

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**JULY 2009 POLITICAL SURVEY / MEDIA UPDATE**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
 July 22-26, 2009  
 N=1506

**QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 5 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

On a different subject...

**ASK ALL:**

Q.6 How do you get most of your news about national and international issues? From **[READ AND RANDOMIZE]**? **[ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS: IF ONLY ONE RESPONSE IS GIVEN, PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL RESPONSE]**

	<u>Tele-</u> <u>vision</u>	<u>News-</u> <u>papers</u>	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Maga-</u> <u>zines</u>	<u>Internet</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>Other</u>	<u>(VOL.)</u> <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	71	33	21	3	42	1	1
December, 2008	70	35	18	5	40	2	1
September, 2007	74	34	13	2	24	2	1
July, 2007	65	27	15	2	26	2	1
Late September, 2006	74	37	16	4	21	3	1
August, 2006	72	36	14	4	24	2	1
November, 2005	73	36	16	2	20	2	*
<b>Early Sept, 2005<sup>1</sup> (Hurricane Katrina)</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>*</b>
June, 2005	74	44	22	5	24	2	1
December, 2004	74	46	21	4	24	2	3
October, 2003	80	50	18	4	20	2	1
August, 2003	79	46	15	3	18	2	1
Early July, 2003	79	45	16	5	19	1	*
<b>March, 2003 (War in Iraq)</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>*</b>
February, 2003	83	42	19	4	15	3	*
January, 2003	81	44	22	4	17	2	1
January, 2002	82	42	21	3	14	2	*
<b>Mid-September, 2001 (Terror Attacks)</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>*</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Early September, 2001	74	45	18	6	13	1	*
February, 2001	76	40	16	4	10	2	1
October, 1999	80	48	19	5	11	2	*
January, 1999	82	42	18	4	6	2	*
January, 1996	88	61	25	8	--	2	*
September, 1995	82	63	20	10	--	1	1
January, 1994	83	51	15	10	--	5	1
September, 1993	83	60	17	9	--	3	*
January, 1993	83	52	17	5	--	1	1
<b>Early January, 1991 (Persian Gulf)</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>*</b>

<sup>1</sup> In Early September 2005, the question was worded “news about the impact of Hurricane Katrina.” In March 2003, the question was worded “news about the war in Iraq,” and in Mid-September 2001, the question was worded “news about the terrorist attacks.” In September 1995, question wording did not include “international.” In Early January 1991 the question asked about “the latest developments in the Persian Gulf.”

**IF '1' TELEVISION AS EITHER 1ST OR 2ND RESPONSE IN Q.6 ASK [N=1090]:**

Q.7 On television, do you get most of your news about national and international issues from [READ, RANDOMIZE ITEMS 2 THRU 4 AND 5 THRU 7 SEPARATELY, AND RANDOMIZE SETS OF ITEMS (LOCAL; NETWORK; CABLE). ACCEPT MULTIPLE ANSWERS BUT DO NOT PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL]

		<i>Hurricane Katrina</i>											
		Early						Early					
<b>BASED ON TOTAL:</b>		Dec	Sept	July	Aug	Nov	Sept	June	Dec	Oct	Aug	July	Jan
		<u>2008</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2005<sup>2</sup></u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
18	Local news programming	15	18	12	13	16	19	13	15	17	17	17	16
11	ABC Network news	12	11	10	10	14	14	12	11	12	12	12	11
10	CBS Network news	9	8	7	9	12	8	9	9	8	10	11	11
13	NBC Network news	10	13	11	12	15	12	12	14	13	15	14	15
22	CNN Cable news	23	22	16	24	24	31	18	20	20	26	27	28
6	MSNBC Cable news	8	7	5	6	8	9	5	6	6	7	9	8
19	The Fox News Cable Channel	17	16	17	20	22	22	16	19	17	18	22	16
3	Other (VOL.)	4	3	2	6	5	3	2	3	--	3	3	4
1	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2	2	1	1	3	3	4	3	4	4	3	2
(29)	<i>TV not a main source</i>	(30)	(26)	(35)	(28)	(27)	(11)	(26)	(26)	(20)	(21)	(21)	(18)

Figures add to more than 100% because of multiple responses.

**ASK ALL:**

Q.A Now thinking about local news about issues and events in your area...How do you get most of your local news? From [READ AND RANDOMIZE]? [ACCEPT TWO ANSWERS: IF ONLY ONE RESPONSE IS GIVEN, PROBE FOR ADDITIONAL RESPONSE]

- 64 Television
- 41 Newspapers
- 18 Radio [OR]
- 17 The internet
- 3 Other [VOL. DO NOT READ]
- 2 Don't know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]

**QUESTIONS 8 THROUGH 17 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**NO QUESTIONS 18 THROUGH 24**

<sup>2</sup> In early September 2005, the question was worded: "Have you been getting most of your news about the disaster from ..."

**ASK ALL:**

Q.25 Now I'd like your opinion of some groups and organizations in the news. Is your overall opinion of... **(INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ITEMS a. THROUGH c. FOLLOWED BY RANDOMIZED ITEMS d. THROUGH l.; OBSERVE FORM SPLITS)** very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? **(INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE")** How about **(NEXT ITEM)?** **[IF NECESSARY: would you say your overall opinion of [ITEM] is very favorable, mostly favorable, mostly UNfavorable, or very unfavorable? [INTERVIEWERS: PROBE TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN "NEVER HEARD OF" AND "CAN'T RATE."]**

**QUESTIONS 25a-c PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

		-----Favorable-----			----Unfavorable----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	Never heard of	Can't rate
d.	CNN – Cable News Network								
	July, 2009	60	20	40	19	7	12	*	21
	July, 2007	59	22	37	23	8	15	*	18
	January, 1992	82	44	38	4	3	1	3	11
	September, 1987	53	23	30	5	3	2	6	36
e.	The Fox News Cable Channel								
	July, 2009	55	19	36	25	12	13	1	19
	July, 2007	61	26	35	20	10	10	1	18
f.	MSNBC cable news								
	July, 2009	48	13	35	19	7	12	2	31

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=760]:**

g.F1	Network television news such as ABC, NBC, and CBS								
	July, 2009	64	18	46	24	8	16	0	12
	July, 2007	65	22	43	27	9	18	*	8
	June, 2005 <sup>3</sup>	68	19	49	23	6	17	*	9
	July, 2001	72	17	55	23	7	16	*	5
	August, 1999	74	19	55	24	6	18	*	2
	June, 1999	68	20	48	28	6	22	*	4
	February, 1998	76	16	60	22	5	17	*	2
	February, 1997	73	15	58	23	5	18	*	4
	April, 1996	79	21	58	17	4	13	0	4
	January, 1996	83	25	58	15	4	11	*	2
	June, 1995	67	16	51	30	9	21	*	3
	July, 1994	69	17	52	29	7	22	*	2
	May, 1993	81	23	58	15	3	12	0	4
	January, 1992	82	27	55	13	2	11	0	5
	November, 1991	75	24	51	21	5	16	0	4
	March, 1991	91	40	51	7	2	5	0	2
	May, 1990	82	22	60	15	3	12	*	3
	August, 1989	82	28	54	14	3	11	4	
	February, 1989	82	21	61	15	3	12	3	
	August, 1988 (RVs)	81	29	52	14	5	9	5	
	May, 1988	78	20	58	18	4	14	4	
	January, 1988	81	12	69	16	3	13	3	
	January 7-18, 1988	78	18	60	18	4	14	4	

<sup>3</sup> In June 2005, "...such as ABC, NBC, and CBS" was added to the question wording.

**Q.25 CONTINUED ...**

		-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	Never heard of	Can't rate
	October, 1987	81	19	62	13	3	10	6	
	May, 1987	84	21	63	14	3	11	2	
	January, 1987	74	19	55	22	6	16	4	
	July, 1986	83	30	53	14	4	10	3	
	August, 1985	81	30	51	10	2	8	7	
	July, 1985	84	25	59	10	2	8	6	
h.F1	Local television news								
	July, 2009	73	20	53	17	7	10	1	10
	July, 2007	73	25	48	20	6	14	*	7
	June, 2005	73	22	51	20	6	14	*	7
	July, 2001	79	25	54	17	4	13	*	4
	June, 1999	74	25	49	22	7	15	*	4
	February, 1998	81	19	62	16	4	12	0	3
	February, 1997	81	25	56	15	3	12	0	4
	April, 1996	84	26	58	13	3	10	*	3
	January, 1996	84	28	56	14	4	10	*	2
	March, 1991	89	37	52	8	2	6	*	3
	August, 1989	80	27	53	15	4	11	5	
	July, 1985	84	27	57	11	2	9	5	
i.F1	NPR – National Public Radio								
	July, 2009	44	17	27	12	5	8	9	35
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:</b>									
j.F2	The daily newspaper you are most familiar with								
	July, 2009	65	17	48	20	6	14	*	15
	July, 2007	69	21	48	19	6	13	*	12
	June, 2005	72	22	50	18	5	13	0	10
	July, 2001	75	24	51	17	5	12	*	8
	August, 1999	78	22	56	18	5	13	*	4
	June, 1999	79	24	55	17	6	11	*	4
	February, 1998	74	18	56	18	5	13	*	8
	February, 1997	74	21	53	19	4	15	0	7
	April, 1996	80	24	56	16	4	12	0	4
	January, 1996	79	27	52	16	5	11	*	5
	June, 1995	74	22	52	21	7	14	1	4
	July, 1994	80	23	57	18	5	13	*	2
	May, 1993	81	26	55	14	4	10	0	5
	January, 1992	78	27	51	18	5	13	0	4
	November, 1991	80	24	56	16	5	11	0	4
	March, 1991	85	30	55	10	3	7	*	5
	May, 1990	78	22	56	17	5	12	*	5
	August, 1989	77	25	52	17	5	12	6	
	February, 1989	78	22	56	17	4	13	5	
	August, 1988 (RVs)	78	30	48	15	5	10	7	
	May, 1988	78	19	59	17	4	13	5	
	January, 1988	81	19	62	14	3	11	5	
	January 7-18, 1988	80	21	59	16	4	12	4	
	October, 1987	79	21	58	13	4	9	8	

**Q.25 CONTINUED ...**

		-----Favorable-----			-----Unfavorable-----			(VOL.)	(VOL.)
		<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Very</u>	<u>Mostly</u>	Never heard of	Can't rate
	May, 1987	81	22	59	15	3	12	4	
	January, 1987	76	19	57	19	6	13	5	
	July, 1986	79	28	51	17	6	11	4	
	August, 1985	77	25	52	15	5	10	8	
	July, 1985	81	25	56	11	3	8	8	
k.F2	The New York Times								
	July, 2009	29	10	20	17	8	9	1	53
l.F2	The Wall Street Journal								
	July, 2009	32	7	25	13	6	8	1	54

**NO QUESTIONS 26 THROUGH 29**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.30 Some people think that by criticizing leaders, news organizations keep political leaders from doing their job. Others think that such criticism is worth it because it keeps political leaders from doing things that should not be done. Which position is closer to your opinion?

	<u>Keeps leaders from doing their job</u>	<u>Keeps leaders from doing things that shouldn't be done</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	22	62	16
July, 2007	27	58	15
November, 2005	22	62	16
June, 2005	28	60	12
Early July, 2003	29	54	17
July, 2002	26	59	15
Mid-November, 2001	32	54	14
Early September, 2001	25	60	15
February, 1999	31	58	11
Early February, 1998	39	55	6
February, 1997	32	56	12
Late January, 1994	24	66	10
Early January, 1994	18	69	13
August, 1989	23	68	9
December, 1986	26	60	14
July, 1985	17	67	16

**ASK ALL:**

Q.31 In general, do you think news organizations get the facts straight, or do you think that their stories and reports are often inaccurate?

	<u>Get the facts straight</u>	<u>Stories often inaccurate</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	29	63	8
July, 2007	39	53	8
June, 2005	36	56	8
Early July, 2003	36	56	8
July, 2002	35	56	9
Mid-November, 2001	46	45	9

**QUESTION 31 CONTINUED...**

	Get the <u>facts straight</u>	Stories often <u>inaccurate</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
Early September, 2001	35	57	8
February, 1999	37	58	5
Early August, 1998	33	58	9
Early February, 1998	34	63	3
February, 1997	37	56	7
January, 1992	49	44	7
August, 1989	54	44	2
August, 1988	40	50	10
May, 1988	48	43	9
January, 1988	44	48	8
July, 1985	55	34	11

**ASK ALL:**

Q.32 In presenting the news dealing with political and social issues, do you think that news organizations deal fairly with all sides, or do they tend to favor one side?

	Deal fairly <u>with all sides</u>	Tend to favor <u>one side</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	18	74	8
July, 2007	26	66	8
June, 2005	21	72	7
Early July, 2003	26	66	8
Early September, 2001	26	67	7
February, 1997	27	67	6
January, 1992	31	63	6
August, 1989	28	68	4
August, 1988	36	57	7
May, 1988	34	56	10
January, 1988	30	59	11
December, 1986	39	54	7
July, 1986	37	57	6
July, 1985	34	53	13

**ASK ALL:**

Q.33 In general, do you think news organizations are pretty independent, or are they often influenced by powerful people and organizations?

	Pretty <u>independent</u>	Often influenced by <u>powerful people and organizations</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	20	74	6
July, 2007	23	69	8
June, 2005	21	73	6
Early July, 2003	23	70	7
Early September, 2001	23	71	6
January, 1994	28	63	9
January, 1992	35	58	7
August, 1989	33	62	5
January, 1988	40	49	11
July, 1986	37	53	10
July, 1985	37	53	10

**ASK ALL:**

Q.34 In general, do you think news organizations pay too much attention to GOOD NEWS, too much attention to BAD NEWS, or do they mostly report the kinds of stories they should be covering?

	<u>Too much attention to good news</u>	<u>Too much attention to bad news</u>	<u>Report the kinds of stories they should be covering</u>	<u>(VOL.) DK/Ref</u>
July, 2009	3	66	24	7
July, 2007	4	64	26	6
June, 2005	3	67	23	7
Early July, 2003	2	67	25	6
Early September, 2001	3	67	24	6
May, 1991	2	54	37	7
August, 1989	3	64	30	3
July, 1985	1	60	35	4

**ASK ALL:**

Q.35 I'm going to read you some pairs of opposite phrases. After I read each pair, tell me which ONE phrase you feel better describes news organizations generally. If you think that NEITHER phrase applies, please say so. First, would you say news organizations (are)...**[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ORDER OF THE ITEM PAIRS; DO NOT RANDOMIZE ORDER WITHIN PAIRS; NOTE FORM SPLITS]**. How about **[NEXT ITEM PAIR]**? **[IF NECESSARY: would you say news organizations (are)]**

			Early		Mid-		Early						
			July	June	July	July	Nov	Sept	Feb	Aug	Jan	July	July
<b>ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=760]:</b>			<u>07</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>85</u>
a.F1	32	Care about the people they report on, OR	35	28	31	30	47	23	21	--	41	--	35
	55	Don't care about the people they report on	53	58	56	55	38	64	67	--	45	--	48
	8	Neither applies	7	9	9	10	11	10	9	--	9	--	10
	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	5	5	4	5	4	3	3	--	5	--	7
b.F1	21	Willing to admit their mistakes, OR	29	28	27	23	35	24	26	--	--	--	34
	70	Try to cover up their mistakes	63	62	62	67	52	67	66	--	--	--	55
	4	Neither applies	4	6	5	6	9	5	6	--	--	--	4
	5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	4	6	4	4	4	2	--	--	--	7
c.F1	41	Moral, OR	46	43	45	39	53	40	40	--	--	--	54
	38	Immoral	32	35	32	36	23	34	38	--	--	--	13
	14	Neither applies	15	15	14	18	17	20	16	--	--	--	20
	7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7	7	9	7	7	6	6	--	--	--	13
d.F1	52	Growing in influence, OR	52	49	55	57	--	55	59	--	--	--	63
	34	Declining in influence	36	36	29	29	--	29	32	--	--	--	17
	7	Neither applies	6	7	8	7	--	9	6	--	--	--	7
	7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	6	8	8	7	--	7	3	--	--	--	13
e.F1	46	Protect democracy, OR	44	47	52	50	60	46	45	55	52	58	54
	37	Hurt democracy	36	33	28	29	19	32	38	19	27	18	23
	10	Neither applies	13	12	13	14	14	15	13	20	13	17	13
	7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7	8	7	7	7	7	4	6	8	7	10

**Q.35 CONTINUED...**

			July	June	Early	Mid-	Early	July	Nov	Sept	Feb	Aug	Jan	July	July	
			<u>07</u>	<u>05</u>	<u>03</u>	<u>02</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>01</u>	<u>99</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>85</u>	<u>85</u>	
<b>ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=746]:</b>																
f.F2	67	Care about how good a job they do, OR	69	65	68	65	78	69	69	--	--	--	--	77	79	
	23	Don't care about how good a job they do	23	25	22	23	14	22	22	--	--	--	--	16	11	
	5	Neither applies	6	6	7	8	6	7	6	--	--	--	--	5	4	
	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	2	4	3	4	2	2	3	--	--	--	--	2	6	
g.F2	59	Highly professional, OR	66	59	62	49	73	54	52	--	--	--	--	71	72	
	27	Not professional	22	25	24	31	12	27	32	--	--	--	--	13	11	
	10	Neither applies	9	12	9	15	12	15	13	--	--	--	--	12	9	
	4	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	3	4	5	5	3	4	3	--	--	--	--	4	8	
h.F2	41	Stand up for America, OR	41	42	51	49	69	43	41	--	--	--	53	53	52	
	44	Too critical of America	43	40	33	35	17	36	42	--	--	--	35	28	30	
	10	Neither applies	12	14	12	12	10	16	13	--	--	--	8	15	10	
	5	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	--	--	--	4	4	8	
i.F2	60	Politically biased in their reporting, OR	55	60	53	59	47	59	56	--	--	--	47	42	45	
	26	Careful that their reporting is NOT	31	28	29	26	35	26	31	--	--	--	39	41	36	
	7	politically biased	7	6	9	10	11	8	8	--	--	--	7	9	7	
	7	Neither applies	7	6	9	5	7	7	5	--	--	--	7	8	12	
	7	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	7	6	9	5	7	7	5	--	--	--	7	8	12	
j.F2	50	Liberal, OR	52	50	51	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	54	--	41	
	22	Conservative	25	26	26	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	26	--	19	
	17	Neither applies	14	16	14	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	12	--	20	
	10	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)	9	8	9	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	8	--	20	

**NO QUESTIONS 36 THROUGH 38**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.39 Now a different kind of question. We're interested in how important you think it would be if some different kinds of news organizations were to go out of business. For example...If all of the **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; KEEP ITEMS a-c IN ONE BLOCK; ITEMS d and e IN ONE BLOCK]** **[INSERT FOR ITEMS a-c (went off the air); FOR ITEMS d and e (stopped publishing)]** and shut down their websites, would that be an important loss, or not so important? What about all...**[NEXT ITEM]**...would this be an important loss, or not so important? **[READ FOR FIRST ITEM IN SECOND BLOCK; OTHERWISE IF NECESSARY: if all of the [ITEM] (went off the air/stopped publishing)]** and shut down their websites... would that be an important loss, or not so important? **[INTERVIEWER INSTRUCTION: IF RESPONDENT ASKS FOR CLARIFICATION ABOUT "personally or generally?" CLARIFY WITH "Important just in general"]**

		Important	Not so	(VOL.)
		<u>loss</u>	<u>important</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>
a.	Cable news networks like CNN, Fox News and MSNBC July, 2009	75	22	3
b.	Network TV evening news programs on ABC, CBS, NBC and PBS July, 2009	76	21	3

**QUESTION 39 CONTINUED...**

		Important <u>loss</u>	Not so <u>important</u>	(VOL.) DK/ <u>Ref</u>
c.	Local television news programs in your area July, 2009	82	16	2
d.	Local newspapers in your area July, 2009	74	24	2
e.	Large national newspapers like USA Today, the New York Times and the Wall Street Journal July, 2009	68	29	4

**ASK ALL:**

Q.40 Thinking specifically about local news, which news organizations do the most to uncover and report on important local issues? [READ; RANDOMIZE 1-3 WITH 4 (“online news websites...”) ALWAYS LAST]

- 25 Local newspapers
- 44 Local TV stations
- 10 Local radio stations [OR]
- 11 Online news websites that are not affiliated with TV, radio or newspapers
- \* Other [VOL. DO NOT READ]
- 3 Multiple/Same [VOL. DO NOT READ]
- \* None [VOL. DO NOT READ]
- 6 Don't Know/Refused [VOL. DO NOT READ]

**NO QUESTIONS 41 THROUGH 47**

**QUESTIONS 48 THROUGH 66 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS  
August 13-16, 2009 NEWS INTEREST INDEX OMNIBUS SURVEY  
FINAL TOPLINE  
N=1002**

**QUESTION 1 PREVIOUSLY RELEASED**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.2 In your opinion, are the news organizations you are familiar with being fair or unfair to the Obama administration?

- 62 Fair
- 23 Unfair
- 14 Don't know/Refused (VOL.)