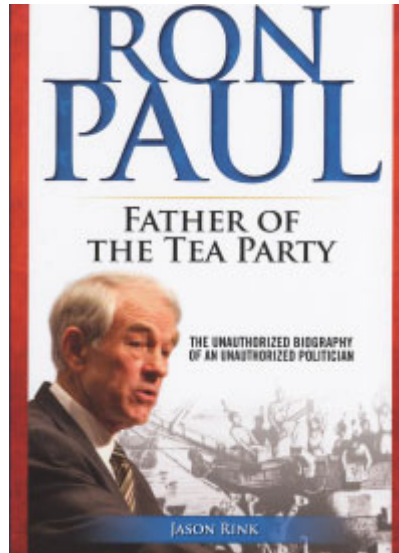




Written by [Jack Kenny](#) on January 25, 2012

Unauthorized Biography on Ron Paul, an Unauthorized Politician

Ron Paul is one of those “overnight” sensations who are years, even decades in the making. Jason Rink, freelance writer and author from Austin, Texas, tells the story of the retired obstetrician and 12-term Congressman who is suddenly among the top contenders in presidential politics. The unmistakably friendly portrayal, advertised on the cover as “The Unauthorized Biography of an Unauthorized Politician,” offers an informative and entertaining life story of one of the most unusual and interesting presidential candidates in American history.



Rink describes Paul’s early life as the third of five boys growing up on a family dairy farm in Green Tree, Pennsylvania. Born in 1935, Paul lived much of his early childhood in the shadow of World War II, as he gained his first impressions of government rationing and bureaucratic controls over farming. As a high-school athlete, he gained a reputation for fleet-footedness on the football field and in track, winning state championships as a junior in the 220- and 440-yard dashes, and finishing third in the 100-yard dash.

He continued to run in track meets and competed on the swim team at Gettysburg College. Just before his senior year, he married Carol Wells, whom he had begun dating in high school. The couple moved to North Carolina when Paul was at Duke Medical School, and then to Michigan for his internship at Henry Ford Hospital in Detroit. In October 1962, while he was finishing his internship, Paul learned what the government means by “volunteer.” His draft notice informed him he could be conscripted into the Army or he could “volunteer” to enter one of the other branches of military service. He chose the Air Force and was commissioned a first lieutenant. His duties included certifying Air Force pilots for flight status. When he signed the medical papers for pilots deploying to Vietnam, Rink relates, Paul began to think about what they were doing there and why.

“I remember well when President Johnson announced a troops surge in Vietnam to hasten victory,” he would later recall. “That went on for another decade and by the time we finally got out 60,000 Americans had died. God knows we should have gotten out ten years earlier.”

Following his active duty, Paul enrolled in the Air National Guard in Pittsburgh, where he completed his residency in obstetrics and gynecology at Magee Women’s Hospital. He later purchased the private practice of the only OB/GYN in Brazoria County, Texas, and settled with his family in the town of Lake Jackson, 50 miles south of Houston. Soon Dr. Paul was delivering up to 50 babies a month at the beginning of a career in which he delivered more than 4,000.

When he later took on a partner, Paul insisted on two rules: no abortions and no taking of federal funds. Medicare and Medicaid patients would be treated for free and given the same care paying patients



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received. He believed both the “red tape” required for the federal reimbursements and the controls over patient care exerted by Health Maintenance Organizations undermined the ability of the doctor to prescribe the treatment he believed best for his patients.

His belief in free markets and voluntary associations grew as he studied writers of the Austrian school of economics. Concerns about the value and stability of the dollar would eventually lead him to what began as a one-man crusade to expose the secret workings of the Federal Reserve Board, and later to an effort to, as the title of one of his best-selling books demands, *End the Fed*.

When President Nixon announced in 1971 that he was ending the convertibility of U.S. dollars to gold and imposing wage and price controls, Paul began to think seriously about entering politics. That Nixon’s New Economic Plan enjoyed bipartisan support made Paul all the more determined to oppose it. “I decided that someone in politics had to condemn the controls,” he said, “and offer the alternative that could explain the past and give hope for the future: the Austrian economists’ defense of the free market.”

His first campaign for Congress in 1974 was based on the theme he has been running on ever since: “Freedom, Honesty and Sound Money.” He chose to run at a tough time and place for Republicans, however. He was in a Democratic district in a year when Republicans were attempting to recover from the Watergate scandal and Nixon’s resignation. Political newcomer Paul lost to eight-term incumbent Robert Casey in a nationwide sweep for the Democrats.

When Casey was appointed to the Federal Maritime Commission in April 1976, Paul won a special election for the vacant seat. He lost the general election in November of that year, but was reelected to Congress two years later. He joined the Committee on Financial Services (also known as the House Banking Committee) and began the opposition to federal intervention in domestic and world markets that would earn him his reputation as “Dr. No.” His principled stand against a routine refunding of the International Monetary Fund so startled the political establishment of both parties that the Senate Banking Committee invited him to testify on his reasons for opposing it.

“I had never heard of this before: a freshman Congressman invited to share his views with a Senate committee,” recalled Gary North, a free-market economist on Paul’s staff at the time. “I have never heard of it since.”

In the conventional wisdom of the 1980s, Paul’s dedication to free markets and frugal spending should have fit right in with the crusade of Reagan Republicans against “big government.” But the maverick Congressman soon found himself at odds with the supply-side economists of the “Reagan Revolution” who claimed cutting taxes alone would reduce deficits by spurring productivity and increasing revenue.

“Tax relief is important, but members of Congress need to back up tax cuts with spending cuts,” Paul said. “True fiscal conservatism combines both low taxes and low spending.” Most self-proclaimed fiscal conservatives weren’t listening, however; and the federal budget nearly doubled and the national debt nearly tripled during Reagan’s eight years as President.

“Dr. No” also refused to go along with sending U.S. military forces into wars which bore no relationship to the defense of the United States, and to “peacekeeping missions” which undermined our nation’s sovereignty. When President Clinton, without the authorization of Congress, sent American troops into the war between the Serbs and Bosnians in the former Yugoslavia, Paul protested that Congress, by continuing to fund the mission, had “allowed our foreign policy to be commandeered by international bodies like NATO and the United Nations.”



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When the Bush administration was making the case for war over Iraq's alleged "weapons of mass destruction" and defiance of United Nations directives, Paul again argued passionately against going to war to enforce UN resolutions. Our nation, he insisted, faced no threat from "an impoverished third world nation 6,000 miles from our shores that doesn't even possess an army or a navy." When Congress approved a resolution authorizing the President to initiate military action against Iraq at his own discretion, Paul was one of only six House members to vote against it. He upbraided his colleagues for ceding to the President the Congress's constitutional power to declare war, even telling them they "lack the political courage to call an invasion of Iraq what it really is: a war."

Rink describes the problems that plagued Paul's ill-fated run as the Libertarian Party candidate in 1988, and the Republican primary campaign of 2008, when the candidate's message of individual liberty, adherence to the Constitution, and a non-interventionist foreign policy resonated with audiences, especially on college campuses. The December 16, 2007 rally in Boston, on the 234th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, was accompanied by an Internet fundraising effort, called a "money bomb," that raised more than \$6 million in a single day. The rally helped set the stage for the Tea Party movement that became a national phenomenon in 2009 and 2010. Among the Tea Party favorites winning election in 2010 was Dr. Rand Paul, the 47-year-old son of the Texas Congressman and now the junior Senator from Kentucky.

Rink's book includes events of the past year, as Paul's steady rise in the polls overcame a very obvious effort by the major news media to ignore it. Some observers, however, began noticing that the Paul campaign was changing the political conversation, as rival candidates began talking about reining in the Federal Reserve, and larger audiences were rallying to the candidate's antiwar stand. Fox News commentator Juan Williams no doubt startled some of his colleagues with the following observation: "If you have not been paying attention, it's time to look around and realize that we are living in the political age of Ron Paul."

An impressive tribute to the man Rink describes as "a soft-spoken small-town doctor," who entered politics "just wishing to be heard. Decades later, at 75 years of age, everybody, it seemed, was listening."

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