

Chapter 1 : The rise of Ronald Reagan - CNN Video

*The Rise of Ronald Reagan The Rise of Ronald Reagan Ronald Reagan was born in in rural Illinois.*

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poor who received federal housing subsidies declined substantially. Many were Vietnam veterans, children and laid-off workers. Perhaps now, as we celebrate the centennial of his birth, a more fitting tribute to his legacy would be for each American city to name a park benchâ€”where at least one homeless person sleeps every nightâ€”in honor of our fortieth president. His most recent book is *The Greatest Americans of the 20th Century*: To submit a correction for our consideration, [click here](#). For Reprints and Permissions, [click here](#).

*Conservatism and the Rise of Ronald Reagan United States History For many Americans, the economic, social and political trends of the previous two decades -- ranging from crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, to the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment.*

In , however, he joined the Republican Party. This change in party identity resulted from his growing attachment to conservative political ideas such as strict constitutional limits on the power of government, unfettered freedom of economic enterprise, and ordered liberty. In , Ronald Reagan strongly favored the presidential candidacy of conservative Republican Barry Goldwater and agreed to make a nationally televised speech for him. Johnson, Ronald Reagan won a large following among Republicans, who responded enthusiastically. How did Ronald Reagan gain the support of the American public and attract national attention? Before he could seriously contend for the presidency, Ronald Reagan needed to prove his capacity for executive leadership in government. He won two terms as governor of California, serving from to His performance in office attracted national attention. His opponent was the incumbent Gerald Ford, who had succeeded to the presidency after Richard Nixon resigned in because of his connection to the Watergate scandal. In , he was sixty-five years old. If elected president in , he would be the oldest person to serve in the office. His vitality during public appearances, however, countered the age issue. He met this challenge by continuing a strategy begun in Ronald Reagan produced a brief radio program, aired five days each week, to broadcast nationally his views on current events and issues. He also wrote a biweekly editorial published in more than two hundred newspaper opinion pages across the country and presented several speeches each month to audiences across America. Thus, Ronald Reagan built a positive public image among a growing number of voters. Ronald Reagan then campaigned against his Democratic Party opponent, the incumbent president Jimmy Carter, and a third-party candidate, liberal Republican John Anderson, who sought the presidency as an independent. And he charged President Carter with failure to halt the decline of American power and prestige in the world. A main theme of his campaign was to ask the voters if they were better off in than four years earlier, when Jimmy Carter became president. Ronald Reagan won a landslide victory. Many independents and a significant number of Democrats joined Republican voters in electing Ronald Reagan to be the fortieth president of the United States.

Chapter 3 : Presidency of Ronald Reagan - Wikipedia

*Rise to the Presidency. Until the age of fifty-one, Ronald Reagan was a Democrat, as his father had been. In , however, he joined the Republican Party.*

The presidencies prior to Reagans left him with many problems. Jimmy Carter had failed to fill the hole made by Nixon and Ford and was a major upset for the American public. The people were looking for someone to reunite the US after the Vietnam War, Watergate scandal, falling economy, and all of the civil rights movements. All of these issues divided the American public into groups based on their different opinions. Reagan would have to have some major success if he wanted to gain the trust of the American people, and thats just what he did. One major event that happened that reunited the American public was the ending of the Cold War. Reagan was able to finally end the conflict between the US and the Soviet Union. He was able to do this due to several major factors: The increase in weapons spending created a fear in the Soviets that they were falling beheind and would not be able to catch up with the omnipotent United States. This coincides with the Soviets drop in arms production and failing economy. Knowing that he could no longer compete, he accepted defeat for his nation. Finally something went the way of the US. A tension that had spanned for decades finally passed and America was ready to restart. This proves that the end of the Cold War brought a reignition in the American spirit that would drive them for the next several years. His motivation began with his campaigning. Reagan used very modest advertisements that promised improvement for the country as a whole, as seen in the video to the right. Reagans campaigning was a major influence to the Americans because he showed that he was a promising candidate. Reagan past as an actor made him popular, but it also made him a good speaker. This helped Reagan acheive his popularity, and when a president is popluar the people tend to have confidence in what they plan on doing. This is just what Reagan needed in order to succeed with his plans. If he had not been so popular he may not have been able to rally Americans behind his SDI plan and his detente foreign policy. This proves that Reagans qualifications and traits made him not only look like a good candidate, but actually be a good candidate. His confidence was contagious, motivating the country to back his ideas. You can clearly see how Reagans traits made him a role model for everyone. People began to trust the government again with his election and thus backed the government and its actions.

**Chapter 4 : The Reagan Revolution and Rise of Conservatism - Cliff Satell**

*Conservatism and the rise of Ronald Reagan For many Americans, the economic, social and political trends of the previous two decades -- ranging from crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, to the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment.*

Conservatism and the rise of Ronald Reagan For many Americans, the economic, social and political trends of the previous two decades -- ranging from crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, to the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment. Conservatives, long out of power at the national level, were well positioned to exploit this new mood. It was a time when many Americans were receptive to their message of limited government, strong national defense and the protection of traditional values against what were seen as the encroachments of a permissive and often chaotic modern society. This conservative upsurge had many sources. A large group of fundamentalist Christians, who regard the Bible as the direct and inerrant word of God, were particularly concerned about an increase in crime and sexual immorality. One of the most politically effective groups in the early s, called the Moral Majority, was led by a Baptist minister, Jerry Falwell. Another, led by Pat Robertson, built an organization called the Christian Coalition which by the s was a potent force in the Republican Party. Like many such groups, they wanted to return religion to a central place in American life. Television evangelists like Falwell and Robertson developed huge followings. Another galvanizing issue for conservatives was one of the most divisive and emotional issues of the time: Opposition to the Supreme Court decision, Roe v. They included, but were not limited to, large numbers of Catholics, political conservatives and religious fundamentalists, most of whom regarded abortion under virtually any circumstances as tantamount to murder. They were prepared to organize in support of politicians who agreed with their position -- and against those who disagreed with it. Pro-choice and antiabortion demonstrations became a fixture of the political landscape. Within the Republican Party, the right wing grew dominant once again. The right had briefly seized control of the Republican Party in with its presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater, then faded from the spotlight. By , however, with the use of modern fund-raising techniques, the right overtook the moderate wing of the party. Drawing on the intellectual firepower of such conservatives as economist Milton Friedman, journalists William F. Buckley and George Will, and research institutions like the Heritage Foundation, the New Right played a significant role in defining the issues of the s. Like other conservatives, or the "Old Right," the New Right favored strict limits on government intervention in the economy. But the New Right was willing to use state power to encourage its view of family values, restrict homosexual behavior and censor pornography. In general, the New Right also favored tough measures against crime, strong national defense, a constitutional amendment to permit prayer in public schools, opposition to abortion and defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment for women. The figure who drew all these disparate strands together was Ronald Reagan. Reagan, born in Illinois, achieved stardom as an actor in Hollywood movies and television before turning to politics. He first achieved political prominence with a nationwide televised speech in in support of Barry Goldwater. In Reagan won the governorship of California, owing to a wave of voter reaction against the student rebellion at the University of California-Berkeley, and served until He narrowly missed winning the Republican nomination for president in before succeeding in and going on to win the presidency from Jimmy Carter. He was a figure of reassurance and stability for many Americans. Despite his propensity for misstatements, Reagan was known as the "Great Communicator," primarily for his mastery of television. For many, he recalled the prosperity and relative social tranquility of the s -- an era dominated by another genial public personality who evoked widespread affection, President Dwight Eisenhower. Reagan believed that government intruded too deeply into American life. He wanted to cut programs he contended the country did not need by eliminating "waste, fraud and abuse. Reagan sought to eliminate regulations affecting the consumer, the workplace and the environment that he argued were inefficient, expensive and impeded economic growth.

Chapter 5 : Reagan's Real Legacy | The Nation

*Hollywood actor and two-term California governor Ronald Reagan shook up the political scene in "The Seventies" airs Thursdays at 9 p.m. ET/PT on CNN.*

Ready to fight back? Sign up for Take Action Now and get three actions in your inbox every week. You can read our Privacy Policy here. Thank you for signing up. For more from The Nation, check out our latest issue. Support Progressive Journalism The Nation is reader supported: Travel With The Nation Be the first to hear about Nation Travels destinations, and explore the world with kindred spirits. Sign up for our Wine Club today. Did you know you can support The Nation by drinking wine? Ronald Reagan was born in in rural Illinois. His father, John Edward Reagan, was a store clerk and erstwhile merchant whose jobs took the family to such towns as Galesburg, Monmouth and Dixon—just the sorts of places responsible for one of the raging themes of American literature, the soul-murdering complacency of our provinces, without which the careers of Edwin Arlington Robinson, Sherwood Anderson, Sinclair Lewis and Willa Cather, to name just a few, would never have found glory. The best and brightest fled all our Galesburgs and Dixons, if they could, but the candidate was not among them. Ad Policy The Reagans were a poor, close, hard-working family. With his older brother, Neil, Reagan sold homemade popcorn at high school football games and was charged with the serious business of maintaining the family vegetable garden. For many summers he worked as a lifeguard at Lowell Park on the Rock River in Dixon, pulling seventy-seven people out of the water by his own count and socking away most of his salary to make up college tuition. The candidate attended Eureka College in Eureka, Illinois. He was no student. He had a photographic memory, and it was this trait, rather than application to books or innate cleverness, that got him through his exams. What really interested him was making the football team, pledging a fraternity, debating and acting in campus theatricals. But his priorities were correct. Eureka, a fifth-rate college, provided meager academic credentials to its graduates. But a third-rate student at a fifth-rate college could learn from the stage, the debating platform, the gridiron and the fraternity party the styles of manliness and verbal sincerity that would stand him in good stead when the time came to make his mark in the world. In fact, the easy, garrulous charm Reagan developed at Eureka got results very quickly. Graduating in the depths of the Depression, he had no trouble finding a job as a radio announcer. Reagan delivers the memorable line coming to after the operation. He was called on to describe baseball games played by the Chicago White Sox and the Cubs on the basis of Western Union messages telegraphed from the ballpark. These were characteristically brief—a hit, a walk and so on—but the chatty Reagan made an art of describing the game as if he were sitting in the stands, faking the scene in all its drama with only a sound effects man to help him. The proximity to Hollywood reawoke his collegiate ambition to act, and he managed to get himself a screen test. An agent had persuaded the studio that he was another Robert Taylor. His means of persuasion was a photograph of himself in his Eureka College jersey and helmet. There is no evidence that between takes they exchanged Republican philosophies. All in all, Reagan acted in close to fifty movies over a twenty-year period and the relevance of this achievement to a Presidential candidacy should not go unexamined. With few exceptions, film stars in the s and s lived in a peculiar state of public celebrity and private humiliation. It was the primary condition of their fame that their worth was constantly under question. The studios had a lock on everyone and actors were punished and rewarded and otherwise dealt with as children by the paternalistic film moguls who held their contracts. In most cases their personal lives were as closely directed as their film lives. How and with whom they conducted themselves were the responsibilities of publicity departments. Their names were changed, and plastic surgeons improved their faces. All in all, they lived in that mead of life and art typecasting we call stardom but which is in fact self-obliteration. Films were made then, as they are today, not by actors but by producers, directors and technicians. The working life of a star was tedium—waiting for the technicians to get around to them, doing scenes in no reasonable order, more often than not repeating them to the point of distraction. No sane adult could long take pride in this sort of mannequin work. Actors bloomed and faded, destroyed themselves in scandal, drugs and drink, gave themselves to public rebellion, or cultivated a rampant narcissism. A few even tried to produce and direct their

own films. It is instructive that Ronald Reagan resorted to none of these stratagems of protest and self-expression. He seemed to agree with assessments of his talents as modest. He did not burningly aspire to serious acting. He followed the rules of the game, was easygoing and cooperative, made friends of influential gossip columnists and producers, sought contacts and acted generally the good boy, perceiving through the endless reaches of this devastatingly hollow life one salient fact: At the beginning of World War II, Reagan, a reserve second lieutenant in the cavalry, was called up for active duty. Here, presumably, was the occasion for reality to make its intrusive claims on the life of a professional fantasist. He narrated training films, one of the most notable being *Target Tokyo*. Saipan-based B superfortress pilots preparing to firebomb Japanese war plants in Ota were shown—by means of special effects, miniature topography and traveling shots made from a moving crane—how the ground below would appear as they made their bombing run. He became active in the Screen Actors Guild and after a time was elected its president. Nevertheless, this was the postwar period of tough jurisdictional disputes between movie craft unions, one reputedly led by gangsters, and it was also the time when the House Un-American Activities Committee began to ask movie stars their opinions of the international godless Communist conspiracy. The candidate got a behind-the-scenes view of some rough politics. He seemed to like it well enough, testifying before the HUAC subcommittee and taking a militantly square-jawed stand on these matters of national urgency with the same kind of Midwestern good-boy appeal that was later to attract the attention of some conservative Californians looking around for a gubernatorial candidate in the s. The odd thing, though, was that while Reagan was devoting more and more time to being spokesman for the Screen Actors Guild, his career as an actor was going into decline. Paradoxically, he was getting more press and prestige as a union officer than as an actor. It is generally believed that this period of his life marked the transition from actor to politician. But in effect he was becoming an actor figure, a front for working actors, and though his activities were now clearly in the realm of the real, if insane, world, the personal quotient of pretense was still high. He was a union official pretending to be a successful movie star. It was in this Pirandelloesque state of being that he married a fairly obscure M-G-M contract player named Nancy Davis. The circumstances that brought them together are worth noting. The daughter of an ultraconservative Chicago surgeon, Miss Davis became concerned when she began to receive mail from left-wing organizations in the early s. She consulted the director Mervyn LeRoy, who suggested that they bring the problem to the attention of guild president Reagan. This seemed to Miss Davis a splendid idea—apparently she was happy to have any pretext to meet the handsome actor. LeRoy, unlikely cupid though he was, suggested that Reagan bring the good news personally to Miss Davis by taking her out to dinner. Reagan complied, and it was in this manner, after giving her a loyalty check, that Ronald Reagan met his wife-to-be. He introduced the weekly stories of the *G. Theater* and gave the sales pitch. When he was not on camera he went around to the *G. The* chief executives of *G. Peculiarly*, his tenure as *G. While* Reagan extolled the virtues of free enterprise in front of the logo, *G. The* company was fined, and some people to this day think Ralph Cordiner, the chairman of the board, himself narrowly escaped prosecution. Reagan, of course, was totally innocent of all of this; and there is no indication his innocence was ever shaken by the news. Even now, as the Republican candidate for the Presidency, he would probably be shocked if it were suggested to him that today the Horatio Alger hero is a multinational corporation. That may be encouraging to some, but of all his previous job experiences, as sportscaster of invisible ball games, studio actor, Culver City commando, television salesman, the governorship of California probably has least relevance to his Presidential candidacy. His own accounts of what he did in California are charmingly demagogic, as though he is seeking to prove that he was more conservative in office than he is given credit for. Always image-conscious, he has not thought, nor, apparently, have his advisers, that by going abroad he might possibly learn something. In any event, the nomination is his who has pursued it giving pep talks and doing dinners and shaking hands and smiling and raising money and speaking simplistic fantasy for most of his adult life. One could write of the people behind Ronald Reagan, but that is another story. He has beaten the best the Republican primaries have had to offer—Senators and Governors, Cabinet officials, Congressmen—and the party that honored us with Richard Nixon will now offer him. Doctorow was the author of twelve novels, four short-story collections and numerous books of essays. Doctorow wrote regularly for *The Nation* for more than thirty-five years. To

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**Chapter 6 : Ronald Reagan and Executive Power | Rise to the Presidency**

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He believed he had fulfilled his campaign pledge of to restore "the great, confident roar of American progress and growth and optimism. A proclamation read in part: With invigorating energy, he set out to accomplish daunting tasks laden with grave risks, but great rewards. Reagan was the son of a shoe salesman. There, he studied economics and sociology, played on the football team, and acted in school plays. Reagan was also a construction worker and a lifeguard. Upon graduation in , he became a radio sports announcer in Des Moines, Iowa. A screen test in won him a contract in Hollywood. He headed for California, where he enjoyed a successful, if mediocre, career in movies and television. After serving in the air force during World War II , he returned to acting. During the following two decades he appeared in 53 films and became known as "the Errol Flynn of the B-movies. Maureen died in In he married Nancy Davis , also an actor, and they had two children, Patricia and Ronald. Nancy was a well-regarded First Lady and visible Reagan supporter throughout their life together. In the second phase, she became more active in such social causes as the "Just Say No! In a final phase, she became protective of her husband during the Iran-Contra scandal. A devoted couple, the Reagans helped each other through the best and worst of times. She was at his side as he recovered from surgeries in July and January In retirement, the two former actors returned to their California ranch. The Reagans enjoyed a peaceful retirement. Reagan was a Democrat who gave his name and time to groups promoting liberal policies at home and abroad. As Reagan recalled in his memoir, *An American Life*, FBI agents approached him in to share their information about the communist effort to infiltrate Hollywood. The Republican Party was impressed by his political views and charisma, and Reagan, who had not held public office before, was elected governor of California in with their backing. Reagan was the only California governor to become president of the United States. As president of SAG, Reagan had become embroiled in disputes over the issue of communism in the film industry. His political views shifted from liberal to conservative during that period. He toured the country as a television host, and became a spokesman for conservatism and anti-communism. Over the years, Reagan and the FBI engaged each other through a series of contacts that catalyzed his political metamorphosis. California was a magnet for disenfranchised dreamers. Some tried the rural subsistence lifestyle, but most became disillusioned with that because it was tough work. On January 2, , Ronald Reagan was sworn in as the governor of California. In , he was elected by a margin of a million votes and was reelected in Edgar Hoover to be a communist hotbed. UC Berkeley was considered by most political observers to be the home of the American Free Speech Movement , and the administration employed avowed communists as instructors. One of them, an African-American teacher named Angela Davis, defiantly taught an accredited class on communism on the UC campus. Civil rights , antiwar , Free Speech and " Black Power" leaders, most of them not enrolled, spoke freely and agitated on the UC Berkeley campus. Charismatic Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, Malcom X and Stokely Carmichael were among those leaders who motivated vociferous students to civil disobedience and defiance. Desecration of American flags, burning of draft cards and bras, street marches, riots and "sit-ins" became almost customary occurrences on the UC campus and in the city of Berkeley. Drug use, destruction of campus property and off-campus private property were commonplace. Also during his governorship, Reagan dismantled the public psychiatric hospital system, advocating instead a community-based housing and treatment system to supplant it. Critics argued that not enough state funding was devoted to the change. In , Reagan lost a longtime friend and fellow conservative, John Wayne , from stomach cancer. Fortieth president of the United States - Reagan won the Republican presidential nomination in and chose as his running mate a former CIA chief, Texas congressman and United Nations ambassador, George H. Voters troubled by inflation and by the year-long confinement of American hostages in Iran , swept the Republican ticket into office. Reagan won electoral votes to 49 for President Jimmy Carter in the election of Reagan took office on January 20, Just 69 days later, he was shot by a

would-be assassin, but quickly recovered and returned to duty. His grace and wit during the dangerous incident caused his popularity to soar. America in the throes of change. Tremendous pressures had built up by the time Reagan took office. Factories continued to close across America, being replaced by "outsourcing" in foreign countries that offered lower business costs and cheaper labor. Moving the factories offshore was a counter-strategy by business and industry leaders who refused to countenance the ongoing demands of American labor unions. Hundreds of thousands of Americans had been thrown into unemployment and many became homeless as well. Concurrently, the personal computer was born, to be followed by the computer revolution in businesses, schools and homes across America and Europe, followed by the rest of the world. Such controversial federal policies as Affirmative Action some called it "reverse discrimination" , sought to inject racial and gender equality into many aspects of American life, especially college enrollment and workplace hiring practices. Dealing skillfully with Congress, Reagan obtained legislation to stimulate economic growth, curb inflation, increase employment, and strengthen the national military muscle. He embarked upon a course of cutting taxes and government expenditures, refusing to deviate from it when the cost of bolstering defense forces led to huge deficits. The election of was a contest between incumbent Reagan and former vice president Walter Mondale. The president was popular, partly because his first term had seen the beginning of a strong economic boom and a resurgence of American military strength. The Reagan Cabinet contained some controversial members. Most memorable was the brusque, outspoken Secretary of State Alexander M. Interior Secretary James G. Watt , who is remembered chiefly for his hostility to the environmental movement and support of the development and use of federal lands by foresting, ranching and other commercial interests, was forced to resign following a controversial ethnic quip. Margaret Thatcher was the British prime minister during the Reagan era. The two politicians affected s politics worldwide. He was president for eight years; she was PM for 11 years. Thatcher was the first national leader to visit him after his inauguration in , and their rapport helped to transform the East-West standoff. The Reagan era is remembered most for his conservative economic reforms and Cold War success.

**Chapter 7 : California Historical Society: The Rise of Ronald Reagan: 50 Years Ago Today**

*A generation after President Ronald Reagan and the film *The Silent Screem* opened a new front in the abortion war by introducing the American public to the emotionally charged if scientifically.*

United States History For many Americans, the economic, social and political trends of the previous two decades -- ranging from crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, to the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment. Conservatives, long out of power at the national level, were well positioned to exploit this new mood. It was a time when many Americans were receptive to their message of limited government, strong national defense and the protection of traditional values against what were seen as the encroachments of a permissive and often chaotic modern society. This conservative upsurge had many sources. A large group of fundamentalist Christians, who regard the Bible as the direct and inerrant word of God, were particularly concerned about an increase in crime and sexual immorality. One of the most politically effective groups in the early s, called the Moral Majority, was led by a Baptist minister, Jerry Falwell. Another, led by Pat Robertson, built an organization called the Christian Coalition which by the s was a potent force in the Republican Party. Like many such groups, they wanted to return religion to a central place in American life. Television evangelists like Falwell and Robertson developed huge followings. Another galvanizing issue for conservatives was one of the most divisive and emotional issues of the time: Opposition to the Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. They included, but were not limited to, large numbers of Catholics, political conservatives and religious fundamentalists, most of whom regarded abortion under virtually any circumstances as tantamount to murder. They were prepared to organize in support of politicians who agreed with their position -- and against those who disagreed with it. Pro-choice and antiabortion demonstrations became a fixture of the political landscape. Within the Republican Party, the right wing grew dominant once again. The right had briefly seized control of the Republican Party in with its presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater, then faded from the spotlight. By , however, with the use of modern fund-raising techniques, the right overtook the moderate wing of the party. Drawing on the intellectual firepower of such conservatives as economist Milton Friedman, journalists William F. Buckley and George Will, and research institutions like the Heritage Foundation, the New Right played a significant role in defining the issues of the s. Like other conservatives, or the "Old Right," the New Right favored strict limits on government intervention in the economy. But the New Right was willing to use state power to encourage its view of family values, restrict homosexual behavior and censor pornography. In general, the New Right also favored tough measures against crime, strong national defense, a constitutional amendment to permit prayer in public schools, opposition to abortion and defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment for women. The figure who drew all these disparate strands together was Ronald Reagan. Reagan, born in Illinois, achieved stardom as an actor in Hollywood movies and television before turning to politics. He first achieved political prominence with a nationwide televised speech in in support of Barry Goldwater. In Reagan won the governorship of California, owing to a wave of voter reaction against the student rebellion at the University of California-Berkeley, and served until He narrowly missed winning the Republican nomination for president in before succeeding in and going on to win the presidency from Jimmy Carter. He was a figure of reassurance and stability for many Americans. Despite his propensity for misstatements, Reagan was known as the "Great Communicator," primarily for his mastery of television. For many, he recalled the prosperity and relative social tranquility of the s -- an era dominated by another genial public personality who evoked widespread affection, President Dwight Eisenhower. Reagan believed that government intruded too deeply into American life. He wanted to cut programs he contended the country did not need by eliminating "waste, fraud and abuse. Reagan sought to eliminate regulations affecting the consumer, the workplace and the environment that he argued were inefficient, expensive and impeded economic growth.*

## Chapter 8 : National Security - The Rise of Ronald Reagan

*Conservatism and the rise of Ronald Reagan. For many Americans, the economic, social, and political trends of the previous two decades -- crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, challenges to traditional values, the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment.*

Free Printable American History Reading with Questions for Grades - American History Readings For many Americans, the economic, social, and political trends of the previous two decades -- crime and racial polarization in many urban centers, challenges to traditional values, the economic downturn and inflation of the Carter years -- engendered a mood of disillusionment. Conservatives, long out of power at the national level, were well positioned politically in the context of this new mood. Many Americans were receptive to their message of limited government, strong national defense, and the protection of traditional values. This conservative upsurge had many sources. A large group of fundamentalist Christians were particularly concerned about crime and sexual immorality. They hoped to return religion or the moral precepts often associated with it to a central place in American life. One of the most politically effective groups in the early s, the Moral Majority, was led by a Baptist minister, Jerry Falwell. Another, led by the Reverend Pat Robertson, built an organization, the Christian Coalition, that by the s was a significant force in the Republican Party. Using television to spread their messages, Falwell, Robertson, and others like them developed substantial followings. Another galvanizing issue for conservatives was divisive and emotional: Opposition to the Supreme Court decision, Roe v. They included, but were not limited to, Catholics, political conservatives, and religious evangelicals, most of whom regarded abortion under virtually any circumstances as tantamount to murder. Pro-choice and pro-life that is, pro- and anti-abortion rights demonstrations became a fixture of the political landscape. Within the Republican Party, the conservative wing grew dominant once again. They had briefly seized control of the Republican Party in with its presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater, then faded from the spotlight. By , however, with the apparent failure of liberalism under Carter, a "New Right" was poised to return to dominance. Using modern direct mail techniques as well as the power of mass communications to spread their message and raise funds, drawing on the ideas of conservatives like economist Milton Friedman, journalists William F. Buckley, and George Will, and research institutions like the Heritage Foundation, the New Right played a significant role in defining the issues of the s. The "Old" Goldwater Right had favored strict limits on government intervention in the economy. This tendency was reinforced by a significant group of "New Right" "libertarian conservatives" who distrusted government in general and opposed state interference in personal behavior. But the New Right also encompassed a stronger, often evangelical faction determined to wield state power to encourage its views. The New Right favored tough measures against crime, a strong national defense, a constitutional amendment to permit prayer in public schools, and opposition to abortion. The figure that drew all these disparate strands together was Ronald Reagan. Reagan, born in Illinois, achieved stardom as an actor in Hollywood movies and television before turning to politics. He first achieved political prominence with a nationwide televised speech in in support of Barry Goldwater. In Reagan won the governorship of California and served until He narrowly missed winning the Republican nomination for president in before succeeding in and going on to win the presidency from the incumbent, Jimmy Carter. He was a figure of reassurance and stability for many Americans. Wholly at ease before the microphone and the television camera, Reagan was called the "Great Communicator. Reagan believed that government intruded too deeply into American life. He wanted to cut programs he contended the country did not need, and to eliminate "waste, fraud, and abuse. He sought to abolish many regulations affecting the consumer, the workplace, and the environment. These, he argued, were inefficient, expensive, and detrimental to economic growth. Reagan also reflected the belief held by many conservatives that the law should be strictly applied against violators. Shortly after becoming president, he faced a nationwide strike by U. Although the job action was forbidden by law, such strikes had been widely tolerated in the past. When the air controllers refused to return to work, he ordered them all fired. Over the next few years the system was rebuilt with new hires. Read the text above, then answer the questions below. What factors led conservatives

to return to power in the United States? What were the general beliefs of conservatives? Describe the Moral Majority and the Christian Coalition. What landmark Supreme Court decision made abortion a focus of the conservative movement? Explain the differences between the "Old Right" and the "New Right. Who was elected president in ? Describe the actions and policies of Ronald Reagan. Click here to print this worksheet. Text courtesy of the U. Service-sector activity benefited; hardware and software could aggregate previously unimagined amounts of data about economic and social trends 3. Percentage of family households dropped; a quarter of all groups were now classified as "nonfamily households" in which two or more unrelated persons lived together 6. Asia and Latin America 7. Product links are paid affiliate links. All links are deemed relevant and are not placed merely for profit. Purchase through these links helps to keep this educational website online and free.

Chapter 9 : Conservatism in the United States - Wikipedia

*Ronald Reagan entered the White House in with strongly conservative values but experience in moderate politics. He appealed to moderates and conservatives anxious about social change and the seeming loss of American power and influence on the world stage.*

As the s opened, few predicted that it would be a decade of unprecedented progress in superpower relations. Unwilling to wait another eight years, Reagan challenged Ford with a blistering critique of his policies and appointments but lost the nomination by 60 votes. Election of Reagan dominated the Republican primary elections in Although his strongest opponent, George Bush , won an upset victory in the Iowa caucuses , Reagan bounced back after a notable performance in a debate with other Republican candidates in Nashua , New Hampshire. The debate, initially sponsored by a newspaper, was first extended to only Reagan and Bush, but Reagan decided to pay for the debate and invite the rest of the candidates. Reagan responded memorably with an angry line he remembered from a Spencer Tracy movie: After some tense and ultimately fruitless negotiations with representatives of Ford, Reagan chose Bush as his running mate, and the two men campaigned against Democratic incumbents Jimmy Carter and Walter Mondale on a platform promising steep tax cuts, increased defense spending, a balanced budget, and a constitutional amendment to ban abortion. Carter began the campaign in a vulnerable position. Inflation had increased from 6 percent to more than 12 percent since his first year in office, and unemployment and interest rates were also high. On November 4, , a mob of Iranian students had stormed the U. Blindfolded American hostage with his Iranian captors outside the U. Electoral and popular vote totals based on data from the Office of the Clerk of the U. Then, on March 30, , a deranged drifter named John W. Rushed to George Washington University Hospital for emergency surgery, Reagan joked with doctors as he was being wheeled into the operating room: Ronald Reagan delivering his first inaugural address, Washington, D. Ronald Reagan by John W. Courtesy Ronald Reagan Library U. Ronald Reagan returning to the White House after recovering from an assassination attempt and then addressing Congress in the wake of these events, As federal employees, the PATCO members were forbidden by law to strike , and Reagan, on the advice of Transportation Secretary Drew Lewis, refused to negotiate and gave them 48 hours to return to work. Most of the striking controllers ignored the ultimatum and were promptly fired. Department of Defense The results were mixed. Bankruptcies and farm foreclosures reached record levels. By early the economy had begun to recover, and by the end of that year unemployment and inflation were significantly reduced; they remained relatively low in later years. During his tenure in office, Reagan appointed more than half the federal judiciary and three new justices of the Supreme Court: He also elevated William Rehnquist to chief justice in upon the retirement of Warren Burger. Foreign affairs When he entered office in , Reagan believed that the United States had grown weak militarily and had lost the respect it once commanded in world affairs. Aiming to restore the country to a position of moral as well as military preeminence in the world, he called for massive increases in the defense budget to expand and modernize the military and urged a more aggressive approach to combating communism and related forms of leftist totalitarianism. All people aboard were killed, including 61 Americans. Reagan, speaking at the Berlin Wall, June 12, In later years, however, former Soviet officials cited SDI as a factor in the eventual collapse of their country, for it showed that the Soviet Union was politically unprepared for and economically incapable of competing in a new arms race with the United States, especially one led by someone as unrelenting as Reagan. Although Reagan never abandoned his support for SDI, it was eventually reconceived as a much smaller and more conventional defensive system than the one he originally proposed. Reagan and Gorbachev met for the first time in November , in Geneva , to discuss reductions in nuclear weapons. Although the summit ended in failure owing to differences over SDI, it was followed up in December by a treaty eliminating intermediate-range nuclear forces INF on European soil. The INF Treaty was the first arms-control pact to require an actual reduction in nuclear arsenals rather than merely restricting their proliferation. Gorbachev, Mikhail; Reagan, Ronald: On the morning of October 23, , a suicide bomber drove a truck laden with explosives into the Marine compound at the Beirut airport, killing Marines and wounding others. Meanwhile,

in the Caribbean island nation of Grenada , Prime Minister Maurice Bishop was deposed and executed in a bloody coup by radical elements of his leftist New Jewel Movement. Less than a week later, and only one day after the bombing of the Marine compound in Lebanon, Reagan ordered an invasion, which he justified as necessary to prevent the country from becoming a dangerous Soviet outpost and to protect American students at the medical school there. Joined by a contingent of troops from neighbouring Caribbean countries, U.S. Critics immediately charged that the administration had staged the invasion to divert public attention from the bombing in Lebanon. In March a U.S. Then, on April 5, two people, including an American serviceman, were killed by a bomb explosion in a discotheque in West Berlin. This policy, which became known as the Reagan Doctrine , was applied with particular zeal in Latin America. Using its influence in international lending agencies such as the World Bank , the United States was able to block most Nicaraguan loan requests from , and in the administration declared a trade embargo. Ronald Reagan discussing relations with Latin America at a press conference. Only two years later, however, he would become embroiled in the worst scandal of his political career, one that would cost him much popular and party support and significantly impair his ability to lead the country. American presidential election, Results of the American presidential election, Source: News of the arms-for-hostages deal, first made public in November only one month after Reagan ordered raids on Libya in retaliation for its alleged involvement in the Berlin bombing , proved intensely embarrassing to the president. The diversion was undertaken by an obscure NSC aide, U.S. North, as it was later revealed, had also engaged in private fund-raising for the Contras. These activities constituted a violation of a law passed by Congress in the second Boland Amendment that forbade direct or indirect American military aid to the Contra insurgency. In response to the crisis, by this time known as the Iran-Contra Affair, Reagan fired both North and Poindexter and appointed a special commission, headed by former senator John Tower of Texas the Tower Commission , to investigate the matter. An independent counsel , Judge Lawrence Walsh, was also appointed, and the House and Senate began joint hearings to examine both the arms sales and the military assistance to the Contras. Reagan accepted responsibility for the arms-for-hostages deal but denied any knowledge of the diversion. Although no evidence came to light to indicate that he was more deeply involved, many in Congress and the public remained skeptical. Nevertheless, most of the public eventually appeared willing to forgive him for whatever they thought he had done, and his popularity, which had dropped dramatically during the first months of the crisis, gradually recovered. In , in a letter to the American people, Reagan disclosed that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer disease , a degenerative brain disorder. National Airport in Washington, D.C.