Inside the Vault

The New Deal & FDR’s Presidential Campaigns
with Professor Barbara Perry

Thursday, August 4, 2022
How to Participate

If you would like to ask a question, you can use the Q&A feature.

We will be answering audience questions at the end of the session.

For Security and Privacy

- Your microphone is automatically muted.
- Your camera is automatically turned off.
Barbara A. Perry is the Gerald L. Baliles Professor and Director of Presidential Studies at the University of Virginia’s Miller Center, where she co-chairs the Presidential Oral History Program. She served as the Judicial Fellow at the US Supreme Court and received the Justice Tom C. Clark Award as the outstanding fellow.

Professor Perry has authored or edited 16 books, including *Rose Kennedy: The Life and Times of a Political Matriarch* (2013), *Edward M. Kennedy Oral History Project* (2015), and *Jacqueline Kennedy: First Lady of the New Frontier* (2004). Dr. Perry is a frequent commentator for national and international media and served as the lead expert for CNN’s documentary *The Kennedys*. 
Today’s Documents

Campaign Broadsides
Franklin D. Roosevelt
32nd President of the U.S.

- Born in Hyde Park, NY in 1882 to wealthy parents
- Distant relative of Theodore Roosevelt
- Married Eleanor Roosevelt, his fifth cousin and a niece of Theodore, in 1905
- His mother was a powerful influence on his confidence and optimism.
FDR’s Presidential Career

Timeline

1929
Beginning of the Great Depression

1932
Wins Presidential Election

1933
First Inauguration + Enactment of the New Deal

1936
Wins Second Presidential Election

1939
Beginning of World War II

1940
Wins Unprecedented Third Presidential Election

1941
Attack on Pearl Harbor

1944
Wins Fourth—and Final—Presidential Election
New Deal Programs

Timeline

1933
Beginning of the New Deal

1933
Civilian Conservation Corps

1933
Farm Credit Administration

1933
Tennessee Valley Authority

1934
Railway Retirement Administration

1935
Home Owners’ Loan Corporation

1935
Soil Conservation Administration

1935
Rural Resettlement Administration

1935
Works Progress Administration

1935
National Labor Relations Act

1936
Social Security Act

1936
Rural Electrification Act

1939
End of the New Deal
Alf Landon
Republican Nominee in 1936

- Governor of Kansas from 1933 to 1937
- Lost to Roosevelt in a landslide (523-8)
- Landon only won Maine and Vermont
- Never sought office again following the 1936 defeat
Wendell Willkie
Republican Nominee in 1940

- New York lawyer and businessman
- Often represented the electric utility industry
- Lost to Roosevelt in a landslide (449-82)
- Became an envoy for Roosevelt in the 1940s
Democratic National Campaign Committee, Saved more than a million homes, 1936. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC09532.01)
Electricity

Democratic National
Campaign Committee, Your
Electric Bill, 1936, 1936.
(The Gilder Lehman
Institute, GLC09532.13)

Democratic National
Committee, Electric
Power for the People,
1940. (The Library of
Congress)
Conservation

Democratic National Campaign Committee, Our Wealth of Earth and Water, 1936. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC09532.05)

Our Wealth of Earth and Water

Once upon a time America was a fertile land of plenty. But abundance made us careless. We overworked our soil. We let wind and rain leave a trail of destruction across our continent. We handed over to special interests the wealth that belongs to the people.

L O S T  R I C H E S

Over 30 million acres of crop land totally ruined in the last century by soil erosion (obstruction of broken top soil by wind and water). Another 125 million acres, now in cultivation, in serious plight.

Still another 200 million acres suffering from soil depletion (loss of plant food in the soil) so that crop yields are cut in half.

Billions of dollars of flood damage. Congress has spent almost 175 million for flood relief. About 60 million acres of timber land now useless from improper cutting. Around 42 million forest acres swept by fire every year at a loss of approximately 60 million dollars. Annual forest losses due to beetles, measles, and other insects, about 100 million dollars.

Countless American families are on relief because they are stranded on barren soil or in abandoned forests.

The New Deal Saves Our Heritage

For the first time the National Government is taking steps to stop this vast national waste. Thirty-five years ago Theodore Roosevelt was a pioneer in conservation. Today Franklin D. Roosevelt is turning those early ideals into practical acts. Under his leadership the New Deal is saving our God-given treasure of earth and water for future generations so that America may be once again "A Land of Opportunity."

A UNITED DRIVE FOR CONSERVATION

1. The new Soil Conservation Administration (S.C.A.) is making it possible, through bounty payments, for farmers to shift 30 million acres in 1936 from soil-depleting crops to soil-building crops like grasses and legumes. As a result not only will the land be given a chance to regain its health but the work of the A.A.A. in cultivating hogs will be continued and farm prices maintained. Under its regular program, the Department of Agriculture is reaching private owners with an erosion-control demonstration covering 8 million acres.

2. A chief aim of the main purpose of the Tennessee Valley Authority (T.V.A.) is to build a series of dams on North Forks and make the Tennessee River more navigable, this purpose goes back to 1933. Years of plowing have loosen[ed] the top soil in the upper South and have torn the countryside with gullies and filled the river channels with mud. In order to achieve its ends, the T.V.A. is helping farmers fill up the gullies, terrace their acres and plant soil-conserving crops. It is developing and distributing fertilizers, supplying cheap seedlings, and bringing hope to thousands of discouraged farmers in the 7 states through which the Tennessee flows.

3. Besides improving the Tennessee Valley, the Government is engaged in scientific river control in every corner of the country. Through cooperation of department and agencies, it is building 574 major dams to harness waters for flood control, navigation, irrigation and (in 19 cases) electric power.

4. The Rural Resettlement Administration (R.R.A.) salvages both land and those who dwell on the land. It is buying some 9 million acres of "dead" farm land and turning it into national parks, grazing ranges, forests, game preserves and other uses. At the same time it is giving over half a million destitute families in rural areas a chance to get a new start in life, by farm loans or transfer to better soil where they can earn a decent living. Since the cost of schools and roads in barren sections often exceeds tax income, land retirement aids the state and county treasuries.

5. The Civilian Conservation Corps (C.C.C.) has enrolled more than a million young men in conservation work. Under the direction of the Department of Agriculture they have built nearly 2 million small diversion dams and otherwise improved 2 million acres of agricultural land. Under the Forest Service they have planted half a billion trees, drives pests and blights from 20 million acres and reduced fire hazard over on a million acres. The C.C.C. has added half a billion dollars to the wealth of the nation.

LOOK AHEAD WITH ROOSEVELT

Democratic National Campaign Committee
Democratic National Campaign Committee, Facts —Mr. Business Man, 1936. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC09532.03)

Democratic National Campaign Committee, Dry Those Crocodile Tears, 1940. (The Library of Congress)
1940 Election

Opposition to a Third Term

Republican National Committee, No Third Term, 1940. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute, GLC09545.01)
1940 Election
Support for a Third Term


*All Campaign Buttons from FDR Presidential Library and Museum*
Upcoming Programs

**Inside the Vault:** September 1 at 7 pm ET (4 pm PT)
- We will be joined by Professor H. W. Brands (The University of Texas at Austin) to discuss the 1836 Texas Declaration of Independence.

**Book Breaks:** August 7 at 2 pm ET (11 am PT)
- Fay Yarbrough will discuss her book *Choctaw Confederates: The American Civil War in Indian Country*.

**MA in American History:** Applications are open now for the Gettysburg College–Gilder Lehrman MA in American History. Registration for Fall 2022 courses will remain open until September 28.