

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**EARLY OCTOBER CALLBACK STUDY**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**October 3-5, 2008**  
**N=820**

**ASK ALL:**

RTHOUGHT How much thought have you given to the coming presidential election . . . Quite a lot or only a little?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=710]:**

	Late Sept <u>2008</u>
83 Quite a lot	80
3 Some (VOL.)	3
12 Only a little	14
1 None (VOL.)	2
<u>1</u> Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>1</u>
100	100

**ASK ALL REGISTERED VOTERS (REGICERT=1):**  
**IF RESPONDENT DID NOT CHOOSE MCCAIN (Q5HORSE=2,3,9) ASK:**  
**ROTATE R.1 AND R.2**

R.1 Do you think there is a chance that you might vote for John McCain in November, or have you definitely decided not to vote for him?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=710]:**

	Late Sept <u>2008</u>
9 Chance might vote for him	10
44 Decided not to vote for him	42
<u>4</u> Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>6</u>
57%	58%

**ASK ALL REGISTERED VOTERS (REGICERT=1):**  
**IF RESPONDENT DID NOT CHOOSE OBAMA (Q5HORSE=1,3,9) ASK:**  
**ROTATE R.1 AND R.2**

R.2 Do you think there is a chance that you might vote for Barack Obama in November, or have you definitely decided not to vote for him?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=710]:**

	Late Sept <u>2008</u>
8 Chance might vote for him	8
37 Decided not to vote for him	37
<u>6</u> Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>6</u>
51%	51%

**ASK ALL:**

R.3 Would you say your overall opinion of... [INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? How about (NEXT NAME)? [IF NECESSARY: would you say your overall opinion of [NAME] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]]

	-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
	Total	Very	Mostly	Total	Very	Mostly	Never Heard of	Can't rate/Ref
a. Sarah Palin								
Early October, 2008 (callback)	49	19	30	43	20	23	1	7=100
Late September, 2008	47	18	29	40	21	19	4	9=100
Mid-September, 2008	50	25	25	34	15	19	6	10=100
b. Joe Biden								
Early October, 2008 (callback)	61	20	41	30	10	20	1	8=100
Late September, 2008	49	15	34	30	10	20	8	13=100
Mid-September, 2008	48	14	34	30	11	19	8	14=100

**ASK ALL:**

**ROTATE R.4 AND R.5**

R.4 Based on what you know about the Republican vice presidential nominee Sarah Palin, do you think she is qualified to serve as PRESIDENT, if it becomes necessary, or not?

		-NII-	
		Late Sept	Sept. 5-8
		<u>2008</u>	<u>2008</u>
40	Yes, qualified	37	52
52	No, not qualified	51	39
8	Don't know/Refused	12	9
100		100	100

**ASK ALL:**

**ROTATE R.4 AND R.5**

R.5 Based on what you know about the Democratic vice presidential nominee Joe Biden, do you think he is qualified to serve as PRESIDENT, if it becomes necessary, or not?

		-NII-	
		Late Sept	Sept. 5-8
		<u>2008</u>	<u>2008</u>
73	Yes, qualified	63	66
18	No, not qualified	20	22
9	Don't know/Refused	17	12
100		100	100

**ASK ALL:**

R.6 Did you happen to watch the vice presidential debate between Sarah Palin and Joe Biden on Thursday night, or didn't you get a chance to see it? **IF YES, ASK:** How much of the debate did you watch: all of it, some of it, or only a little?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS [N=710]:**

		<i>McCain/Obama</i>
		<u>Late Sept 2008</u>
68	Yes ( <b>NET</b> )	60
45	Yes, all	34
20	Yes, some	20
3	Yes, a little	6
32	No, didn't watch	39
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )	<u>1</u>
100		100

**IF RESPONDENT WATCHED (R.6=1-3) ASK:**

**ROTATE R.7 AND R.8**

R.7 All in all, would you say Sarah Palin did an excellent, good, only fair or poor job in the debate?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS WHO WATCHED THE DEBATE [N=533]:**

		<i>McCain</i>
		<u>Late Sept 2008</u>
27	Excellent	14
38	Good	45
25	Only fair	28
10	Poor	12
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )	<u>1</u>
100		100

**IF RESPONDENT WATCHED (R.6=1-3) ASK:**

**ROTATE R.7 AND R.8**

R.8 All in all, would you say Joe Biden did an excellent, good, only fair or poor job in the debate?

**BASED ON REGISTERED VOTERS WHO WATCHED THE DEBATE [N=533]:**

		<i>Obama</i>
		<u>Late Sept 2008</u>
28	Excellent	22
53	Good	50
15	Only fair	20
4	Poor	6
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )	<u>2</u>
100		100

**NO QUESTIONS R.9 THROUGH R.11**

**ASK ALL:**

On a different subject...

- R.12 As you may know, Congress has passed a bill that authorizes the government to invest billions to try to keep financial institutions and markets secure. Do you think this is the right thing or the wrong thing for the government to be doing?

		<b>-NII-</b>	
		Late Sept	Sept. 19-22
		<u>2008<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>2008</u>
42	Right thing	45	57
39	Wrong thing	38	30
<u>19</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )	<u>17</u>	<u>13</u>
100		100	100

**ASK ALL:**

- R.13 What is your opinion of how Congress responded to the recent problems in the financial markets, do you think they [**READ AND RANDOMIZE**].

		Late Sept
		<u>2008<sup>2</sup></u>
23	Took too much time debating the issue	32
39	Were too hasty [ <b>Or are they</b> ]	22
29	Gave it the right amount of consideration	37
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>DO NOT READ</b> )	<u>9</u>
100		100

**ASK ALL:**

- R.14 From what you've read and heard, are you optimistic or pessimistic that the government plan to invest billions to try to keep financial markets secure will work?

42	Optimistic
45	Pessimistic
<u>13</u>	Don't know/Refused ( <b>VOL.</b> )
100	

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<sup>1</sup> In Late September 2008 and in the Sept. 19-22 *News Interest Index* the question was worded, "As you may know, the government is potentially investing billions to try to keep financial institutions and markets secure. Do you think this is the right thing or the wrong thing for the government to be doing?" In Late September 2008, an experiment testing the word "committing" instead of "investing" showed no difference in the results. Results for the two versions have been combined.

<sup>2</sup> In Late September 2008, the question was asked in the present tense.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**OCTOBER 3-5, 2008 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY**  
**TOPLINE**  
**N=612 DEBATE WATCHERS**

**QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 6 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

**ROTATE Q.6A and Q.6B**

**IF RESPONDENT WATCHED (Q.6=1-3) ASK [N=612]:**

Q.6A Please tell me what one word best describes your impression of Sarah Palin in the debate. Tell me just the ONE best word that described her. **(OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE ONLY IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “DON’T KNOW”.)**

15	Confident
15	Honest
14	Good
14	Inexperienced
13	Unqualified
12	Energetic
9	Prepared
8	Excellent
8	Knowledgeable
7	Competent
7	Enthusiastic
7	Fresh
7	Impressive

*The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; they are not percentages.*

**IF RESPONDENT WATCHED (Q.6=1-3) ASK [N=612]:**

Q.6B Please tell me what one word best describes your impression of Joe Biden in the debate. Tell me just the ONE best word that described him. **(OPEN-END. PROBE ONCE ONLY IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS “DON’T KNOW”.)**

53	Knowledgeable
32	Experienced
23	Competent
17	Confident
16	Good
14	Politician
12	Fair
12	Intelligent
11	Old
11	Prepared
8	Excellent
8	Qualified
7	Informed

*The numbers listed represent the number of respondents who offered each response; they are not percentages.*