

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MARCH 23-26, 2007 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
FINAL TOPLINE
N=1,034

Q.1 As I read a list of some stories covered by news organizations this past week, tell me if you happened to follow each news story very closely, fairly closely, not too closely, or not at all closely. First, **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ITEMS] [IF NECESSARY “Did you follow [ITEM] very closely, fairly closely, not too closely or not at all closely?”]**

| | <u>Very Closely</u> | <u>Fairly Closely</u> | <u>Not too Closely</u> | <u>Not at all Closely</u> | <u>DK/ Refused</u> |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| a. News about the current situation in Iraq | 31 | 38 | 18 | 12 | 1=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 34 | 34 | 17 | 15 | *=100 |
| March 9-12, 2007 | 34 | 37 | 16 | 13 | *=100 |
| March 2-5, 2007 | 37 | 37 | 16 | 9 | 1=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 36 | 36 | 15 | 13 | *=100 |
| February 16-19, 2007 | 30 | 36 | 19 | 14 | 1=100 |
| February 9-12, 2007 | 37 | 34 | 18 | 11 | *=100 |
| February 2-5, 2007 | 38 | 38 | 17 | 7 | *=100 |
| January 26-29, 2007 | 36 | 38 | 15 | 11 | *=100 |
| January 19-22, 2007 | 37 | 34 | 18 | 10 | 1=100 |
| January 12-15, 2007 | 38 | 36 | 17 | 8 | 1=100 |
| January, 2007 | 46 | 40 | 8 | 5 | 1=100 |
| January 5-8, 2007 | 40 | 32 | 16 | 12 | 0=100 |
| December, 2006 | 42 | 39 | 12 | 7 | *=100 |
| November 30-December 3, 2006 | 40 | 36 | 13 | 11 | *=100 |
| Mid-November, 2006 | 44 | 38 | 12 | 6 | *=100 |
| September, 2006 | 33 | 43 | 14 | 8 | 2=100 |
| August, 2006 | 41 | 39 | 12 | 7 | 1=100 |
| June, 2006 | 37 | 43 | 13 | 6 | 1=100 |
| May, 2006 | 42 | 35 | 15 | 7 | 1=100 |
| April, 2006 | 43 | 36 | 13 | 7 | 1=100 |
| March, 2006 | 43 | 38 | 12 | 6 | 1=100 |
| February, 2006 | 39 | 42 | 12 | 6 | 1=100 |
| January, 2006 | 40 | 40 | 12 | 7 | 1=100 |
| December, 2005 | 45 | 38 | 11 | 5 | 1=100 |
| Early November, 2005 | 41 | 40 | 13 | 6 | *=100 |
| Early October, 2005 | 43 | 36 | 15 | 6 | *=100 |
| Early September, 2005 | 32 | 40 | 20 | 7 | 1=100 |
| July, 2005 | 43 | 37 | 13 | 6 | 1=100 |
| Mid-May, 2005 | 42 | 42 | 11 | 5 | *=100 |
| Mid-March, 2005 | 40 | 39 | 14 | 5 | 2=100 |
| February, 2005 | 38 | 45 | 13 | 4 | *=100 |
| January, 2005 | 48 | 37 | 11 | 4 | *=100 |
| December, 2004 | 34 | 44 | 15 | 6 | 1=100 |
| Mid-October, 2004 | 42 | 38 | 11 | 8 | 1=100 |
| Early September, 2004 | 47 | 37 | 9 | 6 | 1=100 |
| August, 2004 | 39 | 42 | 12 | 6 | 1=100 |
| July, 2004 | 43 | 40 | 11 | 6 | *=100 |
| June, 2004 | 39 | 42 | 12 | 6 | 1=100 |
| April, 2004 | 54 | 33 | 8 | 5 | *=100 |
| Mid-March, 2004 | 47 | 36 | 12 | 4 | 1=100 |
| Early February, 2004 | 47 | 38 | 10 | 4 | 1=100 |
| Mid-January, 2004 | 48 | 39 | 9 | 4 | *=100 |
| December, 2003 | 44 | 38 | 11 | 6 | 1=100 |

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> |
|--|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| November, 2003 | 52 | 33 | 9 | 5 | 1=100 |
| September, 2003 | 50 | 33 | 10 | 6 | 1=100 |
| Mid-August, 2003 | 45 | 39 | 10 | 5 | 1=100 |
| Early July, 2003 | 37 | 41 | 13 | 8 | 1=100 |
| June, 2003 | 46 | 35 | 13 | 6 | *=100 |
| May, 2003 | 63 | 29 | 6 | 2 | *=100 |
| April 11-16, 2003 ¹ | 47 | 40 | 10 | 2 | 1=100 |
| April 2-7, 2003 | 54 | 34 | 9 | 2 | 1=100 |
| March 20-24, 2003 | 57 | 33 | 7 | 2 | 1=100 |
| March 13-16, 2003 ² | 62 | 27 | 6 | 4 | 1=100 |
| February, 2003 | 62 | 25 | 8 | 4 | 1=100 |
| January, 2003 | 55 | 29 | 10 | 4 | 2=100 |
| December, 2002 | 51 | 32 | 10 | 6 | 1=100 |
| Late October, 2002 | 53 | 33 | 8 | 5 | 1=100 |
| Early October, 2002 | 60 | 28 | 6 | 5 | 1=100 |
| Early September, 2002 ³ | 48 | 29 | 15 | 6 | 2=100 |
| b. The missing Boy Scout found alive in North Carolina | 16 | 30 | 25 | 28 | 1=100 |
| TREND FOR COMPARISON: | | | | | |
| February 23-26, 2007: The rescue of three climbers on Oregon's Mt. Hood | 10 | 25 | 34 | 31 | *=100 |
| January 26-29, 2007: News about two kidnapped boys who were found in Missouri | 23 | 31 | 21 | 24 | 1=100 |
| c. Reports about Walter Reed Army Medical Center and medical care for wounded soldiers returning from Iraq | 27 | 33 | 18 | 22 | *=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 31 | 30 | 20 | 19 | *=100 |
| March 9-12, 2007⁴ | 31 | 31 | 19 | 19 | *=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 19 | 24 | 24 | 32 | 1=100 |
| d. News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election | 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, 2007⁵ | 24 | 27 | 22 | 26 | 1=100 |

¹ From March 20-24, 2003 to April 11-16, 2003, the story was listed as "News about the war in Iraq."
² From October, 2002, to March 13-16, 2003, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will take military action in Iraq."
³ In Early September, 2002, the story was listed as "Debate over the possibility that the U.S. will invade Iraq."
⁴ From February 23-26, 2007 to March 9-12, 2007, the story was listed as "Conditions at Walter Reed Army Medical Center where many soldiers are treated after returning from Iraq."
⁵ January 19-22, 2007 asked about "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

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> |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 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 | 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 | 8=100 |
| Early October, 2000 (RVs) | 42 | 36 | 15 | 6 | 1=100 |
| September, 2000 | 22 | 42 | 21 | 15 | *=100 |
| July, 2000 | 21 | 38 | 20 | 20 | 1=100 |
| June, 2000 | 23 | 32 | 23 | 21 | 1=100 |
| May, 2000 | 18 | 33 | 26 | 23 | *=100 |
| April, 2000 | 18 | 39 | 22 | 20 | 1=100 |
| March, 2000 | 26 | 41 | 19 | 13 | 1=100 |
| February, 2000 | 26 | 36 | 21 | 17 | *=100 |
| January, 2000 | 19 | 34 | 28 | 18 | 1=100 |
| December, 1999 | 16 | 36 | 24 | 23 | 1=100 |
| October, 1999 | 17 | 32 | 28 | 22 | 1=100 |
| September, 1999 | 15 | 31 | 33 | 20 | 1=100 |
| July, 1999 | 15 | 38 | 24 | 22 | 1=100 |
| June, 1999 | 11 | 25 | 29 | 34 | 1=100 |
| 1996 Presidential Election | | | | | |
| November, 1996 (RVs) | 34 | 45 | 15 | 6 | *=100 |
| October, 1996 | 31 | 39 | 18 | 12 | *=100 |
| Early September, 1996 | 24 | 36 | 23 | 17 | *=100 |
| July, 1996 | 22 | 40 | 23 | 14 | 1=100 |
| March, 1996 | 26 | 41 | 20 | 13 | *=100 |
| January, 1996 | 10 | 34 | 31 | 24 | 1=100 |
| September, 1995 | 12 | 36 | 30 | 22 | *=100 |
| August, 1995 | 13 | 34 | 28 | 25 | *=100 |
| June, 1995 | 11 | 31 | 31 | 26 | 1=100 |
| 1992 Presidential Election | | | | | |
| October, 1992 (RVs) | 55 | 36 | 7 | 2 | 0=100 |
| September, 1992 (RVs) | 47 | 36 | 11 | 6 | *=100 |
| August, 1992 (RVs) | 36 | 51 | 11 | 2 | 0=100 |
| July, 1992 | 20 | 45 | 26 | 9 | *=100 |
| May, 1992 | 32 | 44 | 16 | 8 | *=100 |
| March, 1992 | 35 | 40 | 16 | 9 | *=100 |

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> |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| January, 1992 | 11 | 25 | 36 | 27 | 1=100 |
| December, 1991 | 10 | 28 | 32 | 30 | *=100 |
| 1988 Presidential Election | | | | | |
| October, 1988 (RVs) | 43 | 44 | 11 | 2 | *=100 |
| August, 1988 (RVs) | 39 | 45 | 13 | 3 | *=100 |
| May, 1988 | 22 | 46 | 23 | 6 | 3=100 |
| November, 1987 | 15 | 28 | 35 | 21 | 1=100 |
| September, 1987 | 14 | 34 | 37 | 14 | 1=100 |
| e. The announcement that Elizabeth Edwards, the wife of John Edwards, has had a recurrence of breast cancer | | | | | |
| | 17 | 28 | 24 | 30 | 1=100 |
| f. Questions about how the White House and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales were involved in the firing of eight federal prosecutors | | | | | |
| | 20 | 28 | 24 | 28 | *=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 19 | 24 | 22 | 35 | *=100 |
| March 9-12, 2007⁶ | 9 | 17 | 22 | 52 | *=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.**)

| | |
|-----------|--|
| 29 | News about the current situation in Iraq |
| 12 | The missing Boy Scout found alive in North Carolina |
| 9 | News about candidates for the 2008 presidential election |
| 9 | Reports about Walter Reed Army Medical Center and medical care for wounded soldiers returning from Iraq |
| 8 | Questions about how the White House and Attorney General Alberto Gonzales were involved in the firing of eight federal prosecutors |
| 7 | The announcement that Elizabeth Edwards, the wife of John Edwards, has had a recurrence of breast cancer |
| 10 | Some other story (SPECIFY) |
| <u>16</u> | Don't know/Refused |
| 100 | |

Now a few questions about the firing of eight federal prosecutors and how Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and White House officials were involved...

ROTATE QUESTIONS 3 THROUGH 5

Q.3 Do you find this story hard to follow or easy to follow?

| | | <i>Libby Trial</i> <u>March 9-12, 2007⁷</u> |
|-----------|--------------------|---|
| 39 | Hard to follow | 34 |
| 50 | Easy to follow | 49 |
| <u>11</u> | Don't know/Refused | <u>17</u> |
| 100 | | 100 |

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

⁷ For March 9-12, 2007, Q.3 through Q.5 referred to "The recent trial involving former vice presidential aide Lewis Libby."

Q.4 Do you think this story is important for the country or not important for the country?

| | | <i>Libby Trial</i> |
|----------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|
| | | <u>March 9-12, 2007</u> |
| 68 | Important for the country | 59 |
| 26 | Not important for the country | 30 |
| <u>6</u> | Don't know/Refused | <u>11</u> |
| 100 | | 100 |

Q.5 Is this story interesting to you or is it boring?

| | | |
|----------|--------------------|-----------|
| 48 | Interesting | 37 |
| 46 | Boring | 51 |
| <u>6</u> | Don't know/Refused | <u>12</u> |
| 100 | | 100 |

Q.6 Now I'd like to ask you about where you get your news. Do you regularly get news about national and international issues from [INSERT ITEM], or not? How about...[READ AND RANDOMIZE]

| | <u>Yes, regularly</u> | <u>No, not regularly</u> | <u>DK/ Refused</u> |
|--|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| a. Newspapers | 53 | 47 | *=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 53 | 47 | 0=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 51 | 49 | *=100 |
| b. Network television news, such as ABC, CBS or NBC | 66 | 33 | 1=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 65 | 34 | 1=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 68 | 32 | *=100 |
| c. Cable news channels such as CNN or the Fox News Channel | 58 | 41 | 1=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 59 | 40 | 1=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 60 | 40 | *=100 |
| d. Radio | 43 | 57 | *=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 40 | 59 | 1=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 40 | 61 | *=100 |
| e. The Internet | 38 | 61 | 1=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 36 | 63 | 1=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 38 | 62 | *=100 |

Q.7 Which would you say is your MAIN source for news about national and international issues? [DO NOT READ LIST. ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE]

| | <u>Newspapers</u> | <u>Network TV News</u> | <u>Cable TV News</u> | <u>Radio</u> | <u>Internet</u> | <u>Other</u> | <u>None DK/Ref</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------------|
| March 23-26, 2007 | 14 | 30 | 26 | 10 | 14 | 4 | 2=100 |
| March 16-19, 2007 | 11 | 29 | 29 | 10 | 14 | 2 | 5=100 |
| February 23-26, 2007 | 11 | 35 | 25 | 10 | 14 | 3 | 2=100 |