

Gallup Poll

How Kennedy Stands Now

By George Gallup

Princeton, N.J.

In the aftermath of his July 18 car accident which took the life of Mary Jo Kopechne, Senator Edward M. Kennedy has fallen sharply in terms of public esteem for him as a person.

His political standing, however, in a nationwide test race against Richard Nixon and George Wallace remains unchanged compared with earlier April results.

On Saturday, July 26, the day after Senator Kennedy went on network television to explain the details of the fatal accident, Gallup Poll interviewers began questioning a full-scale sample of the nation's adults.

The survey, which reached 1419 persons in over 300 localities, was completed Monday, July 28, prior to Kennedy's announcement that he intended to run for the Senate again in 1970.

A comparison of this survey with an exactly comparable one last March shows a decline in "extremely favorable" attitudes toward Kennedy.

See Back Page



The Gallup Poll

How Sen. Kennedy Stands With Voters

← From Page 1

as a person, from 49 per cent to 34 per cent.

In terms of actual numbers of people, these percentages indicate that Kennedy has lost, temporarily at least, the high regard of some 18 million Americans.

Increase

The decline in extremely favorable attitudes has been accompanied by an increase in "extremely unfavorable" attitudes, from 4 per cent in the earlier survey to 11 per cent today.

Despite these sharp shifts in extreme feelings about Kennedy, over-all favorable attitudes continue to outweigh unfavorable attitudes by a wide margin, 3-to-1 in the latest survey.

Senator Kennedy has not lost political ground in relation to Richard Nixon and George Wallace. In an April survey, Kennedy's share of the vote in a three-way trial heat against Nixon and Wallace was 33 per cent. His vote today is 36 per cent.

Results

It is important to bear in mind that the above trial heat results reflect not only attitudes toward Senator Kennedy, but toward President Nixon and George Wallace as well. Party allegiance is also a factor. Many Democrats for example, may now have a lesser regard for Kennedy as a person but still do not want to jump party lines.

To determine the impact of

recent events on Senator Kennedy, a sensitive attitude measuring device called the Stapel Scalometer was employed.

The Stapel Scalometer consists of ten numbered squares going from plus five — or someone liked very much — all the way down to minus five — or someone disliked very much. Each respondent is asked to indicate the square that best describes his feelings about a particular person.

The following table compares the latest ratings with those recorded in March:

	March Survey %	July 26-28 %	Chng.
Extremely favorable (Plus 5, 4)	49	34	-15
Mildly favorable (Plus 3, 2, 1)	36	40	+ 4
Mildly unfavorable (Minus 1, 2, 3)	8	13	+ 5
Extremely unfavorable (Minus 4, 5)	4	11	+ 7
No opinion	3	2	- 1
	100	100	

The following table shows that Kennedy has fallen from esteem about equally among men and women. The views of older persons have been most seriously affected.

'Extremely Favorable'

	March Survey %	July 26-28 %	Chng.
National	49	34	-15
Men	45	31	-14
Women	52	37	-15
21-29 years	51	39	-12
30-49 years	49	36	-13
50 and over	46	28	-18
East	53	41	-12
Midwest	53	35	-18
South	42	23	-19
West	42	35	- 7
Protestants	41	27	-14
Catholics	65	53	-12

'Extremely Unfavorable'

	March Survey %	July 26-28 %	Chng.
National	4	11	+ 7
Men	5	12	+ 7
Women	3	10	+ 7
21-29 years	2	5	+ 3
30-49 years	3	9	+ 6
50 and over	6	15	+ 9
East	3	7	+ 4
Midwest	2	8	+ 6
South	1	17	+ 16
West	1	9	+ 8
Protestants	6	12	+ 6
Catholics	1	6	+ 5

To determine the impact of recent events on Senator Kennedy's political standing, the Gallup Poll in the latest survey repeated a "test election" question asked last April:

Following are the latest findings, based on the preferences of the 1059 persons in the sample:

	April %	July 26-28 %
Nixon	52	52
Kennedy	33	36
Wallace	10	9
Undecided and other	5	3

Before the recent developments, the youthful Senator had just about everything going for him as a political candidate:

- In a February Gallup survey, Senator Kennedy was far and away the top choice of both Democratic and independent voters as the man who should take over the direction of the plans and policies of the Democratic party during the next four years.

- A March survey showed that 94 per cent of Americans were able to correctly identify the 37-year old Majority Whip, a remarkably high awareness score. The same survey showed 8 in 10 persons of the belief that Kennedy would like to be President. Eight in ten also thought that he would someday win the Democratic nomination for President.

- On campus, Kennedy was found in a May survey to be the new campus hero, replacing last year's idol, Senator Eugene McCarthy.

- In the Gallup Poll's audit last December of the 10 men most admired by the American people, Senator Edward Kennedy placed third on the list.

Copyright 1969, American Institute of Public Opinion