



Academic Kids Menu

- Art and Cultures
 - Art
 - Architecture
 - Cultures
 - Music
 - Musical Instruments
- Biographies
- Clipart
- Geography
 - Countries of the World
 - Maps
 - Flags
 - Continents
- History
 - Ancient Civilizations
 - Industrial Revolution
 - Middle Ages
 - Prehistory
 - Renaissance
 - Timelines
 - United States
 - Wars
 - World History
- Human Body
- Mathematics
- Reference
- Science
 - Animals
 - Aviation
 - Dinosaurs
 - Earth
 - Inventions
 - Physical Science
 - Plants
 - Scientists
- Social Studies
 - Anthropology

Ronald Reagan

From Academic Kids

Ronald Wilson Reagan

(February 6 1911 – June 5 2004) was the 40th President of the United States (1981–1989) and the 33rd Governor of California (1967–1975). Reagan was also a broadcaster, actor, and head of the Screen Actor's Guild before entering politics.

Early life and career

Reagan was born in Tampico, Illinois, the second of two sons to John

Ronald W. Reagan

<p>Missing image <i>Reagan.jpg</i> Ronald W. Reagan</p>	
Order:	40th President
Vice President:	George H.W. Bush
Term of office:	21 January 1981 – 20 January 1989
Preceded by:	Jimmy Carter
Succeeded by:	George H.W. Bush
Date of birth:	6 February 1911
Place of birth:	Tampico, Illinois
Date of death:	5 June 2004
Place of death:	Bel-Air, California
First Lady:	Nancy Reagan

- Economics
- Government
- Religion
- Holidays
- Space and Astronomy
 - Solar System
 - Planets
- Sports
- Timelines
- Weather
- US States

Information

- Home Page
- Contact Us
- Clip Art

search

Go Search

toolbox

- Special pages

"Jack" Reagan
and Nelle

Political party: [Republican](#)

Wilson. One of his four great-grandfathers had immigrated to the United States from [Ballyporeen, Ireland](#) in the [1860s](#). Prior to his grandfather's emigration, the family name had been spelled *Regan*.

In [1920](#), after years of moving from town to town, the family settled in [Dixon, Illinois](#). In [1921](#), at the age of 10, Reagan was [baptized](#) in his mother's [Disciples of Christ](#) church in Dixon, and in [1924](#) he began attending Dixon's Northside High School. Reagan always considered Dixon to be his home-town.



Ronald and his older brother Neil, with parents Jack and Nelle Reagan. (c. 1916-17)

In [1927](#), at age 16, Reagan took a summer job as a [lifeguard](#) in Lowell Park, two miles away from Dixon on the nearby [Rock River](#). He continued to work as a lifeguard for the next seven years, reportedly saving 77 people from drowning. Reagan would later joke that none of

them ever thanked him.

In [1928](#), Reagan entered [Eureka College](#) in [Eureka, Illinois](#), majoring in [economics](#) and [sociology](#) and graduating in [1932](#). In [1929](#) Ronald Reagan joined Tau Kappa Epsilon Fraternity which he recalled during numerous interviews and conversations later in life as one of the greatest experiences he had during his college years. Though earning mediocre grades, he made many lasting friendships. Reagan developed an early gift for [storytelling](#) and [acting](#). He was a [radio announcer](#) of [Chicago Cubs](#) baseball games, getting only the bare outlines of the game from a ticker and relying on his imagination and storytelling gifts to flesh out the game. Once in [1934](#), during the ninth inning of a Cubs-[St. Louis Cardinals](#)

game, the wire went dead. Reagan smoothly improvised a fictional play-by-play (in which hitters on both teams fouled off pitches) until the wire was restored.

Hollywood

Reagan was popular amongst some audiences, aided by his clear voice and athletic physique; he primarily starred in Hollywood in the leading man roles in B movies. His first screen credit was the starring role in the 1937 movie *Love Is On the Air*. By the end of 1939, he had appeared in 19 films. In 1940 he played the role of George "The Gipper" Gipp in the film *Knute Rockne, All American*, from which he acquired the nickname *the Gipper*, which he retained the rest of his life. Reagan himself considered his best acting work to have been in *Kings Row* (1942). He played the part of a young man whose legs were amputated. He used a line he spoke in this film, "Where's the rest of me?" as the title for his autobiography. Other notable Reagan films include *Hellcats of the Navy*, *This Is the Army*, and *Bedtime for Bonzo*. Reagan was kidded widely about the last named film because his co-star was a chimpanzee. He has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame at 6374 Hollywood Blvd.

Reagan was commissioned as a reserve cavalry officer in the U.S. Army in 1935. After the attack on Pearl Harbor he was activated and assigned, partially due to his poor eyesight, to the First Motion Picture Unit in the United States Army Air Force, which made training and education films. He remained in Hollywood for the duration of the war, and he attained the rank of captain. Reagan tried repeatedly to go overseas for combat



Nancy and Ronald Reagan married in 1952. Nancy Reagan became a powerful background figure in Ronald Reagan's rise and roles as governor and president.

duty, but was turned down because of his astigmatism.

Reagan married actress [Jane Wyman](#) in 1940. They had a daughter, [Maureen](#) in 1941 and adopted a son, [Michael](#) in 1945. Their second daughter, Christine, was born four months prematurely in 1947 and lived only one day. They divorced in 1948. Reagan remarried in 1952 to actress [Nancy Davis](#). Their daughter [Patti](#) was born on [October 21](#) of the same year. In 1958 they had a second child, [Ron](#). Reagan was a loving and devoted husband. One of the most touching speeches he ever made as president was a tribute to his wife.^[1]

As Reagan's film roles became fewer in the late 1950s, he moved into television as a host and frequent performer for *General Electric Theater*. Reagan appeared in many live television plays and often co-starred with Nancy. Reagan became head of the [Screen Actors Guild \(SAG\)](#). In 1952, a Hollywood scandal raged over his granting of a SAG blanket waiver to MCA, which allowed it to both represent and employ talent for its burgeoning TV franchises. He went from host and program supervisor of *General Electric Theater* to actually producing and claiming an equity stake in the TV show itself. At one point in the late 1950s, Reagan was earning approximately \$125,000 per year. His final regular acting job was as host and performer on *Death Valley Days*. Reagan's final big-screen appearance came in the 1964 film *The Killers*, in which, uncharacteristically, he played a mob chieftain. This film was a remake of an earlier version based on a short story by [Ernest Hemingway](#). Reagan's co-stars were [John Cassavetes](#) and [Lee Marvin](#).

Early political career

Ronald Reagan began his political life as a Democrat, supporting [Franklin D. Roosevelt](#) and his [New Deal](#). He gradually became a staunch social and fiscal conservative. He embarked upon the path that led him to a career in politics during his tenure as president of the Screen Actors Guild from 1947 until

1952, and then again from 1959 to 1960. In this position, he testified before the [House Un-American Activities Committee](#) on Communist influence in [Hollywood](#). He also kept tabs on actors he considered disloyal and informed on them to the [FBI](#) under the code name "Agent T-10," but he would not denounce them publicly. He supported the practice of [blacklisting](#) in Hollywood. Concluding that the Republican Party was better able to combat communism, Reagan gradually abandoned his left-of-center political views, supporting the presidential candidacies of [Dwight D. Eisenhower](#) in 1952 and 1956 and [Richard Nixon](#) in 1960—all while Reagan was still a Democrat.

His employment by the [General Electric](#) company further enhanced his political image. By the [1964 election](#), Reagan was an outspoken supporter of conservative Republican [Barry Goldwater](#). His nationally televised speech "[A Time for Choosing](#)" electrified conservatives and led to his being asked to run for Governor of California. To this day, this speech is considered one of the most stirring ever made on behalf of a candidate. Soon after, several top Republican contributors visited Reagan at his home in [Pacific Palisades](#), California, urging him to seek the governorship in 1966. Though these requests were initially "laughed off" by Reagan, he says in his autobiography, he eventually gave in, after countless sleepless nights.

[Governorship](#)

In 1966, he was elected the 33rd [Governor of California](#), defeating two-term incumbent [Pat Brown](#); he was re-elected in 1970, defeating [Jesse Unruh](#), but chose not to seek a third term. During the [People's Park](#) protests, he sent 2,200 National Guard troops into the Berkeley campus of the University of California. Reagan made it clear that the policies of his administration would not be influenced by the student agitators nor their actions tolerated, even "if it takes a bloodbath." When the kidnappers of [Patty Hearst](#)

demanded the distribution of food to the poor, Reagan suggested it would be a good time for an outbreak of [botulism](#).

During his first term, he froze government hiring, but also approved tax hikes to balance the budget. One of Reagan's greatest frustrations in office concerned the [death penalty](#). He had gone on record as a strong supporter. However, his efforts to enforce the state's death penalty law were thwarted when the [Supreme Court of California](#) issued its *People v. Anderson* decision, which invalidated all death sentences passed in California prior to 1972. Although the decision was quickly overturned by a constitutional amendment, there would not be another execution in California until 1992.

During his governorship, Reagan actively dismantled the public [psychiatric hospital](#) system, proposing that a community-based housing and treatment system replace it. According to some Reagan critics, the first objective was effectively accomplished, but the community replacement facilities were never adequately funded, either by Reagan or by his successors. Also, a statewide teachers strike started in [Los Angeles](#) due to disagreements with Reagan's cost-cutting plans.

[Presidential campaigns](#)

Reagan's first attempt to gain the Republican presidential nomination in 1968 was unsuccessful. He tried again in 1976 against the incumbent [Gerald Ford](#), but was narrowly defeated at the Republican Convention. He finally succeeded in gaining the Republican nomination in 1980. The campaign, led by [William J. Casey](#), was conducted in the shadow of the Iran hostage crisis; some analysts believe President [Jimmy Carter](#)'s inability to solve the hostage crisis played a large role to Reagan's victory against him in the 1980 election. Other issues in the campaign included [inflation](#), lackluster economic growth, instability in the petroleum market leading to a return of gas lines, and the perceived weakness of the U.S. national

defense.

Reagan's showing in the [televised debates](#) boosted his campaign. He seemed more at ease, making fun of President Carter with remarks like "There you go again." Perhaps his most influential remark was a closing question to the audience, during a time of skyrocketing global oil prices and highly unpopular [Federal Reserve](#) interest rate hikes, "Are you better off today than you were four years ago?" Many critics also point to the so-called [October Surprise](#) as instrumental in securing Reagan's victory. That the hostages were released just after his taking the oath of office is alleged by some to lend credence to this idea.

The change the White House was accompanied by an [12-seat change](#) in the Senate from Democratic to Republican hands, giving the Republicans a majority in the Senate for the first time in 28 years. Upon his election, Reagan became the oldest president to enter office, at the age of 68.

In the [1984 presidential election](#), he was re-elected in a landslide over Carter's Vice President [Walter Mondale](#), winning 49 of 50 states and receiving nearly 60 percent of the popular vote. At the Democratic National Convention, Mondale accepted the party nomination with a speech that is believed to have constituted a self-inflicted mortal wound. In it he remarked "Reagan will raise taxes, I will raise taxes. Reagan won't tell you this, I just did."^[2] Reagan accepted the Republican nomination in [Dallas, Texas](#), on a wave of good feeling bolstered by the recovering economy and the dominating performance by the U.S. athletes at the [Los Angeles Olympics](#) that summer. Despite a weak performance in the first debate, Reagan recovered in the second and was considerably ahead of Mondale in polls taken throughout much of the race. Reagan's landslide win in the 1984 presidential election is often attributed by political commentators to be a result of his conversion of the so-called "[Reagan Democrats](#)," the traditionally Democratic voters who voted for Reagan in that election.

Presidency

Main article: Reagan Administration

Domestic record

Ronald Reagan portrayed himself as being [conservative](#), [anti-communist](#), in favor of [tax cuts](#) and smaller government. Reagan also liked to think of himself and was thought of by many others as being supportive of [business](#) interests and tough on [crime](#).



Chaos outside the Washington Hilton Hotel after the assassination attempt on President Reagan.

Reagan's first official act upon taking the presidency was to terminate oil price controls, a policy designed to boost America's domestic production and exploration of oil.^[3] Perhaps the high point of the Reagan presidency's first 100 days was the freeing of American hostages in [Tehran](#) at the conclusion of the [Iran hostage crisis](#), within minutes of his inauguration.

While leaving the Hilton Hotel in Washington, DC on [March 30, 1981](#), Reagan, his Press Secretary [James Brady](#), [Secret Service](#) agent Tim McCarthy, and MPDC officer Thomas Delanty were shot by [John Hinckley, Jr.](#). Reagan turned what could have been a low point in his first 100 days into another high point by remarking "I hope you're all Republicans," to his surgeons and "Honey, I forgot to duck" to his wife.^[4] Reagan also said that he forgave Hinckley and hoped he asked God's forgiveness as well.

Missing image

Bush_reagan.jpg

Vice President Bush, right, meets with President Reagan, left, in 1984.

In the summer of 1981 Reagan fired a majority of the nation's [air traffic controllers](#) when they went on [strike](#). This action

proved to be a political coup for Reagan as the

public came to perceive the strikers as greedy and unconcerned with public safety. Not only did this set limits for public employee unions, but also signaled that it was acceptable for businesses to play hardball with unions.

A large focus of Reagan's first term was reviving the [stagflation](#)-troubled economy his administration inherited. His administration sought to fight the high [inflation](#) recession with large across-the-board [tax cuts](#), controversially combined with reductions in social [welfare](#) spending. Reagan's fiscal theories were variously referred to as "[Reaganomics](#)", "[Trickle-down economics](#)", and "[Voodoo Economics](#)". (This final epithet was used by [George H. W. Bush](#) in the [U.S. Presidential election](#) of 1980. Once Bush was offered the position of [Vice President of the United States](#), he immediately halted its use.) The end result was that non-defense public spending as a percentage of the national income, steadily growing in the pre-Reagan era, now folded to a steady level that has stabilized somewhat ever since. Also, if pages added to the [Federal Register](#) each year is used as a gauge of increasing regulations against individual liberty (as [Nobel prize](#) winning economist [Milton Friedman](#) suggests) then Reagan's term indicates a sudden cessation in the diminution of liberty. [5] Also, in order to achieve increases in military spending to fight the [Cold War](#), the administration had to allow increases in spending on social programs, resulting in record [deficit spending](#) and a tripling of the [national debt](#) by the end of his second term. At the same time, inflation which had been 13 percent in 1979 came down to under 4 percent in 1982. Unemployment also dropped from 7.5 percent in the year that Reagan took office to 5.2 percent in the year that he left. Proponents often note that Reagan used his veto on public spending projects 78 times in all.

A renewal of the "[war on drugs](#)" was also declared during his presidency, spearheaded by Nancy Reagan's high-profile "Just Say No" series of messages.

President Reagan was criticized by the [gay](#)

rights movement and others for not responding quickly enough to the HIV-AIDS epidemic. The first official mention of the disease in the White House was on October 15, 1982 when Reagan's press secretary Larry Speakes, in response to a reporter's inquiry about "the gay plague," said "I don't have it, do you?" to general laughter. (It should be noted that AIDS was just beginning to be understood at this time. The term *AIDS* had been coined that year and was not yet widely used--hence the reporter calling it "the gay plague" instead. HIV, the virus which causes AIDS, would not be identified until 1983.) Reagan himself first publicly discussed the federal government's role in fighting the disease at a press conference in 1985. Reagan's policies in regards to AIDS and gay rights became a subject of controversy after his death. Liberals and libertarians pointed out that he had gone on record as supporting sodomy laws, opposing anti-discrimination laws including sexual orientation, and the conservative United States Supreme Court Justices that he appointed would help produce the majority opinion in the 1986 case of *Bowers v. Hardwick*. Yet, after his death, family members and gay conservatives pointed out that he opposed the 1978 California anti-gay Briggs Initiative, In 1984 he had the first openly gay couple spend the night in the White House and taught his children that homosexuality was a normal state of being for some people and considered actor Rock Hudson to be a longtime friend.

Reagan made the abolition of communism and the implementation of supply-side economics the primary focuses of his presidency, but he also took a strong stand against abortion. He published the book *Abortion and the Conscience of a Nation*, which decried what Reagan saw as a disrespect for life, promoted by the practice of abortion. Many conservative activists refer to Reagan as the most pro-life president in history. (However, two of the three Supreme Court justices he selected, Sandra Day O'Connor and Anthony Kennedy, voted to

uphold [Roe v. Wade](#), to Reagan's disappointment.)

Although Reagan's second term was mostly noteworthy for matters related to foreign affairs, his administration supported significant pieces of legislation on domestic matters, including an overhaul of the Internal Revenue Code in 1986, as well as the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 which compensated victims of the Japanese American Internment during [World War II](#). Reagan also signed legislation authorizing the death penalty for offenses involving murder in the context of large-scale drug trafficking; wholesale reinstatement of the federal death penalty would not occur until the presidency of [Bill Clinton](#).

Foreign policy and interventions

Reagan forcefully confronted the [Soviet Union](#), marking a sharp departure from the détente observed by his predecessors [Richard Nixon](#), [Gerald Ford](#), and [Jimmy Carter](#). Sensing that planned economies could not compete against market economies in a renewed [arms race](#), he made the [Cold War](#) economically and rhetorically hot. The administration oversaw a massive military build-up that represented a policy of "Peace through strength." The Reagan administration set a new policy toward the Soviet Union with the goal to win the Cold War through a three-pronged strategy outlined in NSDD-32 (National Security Decisions Directive). The directive outlined Reagan's plan to confront the Soviet Union on three fronts: 1. Economic - decrease Soviet access to high technology and diminish their resources, including depressing the value of Soviet commodities on the world market 2. Military - increase American defense expenditures to strengthen the US negotiating position and force the Soviets to devote more of their economic resources to defense, 3. Clandestine - support anti-Soviet factions around the world from Afghanistan resistance fighters in his early years to Solidarity later in his presidency. Former [Prime Minister](#) of the [United Kingdom](#) [Margaret Thatcher](#) said, "Ronald Reagan won

the cold war without firing a shot."

Others argued, however, that the eventual collapse of the Soviet Union was due more to internal separatist problems, an inherent weakness in communist economic theory, and the depressed global price of crude oil, on which the Soviet economy during those years depended heavily. Lech Walesa, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Pope John Paul II, Boris Yeltsin and, of course, Mikhail Gorbachev also played significant roles in the dissolution of the Soviet bloc.



President Reagan and Margaret Thatcher at Camp David.

Among European leaders, his main ally and undoubtedly his closest friend was Thatcher, who as Prime Minister of the United Kingdom supported Reagan's policies of deterrence against the Soviets.

Although the



Reagan, left, in one-on-one discussions with Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the USSR from 1985 to 1991.

administration negotiated arms-reduction treaties such as the INF Treaty and START Treaty with the USSR, it also aimed to increase strategic defense. A controversial plan, named the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), was proposed to deploy a space-based defense system that was supposed to make the U.S. invulnerable to nuclear weapon

missile attack by means of a network of armed satellites orbiting the earth. Critics dubbed the proposal "Star Wars" and argued that SDI was unrealistic and would likely inflame the [Arms Race](#). Supporters responded that even the threat of SDI forced the Soviets into unsustainable spending to keep up. In fact, the Soviets did not attempt to follow suit with their own program, but instead followed a program of arms reduction treaties. The technology required to implement SDI is still being researched in the United States, but remains elusive.

Support for anti-communist groups including armed insurgencies against [communist](#) governments was also a part of administration policy, referred to by his supporters as the [Reagan Doctrine](#). Following this policy, the administration funded "[freedom fighters](#)"—described as terrorists by their detractors—such as the [mujahideen](#) in [Afghanistan](#), the [Contras](#) in [Nicaragua](#), and [Jonas Savimbi's](#) rebel forces in [Angola](#). The administration also helped fund central [European](#) anti-communist groups such as the [Polish Solidarity](#) movement and took a hard line against the Communist regime in [Cambodia](#). Covert funding of the [Contras](#) in [Nicaragua](#) would lead to the [Iran Contra Affair](#), while overt support led to a [World Court](#) ruling against the United States in [*Nicaragua v. United States*](#).

The administration considered groups resisting Israeli [occupations](#), such as [Hezbollah](#) guerrillas in [Lebanon](#), [Palestinian](#) guerrillas in the [West Bank](#) and [Gaza Strip](#), and left-wing [guerrillas](#) fighting US-backed right-wing [military dictatorships](#) in [Honduras](#) and [El Salvador](#) to be [terrorists](#). The Reagan administration also considered guerrillas of the [ANC's](#) armed wing [Umkhonto we Sizwe](#) (MK or Spear of the Nation) and other anti-apartheid militants (e.g. the [PAC](#)) fighting the [apartheid](#) government in [South Africa](#) to be [terrorists](#).

U.S. involvement in [Lebanon](#) followed a limited term [United Nations](#) mandate for a Multinational Force. A force of 800 U.S. Marines was sent to [Beirut](#) to evacuate [PLO](#)

forces. The [September 16, 1982](#) massacre of hundreds of [Palestinian](#) civilians in Beirut (see [Sabra and Shatila Massacre](#)) prompted Reagan to form a new multinational force. Intense administration diplomatic efforts resulted in a peace agreement between Lebanon and [Israel](#). U.S. forces were withdrawn shortly after the [October 23, 1983](#) bombing of a barracks in which 241 Marines were killed. Reagan called this day the saddest day of his life and of his presidency.

A communist [coup](#) on the small island nation of [Grenada](#) in 1983 led the administration to develop an invasion plan to restore the former government. The resulting [Operation Urgent Fury](#) was successful.

Initially neutral, the administration increasingly became involved in the [Iran-Iraq War](#). At various times, the administration supported both nations, but mainly sided with [Iraq](#), believing that Iraqi President [Saddam Hussein](#) was less dangerous than [Iranian](#) leader [Ayatollah Khomeini](#). The American fear was that an Iranian victory would embolden Islamic fundamentalists in other Arab states, perhaps leading to the overthrow of secular governments in [Saudi Arabia](#), [Jordan](#), and [Kuwait](#). After initial Iraqi military victories were reversed and an Iranian victory appeared possible in 1982, the American government initiated Operation Staunch to attempt to cut off the Iranian regime's access to weapons (notwithstanding their later shipment of weapons to Iran in the [Iran-Contra Affair](#)). The United States also provided intelligence information and financial assistance to the Iraqi military regime. The Administration also allowed the shipment of some chemical, biological and "dual use" materials, which Iraq claimed were required for agriculture, medical research, and other civilian purposes, but which were diverted to use in Saddam's [weapons of mass destruction](#) programs[6], although most Iraqi weaponry was supplied by [Germany](#), [Britain](#), [France](#) and the [USSR](#).

Concurrent with the support of Iraq, the Administration also engaged in covert arms

sales to Iran in order to fund Contra rebels in Nicaragua. The resulting [Iran-Contra Affair](#) became a scandal. Reagan professed ignorance of the plot's existence and quickly called for an [Independent Counsel](#) to investigate the scandal. The President was eventually found to be culpable of lax control over his own staff. A significant number of officials in the Reagan Administration were either convicted or forced to resign as a result of the scandal.

In [1985](#), on an official visit to [West Germany](#), Reagan laid a wreath at a cemetery where approximately 50 [SS](#) soldiers were buried along with many German regular army veterans of both World Wars. This visit incited a great deal of controversy; see [Bitburg](#) for more details concerning the visit.

"The Great Communicator"

Reagan was dubbed "The Great Communicator" for his ability to express ideas and emotions in an almost personal manner, even when making a formal address.

He honed these skills as an actor, live television and radio host, and politician, and as president hired skilled speechwriters who could capture his folksy charm.

Reagan's rhetorical style varied. He used strong, even bombastic language to condemn the Soviet Union and communism, particularly during his first term.

But he could also evoke lofty ideals and a vision of the United States as a defender of liberty. His [October 27, 1964](#) speech entitled "A Time for Choosing" introduced the phrase "rendezvous with destiny" to popular culture.^[7] Other speeches recalled America as the "shining city on a hill", "big-hearted, idealistic, daring, decent, and fair," whose citizens had the "right to dream heroic dreams." ^{[8][9]}

Missing image

ReaganBerlinWall.jpg

Speaking in front of the [Berlin Wall](#) on [June 12, 1987](#) Ronald Reagan challenged reformist Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, exclaiming: "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

On January 28, 1986, after the Challenger accident, he postponed his State of the Union address and addressed the nation on the disaster. In a speech written by Peggy Noonan he said, "We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved good-bye and 'slipped the surly bonds of earth' to 'touch the face of God.'" [10] (The quote within Reagan's quote is from the poem "High Flight" by John Gillespie Magee.)

It was perhaps Reagan's humor, especially his one-liners, that disarmed his opponents and endeared him to audiences the most. Discussion of his advanced age led him to quip in his first debate against Walter Mondale during the 1984 campaign, "I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience." On his career he joked "Politics is not a bad profession. If you succeed there are many rewards, if you disgrace yourself you can always write a book."

Both opponents and supporters noted his "sunny optimism", which was welcomed by many in comparison to his Presidential predecessor - the often smiling, but somewhat dour and serious, Carter.

Despite his persona, he was often at odds with Vice President, George H.W Bush who often criticized Reagan's supply-side economic theories, to which he referred to as "voodoo economics". This comment would forever damage relations between the Reagan and Bush families as the former often did not invite the latter to their house.

"The Great Prevaricator" and other criticisms

A frequent objection by his critics, however, was that his personal charm also permitted him to say nearly anything and yet prevail, a quality that earned him the nickname "the Teflon president" (i.e., to whom nothing sticks). His denial of awareness of the Iran-Contra illegalities was belied by quotations in now-

archived notes by his defense secretary, [Casper Weinberger](#), that he (Reagan) could survive violating the law or Constitution, but not the negative public image that "big, strong Ronald Reagan passed up a chance to get the hostages free." However, in the almost twenty years since the Iran-Contra affair, no "smoking gun" has yet been revealed to show that he in fact did know about trading arms for hostages. Reagan-era papers were originally scheduled to be released starting in 2001, but President [George W. Bush](#) enacted a rule change to allow these to be withheld indefinitely. Reagan was also faulted for considering Nelson Mandela a terrorist. His fiscal and tax policies were said by some to have increased social inequality and economic instability. His efforts to cut benefits and raise payroll taxes, which primarily impact middle and lower income workers, while lowering income taxes, which primarily impact upper income workers, were a common flashpoint of criticism. The, at that time, unprecedented growth of the national debt during his presidency sparked charges of endangering the economic health of the nation.

Residents of [Western European](#) countries often saw Reagan very differently from many Americans. In the [United Kingdom](#), Reagan – though he had the strong support of [Margaret Thatcher](#) – was routinely lampooned by the media and public as being dim-witted, if not senile. This was fueled by certain real-life incidents, including a [London](#) speaking engagement in which he forgot the name of [Diana, Princess of Wales](#) and after some hesitation referred to her as 'Princess David', to widespread embarrassment. In the nations of [Eastern Europe](#), however, Reagan enjoyed a good deal of popularity among residents (though not their governments) for his harsh criticism of communism, and has been praised extensively for his role in ending the Cold War [11].

Appointments

Cabinet



President Reagan, with his Cabinet and staff, in the Oval Office (Feb. 4, 1981)

OFFICE	NAME	TERM
President	Ronald Reagan	1981– 1989
Vice President	George H. W. Bush	1981– 1989
State	Alexander M. Haig	1981– 1982
	George P. Shultz	1982– 1989
Treasury	Donald Regan	1981– 1985
	James A. Baker III	1985– 1988
	Nicholas F. Brady	1988– 1989
Defense	Casper Weinberger	1981– 1987
	Frank C. Carlucci	1987– 1989
Justice	William F. Smith	1981– 1985
	Edwin A. Meese III	1985– 1988
	Richard L. Thornburgh	1988– 1989
Interior	James G. Watt	1981– 1983
	William P. Clark, Jr.	1983– 1985
	Donald P. Hodel	1985– 1989

Commerce	Malcolm Baldrige	1981– 1987
	C. William Verity, Jr.	1987– 1989
Labor	Raymond J. Donovan	1981– 1985
	William E. Brock	1985– 1987
	Ann Dore McLaughlin	1987– 1989
	John Block	1981– 1986
Agriculture	Richard E. Lyng	1986– 1989
	Richard S. Schweiker	1981– 1983
HHS	Margaret Heckler	1983– 1985
	Otis R. Bowen	1985– 1989
	Terrell H. Bell	1981– 1984
Education	William J. Bennett	1985– 1988
	Lauro F. Cavazos	1988– 1989
	Samuel R. Pierce, Jr.	1981– 1989
HUD	Drew Lewis	1981– 1982
Transportation	Elizabeth Hanford Dole	1983– 1987
	James H. Burnley IV	1987– 1989
	James B. Edwards	1981– 1982
	Donald P. Hodel	1982– 1985
	John S. Herrington	1985– 1989
Energy		

Supreme Court appointments

Reagan appointed the following Justices to the

Supreme Court of the United States :

- Sandra Day O'Connor – 1981
- William Rehnquist – Chief Justice, 1986 (an associate justice since 1972)
- Antonin Scalia – 1986
- Anthony M. Kennedy – 1988

Major legislation approved

- Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981
- Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982
- Social Security Amendments of 1983
- Tax Reform Act of 1986
- Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986

Christian faith

Reagan had a strong Christian faith from his childhood, and frequently addressed Christian groups. He argued that [communism's](#) enforced atheism was one of its worst features.

In a March 1978 letter to a [liberal Methodist](#) minister who was skeptical about [Christ's divinity](#)—and accused Reagan of a "limited Sunday school level theology"—Reagan argued strongly for Christ's divinity:

Perhaps it is true that Jesus never used the word "Messiah" with regard to himself (although I'm not sure that he didn't) but in John 1, 10 and 14 he identifies himself pretty definitely and more than once. Is there really any ambiguity in his words: "I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me?"... In John 10 he says, "I am in the Father and the Father in me." And he makes reference to being with God, "before the world was," and sitting on the "right hand of God."...

These and other statements he made about himself, foreclose in my opinion, any question as to his divinity. It doesn't seem to me that he gave us any choice; either he was what he said he was or he was the world's greatest liar."

It is impossible for me to believe a liar or charlatan could have had the effect on mankind that he has had for 2000 years. We could ask, would even the greatest of liars carry his lie through the crucifixion, when a simple confession would have saved him? ... Did he allow us the choice you say that you and others have made, to believe in his teachings but reject his statements about his own identity?"

This was similar to the "Trilemma" argument of C.S. Lewis.

Legacy and retirement from public life

On [January 11 1989](#), Ronald Reagan addressed the nation one last time on television from the Oval Office of the White House, nine days before handing over the presidency to [George H. W. Bush](#). After the inauguration, Reagan returned to California, to write his autobiography, ride his horses, and chop wood on his ranch, and to a new house in [Bel-Air](#). As of 2005, Reagan is one of only three presidents to serve two full terms since the adoption of the [22nd Amendment](#) in 1951 (The others are [Dwight Eisenhower](#) and [Bill Clinton](#)).

Reagan received an honorary knighthood, as a Knight Grand Cross of the [Order of the Bath](#), and thus was entitled to use the postnominal GCB, but he is almost never styled this way. Reagan and [George H. W. Bush](#) are the only two American presidents to receive honorary knighthood.

In fall, Fujisankei Communications Group of [Japan](#) hired him to make two speeches and attend some ceremonies. Reagan's weekly fee was about two million dollars, more than he had earned during eight years as president. Reagan made occasional appearances on behalf of the Republican party, including a well-received speech at the [1992 Republican National Convention](#). He publicly spoke out in favor of a [line-item veto](#), a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget, and

repealing the Twenty-second Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which prohibits a president from serving more than two terms.

In 1994, Reagan was officially diagnosed with [Alzheimer's disease](#). He informed the nation of his condition on [November 5 1994](#) with a hand-written letter, which displayed his trademark optimism, stating in conclusion: "I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life. I know that for America there will always be a bright dawn ahead. Thank you, my friends. May God always bless you." As the years went on, the disease slowly destroyed his mental capacity, forcing him to live in quiet isolation.

On [February 6, 1998](#), Washington National Airport was renamed [Ronald Reagan National Airport](#) by a bill signed into law by President [Bill Clinton](#). Three years later, on [March 4 2001](#), the [USS Ronald Reagan \(CVN-76\)](#) was christened by the Navy. It is one of few ships christened in honor of a living person and the first to be named in honor of a living former president. Many other highways, schools and institutions were also named after Reagan in the years after his retirement and death. (See [List of things named after Ronald Reagan](#)).

Reagan's health was further destabilized by a fall in 2001, which shattered part of his hip and

Missing image

FordNixonBushReagenCa

(Left to right:) Presidents [Gerald Ford](#), [Richard Nixon](#), [George H. W. Bush](#), **[Ronald Reagan](#)**, and [Jimmy Carter](#) at the dedication of the Reagan Presidential Library.



Five presidents and first ladies attended the funeral of [Richard Nixon](#) on [April 27, 1994](#), in Nixon's hometown of [Yorba Linda, California](#). From left: [Bill and Hillary Clinton](#), [George H.W. and Barbara Bush](#), **[Ronald and Nancy Reagan](#)**, [Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter](#), [Gerald and Betty Ford](#).

rendered him virtually immobile. By 2004, Reagan had begun to enter the final stage of Alzheimer's. It is frequently reported that Secret Service agents had to inform Reagan every morning that he was once the president.

Job approval rating

According to ABC News by date:

Time	Approval	Disapproval	Event
April 22, 1981	73%	19	Shot by Hinckley
January 22, 1983	42	54	High unemployment
April 26, 1986	70	26	Libya bombing
February 26, 1987	44	51	Iran-Contra
Career average	57	39	Presidency of Ronald Reagan
July 30, 2001	66	27	(retrospective)

Upon leaving office in 1989, Reagan had an astronomical [end-of-presidency job approval rating](#) of 64 percent. This would not be matched until 2001, when Clinton left office with 65 percent job approval.

Death

Main article: [Death and state funeral of Ronald Reagan](#)

In 2003, Reagan's death was incorrectly announced by [CNN](#) when his pre-written obituary (along with those of several other famous figures) was inadvertently published on CNN's web site due to a lapse in password protection.

Reagan died on [June 5, 2004](#) at his home in [Bel-Air](#) and is buried at his [presidential library](#).

Reagan holds the record as the longest lived U.S. president, at 93 years and 120 days. Since Reagan's death, [Gerald Ford](#) is now the oldest surviving president at 91, and if he lives until [November 11, 2006](#), he will hold the new record. Reagan also holds the record as the

oldest-elected president at 69 and oldest president to serve at 77.

Most fascinating person

In 2005, CNN, along with the editors at *Time*, compiled a list of the 25 most fascinating people during the network's first 25 years.

In a broadcast on May 14, [12] Bill Hemmer, then a CNN anchor, counted down the list and before each commercial break, gave hints as to who would get the honor of number one. As the broadcast progressed, it became evident that Reagan would get that honor, based on his tips. Indeed, Reagan received the honor of number one. [13] "A final win for the Gipper," was how Hemmer concluded the broadcast.

History Clipart and Pictures

- [Pictures of the US Presidents](#)
- [Clipart of American Presidents](#)
- [Historical Pictures of the United States](#)
- [Pictures of the American Revolution](#)
- [Civil Rights Pictures](#)
- [Civil War Images](#)
- [Pictures of Colonial America](#)
- [Historical US Illustrations](#)
- [World War II Pictures](#)
- [Pictures of Historical People](#)

Further reading

- Reed Brody. *Contra Terror in Nicaragua*. South End Press. 1985. ISBN 0896083136.
- Dinesh D'Souza. *Ronald Reagan: How An Ordinary Man Became An Extraordinary Leader*. Free Press. 1999. ISBN 0684848236
- Curt Gentry. *Last Days of the Late Great State of California*, (political history of the gubernatorial period).
- Edmund Morris. *Dutch*, the "authorized" biography which became controversial over a number of acknowledged fictitious interpolations by the author
- Frances Fitzgerald. *Way Out There in the Blue: Reagan, Star Wars and the End of the*

- *Cold War*. Touchstone. (political history of Reagan's S.D.I.) 2000. ISBN 0684844168.
- Lou Cannon. *President Reagan: The Role of a Lifetime* Public Affairs. ISBN 1891620916
- Lou Cannon. *Governor Reagan: His Rise To Power* Public Affairs. ISBN 1586480308
- Lou Cannon. *Ronald Reagan: The Presidential Portfolio*. Public Affairs. ISBN 1891620843
- Michael Deaver and Mickey Herskowitz. *Behind the Scenes*. William Morrow. 1987.
- Elizabeth Drew. *Campaign Journal: The Political Events of 1981-1984*. Macmillan. 1985.
- Marlin FitzWater. *Call the Briefing! Bush and Reagan, Sam and Helen, a Decade with Presidents and the Press*. Times Books 1995.
- Jack W. Germond and Jules Witcover. *Blue Smoke & Mirrors: How Reagan Won & Why Carter Lost the Election of 1980*. Viking Press. 1981.
- Peter Schweizer. *Victory: The Reagan Administration's Secret Strategy That Hastened the Collapse of the Soviet Union*. Atlantic Monthly Press. 1996. ISBN 0871136333
- Gary Sick. *October Surprise: America's Hostages in Iran and the Election of Ronald Reagan*. New York: Random House. 1992.
- Alan Moore Bill Sienkiewicz, Martha Honey, Tony Avirgan. *Brought to Light: Shadowplay : The Secret Team/Flashpoint: The LA Penca Bombing (Two Books in One)* ISBN 091303567X
- Marc Green and Gail MacColl. *Reagan's Reign of Error* ISBN 0-394-75644-4 (a compendium of reversals and inaccuracies). 1983, 1987.
- Paul Kengor. *God and Ronald Reagan : A Spiritual Life* Regan Books, 2004. ISBN 0060571411.

Reagan documentaries

- *Ronald Reagan - An American President*

(The Official Reagan Library Tribute),
January 25, 2005.

- *Great Speeches*, October 19, 2004.
- *Stand Up Reagan*, September 7, 2004.
- *NBC News Presents - Ronald Reagan*, August 10, 2004.
- *ABC News Presents Ronald Reagan - An American Legend*, July 13, 2004.
- *Ronald Reagan - His Life and Legacy*, June 22, 2004.
- *Ronald Reagan - His Life and Times*, May 11, 2004.
- *Ronald Reagan - A Legacy Remembered (History Channel)*, 2002
- *Ronald Reagan - The Great Communicator*, 2002.
- *Salute to Reagan - A President's Greatest Moments*, 2001.
- *American Experience - Reagan*, 1998.
- *Tribute to Ronald Reagan*, 1996.

See also

- Republican Senatorial Medal of Freedom
- October Surprise
- Reagan administration
- USS *Ronald Reagan* (CVN-76)
- Death and state funeral of Ronald Reagan

External links

Biographical information

- [RonaldReagan.com - The Official Site](#)
- [Template:Imdb name](#)
- [Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Foundation](#)
- [Ronald Reagan Legacy Project](#)
- [Ronald Reagan Memorial Foundation](#)
- [Ronald and Nancy Reagan Marriage Profile](#)

Videos

- [Kudlow & Company - Short clip with Ronald Reagan on government spending](#)
- [A GE Tribute to Ronald Reagan](#)

News items

- [Public Domain video in Quicktime of CNN reporting attempted assassination of President Reagan \(Courtesy of CNN.com\)](#)

Speeches

- [Reagan 2020 - numerous speeches collected](#)
- [Audio recordings of Reagan's speeches](#)
- [Profile, Portrait and Inaugural Addresses as California Governor](#)

Preceded by: Pat Brown	Governor of California 1967–1975	Succeeded by: Jerry Brown
Preceded by: Gerald Ford	Republican Party Presidential candidate 1980 (won), 1984 (won)	Succeeded by: George H. W. Bush
		Succeeded by: George H. W. Bush Template:End box

Preceded
by:
**Jimmy
Carter**

**President
of the
United
States**
20 January ,
1981–20
January ,
1989

**Presidents
of the
United
States of
America**



Washington |
J. Adams |
Jefferson |
Madison |
Monroe |
J.Q. Adams |
Jackson |
Van Buren |
W.H. Harrison
| Tyler | Polk |
Taylor |
Fillmore |
Pierce |
Buchanan |
Lincoln |
A. Johnson |
Grant | Hayes |
Garfield |
Arthur |
Cleveland |
B. Harrison |
Cleveland |
McKinley |
T. Roosevelt |
Taft | Wilson |
Harding |
Coolidge |
Hoover |
F.D. Roosevelt
| Truman |
Eisenhower |
Kennedy |
L.B. Johnson |
Nixon | Ford |
Carter |
Reagan |
G.H.W. Bush |
Clinton |
G.W. Bush

**Vice
Presidents of
the United
States of
America**

[Adams](#) | [Jefferson](#)
 | [Burr](#) | [Clinton](#) |
[Gerry](#) | [Tompkins](#)
 | [Calhoun](#) | [Van](#)
[Buren](#) | [R.](#)
[Johnson](#) | [Tyler](#) |
[Dallas](#) | [Fillmore](#) |
[King](#) |
[Breckinridge](#) |
[Hamlin](#) | [A.](#)
[Johnson](#) | [Colfax](#) |
[Wilson](#) | [Wheeler](#) |
[Arthur](#) | [Hendricks](#)
 | [Morton](#) |
[Stevenson](#) |
[Hobart](#) |
[Roosevelt](#) |
[Fairbanks](#) |
[Sherman](#) |
[Marshall](#) |



[Coolidge](#) | [Dawes](#)
 | [Curtis](#) | [Garner](#) |
[Wallace](#) | [Truman](#)
 |
[Barkley](#) | [Nixon](#) |
[L. Johnson](#) |
[Humphrey](#) |
[Agnew](#) | [Ford](#) |
[Rockefeller](#) |
[Mondale](#) | [Bush](#) |
[Quayle](#) | [Gore](#) |
[Cheney](#)

This page was last modified 03:00, 27 Mar 2008.

[About Academic Kids](#)

6 times.

Early Life and Career ĩ–Mathers was born in Saint Joseph, Missouri and spent most of his
 Other Works and Ventures ĩ– Eminem made his Hollywood acting debut with the semi-au
 songs for the soundtrack, including "Lose Yourself," which won Eminem an Academy Awa
 web cartoon called "The Slim Shady Show", which has since been pulled offline and is ins
 Hannah Simpson Grant. This article lends itself to the story of this future general's ancest
 Grant was born in Point Pleasant, Ohio and he was educated in both private and public sc
 as a Methodist, but uncommon for his time, he was not baptized or forced to attend churc
 August 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii to Barack Obama, Sr. (1936â€"1982) (born in Oriang'
 Ann (1942â€"1995) (born in Wichita, Kansas, United States). Barack Obama spent most of
 Hawaii at Manoa. Obama started a close relationship with his maternal grandparents. In 1
 milestones in an individualâ€™s life and career is the transition from school to work. Much
 work they perform and the occupations they choose. Early psychological theories examin
 income, to the process by which a child becomes an adult. One of the most influential of t
 must pass through eight stages, each with its attendant requi

t Joseph and Detroit, Michigan.
 02. He recorded several new
 he Crank Yankers show and a
 son of Jesse Root Grant and
 d States army from 1822 to 1861.
 an avid reader. Grant was raised
 e United States, was born on
 d Stanley Ann Dunham, known as
 other attended the University of
 e. One of the most important
 to understand who they are by the
 red by hierarchical rank and
 no proposed that an individual