three times the number citing newspapers as the main source for war news (8%).

	Total	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
	%	%	%	%	%
Television	60	54	58	62	73
Cable news	32	37	28	29	40
Network news	28	17	30	33	33
Internet	16	28	18	10	3
Newspapers	11	8	9	17	15
Radio	9	7	11	8	6
Other/DK	4	3	4	3	3
	100	100	100	100	100

Overall, 44% of the public says that press coverage of the war has been excellent or good, while more than half (53%) give the press an only fair or poor rating. Those who rely most on the internet for news about Iraq are the most critical of the press. About two-thirds (68%) of those who name the internet as their main source of war news say that press coverage has been only fair or poor. By contrast, those who rely on network news give the highest ratings to press coverage of the war (55% excellent/good).

Those who rely primarily on the internet for news about Iraq also are

	----- Main source for Iraq news -----					
	Total	TV Networks	Cable News	News-papers	Radio	Online
War coverage is...	%	%	%	%	%	%
Excellent/good	44	55	46	46	39	27
Only fair/poor	53	43	51	53	59	68
Don't know	3	2	3	1	2	5
	100	100	100	100	100	100
<i>Amount of press coverage</i>						
Too little	33	29	34	30	27	41
Too much	18	18	19	18	20	15
Right amount	43	49	42	47	43	36
Don't know	6	4	5	5	10	8
	100	100	100	100	100	100

more likely than other news audiences to say that the press is devoting too little coverage to the war. About four-in-ten (41%) of those who rely on the internet for Iraq news say that news organizations are giving too little coverage to the conflict; that compares with 34% of those who cite cable news as their main source, and smaller proportions of other news audiences.



## Awareness of U.S. Casualties

When asked whether the number of American military casualties in October were higher, lower or about equal compared with previous months, 41% of the public correctly answered that the number of U.S. troops deaths had declined. According to the Iraq Coalition Casualty Count, a private research group, <http://icasualties.org/oif/>, 38 U.S. troops were killed in Iraq in October, the lowest total for any month this year. (The overall U.S. death toll for the year, which currently stands at more than 850, is higher than for any year since the war began.)

About half of Republicans (51%) knew that troop deaths had declined in

October, compared with 43% of independents and 33% of Democrats. As might be expected, those who follow Iraq news very closely are more likely than those who have paid less attention to Iraq news to know that U.S. military casualties had declined.

	<i>Were US deaths in October*...</i>			
	{Correct}		About	DK/Ref
	<u>Lower</u>	<u>Higher</u>	<u>equal</u>	
	%	%	%	%
Total	41	21	11	27=100
Republican	51	14	12	23=100
Democrat	33	25	11	31=100
Independent	43	19	11	27=100
College grad	45	17	14	24=100
Some college	45	20	9	26=100
HS or Less	35	23	10	32=100
<i>Following Iraq news...</i>				
Very closely	54	22	10	14=100
Fairly closely	42	21	11	26=100
Not too closely	33	19	10	38=100
Not at all closely	25	19	15	41=100
*Question wording: "Do you happen to know whether the number of American military casualties in October of this year was higher, lower or about equal compared to previous months this year?"				

## 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](http://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  
Richard Wike and Kim Parker, Senior Researchers  
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James Albright, Executive Assistant

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**NOVEMBER 2-5, 2007 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,009**

Q.1 What is the FIRST news story that comes to mind when you think about what's been in the news lately?  
**[OPEN END. RECORD FIRST MENTION ONLY; FIRST FEW WORDS/BASIC CONCEPT IS SUFFICIENT]**

		Jan 12-15, <u>2007</u>	Jan 5-8, <u>2007</u>	Dec 14-18, <u>2006</u>	Nov 30- Dec 3, <u>2006</u>
16	Iraq War	55	34	39	44
13	California wildfires				
10	Presidential campaign				
4	Economy/Housing/Gas and oil prices		2	2	
4	Pakistan				
2	Weather/Global warming				
2	Bush (general)	3		1	1
1	100 car pileup in California				
1	Hurricane Noel				
1	Immigration				
1	Floods in Mexico				
1	Iran				
6	Misc. local	1	4	3	2
4	Misc. crime	4	4	10	7
4	Misc. sports	*	1	2	1
3	Misc. politics	1	4	3	2
2	Misc. entertainment	*	1	1	1
2	Misc. accidents	1	*	2	3
1	Misc. international	2	1	1	1
9	Other	24	37	25	21
<u>13</u>	No Answer/Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>17</u>
100		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 Closely	Fairly Closely	Not too Closely	Not at all Closely	DK/ Refused
a. News about the current situation and events in					
Iraq	31	35	18	15	1=100
October 26-29, 2007	28	37	21	13	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	28	37	20	15	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	26	36	18	19	1=100
October 5-8, 2007	29	33	22	16	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	30	41	18	11	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	32	38	17	13	*=100
September 14-17, 2007	31	36	18	15	0=100
September 7-10, 2007	32	34	20	14	*=100
August 30 – September 2, 2007	31	34	18	16	1=100

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>
August 24-27, 2007	34	36	18	12	*=100
August 17-20, 2007	33	34	18	15	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	36	37	14	13	*=100
August 3-6, 2007	29	40	19	12	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	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-March 26, 2007 <sup>1</sup>	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
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

<sup>1</sup> From May, 2003 to March 23-26, 2007, the story was listed as "News about the current situation 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>
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 <sup>2</sup>	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 <sup>3</sup>	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 <sup>4</sup>	48	29	15	6	2=100

b. The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq

	<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 26-29, 2007</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 19-22, 2007</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 12-15, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 5-8, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 28 – October 1, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 21-24, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 14-17, 2007<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>September 7-10, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 30-September 2, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 24-27, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>August 3-6, 2007</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 27-30, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>July 20-23, 2007</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1=100</b>

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

<sup>3</sup> 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.”

<sup>4</sup> In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as “Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq.”

<sup>5</sup> September 14-17, 2007 asked about “General David Petraeus’s report to Congress about how things are going 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>
<b>July 13-16, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 6-9, 2007</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 1-4, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2=100</b>
<b>May 24-27, 2007</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 18-21, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>May 11-14, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>May 4-7, 2007</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>April 27-30, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>April 20-23, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>April 12-16, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>April 5-9, 2007</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 30-April 2, 2007</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
<b>January 12-15, 2007: President Bush's proposal to increase the number of U.S. troops in Iraq</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1=100</b>
c. George Bush's nomination of Michael Mukasey to be the next U.S. Attorney General					
<b>September 21-24, 2007</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1=100</b>
	<b>9</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>*=100</b>
d. The impact of Hurricane Noel on the Bahamas and Cuba					
<b>September 7-10, 2007: The impact of Hurricanes Felix and Henriette on Mexico and Central America</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>August 24-27, 2007: The destruction caused by Hurricane Dean in Mexico and the Caribbean</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>November, 2005: The impact of Hurricane Wilma on Mexico and Florida</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>1=100</b>
September, 2005: Impact of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans and the Gulf Coast	34	37	21	8	*=100
July, 2005: Recent hurricanes that have affected the Gulf Coast of the U.S.	70	21	7	2	*=100
September, 2003: Hurricane Isabel	38	37	17	8	*=100
Early October, 2002: Recent hurricanes in the Gulf of Mexico and Louisiana	47	28	15	10	*=100
	38	34	18	10	*=100
e. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
<b>October 19-22, 2007</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>August 10-13, 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

**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>
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
f. News about candidates for the 2008					
presidential election	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 26-29, 2007</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 19-22, 2007</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 12-15, 2007</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>October 5-8, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 28 – October 1, 2007</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 21-24, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 14-17, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 7-10, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 30-September 2, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 24-27, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 17-20, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August 10-13, 2007</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>*=100</b>

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>
<b>August 3-6, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 27-30, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>July 20-23, 2007</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>July 13-16, 2007</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 6-9, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>June 29-July 2, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 22-25, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 15-18, 2007</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 8-11, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>June 1-4, 2007</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>May 24-27, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 18-21, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>May 11-14, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>May 4-7, 2007</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>April 27-30, 2007</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>April 20-23, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>April 12-16, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>April 5-9, 2007</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 30-April 2, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>March 23-26, 2007</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 16-19, 2007</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>March 9-12, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>March 2-5, 2007</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>February 23-26, 2007</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>February 16-19, 2007</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>February 9-12, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>February 2-5, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 26-29, 2007</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 19-22, 2007<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>24</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<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
Late February, 2004	24	40	23	12	1=100
Early February, 2004 <sup>7</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

<sup>6</sup> January 19-22, 2007 asked about "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

<sup>7</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.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>
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
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

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 candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- 20 News about the current situation and events in Iraq
- 16 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 7 The impact of Hurricane Noel on the Bahamas and Cuba
- 5 The debate in Washington over U.S. policy in Iraq
- 3 George Bush's nomination of Michael Mukasey to be the next U.S. Attorney General
- 14 Some other story (**SPECIFY**)
- 13 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Now thinking about the Iraq war...

Q.4 Ordinarily, do you find that you go looking for the latest news about the Iraq war, or do you typically happen to come across news about the war without looking for it?

- 20 Go looking for war news
- 75 Come across war news without looking
- 5 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Q.5 Which would you say has been your MAIN source for news about the Iraq war **[READ AND RANDOMIZE ITEMS 1-5]**?

- 11 Newspapers
- 28 Network television news, such as ABC, CBS or NBC
- 32 Cable news channels such as CNN or the Fox News Channel
- 9 Radio
- 16 The internet
- 2 **[DO NOT READ]** Some other
- 2 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Q.6 In general, how would you rate the job the press has done in covering the war in Iraq – excellent, good, only fair or poor?

**BASED ON THOSE FOLLOWING THE IRAQ WAR  
VERY OR FAIRLY CLOSELY**

<u>Total</u>		Nov 2-5,	Feb 23-26,	Feb 2-5,	July	March 20-
		<u>2007</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2003</u>	April 7, <u>2003</u>
10	Excellent	11	13	12	22	38
34	Good	34	37	32	42	40
30	Only fair	29	27	28	25	13
23	Poor	24	23	27	9	6
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	*	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

Q.7 Do you think news organizations are giving too much, too little or the right amount of coverage to the war in Iraq?

		July 20-23, <u>2007</u>	June 1-4, <u>2007</u>
18	Too much	18	23
33	Too little	28	23
43	Right amount	48	47
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
100		100	100

Q.8 Still thinking about the war, please tell me if you think the press is giving too much, too little, or about the right amount of coverage to... **[READ; ROTATE]?**

		<u>Too much coverage</u>	<u>Too little coverage</u>	<u>About the right amount</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
a.	Ground troops in action in Iraq April 2-7, 2003	9 24	47 16	40 58	4=100 2=100
b.	Reports about the personal experiences of soldiers April 2-7, 2003	6 15	61 30	31 52	2=100 3=100
c.	U.S. troop casualties April 2-7, 2003 <sup>8</sup>	18 15	37 20	43 63	2=100 2=100
d.	Iraqi civilian casualties April 2-7, 2003	17 17	46 28	34 51	3=100 4=100
e.	Anti-war sentiment in the United States April 2-7, 2003	29 40	32 18	35 38	4=100 4=100
f.	How much the war is costing April 2-7, 2003 <sup>9</sup>	30 25	36 31	31 41	3=100 3=100
g.	The challenges faced by some U.S. soldiers returning from Iraq	6	63	29	2=100
h.	Plans for eventually ending U.S. involvement in Iraq	17	45	34	4=100
i.	Terrorist groups and their involvement in the war	18	38	40	4=100
j.	Efforts to improve conditions in Iraq	7	52	36	5=100

<sup>8</sup> For April 2-7, 2003, the question asked about: "Allied troop casualties."

<sup>9</sup> For April 2-7, 2003, the question asked about: "How much the war is going to cost."

Q.9 Thinking about the people you know, would you say they are becoming LESS emotionally involved in the news from Iraq than they were, MORE emotionally involved, or are people you know about as involved as they had been?

		April <u>2006</u>	June <u>2005</u>	Jan <u>2005</u>	Aug <u>2004</u>	June <u>2004</u>	May <u>2004</u>
44	Less emotionally involved	37	44	35	36	35	26
20	More emotionally involved	21	15	19	19	23	33
32	About as involved as they have been	38	36	44	41	37	36
1	Mixed/Some more, some less (VOL.)	1	1	*	*	1	1
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.10 Do you personally know someone who is currently serving, or has recently served in the military in Iraq, or not? **[IF YES, ASK:]** Is that a family member, a friend, or just someone you know? *{AP 2-07}*

26	Yes, Family member
40	Yes, friend
27	Yes, someone you know
1	Yes, self (VOL.)
38	No
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q.11 Just one final question about Iraq, do you happen to know whether the number of American military casualties in October of this year was higher, lower, or about equal compared to previous months this year?

		June 22-25, <u>2007</u> <sup>10</sup>
21	Higher	66 {correct}
41	Lower {correct}	4
11	About equal	22
<u>27</u>	Don't Know/Refused	<u>8</u>
100		100

<sup>10</sup>

For June 22-25, 2007, the question was "What's your impression about what's happened in Iraq so far this year? Has the number of American casualties since January been higher, lower, or about equal compared to the same period last year?"