

# RFK's Political Star Continues to Rise

By George Gallup

**PRINCETON, N.J., Jan. 28**—Sen. Robert Kennedy's star looms larger than ever on the political horizon. One year ago, President Johnson was given a high rating for his job performance by the public and was a 2-to-1 favorite over Kennedy for the Presidential nomination among rank-and-file Democrats.

By August of last year, Senator Kennedy had pulled up even with the President among Democratic voters and today he holds a clear lead over Johnson among Democrats for the top spot on the 1968 ticket.

Senator Kennedy's gains in political appeal have come during a period of declining popularity for the President, whose rating today is 4 percentage points lower than it was last August and 16 percentage points lower than it was at the beginning of 1966.

In the latest survey (completed just prior to the President's State of the Union message), 47 per cent of the public said they approved of the way Johnson is handling his job, 37 per cent disapproved and 16 per cent did not express an opinion. This is an improvement over his rating earlier this month, when the disapproval figure was 42 per cent (46 approved and 12 per cent had no opinion).

In three surveys of U.S. adults, each approximately 6 months apart, Democrats were asked to choose from a list of four men, which included Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara and Vice-President Hubert Humphrey, as well as Kennedy and Johnson.

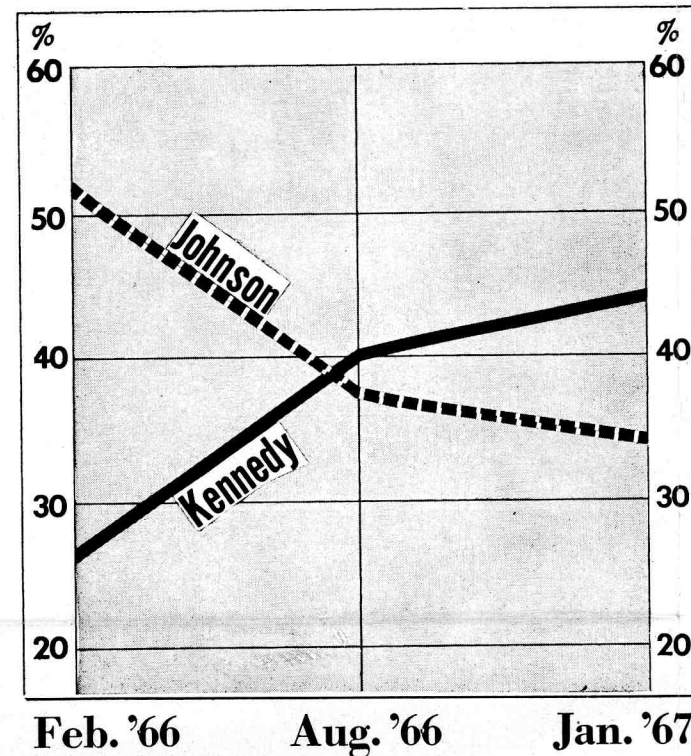
This question was asked:

"Looking ahead to 1968, which one of the men on this list would you like to see nominated as the Democratic candidate in 1968?"

The following table shows the trend:

Choices of Democratic Rank-and-file for '68			
	Feb. '67	Aug. '66	Feb. '66
	%	%	%
Kennedy	43	40	27
Johnson	34	38	52
Humphrey	8	6	5
McNamara	7	6	7
No preference	8	10	9

Choices of Democratic Rank-and-file for '68



The above chart shows the rise in political appeal of Sen. Kennedy among Democratic voters since Feb., 1966.

### 'Showdown' Between Johnson, Kennedy

To find out how all Democrats in the sample would vote in a race between just Johnson and Kennedy, this question was asked:

"Suppose the choice for President in the Democratic convention in 1968 narrows down to Sen. Robert Kennedy of New York and President Lyndon Johnson. Which one would you prefer to have the Democratic convention select?"

Here is the vote of Democrats:

Kennedy	52%
Johnson	39
No opinion	9

When the views of all adults of voting age are taken into consideration—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents alike—the results show Kennedy winning by a 5-to-4 ratio:

Kennedy	48%
Johnson	39
No opinion	13

### Kennedy Shows Great Strength with Young Adults

Further analysis of the "showdown" results (based on all adults) offers some interesting and important differences in the nature of the support given each man.

Kennedy clearly has a solid base of support with young adults, those in their twenties. In fact, Kennedy wins two and one-half times as many votes from this group as does Johnson.

Senator Kennedy wins a greater share of the support of women than does President Johnson. Men are fairly closely divided between the two Democrats, but 50 per cent of women choose Kennedy, compared with 37 per cent for Johnson.

Senator Kennedy is a Roman Catholic, but interestingly, his support from persons of this faith is no greater than from Protestants.

Kennedy tops Johnson in three of the four regions, but both men have about equal strength in the South.

The following table gives the full details:

### Who Preferred in 'Showdown?'

	RFK %	LBJ %	Undec. %
National	48	39	13
Men	45	42	13
Women	50	37	13
21-29 years	67	26	7
30-49 years	51	37	12
50 & over	36	48	16
Republicans	42	42	16
Democrats	52	39	9
Independents	48	39	13
Catholics	48	40	12
Protestants	47	40	13
East	47	44	9
Midwest	53	36	11
South	41	40	19
West	51	37	12
College	40	46	14
High School	52	35	13
Grade School	45	43	12

### Coming Wednesday!

Has the "Battle of the Book" hurt or helped Jacqueline Kennedy's image?