

# George Gallup: Highlights of His Life and Work

## PRE-BIOGRAPHY AND PRE-HISTORY

Understanding the character of creative people and the significance of their achievements requires, in the first place, a study of their pre-biography, together with the pre-history of that branch of science, art or culture where their endeavors have taken place. In other words, the person's biography is a product of both the genealogy and the environment in which his or her professional activity has taken place.

The life and work of George Gallup in this sense are exemplary. In the first place, he belonged to a large family, whose members had vigorously participated in the development of the United States, and whose accomplishments and merits are recorded in the annals of the country. Secondly, even though the modern stage of public opinion research began with the pioneering work of George Gallup in 1935 and 1936, the study of electoral attitudes in the US had a long history prior to that. Accordingly, after examining the pre-biography of George Gallup, we will also review the pre-history of public opinion research.

### Tenth-Generation American

For generations, the large Kollop family resided in Lotharingia (Lorraine). During the Middle Ages some of its descendants moved over to England, retaining the Gollop name. It is believed to have been forged from the German words Gott and Lobe, meaning respectively "God" and "praise". Over time various spellings of the family name emerged: Gallop, Galloup, Galloupe, Gallupe, and Gollop, with the version prevalent in America becoming Gal-lup.

A historical record has been preserved in England concerning John Gollop (born about 1440), who came 'out of the North in the fifth year of the reign of Edward IV' (1465). He married Alice Temple, who lived in Dorset, and they became the founders of the Gollop clan, and Dorset became home for many branches of the family.

A descendant, another John Gallop (1590-1650), great-great-grandson of the first John Gollop, founded the American branch of the family in 1623. He embarked for New England on the 400-ton Mary and John from Plymouth on 20th March, 1630, together with 140 other passengers. They reached the coast of America on 30th May, 1630, and founded a new settlement near Boston, naming it Dorchester in recognition of their origins.

The Puritan community, to which these early settlers belonged, was the most homogeneous among the pilgrims in terms of religion and moral values. They had carried with them the Protestant work ethic, which would define American entrepreneurship and American governance. As Alexis de Tocqueville noted, Puritanism was not merely a religious doctrine; it had a lot in common with the democratic ideas and republican theories.

John Gallop enjoyed great authority among the settlers of New England. He was an experienced seafarer, enterprising merchant, and the owner and captain of the first ship built in America. The maps of Boston and adjacent area from the 18th century show Gallop Shipyard, Gallop Alley and

Gallop Island in Boston Harbor, all named after him.

John and his wife Christobel had a daughter and four sons. One son returned to England; the others become Americans. The daughter had eight children; his eldest son had ten; the younger twins had five and six children respectively. A prodigious family was being born.

In 1966 the first edition of the Gallup Genealogy book appeared, followed by a second in 1987. By the beginning of the 21st century, the *Gallup Family Association* archives contained over 13,000 names of family members.

John Gallop's eldest son, John Gallop II (1615-1675) engaged in maritime commerce alongside his father. He was a soldier, distinguished in many battles. In 1643 he married Hanna Lake, who belonged to a large, ancient English clan, with members featured in the genealogies of French, Saxon, and English kings; that family's lineage went back to the age of medieval chivalry. Four out of the ten children of John Gallop II and Hanna Lake, whose family names already come to be written as Gallup, themselves founded lineages that have included many prominent American personalities.

The Library Congress archives contain the biography of Congressman Albert Gallup (1796-1851), an eighth-generation member, who represented New York during 1837-1839.

The eminent poetess Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) acclaimed as canonical in American literature, is a member of the ninth-generation Gallups. In 1971, a commemorative postage stamp was issued with her portrait. Very few American writers have been awarded such high honour.

It is tempting to conclude this list of distinguished scions of the Gallup family with the following entry: in 1677 Elizabeth Gallup, daughter of John Gallup II, married Henry Stevens. In 1821 their granddaughter's granddaughter Harriet (Harriet Smith) married Obadiah Newcomb Bush, whose maternal ancestors had come to America on 11th November, 1620 with the very first settlers on board the celebrated Mayflower. In 1988, their great-grandson George Bush Senior, representative of the eleventh Gallup generation, was elected the 41st President of the United States of America. In 2000 his son George W. Bush (a member the twelfth generation) followed to become 43rd U.S. President.

George Gallup, whose life and work are the subject of this narrative, himself was a tenth-generation American and direct descendant of John Gallup III (1646-1733), eldest son of John P. Gallup II.

Just like his father, George Gallup was interested in genealogy; reading historical literature was one of his favorite pastimes. America's past was alive for him, and it invigorated his endeavours. The Puritan values and ideals that Massachusetts Bay settlers brought with them from England in the first half of the XVII century were also his. George Gallup's overriding goal – to strengthen the democratic foundations of American society, as well as the related practical problem that he spent half a century to solve, the creation of an instrument for the measurement of public opinion – directly stemmed from his perception of America's past, and of the role played in it by nine generations of his family.

### **The New England Town Meeting and Lord Bryce**

As mentioned above, the patriarch of the American Gallup family arrived in America in 1630 on the *Mary and John*. Among the fellow passengers on the journey which brought John Gallop to America was Roger Ludlow (1590-1666). A successful politician and staunch Puritan, Ludlow was credited with having established, in the town of Dorchester, a form of self-governance that became

to be known as the New England (or Massachusetts) Town Meeting. Classified by historians as 'the purest form of democracy' akin the Athenian democracy of Ancient Greece, the Town Meeting had the authority to decide on all matters of community life, except those that were within the purview of the Commonwealth. This form of governance was soon adopted by other cities, and in 1638 was officially recognized as a legitimate element of governance in the colonies.

In this manner, for George Gallup, a link was established whereby the quest of the scientist was intimately merged with the history of his ancestors.

Gallup was initially unaware of this particular link, until it was revealed to him through the writings of the British historian, lawyer, and statesman Lord James Bryce (1838-1922). Decades after this revelation, Gallup used to stress that his own views on the role of public opinion as an instrument of democracy, and the general direction of his methodology, were directly related to Bryce's ideas. In 1937, addressing the forum of the American Statistical Association, Gallup spoke about Bryce as "the great Englishman" who discovered the huge opportunities for the development of American democracy offered by public opinion research.

Born in Belfast, James Bryce graduated from Trinity College in Oxford and later studied law in Heidelberg (Germany). In 1870 he was appointed professor of law at Oxford University. His political career was also advancing: he became a leader of the Liberal Party and held senior positions in Ireland's government. From 1907 to 1914 Bryce served as England's ambassador in Washington. In 1914 he became member of The Hague Tribunal, and after 1917 devoted his energy to the creation of the League of Nations.

In 1870, and again in 1881 and 1883, James Bryce, visited the United States. During these journeys across the country, he stayed with families of politicians, businessmen, academics, and other local people, using every opportunity to interview ordinary Americans whom he met on his way. His resulting observations and commentary are contained in the book "The American Commonwealth".

In it, Bryce set out his ideas about the role of public opinion in the structure system of governance. He thought that the power system in the United States came closest to what he called "government by public opinion." That assumption made Bryce closer to Gallup than other thinkers of that period. So did Bryce's assessment of the Massachusetts town meeting: 'The town meeting was a simple and effective way of articulating public opinion, and the decisions made by the meeting kept close to the public will'.

In his article in the *Washington Post* dated 20th October 1935, in which George Gallup publicized his method of public opinion polling and presented the results of the first nationwide poll, he quoted Bryce about public opinion measurement as prerequisite for democratic policies, concluding: 'After one hundred and fifty years we return to the town meeting. This time the whole nation is within the doors.'

## **The History of Straw Polls**

According to the authoritative *New Political Dictionary*, the term "straw polls" was invented by the English lawyer, politician and scholar John Selden (1584-1654), who used to say that if you threw a straw in the air, you could see where the wind blows. Nowadays, when we speak of straw polls, we mean polls that

are carried out in the simplest and often unspecified manner, on unrepresentative samples. It would be wrong, however, to dismiss these efforts, because they served as the starting point for the elaboration of scientific techniques for public opinion polling.

The holding of straw polls, the publication of the results, and their discussion by the press and the by people at large – all generated public demand for such information on the eve of elections. Straw polls also served as a testing ground for designing and improving polling techniques, and the experience accumulated over time provided valuable expertise to improve procedures.

At the end of the 17th and during the 18th century, various means were used to register voting results in the USA. (referred to as poll books, poll lists or simply polls). These documents kept records of the participants in elections – white, financially independent men, resident in a constituency – and of the way they voted. No ballot papers were used at the time, as secret voting was nonexistent.

Tom Smith, an expert on the history of electoral polling, notes that various interested political groups as early as in the spring of 1821 undertook assessing the prospective outcome of presidential election scheduled for 1824. In their book *The Pulse of Democracy* George Gallup and S.F. Ray quote the first printed evidence of electoral polling surveys. On 24th July, 1824, the *Harrisburg Pennsylvanian* newspaper published the results of a survey of Wilmington residents (a town in the state of Delaware), where presidential candidate Andrew Jackson, with 335 likely voters, was recorded as polling well ahead of John Quincy Adams, with 169 likely voters. In August of the same year, the *Raleigh Star* newspaper reported the findings of a similar survey in North Carolina, where victory for Jackson was also predicted by large majority. The election in that state indeed brought a victory for Jackson. Moreover, he scored a greater number of votes in the country as a whole (153,000 votes versus 115,000 for Adams), but due to the peculiarities of the American electoral system Adams became President by a vote of the House of Representatives.

In her research on straw polls conducted during the second half of the 19th century, Susan Herbst demonstrated that while such polls had been widely conducted since 1820, it was only in the middle of when century that they became really popular. She refers to this period as the era of people's, or citizen's polls. During the second half of the 19th century, straw polls were becoming increasingly sophisticated. In 1883, for instance, the Civil War veteran and politician General Charles Taylor, then - editor of the *Boston Globe* newspaper, on the day before the actual election, used to send observers to carefully selected constituencies and, based on their reports, would make predictions about the outcome.

In 1896, several Chicago newspapers jointly carried out a straw poll to determine the candidates' chances in the McKinley – Brian campaign. The *Chicago Record* spent in excess of 60 thousand dollars on mailing questionnaire cards to voters from a random sample – actually to one out of every eight voters in the 12 Midwestern states! A quarter of a million cards were received back. The prediction for Chicago came out correct, but it was wrong in the case of the rest of the places sampled.

Claude Robinson estimates that some 85 straw polls were carried out during the electoral campaign of 1928. Seventy-five of them were local – at state, city, county, and other relatively smaller levels; four also covered neighboring areas. Finally, six surveys funded by the *Literary Digest*, *Hearst Newspapers*, *Farm Journal*, *Pathfinder*, *The Nation* and *College Humor* were conducted nationwide.

By the beginning of the 20th century, numerous newspapers and magazines in the United States regularly sponsored and carried out straw polls. However, it was *The Literary Digest* – then the unrivaled leader in political journalism – whose name became synonymous with the straw polls. Thanks to the surveys created and published by this journal, over two entire decades millions of Americans could discover for the first time what the nation thought about the presidential candidates, and what the likely chances for their winning the election were.

*The Literary Digest* journal was founded and published by the Lutheran priest Isaac Kauffman Funk

(1839-1912), together with his friend from college, another former priest, Adam Willis Wagnalls (1843-1924). A mass weekly publication, priced at 10 cents per issue and initially targeted at teachers and priests, it reprinted reports on the latest ideas and studies that were published by nearly 200 magazines and newspapers in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. Ten years after its launch in 1890, the journal's circulation was 60,000 readers. Not least thanks to the popularity of its successful public opinion polls, by the beginning of the 1920s *The Literary Digest* was selling over a million copies, making it one of the leaders of the magazine market.

It was in 1916 that *The Literary Digest* initiated its straw polls. The method that would become the standard was mailing out to subscribers millions of questionnaires printed on postcards. A decade previously, for the purposes of their marketing and administrative needs, the editors had started the creation of a card filing system for current and prospective subscribers. The card index contained names and addresses of people of middle and upper-middle income – lawyers, doctors, architects, engineers, businessmen, etc. – who constituted the target both for the magazine itself, and for the goods advertised in it. By 1900, the file contained 685,000 entries, and by 1932 it had risen to 20 million.

The straw poll of 1916, was carried out among subscribers in five major states – Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, New York and Ohio – and the question was who had a better chance of winning the presidential election, the incumbent Democrat Woodrow Wilson, or the Republican challenger Charles Hughes. The result, in favor of Wilson, was correct. He actually outpolled his opponent by getting 49.2 percent, compared to 46.1 percent of votes for Hughes.

In the following presidential elections of 1920, 1924, and 1928, by sending out 11 million, 16.5 million, and 18 million polling cards, respectively, *The Literary Digest* managed to make correct predictions of the outcome every time. On a state-by-state basis, the 1924 predictions were correct for all states except Kentucky and Oklahoma.

Twenty million letters have been prepared, folded and put into the envelopes'. The article then concluded that *The Literary Digest* was re-launching the huge public opinion survey machine, which in 1924 and 1928 had achieved results of "mystical precision." The 1932 prediction indeed went down in history with its fantastic accuracy. Three days before the vote, *The Literary Digest* re-ported that Governor Roosevelt would obtain 55.99 percent of the vote and secure the support of 474 electors. The official statistics showed 57.4 percent of the vote and 472 members of the Electoral College.

## THE FORMATIVE YEARS

The State of Iowa, located in the Midwest of the United States, is usually referred to as the American Heartland. Gallup was born, educated, and became a highly qualified professional in Iowa. He counted many Iowans among his friends. His character, speech, mannerisms, and attitude to life carried the imprint of this origin.

### Jefferson City Kid

George Horace Gallup was born in Jefferson City, Greene County, in the State of Iowa on 18th November 1901. The families who founded that settlement early in the second half of the 19th century decided to name it in honour of the third U.S. president Thomas Jefferson, one of the authors of the country's Constitution, staunch supporter of the republican system of government, and of democracy in general.

During Gallup's childhood, half a century after the founding of the city, its people adhered strictly to Puritan



standards. They worked a lot, went regularly to church, held the value of an education in high esteem, tried to help each other, and greeted people, even strangers encountered in the street, with a smile.

John Nelson Gallup, George's grandfather, was born in New England. After getting involved in farming in Iowa, in 1892 he bought a farm near Jefferson City.

His eldest son Edgar was shop owner. The middle son, Joseph, was a lawyer. The youngest son – George Gallup's father – who was also named George Gallup (George Henry Gallup, 1864-1932) – first started as a teacher before becoming successful as a real estate agent. He had no advanced formal education, but admired the world of ideas, and, as a true intellectual, 'strenuously resisted doing things the way they had always been done.' His first wife died in 1891, and in 1893 he married Nettie Davenport. They had three children, George being the youngest. Gallup's mother was a quiet, and kind, woman and very religious. All four of her children graduated from college, and this was the most important source of pride in her life.

From early childhood, George's father taught him self-sufficiency and independence. The house kept a farm, and when George was 9 or 10 years old, his father bought a few cows for him and his brother. The boys were supposed to take care of the animals, milk them, find customers for the milk, and make deliveries. The income was theirs to buy clothes with and to pay for their studies. The young farmers made a success of their business. Later, George Gallup used to say that he had been richer than his friends at school were.

There is an interesting photograph from George Gallup's school graduation. The teenager in the snapshot looks more mature than his age would suggest. The caption reads: 'George H. Gallup, "Ted", Class President-19. Business Manager, "Krazy Kazett". Football Captain-19. Basketball Captain-19.' And below: 'Leave the women alone, work hard and enjoy life is my motto!'

## Acquiring a University Education

The Iowa State University, founded in 1847, by the beginning of the 20th century came to be considered one of the finest universities in the nation, and the best in the Midwest. On 26th September, 1919, at 18 years of age, George Gallup was enrolled in its College of Liberal Arts.

By the early 1920s, land prices had plummeted and the financial situation of the family, who lived on earnings from George senior's real estate trade, became precarious. However, by that time George junior had already acquired the attitudes and aptitudes that successful Americans cultivate: independence in judgments and behavior, self-confidence, determination, business aggressiveness, resilience, and optimism. So, it was not hard for him to earn the money for his personal needs and to fund his higher education. Years later, he recalled that upon being admitted to college he had had just six dollars in his wallet, while at graduation he was already earning more money than the President of the University.

On 1 February 1923 Gallup graduated from college with a Bachelor of Arts degree. During that year, the university had inaugurated its School of Journalism, and Gallup, who had not yet turned 22, was offered a teaching position there. He accepted it, at the same time continuing his studies at the university's graduate college, majoring in August 1928 with a Doctor of Philosophy degree in the fields of psychology and economics.

## Editor of the Student Newspaper

The University of Iowa has published a newspaper since 1868. Renamed *The Daily Iowan* in 1901, it became

the first daily student newspaper in the Midwest. Initially it had no permanent manager or editors, being run on the principle "make it or break it". In his memoirs George Gallup explains that this meant that the editor and the general manager undertook covering all running costs and eventual losses themselves, but in case of success, all the returns would be theirs. Few students were willing to accept the job on such risky terms, but George Gallup was not afraid to take it.

To start with, in an effort to attract attention, on 21 July 1921 he penned an editorial entitled "The Unattractive Women". In it he described a supposedly overheard talk between two young men, complaining that college was swarmed with ungainly girls, mostly schoolteachers, who had no idea how to make themselves attractive. The dialogue concluded that women needed first of all to learn how to look their best, because men wanted more in a wife than "a bone, a rag, and a hank of hair." Gallup later recalled, 'This editorial stirred up the campus as nothing else in my experience ever had. All of the girls were angry and I was berated soundly by many professors,' however, 'from that day on, the paper was eagerly read.' By the end of the summer semester, George Gallup had earned enough money to allow himself to relax.

By 1923, Gallup had devised and implemented an ambitious plan to transform the *The Daily Iowan* from a modest student paper into a full-scale urban daily, with himself as Chief Editor. Combining coverage of local events with nation-wide news, the paper attracted a rapidly expanding readership. Accordingly, the volume of advertisements grew too, and the paper became quite profitable.

In addition to his managerial efforts, Gallup kept writing a daily editorial column. This earned him the reputation of 'a man who is ever ready to expose and ridicule pretentiousness and stuffiness.' That column would be remembered for the article "Be radical!". Reminiscent of the spirit of the 1960's student manifestos, it declared: 'Don't be afraid to be radical. Universities need radicals. We are all-rock-ribbed, dyed-in-the-wool intellectual standpatters. Worst of all, we are proud of it. We need atheists, free-lovers, anarchists, free traders, communists, single taxers, internationalists, royalists, socialists, anti-Christians ... Doubt everything. Question everything ... Being a radical is a duty, like casting your first ballot or kissing your sister. Only a man of fifty has the right to be conservative. Don't be a cow. Think, question, doubt! Be radical!'

To be complete, the account of events that marked George Gallup's university years should mention that in 1923 he met Ophelia Miller; she was a student at Iowa University and taught French there. They were married on Christmas Day in 1925. An entry in a reference book (*Current Biography: Who's News and Why*), published in 1940 attests, tells that during the early 1920s George Gallup, then editor of a student newspaper and carrying out his first public opinion polls, conducted a poll on the subject of who was the most beautiful girl at the university. The winner was Ophelia Miller, and she became his wife.

### **The Journalist Becomes a Pollster**

In a short anthology of studies on the history of advertising published in 1986, George Gallup describes the way his career as pollster began: 'A summer job as an interviewer in a newspaper readership survey conducted by the D'Arcy Advertising Agency in St. Louis started me on the research road, which I have traveled during the last 60 years. The survey was conducted in 1922 when I was a junior enrolled in the University of Iowa. The questionnaire used was typical of those employed by researchers in this field... I found that a high percentage of respondents claimed that they always read the editorials, the national and international news. Few admitted reading the gossip columns and other features of low prestige... I came ultimately to the conclusion that the best way to find out what they read is to place a fresh copy of the last issue of the newspaper in front of them, and then to go through the entire paper, column by column, page by page, with the respondent to see what he or she had read in this particular issue... I

discovered that the attempts to shortcut this process (for example, by taking out a single page of the newspaper or by concentrating only on the advertising) failed to produce the same accurate results. The survey findings brought to light an interesting fact. The most important articles published in the newspapers attracted far fewer readers than shown by the typical questionnaire procedure. Conversely, the comic strips, the love advice features, and the like had considerably more readers.' The psychology department of the University of Iowa agreed to accept this test of the method as a suitable Ph. thesis in that department.

Gallup also presented his findings to Gardner Cowles Jr, editor of the *De Moines Register*, and later publisher of *Look* magazine, and Cowles commissioned from him a survey for the *Register* using the novel interview method. The conclusions from that survey appeared in an article published in the *Journalism Quarterly* issue of March 1930. George Gallup began the article with the assertion that comics attract a larger number of adult readers than news about the major events of the day. His overall conclusion was that traditional methods for studying readers' attitudes did not identify their genuine preferences. None of the respondents, even among those who initially claimed they never missed a word, had read more than half of the newspaper. It was also revealed that the front page, which contained major domestic and international news, was rarely read, while preference was given to cartoons, comics and photographs. Obituaries were read more frequently than analyses of social and political events.

The findings of George Gallup's readership studies apparently helped bring about the shift in print media content which occurred shortly thereafter: wider use of comic strips, as well as of photographs and other visuals; the latter probably encouraged the subsequent launch of the first US photo magazine *Look*.

Perhaps the most important long-term accomplishment of George Gallup's doctoral work was his novel measurement technology, nowadays still referred to as the "Gallup Method" (or, less frequently, the "Iowa Method"). This method, in its various modifications, has become the most widely used one in studies of advertising and mass media audiences.

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To complete this story of the role that Iowa played in George Gallup's life, one should mention that his first son, Alec Miller Gallup, was born in 1928, to be followed in 1930 by another son, George Horace Gallup. And in 1937, a daughter, Julia, was added to the family.

## THE LITTLE-KNOWN GALLUP

In his answer to the question: 'Has Gallup become synonymous with polling?' Alec Gallup, his eldest son, said: 'And what's interesting, it's used in Scandinavia as a generic term. It's the word for survey. So you'd have a Harris Gallup or a Roper Gallup. The word for poll is a Gallup, with a small 'g', I guess. And so, it is'. In a similar vein, a close colleague, P. A. Scipione once observed 'So clearly is Gallup identified with polling that Greeks, who usually have a word for everything, have adopted "to Gallup" as their verb for "to poll".'

It is true that George Gallup is known worldwide mainly as the scientist with the greatest contribution to the development of the culture of public opinion research. But there are two other important aspects of Gallup's work which one would be wrong to ignore. These are teaching, and research on the effectiveness of advertising.

The problems of education and training have permanently been at the forefront of Gallup's attention as a researcher and citizen throughout his life; his studies on the impact of advertising, and the instruments for



improving advertising efficiency, by general consent have earned him a place among the select group of super professionals whose work determined the evolution of this research area. One of these venerated major figures – David Ogilvy – admitted once in a speech, that ‘Gallup contributed more to advertising research than all the rest of us put together.

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## The Educator: “Quill and Scroll” Association, Teaching at Universities, Surveys that Help Education

George Gallup was always interested in what people knew about the world and what they would like to know about it. He also believed that citizens should be enabled to think in a more profound way about social problems, and to participate in finding solutions for them. The publication of poll results was meant by Gallup to help voters to become better informed participants in the elections process. Describing his activities in the areas mentioned above, George Gallup used the term “educator”. This term is key to understanding why in 1970 – under the heavy burden of research projects, coupled with job commitments to leading politicians and journalists – he managed to spare the time to write a book, published as a guide for the parents of children in their first year of school.

Gallup’s lifelong devotion to education is exemplified by his role as initiator of the *Quill and Scroll Association*. At his suggestion on 10 April 1926, twenty-three enthusiasts founded that organization with the proclaimed goal of providing every possible form of support for high school students interested in learning about journalism. He also took up the editorship of the *Quill and Scroll* magazine, which was meant to represent, as stated on its cover, the National Honorary Society for High School Journalists. Gallup’s educational undertaking, with time, grew into a social project on a national scale. At the time of its inauguration, the *Quill and Scroll* (Q&S) had local chapters in some 25 schools from Iowa and neighboring states. By the beginning of the 21st century, Q&S had over 14,000 chapters in schools in all 50 states of the USA, as well as in 44 other countries, and there were more than a million graduates of the association, including many world-famous journalists.

Years later, Gallup recollected that the idea to set up an organization dedicated to promoting the study of journalism, came to him while he was editing *The Daily Iowan*. He had adored that experience, and wondering why school athletes were encouraged by fellowships, while students excelling in journalism were ignored, moved him to set right the situation.

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George Gallup’s proper teaching career (discounting the early start in 1925 while still a graduate student), began after graduation. Initially, from 1929 to 1931, he led the Journalism Department at the private Drake University in the capital of Iowa, Des Moines. During the 1931/32 academic year, on invitation from Northwestern University located near Chicago, he taught at its Medill School of Journalism. From 1935 to 1938, as a visiting professor he, lectured in one of the best-known training facilities for journalists in America – the School of Journalism at Columbia University in New York, also called the Pulitzer School. His teaching engagements in the strict sense of the term, that is, professorial work, concluded in 1938, ten years after the start. The problems of education, however always remained within his range of vision and attention span as citizen.

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A long-term research project, known as the “PDK/Gallup Poll”, has been monitoring the Americans’ attitudes towards public schools for over three decades. The acronym stands for *Phi Delta Kappa International* – an organization throughout many decades had been generously funding public school development programs.

The first survey representative of the adult population of the United States was held in 1969. The surveys at once became annual, and Gallup himself wrote the analytical wrap-up reports.

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A special place in George Gallup's creative heritage belongs to his book of essays *The Miracle Ahead*, published in 1964. It brings together a summary of his findings as a psychologist – student of human consciousness – a pollster who analyzed public opinion in the United States and elsewhere in the world, as a teacher and scholar who had devoted years to the study of education, and finally, as a public figure. In this book Gallup showed that to enhance the power of the human intellect, a new system of education is needed for the future that will nurture a mentality capable of creative thinking. That was the essence of the miracle about which he wrote.

Noting that ‘.. resistance to change springs from many sources,’ Gallup singled out the following idea: ‘In the whole history of man, no generation has been taught to expect change, to be prepared for change, or to seek change.’ Accordingly, the extent to which people understand the nature of social change, and the extent of their readiness for change, are the most important indicators of the degree of maturity of civil society. If people want to succeed in their endeavors, they need to be well informed and must not expect help from the powers that be – politicians, journalists, or others.

The back-page summary about the author's background in *The Miracle Ahead* that was probably written, or at least edited, by Gallup himself, reads: ‘George Gallup's name is associated with public opinion polls throughout the world; a lesser-known side of Dr. Gallup is his interest in people and the factors which influence their opinions and aspirations... Dr. Gallup's research activities cover the fields of health, religion, politics, journalism, advertising, entertainment, education, and philosophy. It can be said that no other person has had the opportunity to study the views of so many people on so many aspects of modern life, and in so many parts of the world.’

### **“BUT I ALWAYS LOVED ADVERTISING RESEARCH”**

Shortly before his death, George Gallup was asked which major area of research was his area or source of greatest satisfaction, or where he felt he'd made the greatest contribution. He replied: ‘I think that I would have to say public opinion research. We set out in 1935 to make a report every single week on the important social, political, and economic issues of the day. And we have done that and are carrying that on now in 30 nations of the world. But I always loved advertising research. There's nothing that is so challenging – every advertiser has a problem. And problem solving is the greatest fun in the world. You can solve some problems; you can't solve others. It's a game and it's fascinating, and if I had my life to live again I would not want to miss the advertising research side of it.’ Talking about the future, he said: ‘I think the future is tremendous. We're only in the beginning stages of all of this, and if I were beginning again I would go back into advertising.’

Gallup's own interest in advertising emerged quite early. Following the successful testing of his novel method for the study of newspaper readership, a group of publishers and advertising agencies funded a large-scale survey of readers' interest in advertising and editorial content. The main sponsors were four magazines: *Collier's*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Liberty*, and *The Literary Digest*. The sample of the polls, conducted in the summer of 1931, comprised 15,000 households in six cities across the country. Polling was conducted for a week in each city. A grand total of 3,789 magazines, with readership notes recorded in them, resulted from the survey.

The analysis of this material allowed for model of the appeal of advertising to potential consumers from different demographic groups to be built. In addition, Gallup proposed a very simple scheme for the

content analysis of advertising. Thus, within a single project, text analysis was conducted in parallel with actual polling.

## A Unique Partnership

In 1974, recalling events of forty years before, George Gallup noted that as a professor who taught the psychology of advertising, he had discovered by the early 1930s ‘an almost total lack of any intellectual interest in the theory of advertising – how it works and why it works.’ He saw capable practitioners, but very few investigators. ‘The one outstanding exception was Raymond Rubicam, who was both of these and who, incidentally, induced me to leave the academic world to join the agency that he headed.’

Raymond Rubicam (1892-1978) was the founder and president of the Young & Rubicam (Y&R) advertising agency based in New York. The fame and prestige of the firm were legendary. Brilliantly trained college graduates lined up to work for Y&R in the mail-sorting department or as messengers for 18 to 20 dollars a week. A Yale graduate from a wealthy family worked as a courier in the firm, while the boss was chauffeur-driven to work in a Rolls-Royce. These popular tales help one appreciate the experience, the wisdom, and the professional acumen of the man who in April 1932 went to the trouble of making a special trip from New York to Chicago in order to hire the young professor. <sup>[p. 43]</sup> It is recalled that Rubicam had set his mind to it after reading Gallup’s article “Guesswork Eliminated in New Method for Determining Reader Interest” in the *Editor & Publisher* magazine

Gallup stayed at Y&R for one decade and a half, and during these years he enjoyed complete freedom to determine the direction and form of his research, always had enough funds to experiment, and was never compelled to do anything that he considered unethical.

It was another piece of good luck that during Gallup tenure at Y&R he encountered, and got involved in a long-term professional relationship with, another outstanding practitioner of the advertising profession – David Ogilvy (David Mackenzie Ogilvy, 1911-1999). In the early 1980s, *Expansion* magazine compiled a list of thirty people who during the 20th century had made a revolution in social practice, science, and engineering. In that list, along with Thomas Edison, Albert Einstein, John Maynard Keynes, Alfred Krupp, Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx, Louis Pasteur, and others, David Ogilvy was featured under the title “the Pope of modern advertising.”

Descendant of an old Scottish family, Ogilvy led a rather checkered early life. He studied, but failed to graduate in Edinburgh and at Oxford, moved over to Paris and had a job as cook for dogs belonging to guests of the *Hotel Majestic*, and eventually was promoted to restaurant chef. Returning to England, he worked as traveling salesman and had a brief stint at an advertising agency.

In 1936, on arrival to the U.S. with the ambition to get into advertising, Ogilvy rang up Raymond Rubicam’s agency. By that time, George Gallup had already shifted the focus of his work to public opinion, but remained at Y&R as Vice-President of the firm (from 1937 to 1947). He gave Ogilvy a job at the American Institute of Public Opinion that he had recently founded at Princeton.

After the few weeks, Ogilvy spent learning the basics of polling, Gallup took him to Hollywood. There they negotiated a contract with the heads of some major film studios (David Selznick, Walt Disney, Sam Goldwyn) for surveying the potential responses of movie-goers to new movies, as well as the advertising of movies already produced.<sup>50</sup> According to Ogilvy’s memoirs, the average error in their predictions for audiences, before the relevant films had been shot, did not exceed 10 percent.

From the very start Ogilvy displayed great analytical capacity and managerial acumen. Within a year he became director of one of Gallup’s research bodies – the *Audience Research Institute* in Princeton. When Ogilvy joined the Institute, preparation of a report from a survey consumed two months; he reduced that

time to two days. During his three years on the job, more than 400 national polls were conducted under his guidance.

During World War II Ogilvy served with British Intelligence. After the war, he took a few years to farm with the Amish community in Pennsylvania. In 1949, he set up his own advertising agency "Ogilvy & Mather". It was at that time that he created the famous slogan for Rolls-Royce, acclaimed as a genre masterpiece: *'At 60 miles an hour the loudest noise in this new Rolls-Royce comes from the electric clock'*.

Ogilvy insisted on the active and creative use of the results of advertising research. He recalled: 'I was in the research business - I worked with Dr. Gallup in Princeton - and I did a great deal of research. So I approach advertising from the viewpoint of the researcher... My ideas about what constitutes a good copy, almost all of them, derive from research, not personal opinion.'

### Working for "Young & Rubicam"

During his years at Young & Rubicam George Gallup identified and introduced many techniques to improve the readability and the memorability of advertising: the use of humor, of structured text headings, of different fonts and rectangular images, of texts beginning with small introductory paragraphs; making advertising slogans shorter (less than 11 words), leaving room for open spaces, indents, etc., and not cramming everything with text. Every word in an ad, Gallup said, must be meaningful. Instead of vague promises, provide specific numbers; common phrases must give way to facts and instead of empty blandishments, tempting offers need to be made. He showed that two-level arguments of the type "such as ... as well as..." may lead to poor comprehension of the text; that photographs are perceived better than other kinds of illustrations, but the highly artistic photos that receive prizes in competitions do not work in advertising; ads require something simple that arouses curiosity. Gallup called advertisements that say: "Our product is the world's best." "mere brag and boost" types.

Here is how Ogilvy describes this unique contribution of Gallup at Y & R: 'When George Gallup was research director at Young & Rubicam in the thirties, he not only measured the readership of advertising, he accumulated scores and analyzed them. Certain techniques, he found, consistently outperformed others... Within a few months, Young & Rubicam advertisements were being read by more people than any other agency's, to the incalculable benefit of their clients.' The effect of Gallup's proposals was apparent: in 1927, the Agency's revenues amounted to \$ 6 million; by 1935, they rose to \$ 12 million, jumping to \$22 million in 1937.

And here is what George Gallup himself wrote: 'At Young & Rubicam we organized a nationwide interviewing staff to obtain readership data on ads appearing in the leading magazines. Within a few months we had results on enough advertisements to begin an on-going analysis of the advertisements which emerged with the highest vs. the lowest scores in attention and reading... Within a few years, we were able to deliver three times as many readers per dollar as the average of the advertisers using the same magazines at that time.'

George Gallup was also able to prove the importance of preliminary testing of the effectiveness of advertisements. In one of his late articles he wrote: 'Even simple methods will show that the best advertiser in each product field gets as much as twenty times more for his advertising dollars than the poorest. With this wide chasm between the best and the poorest efforts, shouldn't more attention be given to improving methods to measure advertising effectiveness?'

The uncertainty regarding the role of the brand in the perception of advertising led George Gallup to develop the method called *Impact*. It was extended from the study of print advertising to all media, including TV ads. <sup>[56, p. 49-50]</sup>. The method was based on a series of questions for a telephone interview, which allowed the respondents to recall advertising that they had read, seen, or heard the day before.

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In advertising, Rubicam was George Gallup's mentor. In his turn, Gallup became mentor to Ogilvy. In the case of Rubicam, his firm, already well established, using Gallup's findings rose to new heights of profitability and reputation. "Ogilvy & Mather", on the other hand, from the very start greatly benefited from the fruits of Gallup's research.

For Gallup, working at Y&R became the springboard for his subsequent departure into the domain of public opinion polling. In the meantime, "Ogilvy & Mather" continued to serve as the laboratory for the testing and refinement of Gallup's methods in the sphere of advertising.

### **"I'VE ALWAYS HAD A MESSIANIC DELUSION"**

By the early 1930s, George Gallup was already firmly established as a leading professional in survey research, member of the select group of top experts, and senior manager of one of the nation's major advertising agencies. Financially, his family was prospering; his position permitted him to combine work with teaching at leading American universities, and with writing books. However, all these achievements did not satisfy him; he needed goals and objectives that would fit his broad expertise as scientist, but also satisfy his acute feeling of civic duty. In an interview, he said: 'By nature, I've always believed in change. I guess I've always had a messianic delusion.'

This candid admission reveals why the focus of George Gallup's research was bound to shift from advertising to the measurement of political attitudes and electoral behavior. That area at the time still remained an almost virgin territory at the crossroads of journalism, policy research, psychological study, and the analysis of consumer behavior.

The success of advertising and marketing studies at Young & Rubicam using Gallup's methods had made him confident that a technology so effective in this area could be used with the same effect to measure public opinion on political issues. When in 1948 Time magazine had Gallup on its cover, the long feature story inside about his activities quoted that 'as early as 1932, Gallup, the highly skilled researcher of toothpaste advertising said to himself: 'If it works for toothpaste, why not for politics?'

The years George Gallup spent refining his views about the study of public opinion and developing the appropriate technology were referred to by him, as "the incubation period". A lot had already been achieved. Experience had been accumulated in polling voters and analyzing data from polls to produce electoral forecasts. American electoral statistics were reevaluated, and a scheme for funding surveys was elaborated and tested to ensure independence of the research.

George Gallup's experience with the first electoral poll that he carried out in 1932 is very relevant to this story. Gallup decided to do that poll to help his mother-in-law Ola Miller (Eunice Viola Babcock Miller, 1871-1937). She had decided to stand as the Democratic candidate in the election for Secretary of the State of Iowa. Recalling this event years later, Gallup said: 'I actually became interested in the whole spectrum of polling possibilities, and I did a few rather crude samples ...' Fieldwork for the survey was carried out by Gallup's students in 101 state counties. The forecast that Ola Miller would win proved correct, despite great skepticism that she could do it. Two factors heavily influenced the skeptics: firstly, no woman had ever been elected to such office in Iowa; and secondly, people in the state traditionally voted Republican. Roosevelt's victory in 1932, however, had helped Ola Miller to win that election, and she was easily re-elected to the same office in 1934 and 1936.



The success of this early effort definitely helped trigger Gallup's decision to move into this novel area of research. His second son, George Gallup Jr., among others, confirms that success 'in that election forecast, this informal effort on behalf of my grandmother, certainly inspired him and empowered him to move forward with polling'.

But such a move still required an intellectual and institutional environment ensuring both, tangible demand for electoral surveys and robust financial support to fund them. Both prerequisites were discovered by Gallup in the familiar, and always congenial community of journalism.

In 2004 Hans Zetterberg, Gallup's years-long friend, admitted: 'George H. (Ted) Gallup did not deliver his stories directly to any paper. He had a partner in Chicago, Harold Anderson, who ran Publisher-Hall Syndicate, an agency providing papers with editorial material. This included both features and columnists such as Sylvia Porter, who wrote about finance in such a way that any American could understand. Gallup furnished Anderson with a new and unique product that no one else in his line of business had. Anderson loved Gallup's material and did its marketing with enthusiasm. He offered it in the first place to the biggest paper in each city. This strategy was copied from the early success of the Associated Press that had started by giving a sole franchise to one paper in each city. At best, over 200 papers subscribed to the Gallup releases.'

This tale was repeated by David Moore in his book *The Superpollsters*: 'Having heard from George Gallup that he had a system, but did not know how to make it work, Anderson immediately recognized the potential of this news-making enterprise. Along with Gallup, he invested his own capital in the new American Institute of Public Opinion and became the agent for Gallup's surveys.' This happened in the summer of 1935. The Institute is located in Princeton, New Jersey, across the street from the main campus entrance of Princeton. It was assumed that the proximity of their addresses would help increase the return rate of mailed questionnaires in case of postal surveys. A paragraph in the same previously quoted *Time* article about Gallup goes on to say: 'Gallup talked his ideas over with a blond, blue-eyed Midwestern salesman of newspaper features named Harold Anderson, who had become a partner in Gallup's research service. Anderson jumped at it, urged Gallup on. He began lining up newspaper publishers, soon interested both the Washington Post's Eugene Meyer and the New York Herald Tribune's Helen Rogers Reid.' Meyer and Reid were eminent publishers, among the select few at the very top of the U.S. newspaper business.

### George Gallup's Finest Hour

On October 20, 1935, Gallup released a report on the first national public opinion survey, organized according to the new comprehensive arrangements he had made. Polling had been held between 10 and 15 September. To publicize the event Meyer had hired a small dirigible balloon to cruise over Washington and announcing the inauguration of the new nationwide opinion surveys. The press release, focused on findings about public attitudes on the very controversial issue of increased public spending, was featured on front pages of newspapers across the country. In some cases, not only aggregate data from the polling was quoted, but also the range of opinions by various demographics, and even the data acquisition technology were presented.

It was also announced that summary records of polling results would begin to be released on a weekly basis. These releases, written by Gallup in a weekly column entitled "America Speaks", were published by many national newspapers.

In November of the same year, Gallup polls were conducted to survey attitudes of the electorate in Kentucky (for the gubernatorial elections) and in New York (for the Legislative Assembly). Victories for candidates of the Democratic Party were predicted, with an error of 2 percent for Kentucky and 4 percent for New York.

With the new presidential election approaching, a cloud of expectation was thickening over George Gallup: how was his scientific technology for polling going to perform? He himself had firm confidence in his methods, but they needed to be believed by America. As early as the start of the New Year, 1936, it was evident that the campaign would be virulent, and its outcome would not be easy to predict. On 6 January in an article on the subject *Time* commented ‘...Never before in U.S. history have so many extensive and intensive attempts been made [for an electoral forecast] so far in advance to foretell what will happen on November 3.’ These attempts fell into three categories: The first used the century-old technique of sending out correspondents and trained observers across different states to identify political attitudes of the electorate; the second continued to rely on the straw polls, a methodology familiar, and quite successful in recent decades. One such survey made at the time by *The Literary Digest*, on the basis of a million responses to postcard questionnaires mailed to residents across 41 states, found that 41 percent of respondents supported Franklin Roosevelt’s policy, and 59 percent were against it. *Time* magazine called attention to the deficiencies of *The Literary Digest* sample, which listed owners of telephones and cars; therefore, it was excluding lower income groups that were likely to support Roosevelt’s New Deal. The magazine countered the criticism by arguing that they were copying exactly their procedure of 1932, when the prediction error was under one percent. Finally, the third method was one that only quite recently had been tested and publicized on a national scale: ‘Tests of sentiment by personally questioning relatively small groups chosen with the object of getting a scientifically accurate sample of the voting population.’

George Gallup, it is appropriate to mention, was not the sole proponent and practitioner of this novel method. Other pollsters – the most prominent at that time were Elmo Roper, Daniel Starch, and Hadley Cantril – were contemporaries of Gallup. Like him, they pioneered the modern technology and culture of public opinion research. By a whim of destiny, like Gallup they were children of the twentieth century, of the generation born at its dawn. In their research endeavors at times they were competitors, but overall, they maintained personal and professional relationships that were marked by friendship and cooperation.

According to the December Gallup survey, almost 45 percent of the voters at that time were inclined to support Roosevelt, versus 47 percent who intended to vote for the Republican nominee. Poll results released by Starch showed that 43 percent of voters were in favor of Roosevelt’s New Deal, and 38 percent were against. The November 1935 poll of *Fortune* magazine, conducted by Roper, also revealed positive prospects for Roosevelt.

The media and the public at large were particularly intrigued by what George Gallup had up his sleeve. On 12 June, 1936, i.e. just a month after the nomination of Alfred Landon as the Republican candidate, and six weeks before *The Literary Digest* poll was launched, Gallup predicted in his weekly column that the magazine would forecast a Landon victory with 56 percent of the vote and, accordingly, a defeat for Roosevelt with 44 percent. More than that, this still relatively unknown pundit declared that prediction to be wrong, because the sample of respondents used by the straw poll was skewed. To make these claims Gallup relied on the results of a pilot survey of his own: he had sent out 3,000 postcards to addresses similar to those used by the editors of *The Literary Digest*, and was confident that his smaller sample would be representative for the results obtained by the larger-scale survey of the magazine.

The editor Wilfred Funk, was outraged. In an open letter published in the *New York Times*, he vented his resentment: ‘But never before has anyone foretold what our poll was going to show before it was even started!.. Our fine statistical friend [Gallup] should be advised that the Digest would carry on our poll with those old-fashioned methods that have produced correct forecasts one hundred percent of the time.’

On 2 November, 1936, the day before the presidential election, George Gallup published his final forecast.

Features of the electoral projections	Forecast of the Gallup Institute <sup>69</sup>	Forecast of the Literary Digest
Share of votes in favour of Roosevelt	55.7	43
Share of votes in favour of Landon	44.3	57
Number of states where Roosevelt wins	40	16
Number of states where Landon wins	6	32
Number of states without a declared winner	2	0

In strictly quantitative terms, George Gallup's forecast - 55.7 percent of the vote for Roosevelt, and 44.3 percent of the vote for Landon (counting the number of votes actually cast) - cannot be recognized as fully accurate. In fact, the winner scored 62.5 percent of the vote. However, in the first place, Gallup named him correctly, and, secondly, his error margin amounted to 6.8 percent, while the *Literary Digest* deviation was three times as big (19.5 percent). The forecasts of Crossley (53.8 percent) and Roper (61.7 percent) in favor of Roosevelt were also correct.

This forecasting success propelled George Gallup to nationwide fame. This was the finest hour of his career, and a crucial turning point in the history of polling.

Could errors in *The Literary Digest* forecasts have occurred before 1936? Certainly, yes. And could the magazine's 1936 forecast have come true? That was certainly quite possible too – had the interplay of social and political events in the country been different. Conversely, the 1936 forecasts of Gallup, Crossley, and Roper could also have proven wrong, as it did happen in fact twelve years later. However, the new sampling technology triumphed in 1936, and *The Literary Digest* lost. This meant the end of the straw polls era.

Quite a few research studies have been devoted to the analysis of *The Literary Digest* poll fiasco. George Gallup himself expressed it in a nutshell: 'Disaster lay in the Digest's cross section and its sampling methods', and went on to elaborate: '... the heart of the problem of obtaining an accurate measure of public opinion lay in the cross section, and no mere accumulation of ballots could hope to eliminate the error that sprang from a biased sample.'

## THE PULSE OF DEMOCRACY

*The Pulse of Democracy*, a book authored by George Gallup and Saul Rae, has long been recognized as the Bible of public opinion researchers. It contains a comprehensive and detailed presentation of the work accomplished by Gallup before 1940.

By the end of the 1930's, George Gallup felt that the time was ripe for presenting the methodology of public opinion polling he had devised, as well as the lesson learned from using it, to the interested professional groups and to the wider, educated and publicly-minded strata of the population. Overwhelmed by his daily burden of work – conducting surveys, writing and editing press releases of the results, and heading the research department at Y & R, he needed an assistant to write the book he decided to publish about these experiences. Gallup found the right person for the job in Saul Rae (Saul Forbes Rae, 1914-1999) – a young researcher with doctorate degree in public opinion studies, earned in 1938 at the London School of Economics.

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In the view of Gallup and the other founders of new polling methods, the publication of opinion surveys' results helped draw attention to elections and generally encouraged public political activity. Such was the civic purpose and ultimate goal of their efforts. Secondly, their research opened wider possibilities for identifying

the factors that determine the dynamics of public opinion. Thirdly, surveys revealed the electoral attitudes and behavior of various demographic groups, while publication of the findings was helping to transform the political science constructs of analysts and journalists from purely speculative to science-based ones. Fourthly, by recording the different phases in the formation and functioning of public opinion, surveys allowed a deeper understanding of the operation of democratic institutions. Finally, an extremely important conclusion was made: 'Elections, then, are the laboratory in which the polls are tested, and in which new facts and problems continually come to light. But the practical value of the polls lies in the fact that they indicate the main trends of sentiment on issues about which elections often tell us nothing ... The first stage of testing has demonstrated clearly that the polls can mirror the sentiment of large groups of individuals in concrete election situations. The second stage of practical application shows that the polls can also help to chart the main divisions of sentiment on issues, and so make possible continuous measurements of public opinion.'

One of the fundamental objectives of *The Pulse of Democracy* was to describe what the researchers did to improve the reliability of polling results and how they did it. By the time he started working on the book, George Gallup had already amassed nearly two decades of experience in designing scientifically based samples. Therefore, he had all the good reasons to write: 'The most important requirement of any sample is that it be as representative as possible of the entire group or "universe" from which it is taken.' From the point of view of achieving sample representativeness, two types of universes exist: homogeneous and heterogeneous. Opinion pollsters in the United States normally have to deal with a heterogeneous general aggregate that consists of a large number of social groups with different interests and dissimilar perceptions of current events. In order to take this into account, a stratified, or controlled, sampling method is used. Since "the US population is a mosaic" of a wide range of groups and associations, it is necessary to identify such groups in which the distribution of opinions and attitudes would be more uniform than in the universe as a whole.

The experience of analysts of consumer attitudes, and of researchers of press and radio audiences, had shown that stratification of the population should take into account the geography of the respondents' residence, their occupations, age, gender, political orientation, race and religion, educational and cultural levels. 'The fundamental fact... – that the public consisted of people clustered into social groups... is the chief reason why the opinion surveyor makes use of selective sampling to build up his "miniature public"'

Two types of stratification need to be considered when conducting surveys: social stratification, which comprises the entire adult population, and political stratification, introduced specifically for the study of political attitudes and voting behavior. The first type of stratification is used to study attitudes towards social phenomena and processes, such as the quality of life, living standards, and incomes; the parameters of this sampling are set and controlled by the statistical data from population censuses.

The second type of stratification serves for surveys of the electorate. Here the sampling methods are based both, on census data, and on the findings of sociologists who study the determinants of people's participation in politics. Based on the results obtained in previous studies by Gallup and by other American and European scholars, *The Pulse of Democracy* defined the following fundamental criteria of political stratification: type of elections in which respondents are involved (presidential, gubernatorial, etc.), place of residence, gender, income, and other socio-demographic indicators (in particular, age, race, and nationality).

Sample size, according to the book, must in general be sufficiently large to neutralize the effect of random

factors, but the important and empirically confirmed truth to bear in mind is that: ‘... No major poll in the history of this country ever went wrong because too few persons were reached.’

Subsequent years may have necessitated reconsidering many aspects of both theory and practice of sample design. Two cornerstones of sampling for opinion surveys, which Gallup saw as fundamental, however remain unchanged. These are control of sampling, according to the most important parameters of the universe, and scientifically based determination of sample size.

## THE CRUCIAL FORTIES

The 1940s were crucial for public opinion research in the US. First, the regularly published survey results revealed to the country’s elites and to the public at large previously hidden facets of their own activity.

Secondly, the body of public opinion researchers had been formed, and a new occupation was born: the pollster. The term itself, deriving from the word poll, was introduced at the time of the great public disappointment with polling caused by the wrong forecast of Gallup, Crossley, and Roper about the 1948 presidential elections.<sup>102</sup> Originally, the term was meant to be associated with “huckster”, i.e., the derogatory name for ad copy writers. The term did catch on, but the intended negative connotation did not.

The milestones of the decade were the two accurate forecasts of Gallup, Crossley, and Roper about the outcome of the presidential elections in 1940 and 1944, and the resounding fiasco of the same trio in 1948. The failure, however did serve, and was perceived, as a new invigorating challenge by the researchers. The refined measuring methodologies they developed in the 1950s and 1960s successfully passed the test of practice in subsequent decades.

In a letter sent to a Democratic Senator on 2 July, 1949, six months after the events of 1948 that were so devastating for Gallup, he wrote: ‘Dear Senator Tomas, we all have to live and learn. In the recent Canadian election, we made every effort to apply the lessons learned in November here. The results, frankly, are better than we had even hoped.’<sup>103</sup> Attached to the letter was Gallup’s one- page report on the forecast about the outcome of the parliamentary elections in Canada (the average error of the prediction made for the different political parties was 1.2 percent). It also contained summarized statistical data about Gallup’s previous electoral research: ‘The Canadian forecast was the 515th one of those that have been made during the last 13 years ... The average error of the 515 forecasts has been 4 percent.’

### Success in 1940 and 1944

In the 1940 election, Roosevelt ran against Republican Wendell Wilkie (1892-1944), former Democrat and active critic of the New Deal. Wilkie, though much less experienced than Roosevelt, had wide support not only from Republicans, but also among Democrats. (Roosevelt’s decision to run for a third term had caused strong resentment, because it violated a long-standing American tradition, even though the constitution did not yet restrict holding the office of president to a maximum of two terms).

Eight pre-election Gallup polls were held to test attitudes to the candidates, and in each case Roosevelt led Wilkie. But the distance between the two varied greatly. In June it was 6 percent, and by in mid-September it was less than 2 percent. In early autumn Roosevelt was ahead by about 8 to 10 percent, but the latest poll



– in mid-October – showed Wilkie lagging behind by only 4 percentage points, at 48 percent of likely voters to Roosevelt’s 52 percent.

On Election Day, Roosevelt got 27 million votes (55 percent of the total) to Wilkie’s 22 million, and secured 499 votes by the electors to 82 for the Republican.

The most accurate prediction was made by Roper at 55.2 percent; Gallup declared 52 percent, and Crossley predicted 50.4 percent. Crossley conducted representative surveys in about 20 states; Gallup studied the electorate in 48 states and constructed forecasts for each of these. His results were excellent: the average error in predicting the outcome in 48 states was 2.4 percent. Crossley’s average error was slightly higher - 2.7 percent.

Along with predicting the outcome of the election, Gallup, Crossley and Roper carried out field tests to improve measurement technology. Roper, for instance, set up a small voters’ panel to monitor the dynamics of electoral intentions. Six measurements were performed, the first one in May 1940, and the last in October. Interviewers recorded respondent’s intentions, and where they differed from those declared in the previous test, the respondent was asked about the reason. During the six-month observation period, approximately 45 percent of the respondents had changed attitudes to presidential candidates, but by late October the structure of opinions tended to stabilize.

In 1944, Roosevelt announced his candidacy for a fourth term. The Republicans nominated New York Governor Thomas Dewey, the popular opponent of organized crime. The table below shows how contested the battle for the White House was.

Gallup Poll Results, 1944

Time of polling	Level of support (percent)	
	Roosevelt	Dewey
May	47	45
Mid-September	47	45
Mid-October (more than 100 %, rounding error)	52	49

In early August, *Time* magazine quoted the results of a Roper survey which found that 52.5 percent of respondents would vote for Roosevelt, 43.9 percent for Dewey, and 3.6 percent remained undecided. According to the Gallup polls carried out during the latest six weeks of the campaign, however, Dewey was still ahead in 35 states out of 48.

In 1944, in addition to Gallup, Crossley, and Roper, polling during the election campaign was also carried out by Cantril and Harry Field (the latter headed the National Opinion Research Center he had founded himself in 1941). In their final forecasts, Roper, Cantril, and Crossley, also included the attitudes of 3 million military personnel, apart from the general population, while Field and Gallup surveyed the civilian part of the population only.

Polls	Prediction ( percent)	
	Total Vote	Civilian Vote
Roper Poll	53.6	
Princeton Office of Public Opinion Research (Cantril)	53.3	

Crossley Poll	52.2	
National Opinion Research Center (Field)		51.7
Gallup Poll		51.5

Actually, 53.8 percent of the voters chose Roosevelt, so all five predictions can be considered very good.

By the beginning of the 1940s, public opinion polls had become commonplace in the United States. In this respect, the results of the “poll about polls” – a national survey designated to test public awareness of opinion polling – are quite significant. The survey was conducted in late 1944 by Cantril’s Office of Public Opinion Research.<sup>109</sup> It found that over a half (56 percent) of Americans had heard about public opinion research. Those who were aware were asked to name one or more organizations engaged in polling. By popularity, the Gallup Institute was well ahead of the others: it was mentioned by 60 percent of the respondents. One out of 10 persons (11 percent) who had heard about polls mentioned Roper, and a slightly smaller percentage (7 percent) mentioned Crossley.

To the question: ‘Do you follow any public opinion poll regularly in any newspaper or magazine?’ exactly one-half of the respondents aware of polls said they regularly or occasionally read press reports related to poll results, while the other half did not follow publications. An overwhelming majority (68 percent) of those who knew about polls felt that the pollsters published “honest” data, while 12 percent believed that surveys were carried out in the interests of some political party, for the benefit of certain people, or to benefit certain points of view. The remaining 20 percent of respondents had no definite opinion on the issue.

A special section of the poll aimed at testing confidence in poll results. The following questions were asked:

‘Some polling organizations make frequent predictions of election results. What is your general impression of how well they do: do you think they are pretty nearly right most of the time, or you think their record is not very good?’

Pretty nearly right	57 percent
Not very good	21 percent
Don’t know	22 percent

‘Do you think poll returns on matters not dealing with elections, but with public opinion towards such things as labor problems or international affairs, are usually pretty nearly right or not right at all?’

Pretty nearly right	52 percent
Not right at all	12 percent
Don’t know	36 percent

Finally, seven out of ten respondents (73 percent) who were aware of public opinion polling in the United States considered them to be a necessary and useful thing, and only a very small share (6 percent) expressed critical attitudes.

### The 1948 Fiasco: Learning the Lesson

In an analysis, he presented in April of 1948 to a seminar of the American Statistical Association, George Gallup estimated that since 1936 his Institute had produced altogether 392 election forecasts, with an average error which amounted to 3.9 percent. The average error of forecasts made after November

1944 was even smaller - 2.9 percent. Forecasts about national US elections, elections held in individual states, and in over a dozen other countries were included in this analysis. As if anticipating the situation that was to emerge only a few months later, Gallup pointed out that many factors reduced the accuracy of electoral forecasts – from voting activity of the electorate to weather conditions. In addition, he emphasized that from the point of view of statistics, the accuracy of a forecast is determined by the magnitude of its deviation from the actual results only, not by the correct or wrong prediction of the winner. Gallup noted: 'A poll might be successful in picking the winner, and still be 20 percent away from absolute accuracy. On the other hand, a poll could possibly be erroneous by a fraction of 1 percent and still be on the wrong side.'<sup>[110, p. 5]</sup>

By the autumn of 1948, Americans had come to trust the results of sample-based opinion polls. The forecasts of Gallup, Crossley, and Roper, widely publicized and commented about by the press and on the radio, were received with universal confidence. Therefore, what happened in November 1948 was utterly unexpected. The three leading pollsters had predicted a victory for the Republican Thomas Dewey, but it was the incumbent Democrat Harry S. Truman who against all odds won.

In September 1948, less than two months before the election, *Time* magazine quoted a claim which Roper had published days before in the New York *Herald Tribune*. According to Roper, Dewey had practically won the election even before the campaign had started, because the gap in voter support between him and Truman according to the September poll was too wide to be bridged, at 44 percent vs. 31 percent. Supposedly, only extraordinary and unforeseen "political convulsions" could interfere with Dewey safely getting into the White House. On top of that, Roper declared that in view of the clarity of the situation, he would refrain from making new forecasts, because these conclusions were based not only on findings from his current surveys, but also on monitoring how voter intentions evolved over the three previous presidential campaigns. 'Political campaigns are largely ritualistic... All the evidence we have accumulated since 1936 tends to indicate that the man in the lead at the beginning of the campaign is the man who is the winner at the end of it.'<sup>111</sup>

Several major national newspapers were quick to proclaim Dewey the sure winner of the election. On the very eve of the election, *Life* magazine published a photograph of Dewey, presenting him as the next President of the United States.

The forecast of easy victory caused Republicans to relax their campaigning in the few weeks before the election. Truman, on the contrary, was invigorated despite the heavy odds against him. He plunged into campaigning with renewed spirit, travelling by train 22,000 miles across the United States on a whistle-stop campaign to address crowds from the rear platform of a train, stopped at small towns along the railroad. In spite of this effort, going to bed on 2 November Truman was prepared for defeat.

Next morning, already aware of the unexpected victory, and going by train back to Washington, picked up the latest issue of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* at the St. Louis railroad station. On its front page carried the headline "Dewey Defeats Truman". The photograph of victorious Truman, holding a newspaper that falsely announced his defeat in hand, flew around the world. In a characteristically terse comment, when questioned about what had happened, Truman said: 'This is for the books.'<sup>112</sup> The retired editor of the now-defunct *The Literary Digest* magazine did not wait for the verdict of history, but hastened to comment (in *The New York Times* dated 15 November): 'I do not want to seem malicious, but I can't help but get a good chuckle out of this.'

Two weeks after the election, in a feature entitled "The Great Fiasco" *Time* magazine called the wrong forecast the biggest blunder in predicting the outcome of elections since 1936. The editor of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* summed up the public outrage: 'We won't pay any attention any more to "scientific"

predictions and we don't think our readers will.' <sup>114</sup>

50 years after the event, returning to the causes of the failure, informed observers (including, for instance, George Gallup's son) reiterated what the pollsters Gallup, Crosseley, Roper, et al. themselves had admitted at the time – the fundamental reason for the mistake was the early discontinuation of polling: 'We stopped polling a few weeks too soon. We had been lulled into thinking that nothing much changes in the last few weeks of the campaign.' <sup>115</sup> Factors of psychological nature also greatly contributed to the error. As Warren Mitofsky (1934-2006), one of the developers of telephone polling techniques, said about George Gallup and his colleagues: 'In 1948, they got burned. Those who conduct polls should not be too arrogant. There's a lot of room for humility in polling. Every time you get cocky, you lose.'

George Gallup himself, too, acknowledged this fact: 'We permitted the public to get the impression that polls had reached a stage of absolute perfection. As someone said, we led the people to believe that we could walk on water. But we were not wholly unaware of this fact.' <sup>[116, p.178]</sup> Like Roper, despite noticing that in September 1948 a decline of Dewey's rating had commenced, Gallup assumed that the leader's accumulated advance would more than suffice until the end of the campaign. In late October, he discontinued polling and published his forecast. When, post factum, Dewey asked him why he had stopped polling, Gallup replied that their experience had witnessed the invariability of the views of the electorate. Therefore, there was no reason to continue polling after October 24. <sup>117</sup> Years before that, in 1940 when speaking about assumptions made on the basis of polling data from previous elections, Gallup had said: 'Public opinion changes slowly and usually only under the impact of important events.'

At the end of September 1948, a similar view was expressed by Crossley: according to his previous experiments, changes in the distribution of the votes of the electorate would be quite insignificant during the final days of the election campaign. Roper, for his part, wrote that during Roosevelt's previous election campaigns from his nomination until Election Day - the structure of voter intentions had remained fairly stable, and it seemed that everything would be the same in 1948 as well. <sup>[120, p.p. 117-118]</sup> Roper was so confident of the immutability of this trend that he formulated his final forecast two months before Election Day.

According to Roper, one of the causes of the erroneous prediction was the incorrect assumption about the vote of respondents who, in previous rounds of polling, had answered with "I do not know". For the purposes of analysis, researchers used to split the votes of such respondents proportionally to the shares of voters with expressed preferences. But in 1948 the majority of the "undecideds" switched their support to Truman, who had impressed them with his perseverance and vigor at the end of the campaign. Post-election polls carried out by Gallup and Roper showed that 14 percent of voters had made their final decision during the last two weeks of the campaign, and 74 percent of these favored Truman.

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By 1948, the measurement of public opinion had not only become Gallup's business core; he also began to see it as the greatest undertaking of his life. Therefore, after the failed forecast, the improvement of the technology of public opinion measurements, as well as of the release of polling results to society, became the vortex of the work of Gallup and his colleagues. In hindsight, in 1972 he wrote: 'Many social scientists in the United States have warned of the dangers of attempting to predict human behaviour. After the miscalculations of the poll takers in the 1948 presidential race, many in the field of market research added their voices to those who claimed that it was not feasible to predict what action people would take in a given situation. I have always held an opposite view, I believe that human behavior is predictable and, in fact,

that we as researchers can make progress best by making predictions and learning from our mistakes when we make them. In fact, I believe that the fear of being “wrong”, with attendant penalties, has had a retarding effect upon all of the social sciences. It would be a folly to argue that behaviour can be predicted with perfect accuracy. It can't and never will be. But already enough evidence has been accumulated in a number of different fields to prove that behaviour can be predicted with a high degree of accuracy. The goal is to increase this accuracy.'

The failure of 1948 was seen by Gallup, Crossley, Roper, et al. as a social and technological challenge, and they managed to transform this defeat into victory. The measuring methods they refined and enhanced by them and their followers in the 1950s and the 1960s, have successfully passed the most rigorous tests over the subsequent half century.

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In the presidential election campaign of 1952 – the first one after the 1948 *fiasco*, the Republican Candidate General Dwight Eisenhower (1890-1969), faced the popular Democratic politician Adlai Stevenson (1900-1965). In all nine Gallup polls made during the campaign, Eisenhower came out ahead. His advantage did drop from 28 percent at the start down to 7 in June, but then stabilized at about 10 percent. Had it not been for the traumatic experience of 1948, Gallup might have discontinued polling, but he did not. The last poll a few days before the election found Eisenhower had the support of 51 percent of the electorate, to 49 percent for his opponent. The forecasting error was slightly over four percent, but the winner was predicted accurately.

Four years later, it was once again a contest between Eisenhower and Stevenson, but the outcome was predictable at a very early stage. In January, the incumbent was ahead by 26 percent. By the end of the summer and in the autumn, the gap was reduced to 10 percent, but after the final poll the winner's name was certain

- six out of ten would vote for Eisenhower, versus four out of ten for Stevenson.

The 1960 election, which pitted John F. Kennedy (1917-1963) against Richard Nixon, (1913-1994) was extremely difficult to forecast. At the outset, in January, Kennedy lagged behind Nixon by 5 percent; the February poll showed them running head-to-head at 48 percent. Subsequently their positions changed intermittently, but in each case the distance between candidates was at most 6 percent, and four polls (there were 14 polls altogether) showed the two candidates tied. Voters evidently were having difficulty making up their minds. Similar difficulties were faced by the pollsters. George Gallup commented on the conundrum: 'Open season on pollsters has arrived, and the shooting, as usual, comes from those who do not like the poll findings.'<sup>123</sup> By mid-October Kennedy was ahead with a margin of 4 percent, and Gallup said: 'Unless this situation changes markedly between now and November 8, no poll has any scientific basis for making a prediction.'<sup>124</sup>

Another couple of weeks passed and the results of the final poll were released: Kennedy was shown to be supported by 51 percent of the voters, with Nixon left behind with 49 percent. The forecast proved correct: its error was under 1 percent.

The election campaign in 1964 turned out to be easy to predict. In June, the gap between Democrat Lyndon Johnson (1908-1973), who became president after the assassination of president Kennedy, and Republican Barry Goldwater (1909-

1998) was huge, almost 60 percent. Subsequently the gap was reduced by half, remaining at the same level until the final poll. Gallop predicted that 64 percent of voters would support Johnson, and 36 percent would vote for Goldwater. The forecasting error was under 3 percent.



In contrast, the outcome of the next election was very hard to predict. In spring and early summer, the Democratic candidate Hubert Humphrey (1911-1978) was ahead, but then Richard Nixon took the lead. He was supported by 43 to 44 percent of the voters, while Hubert Humphrey could count on just 28 to 29 percent. A third candidate – George Wallace (1919-1998), a southerner who ran on the American Independent Party ticket – garnered the votes of about a fifth of the electorate. In early autumn, George Wallace's support began shifting to Humphrey, and in October he was lagging just 8 percent behind Nixon. The last poll on the eve of Election Day showed 43 percent for Nixon and 42 percent for Humphrey. Gallup took the risk of naming Nixon as the winner, and his forecast proved right.

The presidential election of 1972 was an easy one to predict. Throughout the campaign, the incumbent Richard Nixon outpaced the Democratic Nominee Senator George McGovern by a margin of 20 to 25 percent, to arrive at a comfortable victory.

The monitoring of the presidential campaign of 1976, in which Gerald Ford (1913-2006), who became president after Nixon's forced resignation over the Watergate affair, and the Democrat Challenger Senator Jimmy Carter, was marked by an unexpected complexity. Given the volatility of electoral attitudes during most of the campaign (from March to early November), Gallup polled voter intentions eighteen times. Carter's popularity never lagged behind that of Ford, but the margin of his advantage varied constantly. In late October, the distance between them amounted to 4 percent – with Carter still ahead. But in the latest poll this slight advantage had melted, and Ford moved ahead at 49 percent of the vote, while Carter retained 48 percent. This trend prompted Gallup to name Ford the winner. In the event, it was Carter who won by 50.1 percent, two percent ahead of Ford. 'To George Gallup, it is the most unpredictable presidential election in his four decades as a pollster', *Time* magazine wrote in late October <sup>125</sup>. His mistake, however, was perceived by the pollster community as being well within the statistical margin of error, rather than as a sign of weakness in survey technology.

Ronald Reagan (1911-2004) was persistently well ahead of his rivals in both of his election campaigns: in 1980, when he ran against the incumbent Carter, and in 1984, when he defeated the challenger Walter Mondale (b. 1928), Vice President in the Carter administration. The forecasts made by Gallup in both cases were easily arrived to, true, and accurate.

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The average discrepancy between final official results from the nineteen presidential elections, monitored by Gallup polls, and Gallup polling forecasts amounts to a mere 2.3 percent. If only polls conducted after the 1948 fiasco are considered, this indicator goes down to 1.8 percent. These are truly magnificent achievements.

60 or 70 years ago, when musing about the prospects of public opinion research academics, journalists, and politicians used to say, with wonder: 'Time will show!' Nowadays we have every reason to say: 'Time has shown!'

## GOING INTERNATIONAL

The 1940s for George Gallup were the years when the bases of the professional community of pollsters in the United States and worldwide were laid. His knowledge, organizational experience and personality

traits made him the person perfectly fit to lead this process.

Within the United States, work started with the setting up of organizations on a state-by-state basis, to survey the opinions of the respective state's voters. During the 1940s a series of such bodies emerged [58]. George Gallup took part in the creation of many of them. One of the first such organizations was "Iowa Poll", founded in 1943. Another early arrival was the "Minnesota Poll", created in February 1944. Mervyn Field, founder of the "California Poll", was "one of the last polling pioneers still active, for whom George Gallup was both mentor and friend".

Harry Hubert Field (1897-1946), one of the first scholars to realize that the study of public opinion deserved the status of an academic discipline, was a major contributor to laying the groundwork for a worldwide network of pollsters. Regrettably, he did not live to see the fruition of his design. In the early autumn of 1946 he was killed in a plane crash while flying from Paris to London, on the way back from visiting organizations that were engaged in public opinion research in Holland, Belgium, and France.

Before the tragic accident, Field had sponsored and chaired a Steering committee which convened the First International Conference for the Study of Public Opinion. This forum was held in Central City, Colorado earlier in 1946.<sup>128</sup> In his memoir, Cahalan, a colleague and friend of Field's, recalled his own doubts about that event: 'A great idea, but who would come way out here, when they are all so busy. And it takes a whole day to get here from New York.' Field's response that he had already solved the related financial problems did not satisfy Cahalan and he persisted: 'But how can you get them to come?' 'Just use a little strategy', Field said. 'First of all, I will get Ted [Gallup's nickname] to agree to come here. That will be easy, because he always says "Yes" to my ideas until his people talk him out of it. As soon as he says "Yes", I'll broadcast it to everybody and get them to thinking that if they don't come, they might be talked about. Besides, they can combine it with a vacation, good trout fishing, splendid mountains, great air. How can we miss?'

The timing of the conference was propitious: optimism inspired by the victory in World War II was still alive, and the Cold War had not yet begun. Pollsters believed that polls helped solve vital political and commercial problems; after the interruption caused by the war, they were glad at the chance to resume professional contacts and discussions with colleagues. The conference was attended by 73 delegates from a wide range of institutions: radio stations and the press, universities, commercial research firms, nonprofit research organization, government offices, and advertising agencies. One researcher each from Mexico, Canada, Libya, and Norway was also in attendance.

The conference session on opinion research studying foreign policy issues was chaired by George Gallup. The session, considered particularly important, on technical and ethical standards in public opinion research, was steered jointly by Gallup, Field, Woodward, and Hart. Immediately after the closing session of the conference, a Continuing Committee, which it had appointed, met. Woodward, Gallup, Field, and Hart were members; Field was elected Chairman, and their first item of business was to initiate preparation for a Second International Conference on Public Opinion Research.

In February 1947 the Continuing Committee further decided on the venue and dates (1 to 5 September 1947) for the Second Conference, and Gallup, Crossley, Roper, and the Time Corporation were announced as sponsors.

The Second Conference had 194 registered participants – twice as many as in Central City. This time around, experts from many countries were present: Australia, Britain, West Germany, Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, France, Czechoslovakia, and Switzerland.

The development of a Gallup-related global polling network had started as early as 1936 when Harry Field, acting on a Gallup's authority, set up in England the first overseas branch of the Gallup Institute – the British Institute of Public Opinion. In the postwar years, similar polling organizations sprang up in other countries, to evolve into what would become the Gallup International Association, GIA.<sup>130</sup> Its first meeting, held from 11 to 18 May 1947 at the English village of Loxwood, was attended by George Gallup as the United States' representative, and by delegates from Britain, Australia, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Finland, France, and Sweden. (Italy and Czechoslovakia were represented by observers; a representative of Brazil was unable to attend).

Gallup and the other founders of the Association were inspired by the belief that international public opinion surveys would permit nations to understand each other better, and so help prevent war. They perceived the polls as an instrument of democratic governance. As George Gallup expressed it: 'If democracy is supposed to be based on the will of the people, then somebody should go out and find out what that will is.'

## THE GALLUP LEGACY

George Gallup started polling newspaper audiences in the early 1920s, while he was still an undergraduate at the University of Iowa. His professional life, distinguished by its remarkable diversity and productivity, was destined to span six decades. 'The last time - recalls historian and journalist Barry Sussman – I talked to Gallup, was by telephone, more than a year before he died. Making small talk, I asked why he was in his office on such a nice day. He was, after all, more than eighty years old at the time. "We are making plans for polling in the year 2000", he replied.'<sup>102</sup>

Gallup, alas, did not live to see these plans come into being...

Under the influence of Lord James Bryce, Gallup was imbued with profound respect for the Swiss model of democracy; he even fell in love with that country. He bought a house in the small Tschingel village in the vicinity of the Lake of Thun, not far away from Bern and, having retired from full-time work, lived there for many years. On 26 July, 1984, George Gallup died of a heart attack in his Swiss home; he was buried in the cemetery at Princeton. On the tombstone shared by Gallup and his wife the ancient motto of the Gallup family was chiseled: "Be bold. Be wise."

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Making a full and fair assessment of George Gallup's creative heritage is not

- To comprehend the range and variety of his work, one must appreciate, above all, the multitude of domains over which Gallup's endeavors were spread. He himself saw public opinion research and the propagation of new attitudes towards polling in general as the major task of his life. But at the same time, Gallup was a journalist and a psychologist, a researcher of mass media and cinema audiences, a pioneer in advertising research, a statistician, an author of countless research papers, a university professor, a book writer, and a businessman.
- The development of the methodology and practice of opinion research and the formation of generations of pollsters worldwide, as well as of the network of their professional associations, will probably continue to be remembered well into the future as Gallup's major and lasting contribution to science and culture.

- Compliance with rigorous scientific standards was the primary determinant of his approach to public opinion surveys. Gallup wrote: 'If our work is not scientific, then no one in the field of social science, and few of those in the natural sciences, have a right to use the word.'<sup>103</sup> It was in great measure owing to his efforts that by the 1950s, scientific soundness and ethical standards were becoming the universal norm in sample surveys.
- Of paramount importance for Gallup throughout his life and work was the allegiance to what he called an open door policy: 'Since the day it was organized, the American Institute of Public Opinion had maintained a policy of providing full information about all of its procedures and operations... Unlike some other occupations, the polling profession has no trade secrets. We have held that the public has every right to know just how we function.'
- Gallup's motivation as a citizen and researcher was nurtured by the pursuit of liberty and democracy – the values which inspired the first pilgrims to leave England for the New World. He believed in direct democracy, and considered it an effective form of public participation in state affairs. Wishing to emphasize the importance of American citizens' ability to see and comprehend what was really happening in the country, Gallup quoted the words of Theodore Roosevelt: 'The majority of plain people of the United States will, day in and day out, make fewer mistakes in governing themselves than any smaller group of men will make in trying to govern them.'
- Gallup was also well aware that democratic procedures and institutions are useless without an educated citizenry - conscious of its rights, ready and capable to defend them. Reminiscing about his school and university years, the 82-year Gallup commented: 'Dealing with problems of education has been the most interesting work I've done. Democracies are effective only when the people are well-informed; almost every country in South America has taken the US Constitution word for word, but many have failed, because their people are not informed.'

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The legacy bequeathed by Gallup has ensured him an indelible place in the history of science, culture, and politics. Decades and centuries will pass, but the scientific study of public opinion and of the dynamics of human attitudes will continue to find important reference points in the work and the writings of George Gallup.