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Political World Mourns Passing of Pollster John Gorman

BOSTON, MA—John Gorman, 57, founder of Opinion Dynamics Corporation (ODC) and lead pollster for the FOX News Channel throughout the most challenging primary season in decades, passed away on Sunday.

Mr. Gorman is considered one of the most talented political minds of his generation. When still a college student, he worked on the successful insurgent campaign of Senator George S. McGovern, the South Dakota Senator and eventual Democratic presidential nominee in 1972. He later played a key role as pollster in President Jimmy Carter's two national campaigns, and provided influential advice to many governors, senators and members of Congress.

Mr. Gorman founded Opinion Dynamics Corporation (ODC), one of the best-known market research firms in the country, in 1987. The firm went on to become a market leader in the public opinion survey research business. He had more than 35 years of experience working on major research projects for presidential candidates, Fortune 500 corporations, and America's leading academic and non-profit institutions.

“We are greatly saddened by the loss of our founder,” said Brad Kates, President of ODC. “John had such an amazing knack for understanding the public and general consumer perceptions long before anyone else had a grasp of these issues. He was one of the forefathers of opinion research, and he mentored many of the current leaders who have made research their career. He was loved by the staff here at ODC, and we will all miss his quick wit, acerbic observations, thoughtfulness, and humility.”

Before founding ODC and while still an undergraduate at Harvard, Mr. Gorman co-founded Cambridge Survey Research (CSR). CSR gained national attention for conducting the survey research that led to early primary wins for Senator McGovern and helped vault the Senator onto a broader public stage. He worked with Senator McGovern throughout his successful campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination that year.

“John was one of the McGovern workers who stands out in the minds of all of us who worked so closely together during that campaign,” noted Senator McGovern, who currently campaigns against world hunger from The McGovern Library at Dakota Wesleyan University in Mitchell, South Dakota. “I’m very sad to learn of his death at all

too young an age. That McGovern army of '72 was one of the most impressive campaign movements in American history, and this dear friend was a memorable part of it."

In 1976 and 1980, Mr. Gorman's CSR handled all polling for the presidential campaigns of Jimmy Carter. In 1976, he also co-authored a seminal piece on voting behavior titled, "What Have You Done for Me Lately? Toward an Investment Theory of Voting."

Mr. Gorman also managed the research and polling for many of Senator John F. Kerry's congressional campaigns.

"John was passionate about politics, always fighting to change things. He broke new ground in terms of political analysis and understood national currents as well as anyone," noted Senator Kerry. "He had a creative, cutting edge approach to issues and the politics that lead to good policies.

"John had an extraordinarily quick, perceptive mind, and never hesitated to tell you what he thought," the Senator added. "This *enfant terrible* of change will be sorely missed."

From 1996 to the present, Mr. Gorman was an integral part of the Election Night Decision Team at the FOX News Channel, where he was responsible for projecting election outcomes in a decade that saw its share of close calls and surprise upsets.

Dana Blanton, Director of Public Opinion Research for FOX News, said of Mr. Gorman, "Especially in the early years when FOX was just getting started, there were times I would literally call John 10 times a day. But no matter how many times I called or how trivial the question, he was always patient and willing to walk me through the issue. I can't imagine doing this without him.

"I'm extremely grateful that John was part of our FOX News coverage of the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary earlier this year -- he really enjoyed being here and working on the election coverage -- making the calls and projections. And of course being here also gave him the opportunity to talk politics and share stories from campaigns he worked on in the past, and he loved that."

Roger Ailes, Chairman and CEO of FOX News Channel, added that Mr. Gorman's numbers "were always right."

"While John's reputation as a brilliant pollster was certainly well deserved and well founded, though, what really differentiated him as a colleague, mentor, and human being was his compassion and generosity for those lucky enough to spend time with him," said Chris Anderson, ODC vice president.

Mr. Gorman served on the board of the Boston Center for the Arts for 12 years, and was chairman of the board there for eight years. While chairman, he led a capital campaign that raised money to repair the infrastructure of the historic Cyclorama.

He was also passionately interested in classical and early music, and served on the Board of Governors of Boston's Handel & Haydn Society for 10 years and was a major supporter of that organization's music program.

Mr. Gorman was born on May 6, 1950 in Rockford, Illinois to Donald E. and Mary Virginia (Doyle) Gorman. He graduated from Boylan Central Catholic High School and Harvard University. He is survived by his mother and four siblings, Mary P. Gorman, Martha A. (Michael) Hogan, Kathleen S. Gorman and James P. (Lynn) Gorman. He is also survived by his nieces and nephews Colleen, Patrick, Erin, Mary Kate, Andrei and Rachael. Mr. Gorman's father died in 1984.

A private funeral service will be held in Mr. Gorman's hometown of Rockford. A public memorial service will be held at a later date in Cambridge, MA. Details will be released as they are confirmed.