

A Political Adventure Filled with Stories,  
Photos, Speeches, Cartoons, and Trivia

# Democrat's

# *Soul*



A Tried-and-True View of Everything Blue



# Introduction

**P**olitics. The word alone evokes a vast array of emotions. In the context of our lives, politics conjures up imagery, memories, opinions, and heated debates, and the word “politics”—in and of itself—can’t help but be extremely personal.

For many, making a party affiliation (no matter the party) can be one of the most defining and memorable moments of one’s life. Your own political beliefs are a testament to your character, igniting your passions, strengthening your convictions, and exemplifying what you hold most dear and true in your heart. In *Democrat’s Soul*, we set out on a journey to explore the personal significance that being a Democrat has on one’s own history, development, ideologies, relationships, and so much more.

*Democrat’s Soul* is not only an exploration, but a commemoration of the nostalgia and pride each party member has for its founders, its fighters, and its future. And what you’ll find throughout these pages encapsulates good old Democrat zeal with compelling first-person stories from fellow Democrats, wit and wisdom from some of your favorite leaders, historical tidbits, and photos that illustrate the pivotal moments in Democrat history. Along the way, you’ll laugh at clever cartoons, reminisce while reading excerpts from inspiring Democrat speeches, and test your political knowledge with trivia and must-know facts.

All in all, this political pick-me-up will entertain, educate, and inspire you and give you a tried-and-true view of everything blue.

# WHO SAID IT?



It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government to their own selfish purposes.

—Andrew Jackson

It is the responsibility of the citizens to support their government. It is not the responsibility of the government to support its citizens.

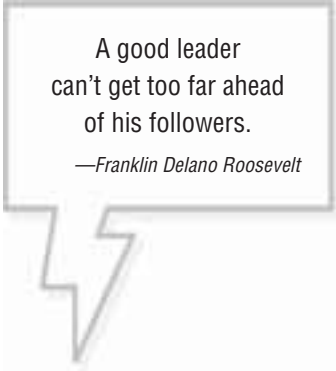
—Grover Cleveland

We need a spirit of community, a sense that we are all in this together. If we have no sense of community, the American dream will wither.

—William Clinton

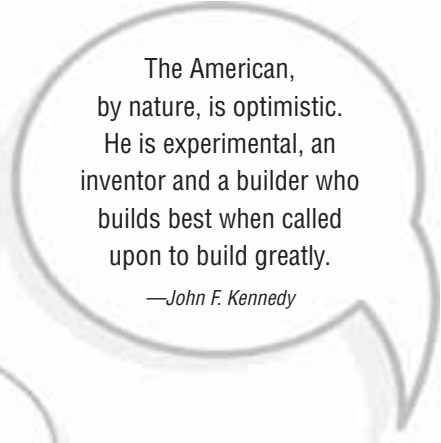
You cannot stop the spread of an idea by passing a law against it.

—Harry S. Truman



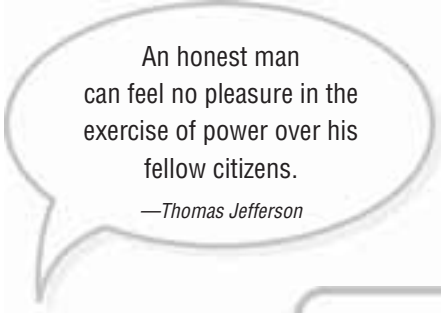
A good leader  
can't get too far ahead  
of his followers.

—Franklin Delano Roosevelt



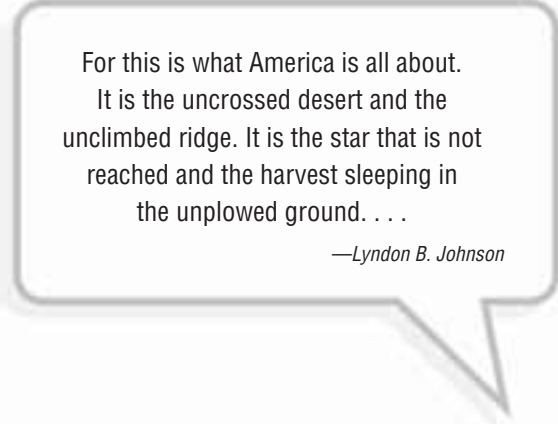
The American,  
by nature, is optimistic.  
He is experimental, an  
inventor and a builder who  
builds best when called  
upon to build greatly.

—John F. Kennedy



An honest man  
can feel no pleasure in the  
exercise of power over his  
fellow citizens.

—Thomas Jefferson



For this is what America is all about.  
It is the uncrossed desert and the  
unclimbed ridge. It is the star that is not  
reached and the harvest sleeping in  
the unplowed ground. . . .

—Lyndon B. Johnson



## Every Vote Counts

He was honest.

He cared about the community.

He had good ideas.

He was my neighbor, Tony, and he was running for town council. It was 1975. I was in high school, Richard Nixon had just resigned, and the Vietnam War was coming to a close. America was changing, and my neighbor, Tony, was going to help make things better.

Tony was in his early thirties. He lived in the split-level ranch next door with his wife and their two small children. One of my sisters baby-sat for the kids; I raked their yard. Tony was excited about becoming a member of the town council. He was running against a long-time incumbent, and he wasn't supposed to have a chance. Everyone but Tony knew that he couldn't win.

I remember the night Tony announced his candidacy to my parents. We sat on my parents' back porch as Tony pleaded his case.

"This town needs change," he told them, "we need to be represented."

And he was right. We lived in a small new development in rural northeastern Connecticut. The development and its residents were markedly different from the farms and farmers surrounding it. The needs of the commuting suburbanites were very different from those of the more entrenched farmers. The suburbanites required more services from the town, and the political landscape was changing.

"Do I have your vote?" Tony finally asked my mom and dad.

Without hesitation my father answered, "We don't vote."

Tony was flabbergasted. “Never?” he asked. “You’ve never voted?” They hadn’t, and my dad made it clear that they weren’t about to start now. Tony looked to my mother for help. She shook her head.

Over and again, Tony asked my parents why they didn’t vote, and the answer was always the same: it didn’t matter. They didn’t believe their votes would make a difference.

Tony spent the next half hour trying to convince my parents to register to vote. He talked about civic duty, about responsibility to the community, and about making the town better for their children. Tony talked until my parents were out of polite patience. Finally, Tony made a personal appeal.

“Will you do it for me? Will you do it just to help your neighbor?” They politely refused. Tony finally gave up.

Tony ran a great grass roots campaign. He walked door to door and talked to everyone who would listen. He was honest, he cared about the community, and he had good ideas. With each passing day, Tony closed the gap on the long-time incumbent.

In the final days before the election, Tony tried repeatedly to convince my parents to vote. I remember him telling them, “This is going to be a very close election; I’m going to need every vote.” Mom and Dad were unmoved.

You’ve probably figured out the end of this story. After all, it is pretty predictable. Tony lost by a single vote. Had my parents voted for him, he would have won by a single vote. Things were never the same between Tony and my parents. I never saw them speak again. About six months after the election, Tony put his house up for sale. It sold quickly, and Tony and his family moved away less than a year after the election.

My parents never considered Tony's defeat their fault. They often discussed it, but only with each other. It always seemed to me that they just couldn't admit, even to themselves, that they were wrong about their votes not counting. My parents never did register to vote. My mother passed several years ago; she lived her whole life without ever casting a vote. Dad is nearly eighty, and has no intention of ever voting, either.

The incident had a lasting effect on me. I registered to vote the day I was eligible, and I've voted in every election—major and minor—since then. Even when I was in the service and far from home, I voted in every election. My sisters mailed information to me about the issues and candidates, and I cast absentee ballots. I voted in several presidential elections this way. Both of my sisters were similarly affected. They, too, vote in every election.

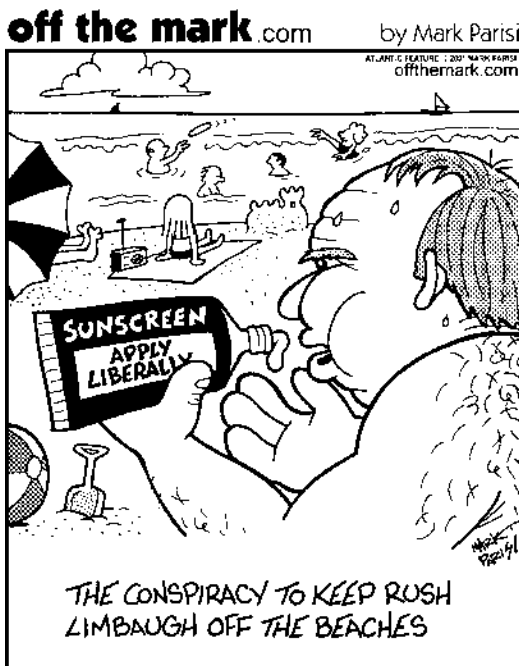
And the best part is: my children have learned the lesson, too. All three of my daughters vote-in every election. We live in Florida, and we were here for the Florida 2000 election debacle. My entire family—except for my youngest daughter, who was too young to vote then—voted in that election. We watched the election night results together until the wee hours of the morning. Like many others, we were greeted that Wednesday morning, after very little sleep, with the news that the election had not been decided.

I was thrilled when my youngest daughter told me, "You're right, Dad, every vote does count!" Even though she was too young to vote in that election, she learned the same lesson I had learned twenty-five years before: even if it is cliché, every vote does count, and we all have a responsibility to vote.

By their example, my parents taught me that every vote counts, and their refusal to vote actually determined the outcome of an election.

I learned by watching my parents do the wrong thing. I wanted my daughters to learn by the right example, and so I took at least one of them to the polling place every time I voted. Not only did I create fond memories of holding one of my daughters' hands while casting my vote, I also feel I helped them to understand the responsibility we all have as citizens. By sharing the story of Tony's heartbreaking run for office, I gave them a real-life example of the truth in the statement that "every vote counts."

*C. A. Verno*



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# *Democrat*

## **Presidential Time Line**

Thomas Jefferson



1801–1805 *and* 1805–1809

*Democrat=*  
*Republican*

James Madison



1809–1813 *and* 1813–1817

*Democrat=*  
*Republican*

James Monroe



1817–1825

*Democrat=*  
*Republican*

John Quincy Adams



1825–1829

*Democrat=*  
*Republican*

Andrew Jackson



1829–1833 *and* 1833–1837

*Democrat*

Martin Van Buren



1837–1841

*Democrat*

James K. Polk



1845–1849

*Democrat*

Franklin Pierce



1853–1857

*Democrat*

James Buchanan		1857–1861	<i>Democrat</i>
Andrew Johnson		1865–1869	<i>Democrat</i>
Grover Cleveland		1885–1889 <i>and</i> 1893–1897	<i>Democrat</i>
Woodrow Wilson		1913–1917 <i>and</i> 1917–1921	<i>Democrat</i>
Franklin D. Roosevelt		1933–1941 <i>and</i> 1941–1945 <i>and</i> 1945	<i>Democrat</i>
Harry S. Truman		1945–1949 <i>and</i> 1949–1953	<i>Democrat</i>
John F. Kennedy		1961–1963	<i>Democrat</i>
Lyndon B. Johnson		1963–1965 <i>and</i> 1965–1968	<i>Democrat</i>
Jimmy Carter		1977–1981	<i>Democrat</i>
William J. Clinton		1993–1997 <i>and</i> 1997–2001	<i>Democrat</i>

## *Governor Mario Cuomo's*

*1984 Democratic National Convention Keynote Address (excerpt)*

Ten days ago, President Reagan admitted that although some people in this country seemed to be doing well nowadays, others were unhappy, even worried, about themselves, their families, and their futures. The President said that he didn't understand that fear. He said, "Why, this country is a shining city on a hill." And the President is right. In many ways we are a shining city on a hill.

But the hard truth is that not everyone is sharing in this city's splendor and glory. A shining city is perhaps all the President sees from the portico of the White House and the veranda of his ranch, where everyone seems to be doing well. But there's another city; there's another part to the shining city; the part where some people can't pay their mortgages, and most young people can't afford one; where students can't afford the education they need, and middle-class parents watch the dreams they hold for their children evaporate.

In this part of the city there are more poor than ever, more families in trouble, more and more people who need help but can't find it. Even worse: There are elderly people who tremble in the basements of the houses there. And there are people who sleep in the city streets, in the gutter, where the glitter doesn't show. There are ghettos where thousands of young people, without a job or an education, give their lives away to drug dealers every day. There is despair, Mr. President, in the faces that you don't see, in the places that you don't visit in your shining city.

In fact, Mr. President, this is a nation—Mr. President you ought to know that this nation is more a "Tale of Two Cities" than it is just a "Shining City on a Hill."

Maybe, maybe, Mr. President, if you visited some more places; maybe if you went to Appalachia where some people still live in sheds; maybe if you went to Lackawanna where thousands of unemployed steel workers wonder why we subsidized foreign steel. Maybe—Maybe, Mr. President, if you stopped in at a shelter in Chicago and spoke to the homeless there; maybe, Mr. President, if you asked a woman who had been denied the help she needed to feed her children because you said you needed the money for a tax break for a millionaire or for a missile we couldn't afford to use.

Maybe, Mr. President. But I'm afraid not. Because the truth is, ladies and gentlemen, that this is how we were warned it would be. President Reagan told us from the very beginning that he believed in a kind of social Darwinism. Survival of the fittest. "Government can't do everything," we were told, so it should settle for taking care of the strong and hope that economic ambition and charity will do the rest. Make the rich richer, and what falls from the table will be enough for the middle class and those who are trying desperately to work their way into the middle class.

You know, the Republicans called it "trickle-down" when Hoover tried it. Now they call it "supply side." But it's the same shining city for those relative few who are lucky enough to live in its good neighborhoods. But for the people who are excluded, for the people who are locked out, all they can do is stare from a distance at that city's glimmering towers.

The Republicans believe that the wagon train will not make it to the frontier unless some of the old, some of the young, some of the weak are left behind by the side of the trail. "The strong"—"The strong," they tell us, "will inherit the land."

We Democrats believe in something else. We democrats believe that we can make it all the way with the whole family intact, and we have more than once.

**A great moment in Democrat history: March 26, 1979—  
President Jimmy Carter exults at the historic signing of the  
Israel-Egypt Peace Treaty with Egypt's Anwar Sadat and  
Israel's Menachem Begin, shaking hands in agreement.**





**Howdy Doody  
Democrat**

My first political confrontation happened in 1960 when I was in third grade. I wore a Kennedy campaign button to school and a sixth grader called me a liberal and tried to rip it off my Howdy Doody/Clarabell T-shirt. The button had a picture of JFK in the middle and the words “Students for Kennedy.” I didn’t know I was a liberal. I don’t think I even knew I was a student.

Well, the worm had turned, and at seven years old, I could no longer afford to be apolitical. Before this incident, most of my quarrels had to do with the great Yankee/Bosox wars that broke out every summer like poison ivy. If you lived in Connecticut, you were a New York Yankee fan, a Boston Red Sox fan, or a commie. The Yankee/Bosox wars tore apart more families than the Civil War and no-fault divorces combined—including mine. I lived and died with the Yankees, and my Dad, a Sox fan, knew all he had to do to see me tear up with anger, was declare “Mickey Mantle’s a bum,” or “Roger Maris is a Republican.” I don’t know why Roger Maris, being a Republican upset me, I wasn’t even sure what a Republican was, but I knew I hated them worse than the times tables.

The 1960 presidential campaign made me and most other third graders in Plantsville’s South End school put previously significant things like baseball and penmanship aside. This was playground politics at its most repugnant. Every recess, insults were hurled (“Nanny-nanny-goat, Kennedy’s a billygoat”), Mighty Mouse lunch boxes

were stomped, and Twinkies were lobbed. Personally, I never wasted a Twinkie—an apple, maybe, a carrot, certainly, but not a Twinkie.

My youthful brain couldn't understand why anyone would choose Nixon over Kennedy. Nixon was from California—the weirdo state; Kennedy was one of us—a New Englander. Kennedy was a Democrat, while Nixon was a stinkin' Republican. Why, just saying the word “Republican” would make my mouth scrunch up like I had a mouthful of turnips. If Richard Nixon played baseball, I thought, he'd play for the Red Sox—then I'd spit. I'd always spit after I said “Red Sox,” so I had to be careful not to utter those words at the dinner table or in church. I made no secret of the reason I backed Kennedy. It wasn't his foreign policy, his economic strategy, or his dodgeball abilities. It was because I had a wicked crush on his wife, Jackie. My father and I may have disagreed about baseball, but we agreed on Jackie—hubba, hubba.

I also supported Kennedy because he was Catholic, as was I. Actually, until that election, I thought everybody was Catholic. I'd heard of Jewish people, but I thought they were Jewish Catholics. One night Walter Cronkite reported that Kennedy might lose votes because he was Catholic. It was then that my mother explained to me that not everyone was Catholic, and indeed, she wasn't. First no Easter Bunny, then no Tooth Fairy, and now my mother wasn't Catholic! What next, no Santa? That wasn't the worst of it. Not only was Mom not Catholic—she was Mormon! I didn't know a Mormon from a Republican, but I'd seen pictures of them in covered wagons, and they all had beards—even the women.

After a stiff drink of Ovaltine, I managed to put the Mormon thing on the back burner and ask why some people wouldn't vote for a

Catholic. Mom told me that people were afraid that if a Catholic were elected, the Pope would run the country. I wasn't sure I wanted the Pope running the country either, and this information almost put me in the Nixon camp. I mean, I was a Catholic, sure, but not to a fault. I figured if the Pope ran the country, he might make us learn Latin, and I was having a hard enough time passing third-grade English.

The following year I'd be ready to give up Catholicism completely after discovering that only Catholics couldn't eat meat on Friday. I hated fish and vegetarians weren't invented yet. I tried to talk my parents into letting me join the Methodists, at least on Fridays. My mother, The Mormon, as I now regarded her, might've gone for it, but my Irish Catholic father would have none of it. I outsmarted them though—I gave up fish for Lent every year. So, thanks to Catholicism, baseball, and Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy—the die was cast: I was a lifelong Democrat. I've only voted for a Republican presidential candidate once. That was in 1972 when I voted for . . . you guessed it, Richard Nixon. I also now live in California—the weirdo state—and I hate the Yankees more than the times tables. I even enjoy a nice swordfish steak now and again. Life has a way of doing that—throwing you an occasional curveball.

*James Alexander*



# Trivia

1. Who is the founder of the Democratic Party?
2. Which president inspired the 22nd Amendment?
3. How many Democratic presidents died in office?
4. Who was the first black woman to run for the presidency?
5. What is the unofficial name of the Democratic Party?
6. Who was the only president to never marry?
7. Which Democratic vice presidents succeeded to the presidency?
8. Which president was the first to associate his Democratic campaign with the use of a cartoon donkey?
9. Who is the only president to win the Pulitzer Prize?
10. Who was the last incumbent Democratic president who decided to not seek reelection?

Answers

1. As a congressional caucus to fight for the Bill of Rights and against the Federalist Party, of which he was a member, Thomas Jefferson founded the Democratic Party in 1792 and ran under the ticket of Democrat-Republican and won in 1801.
2. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected to office four times. After FDR, the 22nd Amendment was ratified, which limits the presidential office to two terms.
3. Two. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy
4. In addition to being the first African-American woman elected to the U.S. Congress, Democrat Shirley Chisholm entered many presidential primaries in 1972 and received 151 delegate votes for the presidential nomination.
5. "The Party of the Common Man"
6. James Buchanan
7. Andrew Johnson became president after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln in 1865; Harry S. Truman assumed the presidency after Franklin D. Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage in 1945; Lyndon B. Johnson took over the presidency after John F. Kennedy was assassinated in 1963.
8. In response to his opponents calling him "a jackass," Democrat Andrew Jackson decided to turn the mudslinging on its head and use a symbol of a donkey in his campaign for the presidency in 1828.
9. John F. Kennedy, for his biography *Profiles in Courage*.
10. Because internal polling showed that he was trailing in early primary states, Lyndon B. Johnson dropped out of the run for the presidency in 1968.

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## Democrats Unite!

You're a Democrat. You pride yourself on democratic values, did a victory dance when your party took back the House in 2006, and are on a mission to champion the Democrats to reclaim the White House in the election of 2008! *Democrat's Soul* is a celebration of your political views and pride in your party.

This political pick-me-up is a humorous, fact-filled, and nostalgic exploration of what it means to be a Democrat and why Democrats are so passionate about their beliefs.

You will be touched by others' recollections of how politics have shaped their lives and strengthened their convictions as well as laugh out loud at stories about donkeys and elephants falling in love, politics in the family, memories of the first visit to the ballot box, and crossing party lines.

Good old Democratic zeal is evident throughout *Democrat's Soul* and is further brought to life with stories, interesting trivia, historical photos of great moments in Democrat history, inspiring keynote speeches, and witty cartoons—illuminating the pride and character of past and present leaders and causes worth fighting for.

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