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# Have a Tattoo? Bet You're Voting for Obama

Body art—or the lack of it—can predict politics, age and religion, according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton poll.

By [Lauren Burgoon](#) | [Email the author](#) | September 4, 2012



1 Comment

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If the number of fellow New Jerseyans sporting tattoos keeps you up at night, rest easy. Rutgers' Eagleton Institute of Politics just came out with data on inked Garden Staters—and how those tats might predict one's politics.

The findings: Tattooed New Jerseyans are more likely to vote for Barack Obama this November over Mitt Romney. The president sports 22 percent of the tattoo vote, with Romney at 14 percent.

Meanwhile, Republicans are the least likely to have tattoos. Sixteen percent of conservatives are inked, while 20 percent of liberals and moderates have sat in a tattooist's chair.

Other New Jersey tattoo facts [you didn't know needed to be researched](#):

- 40 percent of New Jersey voters born after 1980 have at least one tattoo
- 19 percent of voters of all ages sport at least one tattoo
- 62 percent of voters are proud of their body art, compared to 6 percent who regret the tats and 32 percent who feel neutral
- 30 percent of voters who identify as nonreligious are inked, compared to 18 percent of Evangelicals and 17 percent of Catholics
- 18- to 29-year-olds are three times more likely than any other age group to consider at tattoo

And what would any tattoo study be without somehow linking body art to *Jersey Shore*?

"Shows like *Jersey Shore* helped bring tattoos into the mainstream in the past few years," said David Redlawsk, director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and professor of political science at Rutgers University. "But even as ink goes mainstream, those without are far more likely to look down on their tattooed neighbors than to think better of them."

Eagleton researchers surmise that people associate tattoos with the Shore because of the body art on display on any given New Jersey boardwalk in the summer. But tattoos are most common in urban areas (26 percent) and South Jersey (24 percent), with only 18 percent of Shore residents copping to a tattoo.

"We suspect that a large share of the tattoos you see on beach-goers are on summer visitors," Redlawsk said. "MTV's *Jersey Shore* doesn't represent the real thing, Pauly D's tattoos notwithstanding."

*Rutgers-Eagleton survey results come from polling 916 registered voters statewide among both landline and cell phone households from Aug. 23-25. The sample has a margin of error of +/- 3.2 percentage points.*