



**THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER**  
**For The People & The Press**

***NEWS Release***

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**  
**Tuesday, March 15, 2011**

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:**  
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## Strong Public Interest in Japan Disaster

The devastating earthquake and tsunami that hit Japan late last week dominated the public's news interest – and news media coverage – in the days following the March 11 disaster.

Roughly half (52%) of the public say they very closely followed news about the massive earthquake off the northeast coast of Japan and the tsunami that followed, according to the latest News Interest Index survey, conducted March 10-13 among 1,001 adults. The Japan disaster was by far the top story of the week – 46% say this was the news they followed *most* closely last week; no other story came close.

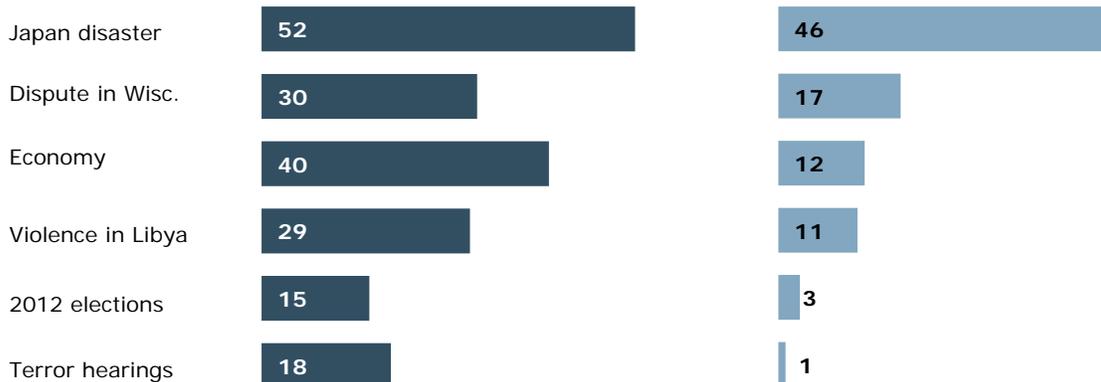
Still, the number who say they followed the Japanese catastrophe very closely is

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### News Interest

*% following each story very closely*

*Which one story did you follow most closely?*



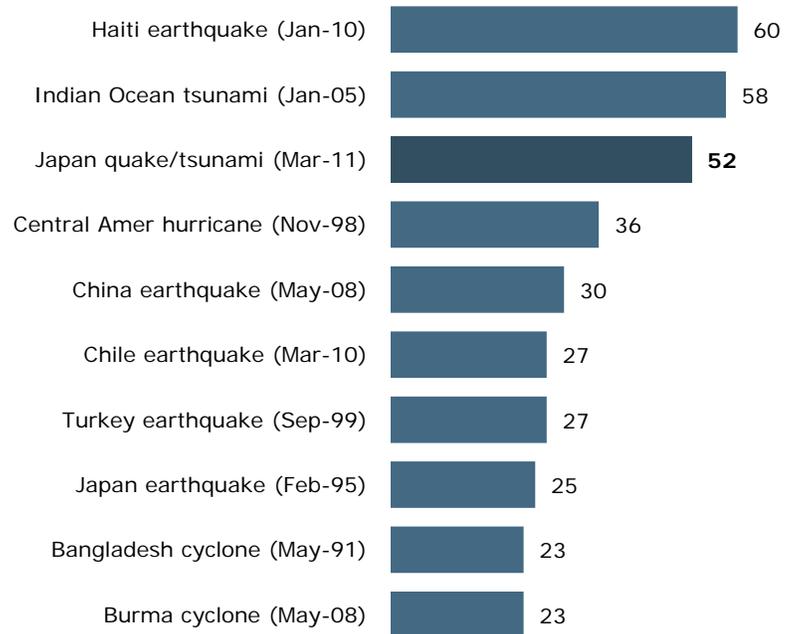
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 10-13, 2010.

somewhat less than the 60% that said they followed news that closely about the earthquake that devastated Haiti in January 2010. In January 2005, 58% said they very closely followed news about the major earthquake and tsunami that struck Indonesia, Sri Lanka and other south Asian nations. Later that year, more Americans paid very close attention to a disaster in this country – Hurricane Katrina – the week that hurricane hit the Gulf Coast (70% very closely).

### Following Foreign Disasters

% following "very closely"



For its part, the media devoted more than half (52%) of news

coverage on Friday – the day the earthquake and tsunami hit – to the disaster in Japan, according to a separate analysis by the Pew Research Center’s Project for Excellence in Journalism (PEJ). For the full week, the late-breaking story accounted for 12% of coverage.

Prior to Friday, two ongoing stories – the fighting in Libya and the confrontation over public employee bargaining rights in Wisconsin – had dominated news coverage. By week’s end, news organizations had shifted focus to the devastation in Japan, rescue efforts and threat of a major nuclear accident at a heavily damaged nuclear power complex. Those story lines continue to drive extensive coverage this week.

Looking at the week’s other top stories, 30% say they very closely followed news about the disputes in Wisconsin and other states between state governments and public employee unions. Fully 17% say this was the news they followed most closely. News about the disputes, which reached a critical juncture last week when Wisconsin Republicans passed a measure scaling back public employee bargaining rights, accounted for 13% of the full week’s newshole, according to PEJ.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 10-13, 2011.

Four-in-ten (40%) say they very closely followed news about the condition of the U.S. economy. This was the top story for 12%. General economic news – apart from the state budget fights – accounted for 6% of coverage for the week.

About three-in-ten (29%) say they followed news about the violence in Libya very closely; 11% say this was the news they followed most closely. News about the fighting in Libya accounted for 19% of coverage, most of the 21% devoted to Middle East unrest more generally.

The public continued to show modest interest in news about possible candidates for the 2012 presidential elections; 15% say they followed developments about potential candidates very closely, essentially unchanged from the 16% that said this in mid-February. Just 3% say news about potential candidates was the story they followed most closely. News about possible 2012 presidential candidates accounted for 1% of the newshole.

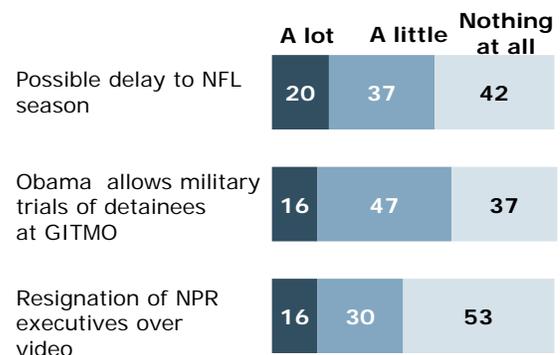
Nearly two-in-ten (18%) say they very closely tracked news about the contentious House hearing held last week on possible support for terrorism among Muslim Americans; 1% say this was the story they followed most closely. News about the hearing accounted for 5% of coverage last week.

### Most Aware of Guantanamo Decision, NFL News

Most Americans say they heard at least a little last week about President Obama's decision to allow military trials of detainees at the Guantanamo Bay prison (63%) and the possibility that the National Football League season will be delayed or cancelled because of a labor dispute (57%). Fewer say they heard about the resignation of NPR executives after the release of a video secretly made by conservative activists: 46% percent had heard at least a little about this, while a majority – 53% – had heard nothing at all.

Just 16% say they heard a lot about the NPR

### Most Heard Nothing about NPR Controversy



PEW RESEARCH CENTER March 10-13, 2011. PEW3a-c. Figures may not add to 100% because of rounding and because "Don't know" responses not shown.

resignations, while 30% heard a little about this story. There were no partisan differences in how likely people were to have heard a lot about the secretly-recorded NPR video. Democrats, however, were slightly more likely than Republicans to have heard nothing at all about this (58% versus 47%).

Another 16% say they heard a lot about President Obama's decision to resume military trials at Guantanamo Bay. Almost half of the public (47%) say they had heard a little about this story, while 37% had heard nothing at all.

One-in-five (20%) say they heard a lot about a possible delay or cancellation of the upcoming NFL season because of a labor dispute; 37% had heard a little and 42% had heard nothing at all about this story.

Men – particularly young men – heard more about the NFL developments. A quarter of men (25%) had heard a lot about this topic, compared with 16% of women. Three-in-ten (30%) men younger than 50 say they heard a lot about the NFL situation; that compares with 17% of women 18 to 49 and 20% of men 50 and older.

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 March 7-13, and survey data measuring public interest in the top news stories of the week were collected March 10-13, from a nationally representative sample of 1,001 adults.

## About the Survey

The analysis in this report is based on telephone interviews conducted March 10-13, 2011 among a national sample of 1,001 adults 18 years of age or older living in the continental United States (670 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 331 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 154 who had no landline telephone). The survey was conducted by interviewers at Princeton Data Source under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International. A combination of landline and cell phone random digit dial samples were used; both samples were provided by Survey Sampling International. Interviews were conducted in English. Respondents in the landline sample were selected by randomly asking for the youngest adult male or female who is now at home. Interviews in the cell sample were conducted with the person who answered the phone, if that person was an adult 18 years of age or older. For detailed information about our survey methodology, see: <http://people-press.org/methodology/detailed>.

The combined landline and cell phone sample are weighted using an iterative technique that matches gender, age, education, race, Hispanic origin, region, and population density to parameters from the March 2010 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey. The sample also is weighted to match current patterns of telephone status and relative usage of landline and cell phones (for those with both), based on extrapolations from the 2010 National Health Interview Survey. The weighting procedure also accounts for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones have a greater probability of being included in the combined sample and adjusts for household size within the landline sample. Sampling errors and statistical tests of significance take into account the effect of weighting. The following table shows the sample sizes and the error attributable to sampling that would be expected at the 95% level of confidence for different groups in the survey:

<b>Group</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Plus or minus ...</b>
Total sample	1001	4.0 percentage points
Republicans	260	7.5 percentage points
Democrats	284	7.0 percentage points
Independents	329	6.5 percentage points

Sample sizes and sampling errors for other subgroups are available upon request.

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.

## 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:

Andrew Kohut, Director  
Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research  
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors  
Michael Remez, Senior Writer  
Leah Christian and Jocelyn Kiley, Senior Researchers  
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**PEW RESEARCH CENTER NEWS INTEREST INDEX**  
**MARCH 10-13, 2011 OMNIBUS**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**N=1,001**

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.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; 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>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
a. Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy					
March 10-13, 2011	40	30	16	13	*
March 3-6, 2011	37	31	17	13	1
February 24-27, 2011	49	29	11	10	*
February 17-20, 2011	35	33	14	17	*
February 10-13, 2011	36	34	13	16	*
February 3-6, 2011	35	37	14	14	*
January 20-23, 2011	37	33	14	15	1
January 13-16, 2010	37	29	15	18	1
January 6-9, 2011	39	37	11	12	1
December 16-19, 2010	39	31	14	15	2
December 9-12, 2010	39	30	14	16	1
December 2-5, 2010	52	28	11	9	*
November 18-21, 2010	46	31	11	11	*
November 11-14, 2010	38	30	15	16	1
November 4-7, 2010	44	32	11	13	*
October 28-November 1, 2010	39	34	11	15	1
October 21-24, 2010	41	29	14	14	1
October 14-17, 2010	42	33	12	13	*
October 7-10, 2010	36	33	15	15	1
September 30-October 3, 2010	43	35	10	11	1
September 23-26, 2010	43	34	13	9	1
September 16-19, 2010	37	30	16	16	1
September 2-6, 2010	43	31	13	12	*
August 19-22, 2010	39	31	14	15	1
August 5-8, 2010	39	33	14	13	1
July 29-August 1, 2010	51	33	11	5	*
July 22-25, 2010	46	33	14	6	1
July 15-18, 2010	37	33	14	15	1
July 8-11, 2010	36	33	15	16	*
July 1-5, 2010	48	30	13	8	*
June 24-27, 2010	37	37	15	11	1
June 17-20, 2010	38	34	15	13	*
June 10-13, 2010	39	35	17	9	*
June 3-6, 2010	35	33	16	14	1
May 27-30, 2010	43	29	13	15	*
May 20-23, 2010	40	35	13	11	*
May 13-16, 2010	49	32	11	8	1
May 7-10, 2010	42	34	11	12	*
April 30-May 3, 2010	32	37	17	14	1
April 23-26, 2010	42	31	13	14	*
April 16-19, 2010	40	32	14	14	0
April 9-12, 2010	40	32	15	13	*
April 1-5, 2010	33	34	14	19	*
March 19-22, 2010	41	32	14	13	*
March 12-15, 2010	41	35	12	12	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
March 5-8, 2010	40	34	12	13	*
February 26-March 1, 2010	31	33	17	19	*
February 19-22, 2010	38	34	15	12	*
February 12-15, 2010	35	34	15	16	*
February 5-8, 2010	43	36	13	9	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	45	32	13	10	*
January 22-25, 2010	41	34	14	10	*
January 15-18, 2010	37	38	14	11	*
January 8-11, 2010	39	33	15	12	*
December 18-21, 2009	45	31	14	10	0
December 11-14, 2009	42	31	14	13	*
December 4-7, 2009	41	36	13	9	1
November 13-16, 2009	38	33	14	15	*
October 30-November 2, 2009	34	32	17	16	*
October 23-26, 2009	44	30	15	10	1
October 9-12, 2009	41	29	16	13	*
October 2-5, 2009	44	30	15	11	0
September 25-28, 2009	44	37	10	10	*
September 18-21, 2009	44	34	15	7	*
September 11-14, 2009	45	32	14	9	*
September 3-6, 2009	41	31	15	13	*
August 28-31, 2009	45	30	13	12	1
August 21-24, 2009	50	27	13	10	1
August 14-17, 2009	41	37	11	12	*
August 7-10, 2009	42	34	13	10	*
July 31-August 3, 2009	46	34	11	8	*
July 24-27, 2009	45	35	12	8	*
July 17-20, 2009	43	35	11	11	1
July 10-13, 2009	37	38	13	11	*
July 2-5, 2009	38	35	15	12	*
June 19-22, 2009	42	33	15	10	*
June 12-15, 2009	41	35	12	12	*
June 5-8, 2009	41	34	11	14	*
May 29-June 1, 2009	43	37	11	8	*
May 21-24, 2009	44	35	13	9	*
May 15-18, 2009	44	35	12	8	*
May 8-11, 2009	42	34	12	12	*
May 1-4, 2009	47	36	11	5	1
April 17-20, 2009	52	30	10	7	1
April 9-13, 2009	48	29	13	10	0
March 27-30, 2009	48	32	10	10	*
March 20-23, 2009	52	34	8	6	*
March 13-16, 2009	48	33	9	10	*
February 27-March 2, 2009	56	30	8	6	*
February 13-16, 2009	55	29	10	6	*
January 30-February 2, 2009	52	31	12	5	*
January 23-26, 2009	57	30	8	5	0
January 16-19, 2009	43	35	13	9	*
January 2-4, 2009	42	36	15	7	*
December 12-15, 2008	51	33	9	7	*
December 5-8, 2008	42	38	13	7	*
November 21-24, 2008	59	24	9	8	*
November 14-17, 2008	56	29	9	6	*
November 7-10, 2008	54	31	8	7	*
October 31-November 3, 2008	63	27	6	4	*
October 24-27, 2008	52	35	7	5	1
October 17-20, 2008	62	29	6	3	*
October 10-13, 2008	65	25	7	3	*
October 3-6, 2008	69	23	5	3	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
September 26-29, 2008	70	22	5	3	*
September 19-22, 2008	56	27	12	5	*
September 5-8, 2008	44	33	16	7	*
August 29-31, 2008	41	34	13	11	1
August 15-18, 2008	39	36	15	10	*
August 8-11, 2008	39	35	16	10	*
August 1-4, 2008	47	34	11	8	0
July 25-28, 2008	46	32	10	12	*
July 18-21, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
July 11-14, 2008	44	33	12	10	1
June 27-30, 2008	49	31	12	7	1
June 13-16, 2008	42	33	14	11	*
May 9-12, 2008	45	31	13	11	*
May 2-5, 2008	43	31	15	10	1
April 18-21, 2008	41	35	13	10	1
April 4-7, 2008	39	37	12	12	*
March 28-31, 2008	42	36	14	8	*
March 20-24, 2008	45	33	13	9	*
February 29-March 3, 2008	38	35	15	11	1
February 15-18, 2008	37	36	11	16	8
February 1-4, 2008	40	37	14	8	1
January 18-21, 2008	42	31	16	11	*
January 11-14, 2008	36	32	15	16	1
November 2-5, 2007	27	37	16	19	1
October 19-22, 2007	25	34	20	21	*
August 10-13, 2007	28	36	18	18	*
Mid-November, 2006	31	40	17	11	1
December, 2005	35	35	18	11	1
Early November, 2005	35	39	17	9	*
Mid-May, 2005	30	39	19	11	1
January, 2005	35	41	17	7	*
Mid-October, 2004	30	43	16	10	1
Early September, 2004	39	34	15	11	1
Mid-January, 2004	37	41	15	7	*
December, 2003	35	38	14	11	2
November, 2003	40	34	15	10	1
October, 2003	32	39	16	12	1
September, 2003	39	30	18	12	1
March, 2003	40	35	16	8	1
February, 2003	42	33	15	10	*
December, 2002	38	34	17	10	1
February, 2002	35	40	15	9	1
January, 2002	30	44	16	9	1
December, 2001	37	40	13	8	2
Mid-November, 2001	41	36	15	7	1
June, 2001	24	41	18	16	1
May, 2001	34	36	15	15	0
April, 2001	36	34	16	13	1
February, 2001	30	39	18	12	1
January, 2001	32	38	17	11	2
June, 1995	26	41	22	11	*
March, 1995	27	45	19	9	*
February, 1995	23	41	22	13	1
December, 1994	28	43	20	9	*
October, 1994	27	40	20	12	1
June, 1994	25	42	23	10	*
May, 1994	33	40	16	10	1
January, 1994	34	39	16	10	1
Early January, 1994	36	44	13	7	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
December, 1993	35	41	15	8	1
October, 1993	33	38	20	9	*
September, 1993	37	40	14	8	1
Early September, 1993	39	39	14	9	*
August, 1993	41	36	14	9	*
May, 1993	37	38	18	6	1
February, 1993	49	36	10	5	*
January, 1993	42	39	12	7	*
September, 1992	43	37	13	6	1
May, 1992	39	39	15	6	1
March, 1992	47	38	11	4	*
February, 1992	47	37	10	6	*
January, 1992	44	40	11	5	*
October, 1991	36	38	16	9	1
b. Disputes in Wisconsin and other states between state governments and public employee unions					
March 10-13, 2011	30	26	18	25	1
March 3-6, 2011	29	24	19	27	1
February 24-27, 2011	36	22	15	26	1
c. Growing violence in Libya					
March 10-13, 2011	29	29	21	20	*
March 3-6, 2011	31	31	18	19	1
February 24-27, 2011	38	30	15	16	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON</b>					
February 17-20, 2011: <i>News about the situation in Egypt</i>	34	32	17	16	1
February 17-20, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in other Middle Eastern and North African nations</i>	20	30	22	28	1
February 10-13, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in Egypt and the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak</i>	39	31	14	15	1
February 3-6, 2011: <i>Anti-government protests in Egypt and other Middle Eastern countries</i>	32	35	16	18	*
January 27-30, 2011	17	26	21	35	*
January 20-23, 2011: <i>Political instability in Tunisia following the collapse of the government</i>	7	15	25	53	1
January 13-16, 2010: <i>The collapse of the Lebanese government</i>	4	11	20	64	*
May 20-23, 2010: <i>A government crackdown on protestors in Thailand</i>	7	14	27	52	1
July 31-August 3, 2009: <i>The Iranian government's crackdown on opposition protestors</i>	18	23	26	31	2
July 2-5, 2009: <i>News about controversy surrounding the recent Iranian election</i>	22	31	23	23	*
June 26-29, 2009: <i>The Iranian government's crackdown on election protestors</i>	31	27	18	23	1
June 19-22, 2009: <i>Protests in Iran over disputed elections</i>	28	28	21	22	1
March 20-24, 2008: <i>Violent protests in Tibet against the Chinese government</i>	12	27	26	35	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
September 28-October 1, 2007: <i>Pro-democracy protests by Buddhist monks in Burma</i>	13	27	20	39	1
March 17-21, 2005: <i>Protests and political changes in Lebanon</i>	10	28	25	36	1
January 6-11, 2004: <i>Reports that Libya will end its weapons program and cooperate with UN inspectors</i>	14	30	28	27	1
October 6-8, 2000: <i>Civil unrest and rioting in Belgrade, Yugoslavia</i>	18	27	24	31	*
January 9-12, 1997: <i>Protests and demonstrations in Belgrade against Serbian President Milosevic</i>	7	14	29	49	1
July 10-24, 1986: <i>The U.S. air strike against Libya</i>	58	27	11	3	1
d. News about possible candidates for the 2012 presidential elections					
March 10-13, 2011	15	21	26	38	0
February 10-13, 2011	16	19	24	40	*
February 3-6, 2011	15	20	23	42	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
October 24-27, 2008: <i>2008 Presidential Election</i>	44	36	11	8	1
October 17-20, 2008	61	28	7	4	*
October 10-13, 2008	52	31	12	5	*
October 3-6, 2008	57	31	8	4	*
September 26-29, 2008	56	29	10	5	*
September 19-22, 2008	47	33	14	6	*
September 12-15, 2008	40	38	14	7	1
September 5-8, 2008	45	39	12	4	*
August 29-31, 2008	45	32	15	8	*
August 22-25, 2008	31	36	22	11	*
August 15-18, 2008	25	41	19	14	1
August 8-11, 2008	27	38	22	13	*
August 1-4, 2008	30	42	19	9	*
July 25-28, 2008	30	34	21	15	*
July 18-21, 2008	30	35	21	14	*
July 11-14, 2008	28	34	22	15	1
July 3-7, 2008	25	35	23	17	*
June 27-30, 2008	39	33	18	10	*
June 20-23, 2008	28	38	22	12	*
June 13-16, 2008	35	35	20	10	*
June 6-9, 2008	38	35	17	10	*
May 30-June 2, 2008	30	35	21	14	*
May 22-25, 2008	32	37	20	11	*
May 16-19, 2008	33	37	19	10	1
May 9-12, 2008	35	36	18	11	*
May 2-5, 2008	27	35	23	14	1
April 25-28, 2008	34	37	18	11	*
April 18-21, 2008	29	41	19	10	1
April 11-14, 2008	31	37	22	10	*
April 4-7, 2008	33	36	17	14	*
March 28-31, 2008	31	41	18	10	*
March 20-24, 2008	34	37	18	11	*
March 14-17, 2008	40	37	16	7	*
March 7-10, 2008	39	36	15	9	1
February 29-March 3, 2008	43	34	14	9	*
February 22-25, 2008	42	37	13	8	*

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	<u>Very closely</u>	<u>Fairly closely</u>	<u>Not too closely</u>	<u>Not at all closely</u>	<b>(VOL.) DK/Ref</b>
February 15-18, 2008	44	36	10	10	*
February 8-11, 2008	39	37	15	9	0
February 1-4, 2008	37	35	16	12	*
January 25-28, 2008	36	37	14	12	1
January 18-21, 2008	36	34	18	12	*
January 11-14, 2008 <sup>1</sup>	32	31	19	17	1
January 4-7, 2008	33	36	19	11	1
December 14-17, 2007	25	34	22	19	*
December 7-10, 2007	24	35	22	19	*
November 30 – December 3, 2007	23	35	23	19	*
November 23-26, 2007	20	33	26	20	1
November 16-19, 2007	26	33	21	19	1
November 9-12, 2007	21	33	25	21	*
November 2-5, 2007	27	30	21	21	1
October 26-29, 2007	21	34	26	19	*
October 19-22, 2007	23	32	22	23	*
October 12-15, 2007	13	31	26	30	*
October 5-8, 2007	22	30	24	24	*
September 28 – October 1, 2007	21	34	25	20	*
September 21-24, 2007	24	31	22	23	*
September 14-17, 2007	22	31	24	23	*
September 7-10, 2007	18	34	26	22	*
August 30-September 2, 2007	19	35	21	25	*
August 24-27, 2007	22	28	24	26	*
August 17-20, 2007	19	27	24	30	*
August 10-13, 2007	23	32	21	24	*
August 3-6, 2007	19	31	25	25	*
July 27-30, 2007	19	32	22	26	1
July 20-23, 2007	16	26	30	27	1
July 13-16, 2007	17	29	27	27	*
July 6-9, 2007	24	29	24	22	1
June 29-July 2, 2007	20	32	25	23	*
June 22-25, 2007	18	31	21	30	*
June 15-18, 2007	17	32	26	25	*
June 8-11, 2007	19	30	24	26	1
June 1-4, 2007	16	27	32	24	1
May 24-27, 2007	22	33	23	22	*
May 18-21, 2007	18	31	24	27	*
May 11-14, 2007	18	30	23	28	1
May 4-7, 2007	23	34	21	21	1
April 27-30, 2007	14	30	29	26	1
April 20-23, 2007	18	28	27	27	*
April 12-16, 2007	18	28	27	27	*
April 5-9, 2007	25	30	26	19	*
March 30-April 2, 2007	20	29	27	23	1
March 23-26, 2007	20	32	22	26	*
March 16-19, 2007	15	28	29	27	1
March 9-12, 2007	24	30	23	23	*
March 2-5, 2007	19	31	26	23	1
February 23-26, 2007	22	33	24	21	*
February 16-19, 2007	18	32	22	27	1
February 9-12, 2007	24	30	24	21	1
February 2-5, 2007	24	36	22	18	*
January 26-29, 2007	24	33	23	20	*
January 19-22, 2007 <sup>2</sup>	24	27	22	26	1

<sup>1</sup> January 11-14, 2008 asked about: "News about the New Hampshire primaries and the presidential campaign."

<sup>2</sup> January 19-22, 2007 asked about: "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2008."

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) DK/Ref
November, 2004 (RVs): <i>2004 Presidential Election</i>	52	36	8	4	*
Mid-October, 2004	46	30	12	11	1
August, 2004	32	38	16	14	*
July, 2004	29	37	18	15	1
April, 2004	31	33	19	16	1
Mid-March, 2004	35	34	18	13	*
Late February, 2004	24	40	23	12	1
Early February, 2004 <sup>3</sup>	29	37	20	13	1
Mid-January, 2004	16	30	27	26	1
Early January, 2004	14	32	30	23	1
December, 2003	16	26	27	30	1
November, 2003	11	26	34	28	1
October, 2003	12	27	28	32	1
September, 2003	17	25	30	27	1
Mid-August, 2003	12	27	27	33	1
May, 2003	8	19	31	41	1
January, 2003	14	28	29	28	1
Early November, 2000 (RVs): <i>2000 Presidential Election</i>	39	44	12	5	*
Mid-October, 2000 (RVs)	40	37	15	8	*
Early October, 2000 (RVs)	42	36	15	6	1
September, 2000	22	42	21	15	*
July, 2000	21	38	20	20	1
June, 2000	23	32	23	21	1
May, 2000	18	33	26	23	*
April, 2000	18	39	22	20	1
March, 2000	26	41	19	13	1
February, 2000	26	36	21	17	*
January, 2000	19	34	28	18	1
December, 1999	16	36	24	23	1
October, 1999	17	32	28	22	1
September, 1999	15	31	33	20	1
July, 1999	15	38	24	22	1
June, 1999	11	25	29	34	1
November, 1996 (RVs): <i>1996 Presidential Election</i>	34	45	15	6	*
October, 1996	31	39	18	12	*
e. Congressional hearings on possible support for terrorism among Muslim Americans					
March 10-13, 2011	18	22	25	35	1
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
May 2004: <i>The Sept. 11 Commission's hearings on the 2001 terrorist attacks</i>	26	36	21	16	1
Early April, 2004	29	34	20	16	1

3 From May 2003 to Early February 2004 and in March 1992, the story was listed as "The race for the Democratic nomination." In January 2003, the story was listed as "Recent announcements by prominent Democrats about plans to run for president in 2004." In September 2000, Early September and July 1996, and May 1992, the question asked about "the presidential election campaign." In January, March and April 1996, the story was listed as "News about the Republican presidential candidates." In August 1992, the story was listed as "News about the presidential election." In July 1992, the story was listed as "News about the presidential campaign." In January 1992, the story was listed as "News about the Democratic candidates for the presidential nomination." In 1988, the story was introduced as being from "this past year" and was listed as "News about the presidential campaign in 1988."

## PEW.1 CONTINUED...

PEW.1F BASED ON MAR 11-13, 2011 ONLY:	Very <u>closely</u>	Fairly <u>closely</u>	Not too <u>closely</u>	Not at all <u>closely</u>	(VOL.) <u>DK/Ref</u>
f. A major earthquake and tsunami off the coast of Japan <sup>4</sup>					
March 11-13, 2011	52	29	12	7	*
<b>TRENDS FOR COMPARISON:</b>					
February 24-27, 2011: <i>A major earthquake in New Zealand</i>	20	30	26	23	1
October 28-November 1, 2010: <i>A tsunami and a volcano erupting in Indonesia</i>	11	25	27	36	1
March 12-15, 2010: Major aftershocks in Chile following an earthquake in late February	18	41	27	14	*
March 5-8, 2010: <i>A major earthquake in Chile</i>	27	42	19	12	*
February 19-22, 2010: <i>Haiti releasing most of the Americans who were accused of attempted kidnapping</i>	16	30	29	23	*
February 12-15, 2010: <i>The aftermath of a major earthquake and relief efforts in Haiti</i>	37	37	17	8	*
February 5-8, 2010	42	39	13	6	*
January 29-February 1, 2010	45	38	13	4	*
January 22-25, 2010	50	40	8	3	*
January 15-18, 2010: <i>A major earthquake in Haiti</i>	60	28	8	4	*
August 14-17, 2009: <i>A typhoon that caused flooding and mudslides in Taiwan</i>	7	21	30	41	1
April 9-13, 2009: <i>A major earthquake in Italy</i>	18	35	25	22	*
May 16-19, 2008: <i>The earthquake in China</i>	30	41	17	12	*
May 9-12, 2008: <i>Reports about the cyclone that hit Burma</i>	23	35	23	19	*
November 2-5, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricane Noel on the Bahamas and Cuba</i>	11	22	31	35	1
September 7-10, 2007: <i>The impact of Hurricanes Felix and Henriette on Mexico and Central America</i>	14	29	29	27	1
August 24-27, 2007: <i>The destruction caused by Hurricane Dean in Mexico and the Caribbean</i>	18	39	24	18	1
October, 2005: <i>The earthquake in Pakistan</i>	22	39	23	16	*
January 2005: <i>The earthquake and tsunami in the Indian Ocean</i>	58	32	7	3	*
January 2004: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	16	34	31	19	*
February 2001: <i>The earthquake in India</i>	15	33	31	20	1
March 2000: <i>Flood rescue efforts in Mozambique</i>	10	26	30	34	*
September 1999: <i>The earthquake in Turkey</i>	27	37	23	12	1
November 1998: <i>Hurricane Mitch and the rain and mudslides in Central America</i>	36	36	16	11	1
February 1995: <i>The earthquake in Japan</i>	25	47	20	8	*
May 1991: <i>The cyclone that devastated Bangladesh</i>	23	36	23	17	1
July 1990: <i>The earthquake in Iran</i>	20	36	28	16	*

<sup>4</sup> This item was added to polling on the second day of the field period. Data were collected March 11-13, 2011. N=671.

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.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.]**

**BASED ON INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED MARCH 11-13, 2011 ONLY:**

Mar 11-13

2011<sup>5</sup>

46	A major earthquake and tsunami off the coast of Japan
17	Disputes in Wisconsin and other states between state governments and public employee unions
12	Reports about the condition of the U.S. economy
11	Growing violence in Libya
3	News about possible candidates for the 2012 presidential elections
1	Congressional hearings on possible support for terrorism among Muslim Americans
6	Some other story <b>(VOL.)</b>
5	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>

**ASK ALL:**

PEW.3 How much if anything, have you heard about each of the following? Have you heard a lot, a little or nothing at all? **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE ITEMS a AND b, WITH ITEM c ALWAYS LAST]**

	<u>A lot</u>	<u>A little</u>	<u>Nothing at all</u>	<b>(VOL.)</b> <u>DK/Ref</u>
a. The resignation of NPR executives because of a hidden video by conservative activists March 10-13, 2011	16	30	53	1
b. President Obama's decision to allow military trials of detainees at Guantanamo Bay March 10-13, 2011	16	47	37	1
<b>TREND FOR COMPARISON:</b> January 30-February 2, 2009: <i>Barack Obama's executive order to close Guantanamo Bay prison within a year</i>	57	27	15	1
June 2005: <i>Reported mistreatment of prisoners held by the U.S. at Guantanamo Bay</i>	49	40	10	1
c. The possibility that the NFL football season will be delayed or cancelled over a labor dispute March 10-13, 2011	20	37	42	1

**PEW.4 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE****PEW.5 THROUGH PEW.8 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE**

<sup>5</sup> The item regarding the earthquake and tsunami was added on the second day of polling, replacing another item. These results reflect polling conducted March 11-13, 2011. N=671.