The Pew Research Center For The People \& The Press

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## Stewart-Cramer Registers Less than Rihanna-Chris Brown PUBLIC SEES MORE OF A MIX OF GOOD AND BAD ECONOMIC NEWS

After months of bleak economic news, an increasing proportion of Americans now say they are hearing a mix of good and bad economic news, while fewer say they are hearing mostly bad news. As has been the case for the last few months, very few say they are hearing mostly good news about the economy.

Currently, $46 \%$ say they are now hearing a mix of good and bad news about the economy; somewhat more (51\%) say they are hearing mostly bad news. Just 2\% say they are hearing mostly positive

| What Americans Are Hearing In the News About the Economy |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Dec | J an | Feb | Mar |
|  | $\underline{2008}$ | $\underline{2009}$ | $\underline{2009}$ | $\underline{2009}$ |
|  | \% | \% | \% | \% |
| Mostly bad news | 80 | 67 | 60 | 51 |
| Mix of good and bad | 19 | 30 | 37 | 46 |
| Mostly good news | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Don't know | * | 1 | 1 | 1 |
|  | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | economic news.

In February, 37\% said they were hearing a mix of good and bad economic news, while $60 \%$ said they heard mostly negative news. In December, just 19\% said they were hearing mixed economic news while about four times as many ( $80 \%$ ) said the news they were hearing was mostly bad.

In the latest weekly News Interest Index survey, conducted March 13-16 by the Pew Research Center for the People \& the Press, there has been a sharp increase in the proportion of Democrats who say they are hearing a mix of good and bad news about the economy. Currently, 55\% of Democrats say they are hearing a mix of good and

bad news, up from $41 \%$ in February. The shift has been less pronounced among Republicans and independents.

The public continues to pay attention to economic and financial news, including last week's big rise in the stock market. More than a quarter of Americans (27\%) say they followed reports about the condition of the U.S. economy more closely than any other story last week. Another $17 \%$ say they followed changes in the stock markets most closely, making those stories the two most closely followed of the week. Meanwhile, reporting about the economy took up 33\% of the newshole, according to a separate analysis by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ). (Including stock market-related stories, economic coverage totaled 35\% of all coverage.)

In terms of more general interest stories, more Americans (33\%) say they have heard a lot about the troubled relationship between pop singers Chris Brown and Rihanna than have heard a lot about the dispute between television's Jon Stewart and Jim Cramer (17\%), the controversy surrounding Republican Chairman Michael Steele (14\%) or news about Bristol Palin and her boyfriend calling off their engagement (13\%).

## Democrats See Less Bad News

With their party now controlling the agenda in Washington, Democrats are more likely than Republicans or independents to report hearing a mix of good and bad news about the economy. This reflects a shift in opinions from before Barack Obama took office, when there were no significant partisan differences on this question.

Today, more than half of Democrats (55\%) say they are hearing mixed news about the economy, compared with $33 \%$ of

| Partisan Divide in Perceptions of Economic News |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Dec | цan | Feb | Mar | Dec-Mar change |
| Democrats | \% | \% | \% | \% |  |
| Mostly bad | 82 | 67 | 56 | 42 | -40 |
| Mix of good/ bad | 17 | 30 | 41 | 55 | +38 |
| Mostly good | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 |  |
| Republicans |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mostly bad | 80 | 68 | 73 | 65 | -15 |
| Mix of good/ bad | 19 | 30 | 26 | 33 | +14 |
| Mostly good | * | 1 | * |  |  |
| Independents |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mostly bad | 76 | 69 | 55 | 52 | -24 |
| Mix of good/ bad | 22 | 28 | 40 | 44 | +22 |
| Mostly good | 1 | 2 | 3 | 3 |  | Republicans and $44 \%$ of independents. In December, just $17 \%$ of Democrats said they were hearing mixed news, compared with $19 \%$ of Republicans and 22\% of independents.

The share of Democrats hearing mostly bad news has dropped considerably from $82 \%$ in December to 42\%. Republicans and independents show significant but smaller drops - from 80\% to $65 \%$ for Republicans and from $76 \%$ to $52 \%$ for independents.

People with family incomes of $\$ 75,000$ or more also are much more likely to see economic news as mixed than they were last month. They now hold similar opinions about the tone of economic news as those earning between $\$ 30,000$ and $\$ 74,999$. Today, more than four-in-ten (42\%) of those with household incomes of $\$ 75,000$ or more say they see a mix of good and bad economic news, compared with $25 \%$ who said this in February. There has been less change among families earning between $\$ 30,000$ and $\$ 74,999$ ( $43 \%$ now vs. $37 \%$ in February) and those earning less than $\$ 30,000$ ( $51 \%$ now vs. 50\% in February).

| Perceptions of Economic News Among Income Groups |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Feb | Mar | Feb-Mar change |
| \$75,000 or more | \% | \% |  |
| Mostly bad | 73 | 57 | -16 |
| Mix of good/ bad | 25 | 42 | +17 |
| Mostly good | 2 | 1 | -1 |
| \$30k-\$74,999 |  |  |  |
| Mostly bad | 62 | 53 | -9 |
| Mix of good/ bad | 37 | 43 | +6 |
| Mostly good | 1 | 4 | +3 |
| Less than \$30,000 |  |  |  |
| Mostly bad | 43 | 44 | +1 |
| Mix of good/ bad | 50 | 51 | +1 |
| Mostly good | 5 | 3 | -2 |

## Most Have Heard about Pop Stars' Troubles

Most of the public reports that they have heard about the troubled relationship between singers Chris Brown and Rihanna, with a third saying they have heard a lot. That is far more than the proportions saying they heard a lot about the dispute between Comedy Central's Jon Stewart and CNBC's Jim Cramer (17\%), controversial comments made by Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele (14\%), or Sarah Palin's teenage daughter Bristol and her boyfriend calling off their engagement (13\%).

| What the Public's Been Hearing about... |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | A | A | Nothing |  |  |
|  | $\frac{\text { lot }}{\%}$ | $\frac{\text { little }}{\%}$ | $\frac{\text { at all }}{\%}$ | $\frac{\text { DK }}{\%}$ |  |
| How much have you heard about.... | 33 | 36 | 31 | $*=100$ |  |
| Chris Brown \& Rihanna's troubles | 17 | 28 | 55 | $*=100$ |  |
| Jon Stewart \& Jim Cramer dispute | 17 |  |  |  |  |
| Controversy for GOP's Michael Steele | 14 | 32 | 54 | $*=100$ |  |
| Bristol Palin \& boyfriend end engagement | 13 | 43 | 44 | $0=100$ |  |

Brown and Rihanna's relationship became major news in early February when Brown allegedly assaulted Rihanna early in the morning before the Grammy Awards. Since then, entertainment and news media have covered the story; Oprah Winfrey discussed the situation in the context of domestic violence on her talk show. Far more women (40\%) than men (26\%) say they have heard a lot about the alleged assault. This story also registered much more with African Americans ( $63 \%$ heard a lot) than whites (28\%). Four-in-ten of those younger than 40 heard a lot about the Brown-Rihanna story, compared with just $21 \%$ of those 65 and older.

By contrast, just $17 \%$ say they have heard a lot about the dispute between The Daily Show's Jon Stewart and Mad Money’s Jim Cramer. Over several episodes of The Daily Show, Stewart criticized how Cramer and his colleagues at CNBC covered financial institutions and the stock market. Cramer appeared on Stewart's program on March 12 for an at times tense confrontation, but more than half of Americans (55\%) say they had heard nothing at all about this story. Democrats were more likely to have heard a lot about this story (23\%) than either Republicans (14\%) or independents (16\%).

Republicans and Democrats were equally aware of the controversy surrounding Michael Steele, the Republican Party chairman. In recent interviews, Steele

| What the Public's Heard a Lot about... |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | Brown \& | Stewart/ | Michael | Bristol |
|  | Rihanna | Cramer | Steele | Palin |
|  | \% | \% | \% | \% |
| Total | 33 | 17 | 14 | 13 |
| Men | 26 | 24 | 18 | 12 |
| Women | 40 | 11 | 10 | 14 |
| White | 28 | 16 | 15 | 13 |
| Black | 63 | 17 | 14 | 12 |
| 18-39 | 40 | 17 | 8 | 11 |
| 40-64 | 31 | 20 | 17 | 14 |
| 65+ | 21 | 12 | 20 | 14 |
| Republican | 24 | 14 | 16 | 11 |
| Democrat | 42 | 23 | 17 | 16 |
| Independent | 31 | 16 | 10 | 11 | had criticized conservative talk-show host Rush Limbaugh and made comments about abortion and gay marriage that angered some within his own party. Just $14 \%$ of Americans heard a lot about this story, including 16\% of Republicans and $17 \%$ of Democrats. One-in-ten independents heard a lot about the story. More than half of the public (54\%) had heard nothing about the Steele story.

The news that teen mother Bristol Palin and her boyfriend, Levi Johnston, had decided to end their engagement did not appear on most people's news radar. Just $13 \%$ said they had heard a lot about the breakup. There was little difference among partisans ( $16 \%$ of Democrats a lot vs. $11 \%$ of Republicans) and no significant differences by age or gender. Far more people (69\%) had heard a lot about Bristol Palin's pregnancy at the time of the 2008 Republican convention.

## Economy Tops Public Interest

Close to half of the public (48\%) says they followed news about conditions of the U.S. economy very closely last week, while a third (33\%) says they followed this news fairly closely. The economy was the story followed most closely by $27 \%$ of the public; reports on the economy (including the stock market) accounted for $35 \%$ of the total newshole, according to PEJ.

Almost four-in-ten (38\%) say they followed stock market reports very closely, while $31 \%$ say they followed those reports fairly closely. For $17 \%$, this was the story they followed most closely. Stock market fluctuations considered separately made up $2 \%$ of the newshole analyzed by PEJ.

Obama's decision to reverse Bush administration limits on federal funding for embryonic stem cell research was followed very closely by $31 \%$ and fairly closely by another $30 \%$. The issue garnered about as much attention as when President Bush announced the plan to limit funding for the
 research in 2001 ( $31 \%$ followed very closely and $34 \%$ fairly closely). This was the most closely followed story of the week for $15 \%$ of the public and took up 5\% of the newshole.

More than a quarter (27\%) say they followed news about Bernard Madoff's guilty plea to charges he cheated investors of billions of dollars very closely. Another 33\% followed that story fairly closely, while $10 \%$ said it was the story they followed most closely last week. Reporting on the Madoff story accounted for $7 \%$ of the total newshole.

Fewer than two-in-ten (18\%) followed stories about a shooting spree in Alabama that left 11 dead very closely; $33 \%$ say they followed that story fairly closely. This was the story followed most closely by $8 \%$. It made up $3 \%$ of the newshole.

Stories about political instability in Pakistan attracted less attention, with $14 \%$ saying they followed those stories very closely and $20 \%$ saying they followed them fairly closely. This was the top story for $3 \%$. It accounted for only $1 \%$ of the coverage, as measured by PEJ.

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 March 9-15, 2009 and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected March 13-16, 2009 from a nationally representative sample of 1,000 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.

## 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 MARCH 13-16, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY TOPLINE <br> $\mathrm{N}=1,000$

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; ROTATE ITEMS IN BLOCKS A-C FIRST, FOLLOWED BY D-F] [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 | $\begin{gathered} \text { DK/ } \\ \text { Refused } \end{gathered}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| a. | Bernard Madoff pleading guilty to charges of fraud involving a scheme that cheated investors |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | out of billions of dollars | 27 | 33 | 17 | 23 | $0=100$ |
|  | December 19-22, 2008 ${ }^{1}$ | 30 | 26 | 18 | 25 | 1=100 |
| b. | Barack Obama's decision on federal funding for stem cell research | 31 | 30 | 20 | 19 | *=100 |
|  | TREND FOR COMPARISON: ${ }^{2}$ |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | July, 2005: Congress approves stem cell bill | 21 | 35 | 21 | 22 | $1=100$ |
|  | Early Sept., 2001: Bush's decision on funding | 31 | 34 | 18 | 15 | $2=100$ |
| c. | Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy | 48 | 33 | 9 | 10 | *=100 |
|  | February 27-March 2, 2009 | 56 | 30 | 8 | 6 | *=100 |
|  | February 13-16, 2009 | 55 | 29 | 10 | 6 | *=100 |
|  | January 30-February 2, 2009 | 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 |
|  | July 11-14, 2008 | 44 | 33 | 12 | 10 | 1=100 |
|  | June 27-30, 2008 | 49 | 31 | 12 | 7 | 1=100 |

[^0]
## Q. 1 CONTINUED...

| 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 |
| September, 1993 | 37 | 40 | 14 | 8 | $1=100$ |
| Early September, 1993 | 39 | 39 | 14 | 9 | *=100 |

## Q. 1 CONTINUED...

|  | Very closely | Fairly closely | Not too closely | Not at all closely | DK/ refused |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 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 | $1=100$ |
| d. News about political instability in Pakistan TREND FOR COMPARISON: ${ }^{3}$ | 14 | 20 | 26 | 40 | $0=100$ |
| September 26-29, 2008: Hotel bombing | 16 | 32 | 23 | 28 | 1=100 |
| August 15-18, 2008: Pakistan instability | 10 | 25 | 29 | 35 | 1=100 |
| February 22-25, 2008: Parliamentary elections | 9 | 24 | 28 | 39 | *=100 |
| January 11-14, 2008: Pakistan instability | 19 | 33 | 20 | 27 | 1=100 |
| January 4-7, 2008: Bhutto assassination | 32 | 36 | 15 | 16 | 1=100 |
| Nov. 30-Dec. 3, 2007: Pakistan instability | 16 | 28 | 26 | 30 | *=100 |
| Nov. 23-26, 2007: Pakistan instability | 13 | 27 | 31 | 28 | 1=100 |
| Nov. 16-19, 2007: Pakistan instability | 20 | 30 | 21 | 28 | 1=100 |
| Nov. 9-12, 2007: Pakistan instability | 20 | 29 | 23 | 28 | * $=100$ |
| October 19-22, 2007: Pakistan bombing aimed at Bhutto | 21 | 28 | 21 | 30 | *=100 |
| July 13-16, 2007: Raid on Pakistani Mosque | 10 | 19 | 23 | 47 | 1=100 |
| e. Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock | 38 | 31 | 14 | 17 | $0=100$ |
| March 6-9, $2009{ }^{4}$ | 35 | 31 | 15 | 19 | * $=100$ |
| February 20-23, 2009 | 31 | 32 | 20 | 17 | *=100 |
| November 21-24, 2008 | 50 | 23 | 15 | 12 | *=100 |
| October 17-20, 2008 | 54 | 31 | 9 | 6 | *=100 |
| October 10-13, 2008 | 59 | 26 | 9 | 6 | *=100 |
| July 3-7, 2008 | 22 | 29 | 23 | 26 | *=100 |
| March 14-17, 2008 | 25 | 31 | 23 | 21 | *=100 |
| January 25-28, 2008 | 29 | 28 | 19 | 23 | 1=100 |
| August 17-20, 2007 | 21 | 24 | 22 | 33 | *=100 |
| July 27-30, 2007 | 15 | 26 | 21 | 37 | 1=100 |
| March 2-5, 2007 | 21 | 28 | 25 | 26 | *=100 |
| Early September, 2002 | 27 | 30 | 20 | 22 | $1=100$ |

[^1]
## Q. 1 CONTINUED...

|  | Closely | Closely | Closely | Closely | Refused |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Late July, 2002 | 33 | 33 | 15 | 18 | $1=100$ |
| March, 2001 | 27 | 27 | 18 | 27 | $1=100$ |
| Mid-October, 2000 | 20 | 26 | 23 | 31 | $1=100$ |
| April, 2000 | 18 | 28 | 23 | 31 | *=100 |
| Early April, 2000 | 19 | 29 | 20 | 32 | *=100 |
| March, 2000 | 23 | 29 | 21 | 26 | $1=100$ |
| March, 1999 | 18 | 29 | 22 | 31 | *=100 |
| January, 1999 | 24 | 28 | 19 | 28 | $1=100$ |
| Early September, 1998 | 32 | 31 | 20 | 17 | *=100 |
| Mid-August, 1998 | 17 | 23 | 21 | 39 | *=100 |
| January, 1998 | 21 | 25 | 23 | 31 | *=100 |
| Early November, 1997 | 16 | 29 | 22 | 33 | *=100 |
| Mid-November, 1997 | 25 | 36 | 18 | 20 | $1=100$ |
| September, 1997 | 14 | 22 | 23 | 40 | $1=100$ |
| April, 1997 | 17 | 21 | 22 | 40 | *=100 |
| February, 1996 | 12 | 20 | 25 | 42 | $1=100$ |
| A shooting spree in Alabama that resulted in the eath of 11 people | 18 | 33 | 24 | 25 | *=100 |
| TREND FOR COMPARISON: ${ }^{5}$ |  |  |  |  |  |
| February 8-11, 2008: Missouri city council meeting | 13 | 28 | 25 | 33 | 1=100 |
| December 14-17, 2007: Colorado religious centers | 17 | 31 | 24 | 27 | 1=100 |
| December 7-10, 2007: Omaha mall | 30 | 36 | 18 | 15 | $1=100$ |

Q. 2 Which ONE of the stories I just mentioned have you followed most closely, or is there another story you've been following MORE closely? [DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE.]

27 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
17 Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market
15 Barack Obama's decision on federal funding for stem cell research
Bernard Madoff pleading guilty to charges of fraud involving a scheme that cheated investors out
10 of billions of dollars
8 A shooting spree in Alabama that resulted in the death of 11 people
3 News about political instability in Pakistan
9 Some other story (VOL.)
11 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100
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 RANDOMIZE]

|  |  | A lot | A little | Nothing at all | DK/ <br> Refused |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| a. | The dispute between Comedy Central's Jon Stewart and CNBC’s Jim Cramer | 17 | 28 | 55 | *=100 |

[^2]
## Q. 3 CONTINUED...

Nothing DK/
b. Controversy over the leadership of Michael Steele, Chairman of the Republican National Committee

A lot A little at all Refused
c. The troubled relationship between pop singers Chris Brown and Rihanna
d. Sarah Palin's teenage daughter Bristol and her boyfriend calling off their engagement

33
$36 \quad 31 \quad *=100$ TREND FOR COMPARISON:

September 5-8, 2008: News that Sarah Palin's

| 17 year old daughter is pregnant | 69 | 21 | 9 | $1=100$ |
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |

On another topic...
Q. 4 Are you hearing mostly good news about the economy these days, mostly bad news about the economy or a mix of both good and bad news?

|  |  | Feb 13-16 | Jan 16-19 | Dec 5-8 |  |
| :---: | :--- | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 2 | Hearing mostly good news about the economy | $\frac{2009}{2}$ | $\underline{2009}$ | $\underline{2008}$ |  |
| 51 | Hearing mostly bad news about the economy [OR] | 60 |  | 67 | 80 |
| 46 | A mix of good and bad | 37 | 30 | 19 |  |
| $\underline{1}$ | Don't know/Refused (VOL. DO NOT READ) | $\underline{1}$ | $\underline{1}$ | $\frac{*}{-}$ |  |
| 100 |  | 100 | 100 | 100 |  |


[^0]:    1 For December 19-22, 2008 the story was listed as "News about a Wall Street investor who allegedly cheated people out of billions of dollars."
    2 July, 2005 asked about "The passage of a bill in Congress allowing stem cell research." Early September, 2001 asked about "George W. Bush's decision on federal funding for stem-cell research."

[^1]:    3
    September 26-29, 2008 asked about "A bombing at a Marriott Hotel in Pakistan that killed over 50 people." November 9-12, 2007 through November 30-December 3, 2007; January 11-14, 2008 and August 15-18, 2008 asked about "Political instability in Pakistan." February 22-25, 2008 asked about "Parliamentary elections and changes in party control in Pakistan." January 4-7, 2008 asked about "The assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and resulting instability in Pakistan." October 19-22, 2007 asked about "A bombing in Pakistan aimed at former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto that killed over 120 people." July 13-16, 2007 asked about "The Pakistani government's raid on a mosque held by Islamic radicals."
    October 10-13, 2008 and November 21-24, 2008 through March 6-9, 2009 asked about "Recent major drops in the U.S. stock market." March 2-5, 2007 asked about "The recent drop in the U.S. stock market." In Early November, 1997, the story was listed as "Thinking about last Monday when the stock market dropped, how closely did you follow what was happening?" From February, 1996 to MidNovember, 1997, the story was listed as "Recent major ups and downs in the stock market." For all other dates, the story was listed as "Recent major ups and downs in the U.S. stock market."

[^2]:    February 8-11, 2008 asked about "A shooting at a city council meeting in Missouri where six people were killed." December 14-17, 2007 asked about "Shootings at two religious centers in Colorado." December 7-10, 2007, asked about "A shooting at a shopping mall in Omaha, Nebraska where eight people were killed."

