

The Star-Ledger/Eagleton-Rutgers Poll

BACKGROUND MEMO--RELEASE SL/EP34-2 (EP84-2), SUNDAY, JULY 7, 1991

The latest *Star-Ledger*/Eagleton Poll was conducted between June 18 and June 24, 1991, when a random sample of 800 New Jerseyans, 18 years and older, was interviewed by telephone. Figures based on this sample size are subject to a sampling error of about ± 3.5 percent. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from that population. Sampling error does not take into account other possible sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The questions and figures referred to in this release are presented below. The location of each question on the actual questionnaire is in brackets.

"Do you have any type of gun in your home?" [Q.17]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know Refused</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	18%	81%	2%	101%	(798)
<u>Party ID</u>					
--Democrat	13	86	1	100	(195)
--Independent	18	81	1	100	(338)
--Republican	23	75	3	101	(215)
<u>Sex of Respondent</u>					
--Male	23	75	1	99	(403)
--Female	12	86	2	100	(395)
<u>Race</u>					
--White	20	78	2	100	(639)
--Non-white	9	90	1	100	(149)
<u>Region of State</u>					
--North	14	84	2	100	(381)
--Central	21	77	2	100	(211)
--South	21	78	1	100	(206)

"Do you think you or someone in your household will purchase a gun in the future?" [Q.18a] (Asked of those who said they do not have a gun in their home in Q.17.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know Refused</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	8%	84%	7%	99%	(662)

"Did you ever have any kind of gun in your home in the past?" [Q.18b] (Asked of those who said they do not have a gun in their home in Q.17.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know Refused</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	19%	79%	1%	99%	(662)

"Do you have any type of gun in your home? (If "Yes") Is that a hand gun, a shotgun, a rifle, or a semi-automatic weapon?" [Q.18c]

		<u>(n)</u>
Percentage of households own these:		
Handgun	7%	(800)
Shotgun	9	(800)
Rifle	8	(800)
Semi-automatic weapon	2	(800)

"Is the gun used for hunting, target shooting, protection, or something else? [Q.18d]

	<u>%</u>	<u>(n)</u>
Hunting	9%	(800)
Target shooting	6	(800)
Protection	4	(800)

"Are you a member of the National Rifle Association (NRA)?" [Q.19]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	5%	95%	100%	(800)

"Is anyone in your household a member?" [Q.20] (Asked of those who said "No" in Q.19.)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	4%	94%	2%	100%	(763)

"What is your personal view on the issue of gun control in New Jersey. Do you think that the laws on gun ownership should be more strict than they are now, less strict, are they about right or don't you know anything about the current gun laws? [Q.21]

	More Strict Than <u>They Are Now</u>	Less Strict Than <u>They Are Now</u>	They Are About <u>Right</u>	Don't Know About <u>Current Laws</u>	Not Sure/ <u>Refused</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	58%	8%	17%	13%	3%	99%	(800)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	69	4	11	13	3	100	(195)--
Independent	57	9	17	14	2	99	(340)--
Republican	54	9	25	10	1	99	(215)
<u>Age</u>							
18 - 29	52	8	23	16	2	101	(180)30 -
49	60	8	16	12	4	100	(344)50
or over	62	6	16	13	3	100	(265)
<u>Region</u>							
--North	60	8	14	15	3	100	(381)--
Central	61	8	15	13	3	100	(213)--
South	53	8	24	11	4	100	(206)
<u>Income</u>							
--under \$20,000	67	5	8	16	4	100	(88)--
\$20,001 - \$30,000	63	5	16	13	3	100	(116)--
\$30,001 - \$50,000	58	6	19	12	5	100	(224)--
over \$50,000	47	12	25	14	2	100	(264)
<u>Sex of Respondent</u>							
--Male	55	12	22	9	2	100	(404)--
Female	62	4	12	17	4	99	(396)

"Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. [Q.22]

	Strongly <u>Agree</u>	Mildly <u>Agree</u>	Mildly <u>Disagree</u>	Strongly <u>Disagree</u>	Don't <u>Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
a.Owning a gun is a right all Americans should have	28%	19%	13%	36%	5%	101%	(800)
b.Using a gun for sporting activities like target shooting or hunting can be enjoyable	42	31	7	16	4	100	(800)
c.There should be a one week waiting period to investigate the back- ground of someone who wants to buy a gun	78	5	4	11	3	101	(800)
d.A private citizen carrying a gun is just asking for trouble	43	14	19	18	7	101	(799)
e.Strict gun control laws make it more difficult							

for law-abiding citizens
to get guns, but not
more difficult for
criminals

53 13 11 17 6 100 (800)

"Recently, a New Jersey law went into effect making it illegal to own semi-automatic assault weapons in New Jersey. Have you read or heard anything about this law?" [Q.23]

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	65%	34%	1%	100%	(800)
<u>Party ID</u>					
--Democrat	56	41	3	100	(195)
--Independent	70	30	0	100	(340)
--Republican	66	34	1	101	(215)
<u>Sex of Respondent</u>					
--Male	73	27	0	100	(404)
--Female	57	41	2	100	(396)
<u>Region of State</u>					
--North	58	41	1	100	(381)
--Central	69	29	2	100	(213)
--South	71	28	0	99	(206)
<u>Have a Gun</u>					
--Yes	91	9	0	100	(138)
--No	59	40	1	100	(641)

"How much have you read or heard about it--a lot, some or just a little?" [Q.24] (Asked of those who had heard of the New Jersey law.)

	<u>A Lot</u>	<u>Some</u>	<u>Just A Little</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	35%	39%	25%	1%	100%	(563)
<u>Have (own) a gun</u>						
--Yes	51	40	9	0	100	(128)--No
	30	39	30	1	100	(423)

"In addition to making the sale and purchase of semi-automatic assault weapons illegal in New Jersey, the law requires current owners to sell them out-of-state, turn them in to police, or disable them. Anyone possessing a banned weapon faces a maximum of five years in prison. Would you say that you support or oppose this law?" [Q.25]

	<u>Support Strongly</u>	<u>Support Mildly</u>	<u>Oppose Mildly</u>	<u>Oppose Strongly</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	58%	15%	8%	13%	6%	100%	(800)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	60	14	8	10	8	100	(195)
--Independent	62	15	9	11	4	101	(340)
--Republican	51	17	8	19	4	99	(215)
<u>Region</u>							
--North	61	14	7	12	6	100	(381)
--Central	54	17	11	12	6	100	(213)
--South	55	15	8	18	5	101	(206)
<u>Have a Gun</u>							
--Yes	40	13	13	32	2	100	(138)
--No	62	16	7	10	6	101	(641)

"A proposal to change this law includes allowing current owners of assault weapons to keep them in working condition provided they register them with the state. Do you support or oppose allowing current owners of assault weapons to keep them in working condition?" [Q.26]

	<u>Support Strongly</u>	<u>Support Mildly</u>	<u>Oppose Mildly</u>	<u>Oppose Strongly</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(n)</u>
June, 1991	26%	22%	9%	35%	7%	99%	(800)
<u>Party ID</u>							
--Democrat	29	21	11	33	6	100	(195)
--Independent	22	21	8	43	6	100	(340)
--Republican	30	25	10	29	7	101	(215)
<u>Sex of Respondent</u>							
--Male	34	21	6	33	6	100	(404)
--Female	19	22	13	38	8	100	(396)
<u>Have a Gun</u>							
--Yes	48	19	8	21	4	100	(138)
--No	22	22	10	39	8	101	(641)