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SPRINGSTEEN GETS JERSEY LOVE

Public says Gov. Christie's adulation is "kind of cool" too

If you are from New Jersey, you've got to admire Bruce Springsteen even if you're not a big fan of his music. The ***Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll*** found that few Garden State residents have anything negative to say about their home state hero as he celebrates his 65th birthday on Tuesday. In fact, many find it kind of cool that their own governor is a mega-fan of The Boss.

About 1-in-3 New Jersey adults (34%) say they have some Springsteen in their personal music collection and more than 4-in-10 call themselves a Bruce fan, including 12% who say they are "big fans" and 30% who are less ardent admirers. Garden State men (40%) and women (44%) are about as likely to consider themselves fans of the Boss. Younger adults under age 35 (27%), though, are less likely than their older counterparts age 35 to 54 (49%) and 55 and older (46%) to say they are fans. White New Jerseyans (49%) are more likely to be Bruce fans than are black, Hispanic, and Asian residents (29%) of the state. Politically, Democrats (46%) are most likely to be Bruce fans, followed by independents (42%), and Republicans (36%). However, Republicans (33%) are just as likely as Democrats (33%) to own a Bruce record, CD or downloaded song.

Most New Jerseyans feel at least a twinge of pride knowing they share a home state with Springsteen. Specifically, 22% feel a great deal of pride that Springsteen is from New Jersey and 32% have a little pride, while 38% say they feel no pride at all in the fact that Springsteen is a fellow Garden State resident. Not surprisingly, 87% of self-professed "big fans" and 71% of other Bruce fans feel at least a little pride in their shared heritage with Bruce, but even 40% of non-fans say it makes them at least a little proud to share a home state with him.

“Bruce has devoted fans all over the world. In some territories he’s held up on a pedestal so high it’s almost like idol worship. In New Jersey there’s obviously a big Springsteen connection and pride, but here it’s more personal,” said Professor Joe Rapolla, chair of Monmouth University’s Department of Music and Theater Arts and former senior vice president of marketing at Warner and Universal Music Group who has joined Springsteen on stage as a fellow Jersey musician.

It doesn’t get any more personal than at the highest echelons of political power in New Jersey. Governor Chris Christie is a self-professed mega-fan, having attended well over one hundred Springsteen concerts and even asking The Boss to perform at his inaugural celebration. What do Christie’s constituents think of their chief executive’s infatuation with Bruce? Nearly half (48%) say it’s kind of cool, which is more than double the number (19%) who say Christie’s hero worship is kind of embarrassing. Another 22% say Christie’s admiration of Springsteen is neither cool nor embarrassing. About half of Republicans (54%), Democrats (49%), and independents (46%) alike find it kind of cool that Christie is such a big fan.

“Democrats and Republicans may have very different views of the governor’s job performance, but one area where Christie has fostered unabashed bipartisan support is his idolization of Bruce Springsteen,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

Springsteen has become more politically active in recent years, but public opinion of the man is overwhelmingly positive regardless of partisan affiliation. Overall, nearly half (47%) of Garden State residents have a favorable impression of Bruce as a person while only 4% hold an unfavorable view. Another 49% have no opinion. Significant numbers of Democrats (56%), Republicans (50%), and independents (40%) alike hold a favorable view of Springsteen. Fewer than 1-in-10 New Jerseyans in any partisan group have a negative opinion of him.

Overall, 37% of state residents think that Springsteen’s music, which focuses on the grittier aspects of life in the Garden State, actually helps New Jersey’s image while only one percent say it hurts the state. A majority (55%), though, say that Bruce’s music has no impact on how New Jersey is viewed by others.

Fully 80% of the New Jersey adults polled said they were aware Bruce shares their home state before pollsters spoke with them. Oddly, about 1-in-12 self-professed fans admit they did not know this crucial facet of Springsteen’s bio. “As a pollster, I generally have to accept how people describe themselves. But I find it difficult to believe that any self-respecting Bruce fan with even a passing knowledge of his lyrics could have missed the Jersey connection. I have to assume these folks just jumped on the Bruce bandwagon,” said a bemused Murray.

The *Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll* was conducted by telephone with 802 New Jersey adults from September 17 to 21, 2014. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. The

poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute and originally published by the Asbury Park Press and its sister publications (Courier-Post, Courier News, Daily Journal, Daily Record, and Home News Tribune).

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. Do you own any Bruce Springsteen records, C.D.s, or downloaded songs?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep
Yes	34%	33%	35%	21%	44%	34%	45%	16%	33%	37%	33%
No	66%	67%	65%	79%	56%	65%	55%	85%	67%	64%	68%

TREND:	September 2014	September 2009	December 2005
Yes	34%	31%	36%
No	66%	69%	64%
Unwtd N	802	902	800

2. Are you a fan of Springsteen or not really a fan? [If YES: Would you call yourself a big fan?]

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep
Big fan	12%	9%	14%	5%	16%	12%	16%	4%	11%	12%	11%
Fan, but not big	30%	31%	30%	22%	33%	34%	33%	25%	35%	30%	25%
Not really a fan	54%	55%	54%	65%	50%	51%	48%	66%	52%	53%	62%
(VOL) Don't know	4%	5%	2%	8%	1%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	2%

3. Is your general impression of Bruce Springsteen as a person favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID			BRUCE FAN		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep	Big fan	Fan	Not a fan
Favorable	47%	44%	51%	27%	55%	55%	56%	32%	56%	40%	50%	86%	70%	29%
Unfavorable	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	7%	5%	2%	5%
No opinion	49%	52%	47%	71%	42%	40%	39%	65%	42%	56%	42%	8%	28%	66%

4. Did you know that Springsteen is from New Jersey, or weren't you aware of that?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID			BRUCE FAN		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep	Big fan	Fan	Not a fan
Know he's from Jersey	80%	76%	83%	57%	85%	92%	91%	59%	80%	77%	91%	95%	91%	74%
Not aware	19%	23%	15%	41%	14%	6%	8%	39%	19%	22%	9%	5%	9%	25%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	2%	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%

5. Do you think Springsteen’s music helps or hurts New Jersey’s image, or does it make no difference to the state’s image?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID			BRUCE FAN		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep	Big fan	Fan	Not a fan
Helps	37%	34%	40%	29%	38%	42%	43%	25%	42%	35%	35%	67%	47%	27%
Hurts	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%	0%	1%	2%
No difference	55%	58%	51%	58%	58%	49%	50%	62%	50%	59%	56%	32%	51%	62%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	6%	8%	12%	4%	7%	5%	11%	7%	5%	6%	1%	1%	10%

6. Does it make you feel proud a great deal, a little, or not at all that Springsteen is from New Jersey?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID			BRUCE FAN		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep	Big fan	Fan	Not a fan
Great deal	22%	20%	25%	13%	25%	27%	25%	19%	27%	19%	22%	57%	26%	13%
Little	32%	32%	32%	29%	37%	29%	34%	29%	35%	30%	36%	30%	45%	27%
Not at all	38%	40%	37%	51%	31%	37%	36%	40%	31%	45%	38%	12%	26%	51%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	8%	6%	7%	7%	7%	5%	11%	8%	6%	4%	2%	3%	8%

7. Governor Christie has attended more than 100 Springsteen concerts and even asked Springsteen to perform at his inaugural ball. Do you think Christie being such a big fan is kind of cool or kind of embarrassing?

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID			BRUCE FAN		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep	Big fan	Fan	Not a fan
Cool	48%	46%	49%	45%	54%	42%	50%	42%	49%	46%	54%	69%	56%	39%
Embarrassing	19%	18%	20%	25%	14%	21%	17%	23%	21%	20%	17%	15%	17%	22%
(VOL) Neither	22%	23%	21%	22%	19%	25%	25%	18%	18%	26%	16%	12%	23%	24%
(VOL) Don't know	11%	12%	10%	8%	13%	12%	7%	17%	12%	8%	13%	5%	5%	15%

The Monmouth University/Asbury Park Press Poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from September 17 to 21, 2014 with a statewide random sample of 802 adult residents, including 602 contacted via live interview on a landline telephone and 200 via live interview on a cell phone. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey questionnaire design, data weighting and analysis. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. 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.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)			
36% Dem	50% Male	28% 18-34	63% White
45% Ind	50% Female	38% 35-54	13% Black
19% Rep		34% 55+	15% Hispanic
			9% Asian/Other

	TOTAL	GENDER		AGE			RACE		PARTY ID			BRUCE FAN		
		Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Black, Hispanic & Asian	Dem	Ind	Rep	Big fan	Fan	Not a fan
Unweighted N	802	423	379	134	219	448	571	208	261	352	149	97	267	411
moe	3.5%	4.8%	5.0%	8.5%	6.6%	4.6%	4.1%	6.8%	6.1%	5.2%	8.0%	10.0%	6.0%	4.8%

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute’s policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues that affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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