



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:  
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**Broad Public Awareness of Coming Digital TV Transition**  
**POLICY ISSUES OVERSHADOW PERSONAL STORIES IN OBAMA’S FIRST WEEKS**

The public focused much more on President Obama’s major policy proposals and decisions than on lighter, more personal stories about the new president and his family in the early days of his administration. Nearly seven-in-ten Americans (69%) say they heard a lot about Obama’s push for quick action on his economic stimulus plan. In contrast, just 26% say they heard a lot about Obama’s successful bid to keep his Blackberry phone.

A majority (57%) say they heard a lot about Obama’s executive order to close the Guantanamo Bay prison camp in Cuba within a year, according to the latest Pew Research Center weekly News Interest Index survey.

Close to half of the public (46%) also heard a lot about Obama’s sharp criticism of leading financial services companies that have awarded

huge bonuses to their executives, at a time when many of these companies have sought aid from the federal bailout program. And four-in-ten heard a lot about Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner’s failure to pay some of his taxes on time. The survey, conducted Jan. 30-Feb. 2, was in the field when news broke that Tom Daschle, Obama’s choice to be secretary of health and human services, also had failed to pay certain taxes in recent years. Daschle withdrew from consideration this week.

Public Hearing a Lot about Policy Matters				
	A lot %	A little %	Nothing at all %	DK %
<i>How much have you heard about...</i>				
Obama pushing for quick action on economic stimulus plan	69	24	7	*=100
Obama’s order to close Guantanamo	57	27	15	1=100
Obama criticizing executive bonuses	46	32	22	*=100
Treasury Sec. Geithner’s failure to pay some of his taxes on time	40	33	27	*=100
Obama taking oath of office a 2nd time	38	40	22	*=100
Obama calling for improved relations with Muslim world in Arab TV interview	28	39	32	1=100
Obama keeping his Blackberry phone	26	39	34	1=100
Obama lifting ban on funds for int’l orgs that provide abortions/abortion info	25	36	38	1=100
Dolls with names of Obama’s daughters	14	38	47	1=100

The public, meanwhile, continued to closely track reports about the nation’s troubled economy and the debate in Washington about how best to stimulate the economy. About a third (34%) say they followed stories about the economy more closely than any other story last week, while about a quarter (24%) say the story they followed most closely was the debate in Congress over Obama’s proposed stimulus plan. The economic crisis was easily the most reported story of the week, with those two story themes – the economy and the stimulus proposal – accounting for 45% of the newshole, according to an analysis by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism.

Nearly four-in-ten Americans (38%) say they heard a lot about Obama taking the oath of office a second time because of a mix-up in the words on inauguration day. Somewhat fewer (28%) say they heard a lot about Obama’s call for improved relations with the Muslim world in an interview with an Arab television station. The interview was his first on television since taking the oath of office.

About the same percentage say they heard a lot about Obama’s bid to keep his Blackberry (26%) and his executive order lifting a ban on funds for international family planning organizations that provide abortions or information about abortions (25%). Only 14% say they heard a lot about the marketing of dolls with the same names as Obama’s daughters, Malia and Sasha. Close to half (47%) say they had heard nothing at all about that story.

### Modest Partisan Differences in Awareness

In terms of the policy issues, there was little partisan difference in the numbers of Democrats and Republicans who say they had heard a lot about Obama’s push for his stimulus (74% vs. 73%) or the decision to close the Guantanamo prison (63% vs. 61%).

Democrats were slightly more likely to have heard a lot about Obama’s criticism of executive bonuses (54% vs. 45%) and Obama’s calls for improved relations with the

Muslim world (35% vs. 25%). Republicans, on the other hand, were slightly more likely to have heard a lot about Obama’s decision to lift the ban on funds for international organizations that provide abortions or abortion information (36% vs. 27%).

Economic Stimulus, Guantanamo Register Widely among Reps and Dems			
<i>How much have you heard about...</i>	<i>% who heard 'a lot'</i>		<i>R-D Diff</i>
	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	
Obama pushing for quick action on economic stimulus plan	73	74	+1
Obama’s order to close Guantanamo	63	61	-2
Obama calling for improved relations w/ Muslim world in Arab TV interview	25	35	+10
Obama criticizing executive bonuses	45	54	+9
Obama lifting ban on funds for int’l orgs that provide abortions/abortion info	36	27	-9

## Peanut Scare Grabs Attention

Americans pay very close attention to news about food safety and consumer news about widely used products, as demonstrated by interest in the story last week about a salmonella outbreak that has been linked to tainted peanuts. A third of Americans (33%) followed news about the national recall of potentially contaminated peanut products very closely; 11% listed this as their most closely followed story of the week. Still, in terms of press coverage, just 1% of the overall newshole was devoted to this story, according to PEJ.

Public interest in the peanut recall is on par with other recent consumer scares, including recalls involving U.S. beef early last year and children's toys made in China in late 2007. The Firestone tire recall in 2000 (followed very closely by 42% of the public) and a 1997 beef recall (40% followed very closely) attracted considerably more public interest.

Women tend to follow news about consumer safety more closely than men. Interest in the peanut product recall has been especially high among women. More than four-in-ten women (41%) followed this story very closely compared with one-in-four (25%) men. The only recent comparable story in which men paid just as much attention as women was the Firestone tire recall: 43% of men and 41% of women followed this news very closely.

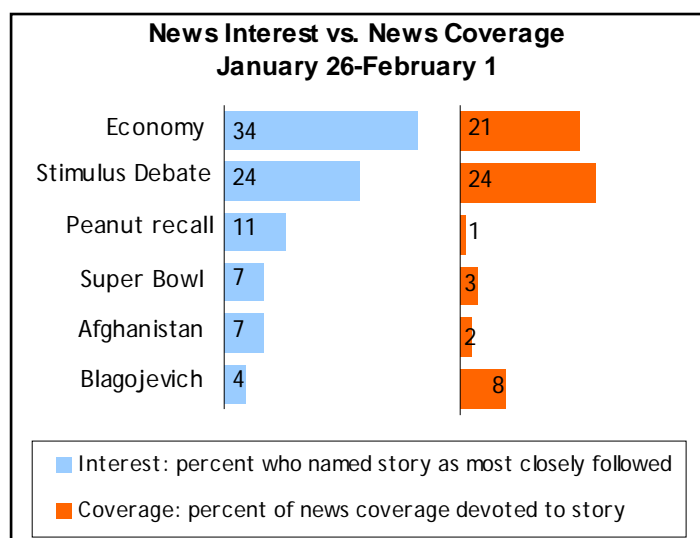
	Total	Men	Women
<i>Following peanut recall...</i>	%	%	%
Very closely	33	25	41
Fairly closely	38	41	36
Not too closely	20	23	16
Not at all closely	9	11	7
Don't know	*	*	*
	100	100	100

	Total	Men	Women
<i>% Followed very closely...</i>	%	%	%
U.S. beef recall {2/08}	29	25	32
Chinese toy recall {11/07}	33	28	37
Chinese products recall {7/07}	26	23	29
Pet food recall {5-07}	28	23	33
Firestone tires {10-00}	42	43	41
Hamburger recall {9-97}	40	34	46

## Top Stories of the Week

With Obama's inauguration now history, the economic crisis dominated the news last week, both in terms of interest and coverage. Economic news about the deteriorating conditions of the U.S. economy and a roughly \$900 billion economic stimulus plan now before Congress were the *most* closely followed news items for virtually six-in-ten Americans (58%). A majority (52%) followed news about the conditions of the economy very closely, while 34%



say it was the story they followed most closely. Roughly a third (36%) followed the debate in Congress over the president's economic plan very closely, while 24% say it was their most closely followed story.

Meanwhile, the conditions of the U.S. economy, including announcements about layoffs and the release of billions of dollars in federal assistance to U.S. banks, accounted for 21% of the news coverage last week across five major media sectors, according to the PEJ analysis. Coverage of the Congressional debate and political maneuvering surrounding the stimulus package made up 24% of the overall newshole.

In other news last week, one-in-five (20%) paid very close attention to the impeachment and removal from office of Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich; 4% named this as their top story for the week. The media focused much greater attention on Blagojevich than the public. Aside from economic news, this was the next biggest story of the week in terms of coverage. In a week that included a national media blitz by Blagojevich as his senate trial unfolded in Illinois, the press devoted 8% of all news to the story.

One-in-four Americans (26%) paid very close attention to news about the U.S. military effort in Afghanistan; 7% listed this as the story they followed most closely. The national news media devoted 2% of coverage to the war in Afghanistan. And interest in news about the Super Bowl was on par with last year. About one-in-five (19%) followed NFL football stories very closely this past week.

### Public Signaled On Digital TV

On another issue, the public has heard a lot about the upcoming transition from analog to digital signal transmissions for the nation's television stations. Lawmakers and the White House have been working to delay the transition, initially set for Feb. 17, to June 12 because many people remain unprepared for the change and could be deprived of free over-the-air programming. The House was working to send an extension measure to Obama Wednesday.

Americans, though, are broadly aware of the coming change. About eight-in-ten (81%) say they have heard a lot about the switch and 16% say that have heard a little. Only 3% say they have heard nothing at all. There is little variation across age groups or level of education on the awareness of this issue.

Switch to Digital TV Signals Widely Known	
<i>How much have you heard about digital TV...</i>	<i>Percent</i>
A lot	81
A little	16
Nothing at all	3
Don't know	*
	100

Question wording: "On February 17th, television stations around the country are scheduled to change the way their signals are broadcast over the air from what is called an analog signal to a digital signal. How much, if anything, have you read or heard about this upcoming change?"

The new transmission method will limit the ability of those with older televisions or no cable service to receive free television reception unless they use a digital converter box. The government has offered coupons to help people pay for the boxes, but that program used up all funding before many potentially affected households were helped.

While more than three-quarters of the public (77%) do not think that televisions in their homes will be affected by the conversion, one-in-five say that they will. Roughly one-in-four (27%) from households with less than \$30,000 in annual income believe that this change is going to affect the TVs in their homes and one-in-five (19%) among households with \$30,000 to \$75,000 in annual earnings share this view. Higher income Americans are less likely to think the change will affect them (11%). People living in the Midwest are also more likely to think that the conversion is going to affect their reception than people from other regions of the country.

Will the Switch to Digital Signals Affect TVs in Your Home?			
	Think <u>it will</u> %	Think <u>it won't</u> %	DK/ <u>Ref</u> %
Total	20	77	3=100
<b>Income</b>			
\$75,000+	11	88	1=100
\$30,000 to \$75,000	19	77	4=100
Less than \$30,000	27	69	4=100
<b>Region</b>			
East	14	81	5=100
Midwest	30	67	3=100
South	17	80	3=100
West	18	78	4=100

Question wording: "From what you know, do you think the upcoming switch to digital television signals WILL affect televisions you use in your house or WILL NOT affect your televisions?"

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 coverage. 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 January 26-February 1, 2009 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected January 30-February 2, 2009 from a nationally representative sample of 1,002 adults.

## 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 compiles this data to identify the top stories for the week. The News Interest Index survey collects 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 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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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**JANUARY 30-FEBRUARY 2, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY**  
**TOPLINE**  
**N=1,002**

Q.1 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] [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. The recall of peanut products after a nationwide outbreak of salmonella	33	38	20	9	*=100
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:<sup>1</sup></b>					
September 26-29, 2008: <i>Chinese milk powder</i>	17	27	24	31	1=100
February 22-25, 2008: <i>U.S. Beef recall</i>	29	36	19	16	*=100
November 9-12, 2007: <i>Chinese toys</i>	33	34	17	15	1=100
August 17-20, 2007: <i>Chinese toys/other products</i>	28	32	21	19	*=100
June 29-July 2, 2007: <i>Chinese food/other products</i>	26	30	20	24	*=100
May 4-7, 2007: <i>Contaminated pet food</i>	28	28	21	22	1=100
September, 1997: <i>Contaminated hamburger meat</i>	40	37	16	7	*=100
October, 2000: <i>Firestone tires</i>	42	34	16	8	*=100
b. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	52	31	12	5	*=100
January 23-26, 2009	57	30	8	5	0=100
January 16-19, 2009	43	35	13	9	*=100
January 2-4, 2009	42	36	15	7	*=100
December 12-15, 2008	51	33	9	7	*=100
December 5-8, 2008	42	38	13	7	*=100
November 21-24, 2008	59	24	9	8	*=100
November 14-17, 2008	56	29	9	6	*=100
November 7-10, 2008	54	31	8	7	*=100
October 31-November 3, 2008	63	27	6	4	*=100
October 24-27, 2008	52	35	7	5	1=100
October 17-20, 2008	62	29	6	3	*=100
October 10-13, 2008	65	25	7	3	*=100
October 3-6, 2008	69	23	5	3	*=100
September 26-29, 2008	70	22	5	3	*=100
September 19-22, 2008	56	27	12	5	*=100
September 5-8, 2008	44	33	16	7	*=100
August 29-31, 2008	41	34	13	11	1=100
August 15-18, 2008	39	36	15	10	*=100
August 8-11, 2008	39	35	16	10	*=100
August 1-4, 2008	47	34	11	8	0=100
July 25-28, 2008	46	32	10	12	*=100
July 18-21, 2008	45	33	13	9	*=100

<sup>1</sup> September 23-26, 2008 asked about “Reports about contaminated milk powder in China.” February 22-25, 2008 asked about “The U.S. Department of Agriculture recalling over 100 million pounds of frozen beef.” November 9-12, 2007, asked about “The recall of various toys made in China that can be dangerous for children.” August 17-20, 2007, asked about “Safety issues involving toys and other products from China.” June 29-July 2, 2007, asked about “Safety issues involving food and other products from China.” May 4-7, 2007, asked about “Reports about contaminated pet food.” October, 2000, asked about “The recall of defective Firestone tires.” September, 1997, asked about “The recall of contaminated hamburger meat.”

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>
July 11-14, 2008	44	33	12	10	1=100
June 27-30, 2008	49	31	12	7	1=100
June 13-16, 2008	42	33	14	11	*=100
May 9-12, 2008	45	31	13	11	*=100
May 2-5, 2008	43	31	15	10	1=100
April 18-21, 2008	41	35	13	10	1=100
April 4-7, 2008	39	37	12	12	*=100
March 28-31, 2008	42	36	14	8	*=100
March 20-24, 2008	45	33	13	9	*=100
February 29-March 3, 2008	38	35	15	11	1=100
February 15-18, 2008	37	36	11	16	8=100
February 1-4, 2008	40	37	14	8	1=100
January 18-21, 2008	42	31	16	11	*=100
January 11-14, 2008	36	32	15	16	1=100
November 2-5, 2007	27	37	16	19	1=100
October 19-22, 2007	25	34	20	21	*=100
August 10-13, 2007	28	36	18	18	*=100
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
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



**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>
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
c. The debate in Congress over Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan	<b>36</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:<sup>2</sup></b>					
<b>January 16-19, 2009: Debate in Washington over the nation's economic problems</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>December 19-22, 2008: Bush administration plan for emergency loans to U.S. automakers</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>December 12-15, 2008: Debate over a government bailout for U.S. auto industry</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>December 5-8, 2008: Debate in Congress over a bailout for U.S. auto industry</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>November 21-24, 2008</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 3-6, 2008: Washington debates plan to stabilize markets</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 26-29, 2008</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 19-22, 2008: Wall Street turmoil</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 12-15, 2008: Government takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>March 20-24, 2008: Bear Stearns buyout</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>February 8-11, 2008: Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic stimulus plan</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>January 25-28, 2008</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>August, 1989: Savings and loan bailout</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1=100</b>
d. The impeachment and removal from office of the Illinois governor	<b>20</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 9-12, 2009: Governor's impeachment</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1=100</b>

<sup>2</sup> January 16-19, 2009 asked about "The debate in Washington over what the government should do about the nation's economic problems." December 19-22, 2008 asked about "The Bush administration's plan to provide billions in emergency loans to U.S. automakers." December 12-15, 2008 asked about "The debate over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry." November 21-24, 2008 and December 5-8, 2008 asked about "The debate in Congress over a government bailout for the U.S. auto industry." September 26-29, 2008 and October 3-6, 2008 asked about "The debate in Washington over a plan to use government funds to stabilize financial markets." September 19-22, 2008 asked about "Turmoil among major financial institutions on Wall Street." September 12-15, 2008 asked about "The federal government taking control of the mortgage companies Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac." March 20-24, 2008 asked about "The buyout of Wall Street investment bank Bear Stearns." January 25-28, 2008 and February 8-11, 2008 asked about "President Bush and Congress agreeing on an economic stimulus plan." August, 1989 asked about: "Passage in Congress of a bill to bailout ailing savings and loan institutions."

**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>
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:<sup>3</sup></b>					
<b>January 2-4, 2009</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>December 12-15, 2008</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>1=100</b>
e. The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan	<b>26</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>January 2-4, 2009</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 24-27, 2008</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>October 10-13, 2008<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>19</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>September 12-15, 2008</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>August 29-31, 2008</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 18-21, 2008</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>July 11-14, 2008</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>July 3-7, 2008</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>June 20-23, 2008</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>*=100</b>
Late July, 2002	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
f. The Super Bowl	<b>19</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1=100</b>
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
<b>February 1-4, 2008</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>*=100</b>
<b>February 9-12, 2007</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>1=100</b>
February, 2000	31	22	15	32	0=100
February, 1990	22	22	19	37	0=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.]**

- 34 Reports about the conditions of the U.S. economy
  - 24 The debate in Congress over Barack Obama's economic stimulus plan
  - 11 The recall of peanut products after a nationwide outbreak of salmonella
  - 7 The Super Bowl
  - 7 The U.S. military effort in Afghanistan
  - 4 The impeachment and removal from office of the Illinois governor
  - 5 Some other story (VOL.)
  - 8 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
- 100

<sup>3</sup> For January 2-4, 2009 the item was listed as "The Governor of Illinois appointing someone to fill Obama's Senate seat while under investigation for corruption." For December 12-15, 2008 the item was listed as "The arrest of the Illinois Governor on corruption charges associated with Barack Obama's vacant Senate seat."

<sup>4</sup> From June 20-23, 2008 to October 10-13, 2008 the story was listed as "The military effort in Afghanistan against Taliban fighters."

Thinking about the new Obama administration...

Q.3 How much if anything, have you heard about each of the following? Have you heard a lot, a little or nothing at all? **[READ AND ROTATE]**

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
a. Barack Obama criticizing executive bonuses	46	32	22	*=100
b. Barack Obama's executive order to close Guantanamo Bay prison within a year	57	27	15	1=100
c. Barack Obama keeping his Blackberry phone	26	39	34	1=100
d. Barack Obama calling for improved relations with the Muslim world in an interview with an Arab TV channel	28	39	32	1=100
e. Chief Justice John Roberts giving the oath to Barack Obama for a second time after a mistake on inauguration day	38	40	22	*=100
f. Barack Obama pushing for quick action on his economic stimulus plan	69	24	7	*=100
g. The marketing of dolls with the names of the Obamas' daughters Sasha and Malia	14	38	47	1=100
h. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner's failure to pay some of his taxes on time	40	33	27	*=100
i. Barack Obama lifting a ban on funding for international organizations that provide abortions or abortion information	25	36	38	1=100

On another topic...

Q.4 On February 17th, television stations around the country are scheduled to change the way their signals are broadcast over the air from what is called an analog signal to a digital signal. How much, if anything, have you read or heard about this upcoming change?

81 A lot  
 16 A little  
 3 Nothing at all  
 \* Don't know/Refused (VOL.)  
 100

Q.5 From what you know, do you think the upcoming switch to digital television signals WILL affect televisions you use in your house or WILL NOT affect your televisions?

20 Think it will affect  
 77 Think it will not affect  
 3 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)  
 100