

Oct. 28, 2021

CONTACT:

Ashley Koning, Director
Office: 848-932-8940
Cell: 908-872-1186
akoning@rutgers.edu

All news releases are available at https://eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu/press_releases/. Follow the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

The Force is Strong with New Jerseyans: Residents Prefer Star Wars Over Star Trek by Double Digits

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. (Oct. 28, 2021) – In the wake of last night’s critical [NJ.com debate](#) on which science fiction universe rules the galaxy, New Jerseyans embrace the “Light Side” and lightsabers by a double-digit margin over the Vulcan salute and the final frontier, according to the latest Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. 36 percent say they prefer Star Wars, 24 prefer Star Trek, 4 say both and 29 say neither; 7 are unsure.

“What starry-eyed child hasn’t hummed lightsaber noises and dreamt of a galaxy far, far away? What little boy or girl hasn’t yearned to be a Jedi Master or the iconic feminist princess-turned-general, or get behind the wheel of the fastest hunk of junk in the galaxy and attempt the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs?” argued Ashley Koning, an assistant research professor and director of the [Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling \(ECPIP\)](#) at [Rutgers University–New Brunswick](#). “Star Wars has so deeply permeated our society, our culture, our politics and our everyday life. It is a reflection of our biggest triumphs and worst failures, its beating heart the timeless theme of family against the backdrop of an epic battle between good versus evil, played out by classic archetypes through which we can so clearly see ourselves – albeit in a galaxy far, far, away. It is both an all-too-real reminder of the horrors of tyranny, war and the insidiously cyclical nature of history, while simultaneously serving as an otherworldly escape that shows there is always good and that there is always ... a new hope. Star Trek shows us a final destination, but Star Wars teaches us the saga never ends.”

Star Wars is light years ahead of Star Trek among younger and middle-aged New Jerseyans – 41 percent versus 16 percent among those 18 to 34 years old and 42 percent versus 18 percent among those 35 to 49 years old. Older residents’ lack of faith in the galaxy far, far away is disturbing, to say the least. The two universes are nearly tied (not to be confused with TIE fighters) among 50 to 64-year-olds; 29 percent prefer Star Wars, while 31 percent prefer underdog Star Trek. Senior citizens embrace the “Dark Side” by choosing Star Trek, 33 percent to 29 percent.

Beyond age, New Jerseyans have otherwise formed a clear alliance supporting Star Wars across the board. Partisans of all stripes, both men and women, residents in every region of the state, and those across every level of income and education strongly feel the force.

Results are from a statewide poll of 1,008 adults contacted by live interviewers on landlines and cell phones from Oct. 21–27. The full sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percentage points.

###

Broadcast interviews: Rutgers University–New Brunswick has broadcast-quality TV and radio studios available for remote live or taped interviews with Rutgers experts. For more information, contact John Cramer at john.cramer@rutgers.edu.

ABOUT RUTGERS—NEW BRUNSWICK

Rutgers University–New Brunswick is where Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, began more than 250 years ago. Ranked among the world’s top 60 universities, Rutgers’s flagship university is a leading public research institution and a member of the prestigious Association of American Universities. It is home to internationally acclaimed faculty and has 12 degree-granting schools and a Division I Athletics program. It is the Big Ten Conference’s most diverse university. Through its community of teachers, scholars, artists, scientists, and healers, Rutgers is equipped as never before to transform lives.

ABOUT THE EAGLETON CENTER FOR PUBLIC INTEREST POLLING (ECPIP)

Home of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, ECPIP was established in 1971 and is the oldest and one of the most respected university-based state survey research centers in the United States. Now in its 50th year and with the publication of over 200 polls, ECPIP’s mission is to provide scientifically sound, non-partisan information about public opinion. To read more about ECPIP and view all of our press releases, published research, and data archive, please visit our website: eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. You can also visit our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

ABOUT THE EAGLETON INSTITUTE OF POLITICS

The Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling is a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University–New Brunswick. The Eagleton Institute studies how American politics and government work and change, analyzes how the democracy might improve, and promotes political participation and civic engagement. The Institute explores state and national politics through research, education, and public service, linking the study of politics with its day-to-day practice. To learn more about Eagleton programs and expertise, visit eagleton.rutgers.edu.

QUESTIONS AND TABLES START ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE

Methodology

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted by telephone using live interviewers October 21-27, 2021, with a scientifically selected random sample of 1,008 New Jersey adults, 18 or older. Persons without a telephone could not be included in the random selection process. Respondents within a household are selected by asking randomly for the youngest adult male or female currently available. If the named gender is not available, the youngest adult of the other gender is interviewed. The poll was available in Spanish for respondents who requested it. This poll included 308 adults reached on a landline phone and 700 adults reached on a cell phone, all acquired through random digit dialing; 475 of the cell phone completes were acquired through one-to-one SMS text messaging by live interviewers that led respondents to an online version of the survey. Distribution of phone use in this sample is:

Cell Only	46%
Dual Use, Reached on Cell	20%
Dual Use, Reached on LL	49%
Landline Only	2%

The data were weighted to be representative of the non-institutionalized adult population of New Jersey. The weighting balanced sample demographics to target population parameters. The sample is balanced to match parameters for sex, age, and race/ethnicity. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target population.

Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response.¹

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. Sampling error should be adjusted to recognize the effect of weighting the data to better match the population.

In this poll, the simple sampling error for 1,008 New Jersey adults is +/-3.2 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval.² This means that in 95 out every 100 samples using the same methodology, estimated proportions based on the entire sample will be no more than 3.2 percentage points away from their true values in the population. The design effect³ is 1.08, making the adjusted margin of error +/- 3.2 percentage points. Thus, if 50 percent of New Jersey adults in this sample favor a particular position, we would be 95 percent sure that the true figure is between 46.8 and 53.2 percent (50 +/- 3.2)

¹ The composite design effect for a sample of size n , with each case having a weight, w , is computed as $deff = n \sum w^2 / (\sum w)^2$.

² The survey's maximum margin of error is the largest 95% confidence interval for any estimated proportion based on the total sample – one around 50%.

³ Post-data collection statistical adjustments require analysis procedures that reflect departures from simple random sampling. We calculate the effects of these design features so that an appropriate adjustment can be incorporated into tests of statistical significance when using these data. The so-called "design effect" or *deff* represents the loss in statistical efficiency that results from a disproportionate sample design and systematic non-response.

if all New Jersey adults had been interviewed, rather than just a sample.

Sampling error does not consider other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects.

This Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was fielded by Braun Research, Inc. with sample from Dynata. The questionnaire was developed and all data analyses were completed in house by the Eagleton Center for Public Interest Polling (ECPIP). Jessica Roman assisted with analysis and preparation of this report. The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll is paid for and sponsored by the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, a non-partisan academic center for the study of politics and the political process. Full questionnaires are available on request and can also be accessed through our archives at eagletonpoll.rutgers.edu. For more information, please contact poll@eagleton.rutgers.edu.

Weighted Sample Characteristics 1,008 New Jersey Adults

Male	48%	Democrat	38%	18-34	27%	HS or Less	17%	White	61%
Female	52%	Independent	37%	35-49	24%	Some College	31%	Black	14%
		Republican	25%	50-64	27%	College Grad	30%	Hispanic	19%
				65+	22%	Grad Work	22%	Other	6%