

Celebrities

## Celebrity Power?

David A. Andelman, 10.17.07, 6:00 PM ET

Oprah Winfrey, Tom Hanks and George Clooney are the celebrities most likely to give nice pop in the polls to any political candidate they endorse. But look out for Rosie O'Donnell, Tom Cruise, Madonna and Donald Trump—they're the celebrities most likely to torpedo any presidential wannabee.

Celebrities, who love to endorse presidential candidates, are the new feature this month for the Forbes.com political poll known as the Forbes '08 Tracker. With our partner, California-based E-Poll Market Research, the poll is taking a look at which celebs would help their candidates and who would hurt them.

The selection of 2,213 men and women over the age of 18 were read a list of celebrities and asked how they would respond—positively or negatively—if the celeb were to endorse a political candidate.

### [In Pictures: Celebrity Endorsement Power](#)

The six who would have the most positive impact on the image of a candidate with whom they associated were Oprah, on top, followed by Tom Hanks, George Clooney, Jon Stewart of *The Daily Show*, Angelina Jolie and Tiger Woods.

On the negative side, our poll shows politicians should be avoiding the likes of Rosie O'Donnell, Tom Cruise, Madonna, Jane Fonda, Donald Trump and Susan Sarandon.

Endorsements by celebrities have a substantially different impact depending on the age of the prospective voter. The younger the vote, the more "positive the perception of a candidate endorsed by a celebrity they admire," according to the pollsters at E-Poll Market Research.

So Oprah scores 26% positive among 18- to 24-year-olds, but drops to just 11% for those 45 and older. Still, among those 65 and older, Oprah scores better than any other celebrity, with the same 11% saying they would pay positive attention to any politician she might endorse.

On the negative side, Rosie O'Donnell's endorsement would be most counterproductive among older voters, with 46% of those over 65 saying she would have a negative effect on their perception of any candidate, while 27% of those aged 18 to 34 say she would negatively impact their views. Donald Trump is a negative influence on perceptions pretty much across the age spectrum—21% to 32% of voters saying his endorsement would be counterproductive.

Oprah would also have the greatest positive impact on Barack Obama, followed by Hilary Clinton. Indeed, she did endorse Obama back in May. However, Obama would also be helped by Tom Hanks, George Clooney (who did endorse him as long ago as last December), Jon Stewart and Tiger Woods. Clinton is helped to a lesser extent by George Clooney (whose endorsement of Obama probably rules him out at least until after primary season) and Angelina Jolie.

At the same time, the age of the celebrity matters as well, particularly to younger voters who are also more likely to single out younger celebrities as having the most favorable impact—including Johnny Depp and Brad Pitt, though neither was among the top six favorites of the overall population polled.

Next month, we plan to match celebrities with candidates—which celebrity's 46 attributes most closely respond to a particular presidential aspirant.

### [In Pictures: Celebrity Endorsement Power](#)