

## Opinion Researcher Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann (October 1953)

### Abstract

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Elisabeth Noelle (from 1946: Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann) studied history, philosophy, journalism, and American studies in Munich, Königsberg, and Berlin. In 1937, she received a one-year scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) to attend the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She earned her Ph.D. in Berlin in 1940 with a dissertation based on American publications. Entitled *Amerikanische Massenbefragungen über Politik und Presse* [*American Public Surveys on Politics and the Press*], which like other of her wartime writings, was colored by antisemitic sentiment. Even after the outbreak of war, she was able to obtain the latest American materials for her dissertation thanks to her contacts at the Reich Ministry of Propaganda. During the war, Noelle trained at the newspaper *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* and worked, among other jobs, at *Das Reich*, the weekly newspaper granted special freedoms by Joseph Goebbels. In 1947, Noelle-Neumann and her husband, the journalist Ernst Peter Neumann, founded the Allensbach Institute for Public Opinion Research, which was modeled on the American Gallup Institute; it soon became a leading institution in the field of opinion research. During the 1953 campaign for the Bundestag, the CDU/CSU drew on the professional opinion research services of the Allensbach Institute and decided to run a personalized campaign focused entirely on Adenauer – which ultimately proved successful. Because of the institute's location in Allensbach on Lake Constance, Noelle-Neumann earned the nickname the “Pythia of Lake Constance” in the Bonn Republic.

### Source

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