

# barry goldwater apush

**Barry Goldwater** was a significant figure in American politics and a crucial part of the narrative of the conservative movement in the United States during the mid-20th century. His ideologies and political career had immense implications for the structure of American conservatism, influencing both the Republican Party and the broader landscape of American political thought. Goldwater's legacy is often discussed in the context of Advanced Placement United States History (APUSH) as it encapsulates a shift in political ideologies, the rise of conservatism, and the dynamics of American electoral politics.

## Early Life and Career

### Background

Barry Morris Goldwater was born on January 2, 1909, in Phoenix, Arizona. He came from a prominent family in the region; his father was a successful businessman, and his mother was a socialite. Goldwater's upbringing was influenced by the Western frontier culture, instilling in him a strong sense of individualism and self-reliance.

### Political Beginnings

Goldwater's political career began after he graduated from high school in 1928 and worked in his family's department store. He was drawn to politics when he became actively involved in the local chapter of the Young Republicans. His military service during World War II as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Forces further shaped his beliefs regarding national defense and governance.

In 1949, Goldwater was elected to the Phoenix city council, and by 1952, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, representing Arizona. His rise in politics coincided with a burgeoning conservative movement that sought to challenge the New Deal policies established by Franklin D. Roosevelt.

## Goldwater's Ideological Foundations

### Conservatism and Libertarianism

Goldwater's political philosophy was rooted in a blend of conservatism and libertarianism. He believed in limited government intervention, individual liberties, and a free-market economy. His opposition to the New Deal and Great Society programs positioned him as a leader in the conservative movement.

Key tenets of Goldwater's ideology included:

1. **Limited Government:** He advocated for reducing the size and scope of government, arguing that many federal programs were inefficient and encroached upon personal freedoms.
2. **Individualism:** Goldwater emphasized the importance of individual rights and responsibilities, asserting that people should be free to make their own choices without excessive government interference.
3. **Anti-Communism:** During the Cold War, Goldwater was a staunch anti-communist, believing that military strength was essential to combat the threat posed by the Soviet Union.

## **Contributions to the Conservative Movement**

Goldwater's candidacy and political writings contributed significantly to the development of the conservative movement:

- **"Conscience of a Conservative":** In this 1960 book, Goldwater outlined his beliefs and vision for America, providing a manifesto for the conservative movement. He criticized welfare programs, civil rights legislation, and foreign policy approaches that he believed weakened American power.
- **Influence on Future Leaders:** Goldwater's philosophy inspired a generation of conservative politicians, including Ronald Reagan, who would later become a pivotal figure in American politics.

## **The 1964 Presidential Campaign**

### **Nomination and Platform**

Goldwater's most significant impact came during his presidential run in 1964. After a fierce primary battle, he secured the Republican nomination, marking a major shift in the party's direction. His platform was characterized by:

1. **Opposition to the Great Society:** Goldwater vehemently opposed President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society programs, asserting that they promoted dependency on government.
2. **Pro-Military Stance:** He advocated for a strong military presence and was open to using military force in foreign conflicts.
3. **Civil Rights:** Goldwater's stance on civil rights was complex. He supported states' rights and opposed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 because he believed it infringed on individual freedoms and state sovereignty.

### **Campaign Strategies and Challenges**

Goldwater's campaign was marked by a grassroots approach, relying on enthusiastic supporters to mobilize voters. However, his candidacy faced significant challenges:

- Perception of Extremism: Many viewed Goldwater as too extreme for the presidency. His remarks about using nuclear weapons and his libertarian views led to concerns about his suitability for the office.
- Democratic Opposition: Johnson's campaign capitalized on fears of Goldwater's policies, portraying him as a dangerous radical. The infamous "Daisy" ad, which suggested that Goldwater's policies could lead to nuclear war, struck a chord with voters.

Ultimately, Goldwater lost the election to Johnson in a landslide, capturing only six states and 38 electoral votes.

## Post-1964 and Legacy

### Political Realignment

Although Goldwater's presidential campaign was unsuccessful, it set the stage for a broader realignment within the Republican Party. His loss highlighted the divide between traditional Republicans and the emerging conservative faction. Despite his defeat, he energized grassroots conservatives and established a base for future candidates.

### Re-emergence in Politics

After his presidential run, Goldwater returned to the Senate, serving from 1969 until 1987. During this time, he became known as a more moderate figure on certain issues, such as civil rights and environmental policies.

- Opposition to the Vietnam War: Over time, Goldwater shifted his position on the Vietnam War, advocating for a negotiated settlement rather than a military escalation.
- Support for LGBTQ Rights: In his later years, he expressed support for LGBTQ rights, famously stating that "you don't have to be straight to be in the military."

### Legacy and Influence

Barry Goldwater's influence continues to resonate in American politics. He is often regarded as the "father of modern conservatism," and his ideas laid the groundwork for the conservative resurgence in the 1980s with the election of Ronald Reagan.

Key aspects of Goldwater's legacy include:

1. Conservative Movement: He is credited with revitalizing the conservative movement, encouraging a generation of activists to challenge liberal policies.

2. Republican Party Dynamics: Goldwater's candidacy reshaped the Republican Party, steering it towards a more ideologically coherent conservative platform.
3. Cultural Impact: His emphasis on individual liberty and skepticism of government bureaucracy has influenced various aspects of American culture, especially in the realms of business and personal freedoms.

## **Conclusion**

Barry Goldwater's contributions to American politics cannot be overstated. His ideology and political career marked a pivotal moment in the evolution of conservatism, influencing not only the Republican Party but also the broader ideological landscape of the United States. Through his advocacy for limited government, individual rights, and a strong national defense, Goldwater remains a crucial figure in understanding the dynamics of American political history. His legacy continues to inspire and shape the discourse around conservatism, making him a significant subject of study in APUSH and beyond.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Who was Barry Goldwater and why is he significant in APUSH?**

Barry Goldwater was a U.S. Senator from Arizona and the Republican presidential nominee in 1964. He is significant in APUSH for his role in shaping modern conservatism and influencing the Republican Party's shift towards a more right-wing ideology.

### **What were the main components of Barry Goldwater's political platform during the 1964 election?**

Goldwater's political platform emphasized limited government, individual liberties, a strong anti-communist stance, and a call for a more aggressive foreign policy. He opposed the Great Society programs and advocated for states' rights.

### **How did Barry Goldwater's views differ from those of the moderate Republicans of his time?**

Goldwater's views were more libertarian and conservative compared to the moderate Republicans who favored a more interventionist government approach and social welfare programs. He opposed federal intervention in many areas, including civil rights.

### **What impact did Barry Goldwater have on the conservative movement**

## in the United States?

Goldwater is often credited with revitalizing the conservative movement in the U.S. His 1964 campaign laid the groundwork for future conservative politicians, including Ronald Reagan, and helped to shift the Republican Party towards a more conservative ideology.

## What was the outcome of Barry Goldwater's 1964 presidential campaign, and what were its implications?

Barry Goldwater lost the 1964 presidential election to Lyndon B. Johnson in a landslide. However, his campaign energized the conservative base and set the stage for the rise of the conservative movement, ultimately leading to the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980.

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