

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
MARCH 27-30, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY
TOPLINE
N=1001

Q.1 All things considered... these days have you been hearing too much, too little, or the right amount about Barack Obama?

		Oct 24-27, <u>2008</u> ¹	Aug 1-4, <u>2008</u>
34	Too much	41	48
8	Too little	10	10
54	Right amount	47	41
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100

Q.2 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. Floods in and around Fargo, North Dakota	24	33	19	24	*=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:	39	36	14	11	*=100
June 20-23, 2008: Floods in the Midwest	34	34	18	14	*=100
June 13-16, 2008					
August 24-27, 2007: Floods in the Midwest and the plain states	27	35	20	18	*=100
July 6-9, 2007: Floods in Texas and the plains states	21	29	24	26	*=100
January, 2006: <i>Floods in California</i>	20	31	28	20	1=100
April, 2001: <i>Floods in the Midwest</i>	20	34	24	22	*=100
January, 1997: <i>Floods in the Pacific Northwest</i>	34	37	14	14	1=100
March, 1995: <i>Floods in California</i>	37	40	18	5	*=100
August, 1993: <i>Floods in the Midwest</i>	65	27	6	2	*=100
June, 1990: <i>Flooding in Texas and other Southwestern states</i>	34	39	17	10	*=100
b. The debate over Barack Obama's budget proposal	28	34	18	19	1=100
TREND FOR COMPARISON:²					
Feb 27-March 2, 2009: Obama's budget proposal to increase spending, raise taxes on the wealthy	47	34	9	10	*=100
February, 2002: <i>Debate in Congress over G.W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan</i>	17	31	28	23	1=100
April, 2001	24	38	20	18	*=100
February, 2001: <i>G.W. Bush's tax cut plan</i>	31	35	19	14	1=100

¹ For Aug. 1-4 and Oct. 24-27, 2008, the question was preceded by "Thinking about the presidential campaign. Also, the question then was asked about both Obama and John McCain, in random order.

² Feb. 27 to March 2, 2009, asked about "Barack Obama's budget proposal for next year that raises taxes on wealthy Americans and increases spending on health care, education and other programs." April, 2001 and February, 2002 asked about "The debate in Congress over George W. Bush's budget and tax cut plan." February, 2001 asked about "George W. Bush's tax-cut plan."

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
c. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy	48	32	10	10	*=100
March 20-23, 2009	52	34	8	6	*=100
March 13-16, 2009	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
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

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
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
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. A shooting in Oakland, California in which four police officers were killed	20	24	21	34	1=100
e. The Obama administration's plans to expand federal regulations over financial institutions	36	29	19	16	*=100

Q.2 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<u>DK/Refused</u>
f. Hillary Clinton's recent trip to Mexico to discuss drug violence near the border	14	24	23	39	*=100
TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:					
Feb 27-March 2: <i>News about growing drug-related violence in Mexico</i>	18	28	23	31	*=100
Jan. 23-26, 2009: <i>Hillary Clinton becoming secretary of state</i>	24	30	24	22	*=100

Q.3 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.**]

- 30 Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
- 17 The debate over Barack Obama's budget proposal
- 13 Floods in and around Fargo, North Dakota
- 8 The Obama administration's plans to expand federal regulations over the financial institutions
- 7 A shooting in Oakland, California in which four police officers were killed
- 4 Hillary Clinton's recent trip to Mexico to discuss drug violence near the border
- 9 Some other story (**SPECIFY**)
- 12 Don't know/Refused
- 100

Q.4 Do you think the press has been too critical, not critical enough or fair in the way it has covered Barack Obama?

		<u>Jan 23-26, 2009³</u>	<u>Jan 2-4, 2009</u>
18	Too critical	12	11
24	Not critical enough	18	23
52	Fair	64	61
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
100		100	100

³ For Jan. 23-26, 2009, question wording was: "Do you think the press has been too critical, not critical enough or fair in the way it has covered Barack Obama during his first few days in office?" For Jan. 2-4, 2009, question was asked about George W. Bush and Barack Obama. Question wording was: "Do you think the press has been too critical, not critical enough or fair in the way it has covered [INSERT ITEM; ROTATE]?"

On another topic...

Q.5 All in all, do you think the government is on the right track or the wrong track in the way it is handling economic problems facing the nation?

		Feb 20-23, <u>2009</u>	Jan 16-19, <u>2009</u>
50	Right track	47	31
39	Wrong track	34	48
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	<u>19</u>	<u>21</u>
100		100	100

Q.6 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]

		<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<u>DK/ Refused</u>
a.	Medical research indicating that eating too much red meat may increase the chances of premature death	20	44	36	*=100
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
	Nov. 9-12, 2007: <i>Study suggesting that being overweight does NOT increase the risk of dying of certain diseases</i>	16	36	47	1=100
b.	Medical research indicating that prostate cancer testing may not help to save men's lives	13	32	54	1=100
c.	Michelle Obama starting a vegetable garden on the White House grounds	19	41	40	*=100
	TREND FOR COMPARISON:				
	June 20-23, 2008: <i>Michelle Obama's appearance on the daytime TV show The View</i>	29	31	40	*=100
	Feb. 22-25, 2008: <i>Michelle Obama saying this is first time in her adult life she has been really proud of her country</i>	35	25	39	1=100