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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ronald W. Reagan</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Order:</strong></td>
<td>40th President</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Vice President:</strong></td>
<td>George H.W. Bush</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Term of office:</strong></td>
<td>21 January 1981 – 20 January 1989</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Preceded by:</strong></td>
<td>Jimmy Carter</td>
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<td><strong>Succeeded by:</strong></td>
<td>George H.W. Bush</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date of birth:</strong></td>
<td>6 February 1911</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Place of birth:</strong></td>
<td>Tampico, Illinois</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Date of death:</strong></td>
<td>5 June 2004</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Place of death:</strong></td>
<td>Bel-Air, California</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>First Lady:</strong></td>
<td>Nancy Reagan</td>
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“Jack” Reagan and Nelle 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.

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
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.
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.

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. 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. Reagan also said that he forgave Hinckley and hoped he asked God's forgiveness as well.

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.

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 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]
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 illegals 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)

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<td>Donald P. Hodel</td>
<td>1982–1985</td>
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**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

- 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
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:

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

- 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*


Marlin FitzWater. Call the Briefing! Bush and Reagan, Sam and Helen, a Decade with Presidents and the Press. Times Books 1995.


Reagan documentaries

Ronald Reagan - An American President
- Ronald Reagan - A Legacy Remembered (History Channel), 2002

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

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Succeeded by: George H. W. Bush
Template:End box
### Presidents of the United States of America

#### Preceded by:
**Jimmy Carter**

- 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
Mathers was born in Saint Joseph, Missouri and spent most of his childhood moving back and forth between Saint Joseph and Detroit, Michigan.

Eminem made his Hollywood acting debut with the semi-autobiographical 8 Mile, released in November 2002. He recorded several new songs for the soundtrack, including "Lose Yourself," which won Eminem an Academy Award for Best Original Song. He has also lent his voice to the Crank Yankers show and a web cartoon called "The Slim Shady Show," which has since been pulled offline and is instead sold online.

Ulysses S. Grant was the first born son of Jesse Root Grant and Hannah Simpson Grant. This article lends itself to the story of this future general's ancestry, birth, and early career in and out of the United States army from 1822 to 1861. Grant was born in Point Pleasant, Ohio and he was educated in both private and public schools. Although he was raised as a Methodist, he was baptized or forced to attend church as a child. Grant was born into a family of wealth and privilege, and his father was a prominent businessman and landowner.

Barack Obama, the 44th president of the United States, was born on August 4, 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii to Barack Obama, Sr. (1936–1982) (born in Rachuonyo North District, Kenya) and Stanley Ann Dunham, known as Ann (1942–1995) (born in Wichita, Kansas, United States). Barack Obama spent most of his childhood years in Honolulu, where his mother attended the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Obama started a close relationship with his maternal grandparents. In 1965, his mother remarried to Early Career Stage. One of the most important milestones in an individualâ€™s life and career is the transition from school to work. Much of the work they perform and the occupations they choose. Early psychological theories examined the importance of work, especially as measured by hierarchical rank and income, to the process by which a child becomes an adult. One of the most influential of these models was developed by Erik Erikson, who proposed that an individual must pass through eight stages, each with its attendant require...