

## THE HARRIS POLL

# Book Row Has Cut Jackie's Popularity

By LOUIS HARRIS

One in every three Americans says he "thinks less" of Jacqueline Kennedy as a result of the controversy over publication of William Manchester's book "The Death of a President." By nearly 2 to 1, people reject the claim that Mrs. Kennedy's right to privacy might be invaded by publication of the full account of events surrounding the assassination of President Kennedy.

Sen. Robert Kennedy also lost some standing as a result of the dispute, with 20 per cent saying they "think less" of him now as a result of the book episode. Significantly, the better-educated and more affluent segments of the population are more critical of the Kennedys.

Despite the personal criticism, no more than one person in every three is prepared to believe that the Kennedy family was trying to control the writing of history. People simply believe that the matter was handled with a lack of dignity and propriety, particularly since Manchester had been commissioned to write the account in the first place.

"She told him he could go ahead and do it and then changed her mind," a housewife in Baltimore said. "That isn't right." A professional man in Greenfield, Mass., put it this way: "Mrs. Kennedy was a pawn. She let herself be used by members of the family to further their own political careers."

A salesclerk in Georgia took Mrs. Kennedy's side: "She had enough backbone to object. She risked an unfavorable reaction, but that's more in her favor." A blue-collar worker in Chicago said: "She should have the final say over what is written for private gain about herself and her husband's life. She's entitled to live her own life."

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A rather high 69 per cent of the public says it followed the book controversy closely. However, barely a majority of the less-well-educated and lower-income people read about the episode, compared with nearly nine out of every 10 people in the more affluent and upper-income group.

It must be concluded that the controversy has had an effect on Robert Kennedy's political future. For example, among people who did not follow the disagreements and the lawsuit Mrs. Kennedy filed, Sen. Kennedy runs slightly ahead of President Johnson as the choice for the Democratic nomination in 1968. But among people who followed the controversy, an overwhelming 59 per cent prefer Johnson.

The group most critical of the Kennedys is the growing body of affluent Americans. They were more prepared to think that the Kennedys were trying to dictate the writing of history and most rejected the claim that Mrs. Kennedy's privacy was being violated.

While it can be argued that people in this group tend to be the most conservative and Republican-minded, nonetheless they are also the most tolerant segment of the public on such issues as civil rights and the introduction of new ideas into politics and the national life. President Kennedy had achieved a high degree of respect among the affluent.

A carefully drawn cross section of the public was asked:

"As a result of the controversy over the book 'The Death of

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a President," do you think more of Mrs. Jacqueline Kennedy, less, or has it made no difference in your attitude toward her?"

**VIEW OF MRS. JACQUELINE KENNEDY**

	THINK MORE	THINK LESS	NO DIFFERENCE	NOT SURE
NATIONWIDE	10%	33%	51%	6%
By education:				
8th grade or less	15	22	50	13
High school	8	30	57	5
College	10	42	47	1

In the case of Robert Kennedy, 20 per cent of the public said they thought less of him for his part in the episode; 6 per cent thought more of him, 74 per cent said it made no difference.

However, an analysis of the preference test between Kennedy and President Johnson (reported Saturday as 56 to 44 per cent in favor of LBJ), according to whether or not they had followed the book controversy, is revealing:

**IMPACT OF BOOK CONTROVERSY ON RFK-LBJ PREFERENCE FOR 1968 PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION**

	PREFER	
	LBJ	RFK
NATIONWIDE	56%	44%
By book episode:		
Followed controversy	59	41
Did not follow it	45	55

Significantly, those people who either did not hear of the Kennedy-Manchester differences or did not follow them closely enough to have any opinions tend to favor Kennedy over President Johnson by almost precisely the margin Kennedy was ahead in the nation as a whole in November, 54 to 46 per cent.

But those who did follow the episode veered sharply toward President Johnson as their choice by 59 to 41 per cent. In fact, 77 per cent of those who say they think less of the Senator because of the controversy favor President Johnson.

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While it is true that the more affluent and better informed followed the dispute, and these people have always been less favorable to Kennedy, nonetheless, the implication of these results is inescapable: The Manchester book episode has hurt Robert Kennedy.

On the key charges in the book controversy, the public tends to take a position that neither the Kennedys nor Manchester was right. The public rejects the notion that Mrs. Kennedy's privacy was invaded and, also, does not agree that the Kennedy family was trying to control the writing of history:

**WAS MRS. KENNEDY'S PRIVACY INVADED?**

	YES	NO	NOT SURE
NATIONWIDE	32%	55%	13%
By education:			
8th grade or less	38	43	19
High school	32	56	12
College	29	63	8

**WERE KENNEDYS TRYING TO CONTROL WRITING OF HISTORY?**

	YES	NO	NOT SURE
NATIONWIDE	32%	55%	13%
By education:			
8th grade or less	22	56	22
High school	27	53	12
College	42	50	8