



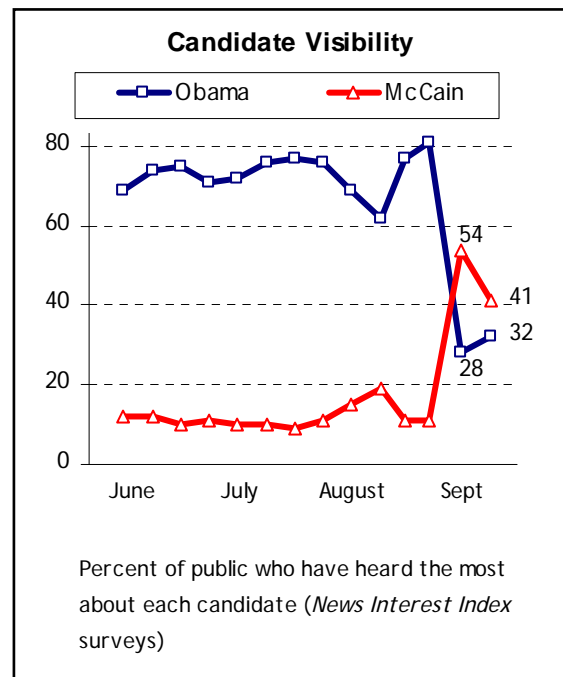
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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Public Sees Obama Ads Getting More Negative
VIEWS OF PALIN FLUID AS SPOTLIGHT REMAINS ON GOP TICKET

Sarah Palin continued to be a dominant factor in presidential campaign coverage last week, but her impact on the race remains unclear and her public image is very much in flux.

Palin clearly has boosted John McCain’s visibility. From mid-June through the last week of August, Barack Obama consistently led McCain as the candidate the public was hearing the most about in the news. McCain received an expected bump following the Republican convention, but he continued to top Obama last week as 41% pointed to McCain as the more visible candidate while 32% named Obama. Notably, 17% said they had been hearing the most about Palin – even though they were specifically asked to name a presidential candidate.



According to the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism, stories revolving around Palin accounted for 50% of the campaign coverage newshole last week. And as the public learns more about her, opinions about Palin are changing. Three-in-ten (31%) say their view of her has become more favorable in recent days, while nearly as many (27%) say their opinion has become less favorable. Only

	More favorable %	Less favorable %	No change %	Don't know %
John McCain	28	25	45	2=100
Barack Obama	20	20	58	2=100
Sarah Palin	31	27	37	5=100
Joe Biden	14	18	58	10=100

Question: In the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of _____, a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of him changed lately?

37% say their opinion of Palin has not changed in recent days.

A solid majority (67%) heard at least a little about Palin’s recent interview with ABC News. While a plurality of those who heard about the interview (40%) said Palin did a good job, relatively few (12%) rated her performance as excellent.

With his heightened visibility, views about McCain have become more fluid as well, even as opinions of Obama and Joe Biden have largely remained stable. More than half of the public says their opinion of McCain has changed in recent days – with slightly more saying their view has become more favorable (28%) rather than less favorable (25%). Fewer than half (45%) say their opinion of the Arizona senator has not changed lately.

In contrast, nearly six-in-ten (58%) say their opinion of Obama has not changed in recent days. Some 20% say they their opinion of the Democratic nominee has become more favorable in recent days, while an equal percentage say their view of Obama has become less favorable. Similarly, 58% say their view of Biden has not changed in recent days. Among those whose opinions have changed, slightly more say their view of Obama’s running mate has become less favorable (18%) than more (14%).

Republicans More Positive About McCain and Palin

Republicans are showing more enthusiasm than Democrats for each of their nominees. Fully 53% say their opinion of McCain has become more favorable in recent days. By contrast, only 38% of Democrats say their opinion of Obama has become more favorable recently. More than half of Democrats (54%) say their view of Obama has not changed recently.

Among independents, some 28% say their opinion of McCain has become more favorable in recent days. Only 14% of independents say their opinion of Obama has become more favorable.

Republicans are also enthusiastic about Palin: 58% say their opinion of Palin has become more favorable in recent days. By contrast, only 25% of Democrats say they have come to have a more favorable view of Biden recently.

Palin’s image is split among women: 30% say their view of her has become more

	More <u>Favorable</u> %	Less <u>favorable</u> %	No <u>change</u> %	Don't <u>know</u> %
Total	31	27	37	5=100
Republicans	58	4	34	4=100
Democrats	14	47	35	4=100
Independents	31	23	40	6=100
Men	33	25	37	5=100
Women	30	29	36	5=100

favorable while 29% say their view of her has become less favorable. On balance, men’s views of Palin are more favorable than less (33% vs. 25%) in the past few days.

Is Obama Changing His Tone?

About six-in-ten (58%) say they have seen a McCain television commercial in the past few days and 54% say they have seen an Obama ad. The public’s perception of the tone of the campaign ads has changed significantly over the past month.

In early August, most of those who had seen Obama’s ads said they were mainly positive messages about Obama; very few thought they were negative messages about McCain. Today, the public is divided about the tone of the Democratic nominee’s ads: 24% say they are mostly positive messages about Obama while just as many (25%) say they are negative messages about his opponent. On balance, Republicans and independents now see Obama’s ads as more negative than positive. Just the opposite was true a month ago.

Views of McCain’s television ads are similar to views of Obama’s. One-in-four say McCain’s ads are mostly positive messages about the GOP nominee, while 27% say they are mostly negative messages about his opponent. Last month, 19% said McCain’s ads were mostly positive and 31% said they were mostly negative.

The increase in the percent that now see the McCain ads as having a positive message comes primarily from Republicans and independents. Fully 42% of Republicans now say McCain’s ads are mostly positive messages about the nominee. This is up dramatically from 23% who said McCain’s ads were delivering a positive message just a month ago. Among independents, 26% now say McCain’s ads are mainly positive – up from 18% in August.

Changing Views of Campaign Commercials		
	Aug 1-4 %	Sept 12-15 %
<i>Saw Obama commercial(s)</i>		
Yes	58	54
Mostly positive on Obama	38	24
Mostly negative on McCain	13	25
Neither/DK	7	5
No haven’t seen/DK	42	46
	100	100
<i>Saw McCain commercial(s)</i>		
Yes	55	58
Mostly positive on McCain	19	25
Mostly negative on Obama	31	27
Neither/DK	5	6
No haven’t seen/DK	45	42
	100	100

Public Continues to See Bias in Campaign Coverage

Views of how the press is covering the presidential campaign have changed little in recent months. Half of the public continues to think that the press is showing bias in its coverage of the candidates, with 36% saying the press is biased toward Obama and 14% saying it is biased in favor of McCain. Some 40% say the press has not shown bias one way or the other. In late

July, 42% said the press was biased toward Obama and 6% said the press was biased toward McCain.

Most Republicans (63%) continue to say the press is biased in favor of Obama, while most Democrats (52%) say the press has not shown any bias. Notably, the percentage of Democrats who say the press is biased in favor of McCain has increased from 10% in late July to 24% now.

Lipstick on a Pig

On the campaign trail last week, Barack Obama attracted a good deal of attention when he commented from the stump that although “you can put lipstick on a pig, it’s still a pig.”

	A <u>lot</u> %	A <u>little</u> %	Nothing <u>at all</u> %	DK %
How much have you heard about... Obama’s comment about lipstick on a pig	55	25	19	1=100
Palin’s interview on ABC	35	32	32	1=100

His words registered widely with the public. Fully 55% heard a lot about it and another 25% heard a little. Only one-in-five heard nothing at all about Obama’s comment. Among the public who had heard a lot or little about the remark, a solid majority (66%) believe that Obama intended it as a joke about McCain’s polices. Very few (21%) say that he intended to insult Palin.

Predictably, the answers cut along party lines. Republicans are evenly divided between seeing the comment as a joke about McCain (42%) or an insult directed at Palin (43%). Democrats overwhelming interpret the comment as a joke (83%) rather than an insult (8%).

In other news, more than a third of the public (35%) heard a lot about Palin’s interview with ABC News, and a comparable percentage (32%) said that they had heard a little about it. Among those who heard a lot or little about the interview, roughly half (52%) said that her performance was excellent (12%) or good (40%), while 37% rated it only fair (22%) or poor (15%). Republicans gave Palin a far better rating than Democrats. Fully 82% of Republicans called her performance excellent or good, while just 28% of Democrats thought she performed that well. Responses by gender mirror the public as a whole.

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 were collected from September 8-14 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected September 12-15 from a nationally representative sample of 1,006 adults.

The Presidential Campaign Then and Now: 2004 to 2008

The American public sees the current presidential campaign as more interesting -- but less informative -- than the Bush vs. Kerry contest in 2004.

Comparing attitudes measured shortly after the party conventions in each year, the public is more likely to describe this year's race as interesting rather than dull. In addition, fewer Americans view the campaign's tone as too negative compared with the 2004 contest at this point.

Currently, 68% say that the campaign is interesting, while one-in-four (26%)

describe it as dull. The percentage that sees the race as interesting is up 18 points from the fall of 2004, when half found the campaign interesting and a sizeable minority (42%) described it as dull. Across many subgroups, greater percentages call the campaign interesting now than did so four years ago. Some of the greatest change is found among individuals under 30 years of age (+28%) and among Democrats (+24%).

When the public is asked to characterize the tone of the presidential campaign thus far, fewer now than in 2004 describe the race as too negative. Four years ago, more than six-in-ten (62%) said that the campaign was too negative, while just 32% said it was not. Now, 43% describe the race as too negative and a slight majority (51%) says it is not.

This shift in the balance of opinion is found across gender and party, but nowhere is it stronger than among young people (those under 30). For this group, 58% said that the

2008: A More Interesting Race than '04

---September 2008---				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<i>So far campaign has been...</i>	%	%	%	%
Interesting	68	75	74	61
Dull	26	24	22	29
Neither (VOL.)	5	1	3	8
Don't know/Refused	1	0	1	2
	100	100	100	100
---September 2004*---				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<i>So far campaign has been...</i>	%	%	%	%
Interesting	50	56	50	42
Dull	42	36	43	49
Neither (VOL.)	6	5	4	8
Don't know/Refused	2	3	3	1
	100	100	100	100

*Based on registered voters.

Different Views from Young and Old on Tone of the Campaign

---September 2008---					
	Total	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
<i>So far campaign has been...</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Too negative	43	30	42	51	52
Not too negative	51	68	51	43	42
Neither (VOL.)	4	2	5	4	4
Don't know/Refused	2	0	2	2	2
	100	100	100	100	100
---September 2004*---					
	Total	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+
<i>So far campaign has been...</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Too negative	62	58	59	72	61
Not too negative	32	38	35	23	28
Neither (VOL.)	1	1	2	1	1
Don't know/Refused	5	3	4	4	10
	100	100	100	100	100

*Based on registered voters.

campaign was too negative in 2004, while just three-in-ten (30%) describe it this way today. That is markedly different than older Americans. Among those 65 and older, a majority (61%) described the presidential race as too negative in 2004 and still half (52%) describe the campaign as too negative this year.

Where the public appears less satisfied with this campaign than with the 2004 contest is in how informative the race has been. In September four years ago, a solid majority (63%) described the campaign as informative, while a third (33%) found the campaign not informative. Currently, just over half (54%) see the campaign as informative and a substantial minority (41%) see it as not.

Campaign Viewed as Less Informative				
---September 2008---				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<i>So far campaign has been...</i>	%	%	%	%
Informative	54	62	59	45
Not informative	41	37	37	49
Neither (VOL.)	3	1	2	4
Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100	100
---September 2004*---				
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
<i>So far campaign has been...</i>	%	%	%	%
Informative	63	70	63	56
Not informative	33	27	33	40
Neither (VOL.)	1	1	1	1
Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100

*Based on registered voters.

Hurricane Ike Draws Large News Audience

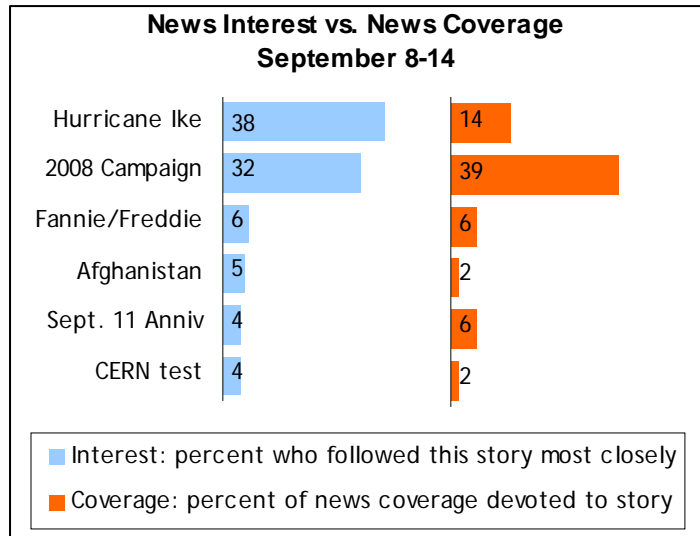
Hurricane Ike attracted a large news audience last week with 50% of the public paying very close attention to the devastating storm. Nearly four-in-ten (38%) listed Ike as the single news story they were following more closely than any other, making it the public's top news story of the week.

The latest Pew News Interest Index survey was conducted before this week's dramatic events on Wall Street.

	Strong Interest in Coverage of Ike				
	<i>Following story...</i>				
	Very closely	Fairly closely	Not too closely	Not At all closely	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%
Hurricane Ike (9/08)	50	32	13	5	*=100
Hurricane Gustav (9/08)	42	35	17	6	*=100
Tropical Storm Hanna (9/08)	34	37	19	10	0=100
Hurricane Dolly (7/08)	19	29	29	23	*=100
Hurricane Wilma (11/05)	34	37	21	8	*=100
Hurricane Katrina (9/05)	70	21	7	2	*=100
Hurricane Isabel (9/03)	47	28	15	10	*=100

Interest in news about Ike topped that of recent storms Hurricane Gustav and Tropical Storm Hanna and surpassed interest in news about widespread flooding in the Midwest last spring. Still, interest in Ike was nowhere near that of Hurricane Katrina – 70% of Americans were following news about Katrina very closely in September, 2005.

The public divided its attention last week between the hurricane and the presidential campaign. Interest in the campaign remained high as 40% followed campaign news very closely and 32% listed this as their most closely followed story. For its part, the national news media continued to focus heavily on the presidential race – devoting 39% of the overall newshole to campaign news. Coverage of Hurricane Ike accounted for 14% of the newshole.



News that the federal government was taking control of mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, last week’s biggest financial story, drew the very close attention of 28% of the public. Some 6% listed this as their most closely followed news story, and the media devoted 6% of its overall coverage to the story.

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 seven 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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Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
SEPTEMBER 12-15, 2008 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1,006

Q.1 Apart from who you support, which presidential candidate have you heard the most about in the news in the last week or so? [OPEN-END. RECORD FIRST MENTION ONLY]

	<u>Barack Obama</u>	<u>John McCain</u>	<u>Sarah Palin¹</u>	<u>Other²</u>	<u>Don't know/ Refused</u>
September 12-15, 2008	32	41	17	2	8=100
September 5-8, 2008	28	54	10	2	6=100
August 29-31, 2008	81	11		2	6=100
August 22-25, 2008	77	11		3	9=100
August 15-18, 2008	62	19		4	15=100
August 8-11, 2008	69	15		5	11=100
August 1-4, 2008	76	11		4	9=100
July 25-28, 2008	77	9		3	11=100
July 18-21, 2008	76	10		2	12=100
July 11-14, 2008	72	10		5	13=100
July 3-7, 2008	71	11		3	15=100
June 27-30, 2008	75	10		5	10=100
June 20-23, 2008	74	12		4	10=100
June 13-16, 2008	69	12		7	12=100
June 6-9, 2008	67	2		23	8=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	54	5		28	13=100
May 22-25, 2008	51	8		29	12=100
May 16-19, 2008	59	4		27	10=100
May 9-12, 2008	52	2		38	8=100
May 2-5, 2008	57	2		31	10=100
April 25-28, 2008	46	3		39	12=100
April 18-21, 2008	55	4		29	12=100
April 11-14, 2008	51	8		26	15=100
April 4-7, 2008	45	6		35	14=100
March 28-31, 2008	53	4		32	11=100
March 20-24, 2008	70	3		16	11=100
March 14-17, 2008	57	4		28	11=100
March 7-10, 2008	38	6		41	15=100

Q.2 Please think about each of the following candidates [INSERT NAME]. In the past few days, have you come to have a MORE favorable opinion of (him/her), a LESS favorable opinion, or hasn't your opinion of (him/her) changed lately? ³ [ROTATE IN BLOCKS: A/B FIRST, FOLLOWED BY C/D]

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not changed</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
a. Barack Obama	20	20	58	2=100
September 5-8, 2008	20	20	59	1=100
August 29-31, 2008	29	19	50	2=100
August 22-25, 2008	22	21	54	3=100

¹ Although the question specifically asks respondents to name a "presidential" candidate, Sarah Palin was accepted, as all responses were volunteered.

² "Other" includes responses for Hillary Clinton.

³ Prior to September 12-15, the question was worded, "Please think about each of the following *presidential* candidates..."

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>More Favorable</u>	<u>Less Favorable</u>	<u>Opinion has Not change</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
August 15-18, 2008	16	21	60	3=100
August 8-11, 2008	15	18	64	3=100
August 1-4, 2008	16	22	60	2=100
July 25-28, 2008	17	21	59	3=100
July 18-21, 2008	16	22	60	2=100
July 11-14, 2008	15	17	64	4=100
July 3-7, 2008	17	17	62	4=100
June 27-30, 2008	21	19	56	4=100
June 20-23, 2008	16	16	66	2=100
June 13-16, 2008	17	15	64	4=100
June 6-9, 2008	19	17	61	3=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	17	21	58	4=100
May 22-25, 2008	18	20	60	2=100
May 16-19, 2008	19	19	59	3=100
May 9-12, 2008	20	23	55	2=100
May 2-5, 2008	11	25	59	5=100
April 25-28, 2008	16	24	58	2=100
April 18-21, 2008	18	24	54	4=100
March 28-31, 2008	18	27	52	3=100
March 20-24, 2008	22	30	46	2=100
b. John McCain	28	25	45	2=100
September 5-8, 2008	35	24	40	1=100
August 29-31, 2008	28	22	47	3=100
August 22-25, 2008	17	20	60	3=100
August 15-18, 2008	17	21	59	3=100
August 8-11, 2008	14	20	63	3=100
August 1-4, 2008	18	23	57	2=100
July 25-28, 2008	16	19	62	3=100
July 18-21, 2008	17	15	65	3=100
July 11-14, 2008	14	15	66	5=100
July 3-7, 2008	15	16	64	5=100
June 27-30, 2008	17	21	58	4=100
June 20-23, 2008	15	18	65	2=100
June 13-16, 2008	13	18	66	3=100
June 6-9, 2008	14	15	65	6=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	11	20	64	5=100
May 22-25, 2008	15	18	63	4=100
May 16-19, 2008	14	21	62	3=100
May 9-12, 2008	12	18	67	3=100
May 2-5, 2008	10	13	71	6=100
April 25-28, 2008	14	16	65	5=100
April 18-21, 2008	18	15	61	6=100
March 28-31, 2008	18	20	57	5=100
March 20-24, 2008	18	18	61	3=100
c. Joe Biden	14	18	58	10=100
d. Sarah Palin	31	27	37	5=100

Q.3 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, please tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE 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. Hurrican Ike	50	32	13	5	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
September 5-8: <i>Hanna (Southeast U.S.)</i>	34	37	19	10	0=100
September 5-8, 2008: <i>Gustav (Gulf coast)</i>	42	35	17	6	*=100
August 29-31, 2008: <i>Gustav(Gulf coast)</i>	33	30	23	14	*=100
July 25-28, 2008: <i>Dolly (Texas coast)</i>	19	29	29	23	*=100
November 2-5, 2007: <i>Noel (Bahamas and Cuba)</i>	11	22	31	35	1=100
September 7-10, 2007: <i>Felix and Henriette (Mexico and Central America)</i>	14	29	29	27	1=100
August 24-27, 2007: <i>Dean (Mexico and Caribbean)</i>	18	39	24	18	1=100
November, 2005: <i>Wilma (Mexico and Florida)</i>	34	37	21	8	*=100
September, 2005: <i>Katrina (New Orleans and Gulf Coast)</i>	70	21	7	2	*=100
July, 2005: <i>Recent hurricanes (Gulf coast)</i>	38	37	17	8	*=100
September, 2003: <i>Isabel</i>	47	28	15	10	*=100
Early October, 2002: <i>Recent hurricanes (Gulf of Mexico and Louisiana)</i>	38	34	18	10	*=100
b. News about the first test of the world’s largest supercollider in Geneva, Switzerland	12	17	23	45	3=100
c. The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters	21	34	25	19	1=100
August 29-31, 2008	18	27	32	23	*=100
July 18-21, 2008	27	33	24	16	*=100
July 11-14, 2008	19	28	29	23	1=100
July 3-7, 2008	19	28	32	21	*=100
June 20-23, 2008	20	30	30	20	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
Late July, 2002 ⁴	41	38	13	7	1=100
June, 2002	38	32	20	9	1=100
April, 2002	39	39	13	8	1=100
Early April, 2002	45	37	12	5	1=100
February, 2002	47	39	8	5	1=100
January, 2002	51	35	9	4	1=100
December, 2001	44	38	12	5	1=100
Mid-November, 2001	49	36	11	3	1=100
Early November, 2001	45	36	12	6	1=100
Mid-October, 2001	51	35	10	3	1=100

⁴ From Mid-October, 2001 to Late July, 2002 the story was listed as “the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan.”

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
d. The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac	28	35	19	17	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:⁵					
March 20-24, 2008: <i>Bear Stearns buyout</i>	21	26	21	32	*=100
August, 1989: <i>Savings and loan bailout</i>	26	30	20	23	1=100
e. The seventh anniversary of the September 11 th terrorist attacks	32	33	22	12	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:					
September 14-17, 2007: <i>Sixth Anniversary</i>	26	33	23	18	*=100
September, 2006 <i>Fifth Anniversary</i>	27	35	25	12	1=100
September, 2002 <i>First Anniversary</i>	39	35	18	7	1=100
f. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election	40	38	14	7	1=100
September 5-8, 2008	45	39	12	4	*=100
August 29-31, 2008	45	32	15	8	*=100
August 22-25, 2008	31	36	22	11	*=100
August 15-18, 2008	25	41	19	14	1=100
August 8-11, 2008	27	38	22	13	*=100
August 1-4, 2008	30	42	19	9	*=100
July 25-28, 2008	30	34	21	15	*=100
July 18-21, 2008	30	35	21	14	*=100
July 11-14, 2008	28	34	22	15	1=100
July 3-7, 2008	25	35	23	17	*=100
June 27-30, 2008	39	33	18	10	*=100
June 20-23, 2008	28	38	22	12	*=100
June 13-16, 2008	35	35	20	10	*=100
June 6-9, 2008	38	35	17	10	*=100
May 30-June 2, 2008	30	35	21	14	*=100
May 22-25, 2008	32	37	20	11	*=100
May 16-19, 2008	33	37	19	10	1=100
May 9-12, 2008	35	36	18	11	*=100
May 2-5, 2008	27	35	23	14	1=100
April 25-28, 2008	34	37	18	11	*=100
April 18-21, 2008	29	41	19	10	1=100
April 11-14, 2008	31	37	22	10	*=100
April 4-7, 2008	33	36	17	14	*=100
March 28-31, 2008	31	41	18	10	*=100
March 20-24, 2008	34	37	18	11	*=100
March 14-17, 2008	40	37	16	7	*=100
March 7-10, 2008	39	36	15	9	1=100
February 29-March 3, 2008	43	34	14	9	*=100
February 22-25, 2008	42	37	13	8	*=100
February 15-18, 2008	44	36	10	10	*=100
February 8-11, 2008	39	37	15	9	0=100
February 1-4, 2008	37	35	16	12	*=100
January 25-28, 2008	36	37	14	12	1=100

⁵ March 20-24, 2008 asked about: "The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns." August, 1989 asked about: "Passage in Congress of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions."

Q.3 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 18-21, 2008	36	34	18	12	*=100
January 11-14, 2008 ⁶	32	31	19	17	1=100
January 4-7, 2008	33	36	19	11	1=100
December 14-17, 2007	25	34	22	19	*=100
December 7-10, 2007	24	35	22	19	*=100
November 30 – December 3, 2007	23	35	23	19	*=100
November 23-26, 2007	20	33	26	20	1=100
November 16-19, 2007	26	33	21	19	1=100
November 9-12, 2007	21	33	25	21	*=100
November 2-5, 2007	27	30	21	21	1=100
October 26-29, 2007	21	34	26	19	*=100
October 19-22, 2007	23	32	22	23	*=100
October 12-15, 2007	13	31	26	30	*=100
October 5-8, 2007	22	30	24	24	*=100
September 28 – October 1, 2007	21	34	25	20	*=100
September 21-24, 2007	24	31	22	23	*=100
September 14-17, 2007	22	31	24	23	*=100
September 7-10, 2007	18	34	26	22	*=100
August 30-September 2, 2007	19	35	21	25	*=100
August 24-27, 2007	22	28	24	26	*=100
August 17-20, 2007	19	27	24	30	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	23	32	21	24	*=100
August 3-6, 2007	19	31	25	25	*=100
July 27-30, 2007	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, 2007 ⁷	24	27	22	26	1=100

⁶ January 11-14, 2008 asked about: “News about the New Hampshire primaries and the presidential campaign.”

Q.3 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very Closely</u>	<u>Fairly Closely</u>	<u>Not too Closely</u>	<u>Not at all Closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
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 ⁸	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
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

⁷ January 19-22, 2007 asked about: "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

⁸ 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.3 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, 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
October, 1991	12	26	31	29	2=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.4 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.]**

- 38 Hurricane Ike
- 32 News about the candidates for the 2008 presidential election
- The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac
- 6
- 5 The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters
- 4 The seventh anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks
- 4 News about the first test of the world's largest supercollider in Geneva, Switzerland
- 5 Some other story (SPECIFY)
- 6 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Thinking about the presidential campaign...

Q.5 How would you describe the presidential election campaign so far – is it **[READ ITEM a. FIRST, THEN ROTATE ITEMS b. AND c.]**

		Apr 18-21, <u>2008</u>	Feb 15-18, <u>2008</u>	Oct 12-15, <u>2007</u>	April <u>2007</u>	—RVs— Mid-Oct <u>2004</u>	—RVs— Early Sept <u>2004</u>	June <u>2004</u>	June <u>2000</u>	July <u>1996</u>
a.	68	59	70	37	34	66	50	33	28	21
	26	35	25	55	52	28	42	57	65	73
	5	5	4	5	6	5	6	4	4	3
	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

		Apr 18-21, <u>2008</u>	Feb 15-18, <u>2008</u>		—RVs— Mid-Oct <u>2004</u>	—RVs— Early Sept <u>2004</u>	June <u>2004</u>	Mid- March <u>2004</u>
b.	43	50	28		57	62	45	47
	51	44	66		38	32	46	47
	4	4	3		3	1	2	2
	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>		<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>4</u>
	100	100	100		100	100	100	100

Q.5 CONTINUED...

		Feb 15-18, <u>2008</u>	—RVs— Mid-Oct <u>2004</u>	—RVs— Early Sept <u>2004</u>	June <u>2004</u>	Mid- March <u>2004</u>	
c.	54	Informative OR	65	73	63	48	53
	41	Not informative	31	22	33	46	42
	3	Neither applies (VOL.)	2	3	1	2	2
	<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>
	100		100	100	100	100	100

Q.6 In the way they have been covering the presidential election so far, do you think that news organizations are biased in favor of [Barack Obama], biased in favor of [John McCain], or don't you think news organizations have shown any bias one way or the other? **[ROTATE BRACKETED ITEMS]**

		July 25-28, <u>2008</u>
36	Biased in favor of Barack Obama	42
14	Biased in favor of John McCain	6
40	No bias	42
<u>10</u>	Other biases/Don't know (VOL.)	<u>10</u>
100		100

ROTATE Q.7 AND Q.8

Q.7 In the past few days have you seen any television commercials on behalf of Barack Obama's candidacy, or not? **[IF YES, ASK: Were these ads mostly a positive message about Barack Obama or mostly a negative message about John McCain?]**

		Aug 1-4, <u>2008</u>
24	Yes have seen, mostly a positive message about Obama	38
25	Yes have seen, mostly a negative message about McCain	13
5	Yes have seen, neither/don't know	7
44	No haven't seen	40
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>
100		100

Q.8 In the past few days have you seen any television commercials on behalf of John McCain's candidacy, or not? **[IF YES, ASK: Were these ads mostly a positive message about John McCain or mostly a negative message about Barack Obama?]**

		Aug 1-4, <u>2008</u>
25	Yes have seen, mostly a positive message about McCain	19
27	Yes have seen, mostly a negative message about Obama	31
6	Yes have seen, neither/don't know	5
40	No haven't seen	44
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>
100		100

Q.9 How much if anything have you heard about each of the following? Have you heard a lot, a little or nothing at all? **[READ ITEMS; ROTATE ITEMS]**

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a. Barack Obama's comment that you can put lipstick on a pig, but it's still a pig	55	25	19	1=100
b. Sarah Palin's TV interview with Charles Gibson of ABC News	35	32	32	1=100

IF HEARD ABOUT OBAMA'S COMMENT (Q.9a=1,2) ASK: [N=851]

Q.10 Thinking about Barack Obama's comment about putting lipstick on a pig, do you think he intended this as an insult to Sarah Palin, or do you think he was just making a joke about John McCain's policies?

21	Intended it as an insult to Sarah Palin
66	Just making a joke about John McCain's policies
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

IF HEARD ABOUT PALIN INTERVIEW (Q.9b=1,2) ASK: [N=742]

Q.11 In her interview with Charles Gibson do you think Sarah Palin's performance was... **[READ IN ORDER]**

12	Excellent
40	Good
22	Only fair
15	Poor
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	