



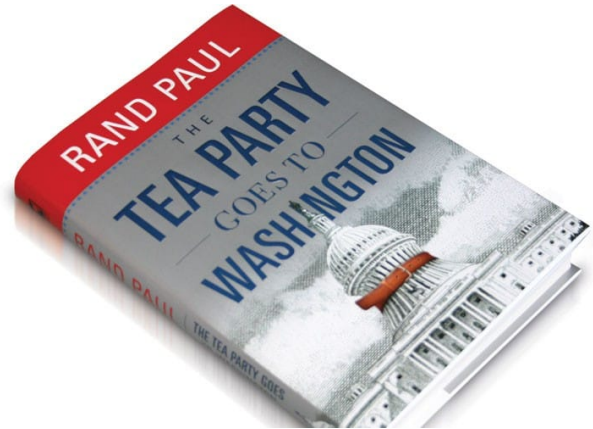
Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on April 4, 2011

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Rand Paul's New Tea Party Handbook

The Tea Party Goes to Washington, by Rand Paul and Jack Hunter, New York, New York: Center Street/Hachette Book Group, 2011, 254 pages, hardcover.

Freshman Kentucky Senator and medical doctor Rand Paul has written what should — and may indeed — become the new handbook of the Tea Party movement. Written by the Tea Party's most prominent member who won its most celebrated electoral victory, *The Tea Party Goes to Washington* is a study of the Tea Party movement yesterday and today. It also provides a prescription from the ophthalmologist/Senator for curing the nation's fiscal ills.



It's rare that a reviewer opens up a book with the intent of highlighting only the most important quotes in the book, and ends up highlighting almost every line. This is one of those rare books. The author describes the Tea Party movement as a decentralized movement without a single leader, but with the brilliant ideas and legislative agenda presented in this book, Rand Paul establishes himself as the Tea Party's most prominent adherent.

Rand Paul calls the Tea Party an "open mic night," noting that "although they come together, they never really come together too much." Paul explains, "To this day, statewide communication between the different Tea Parties in each city is spotty at best, and yet in city after city thousands of folks gather at local events. This has been the dynamic of the movement nationwide."

"Despite accusations to the contrary, the Tea Party is organized from the bottom up, decentralized and independent," Paul stresses. "No matter how much the establishment would love to control and manipulate this movement, its political narrative is dictated by the grass roots, not the other way around."

That's not for lack of trying, however. "There's no question that some in the political establishment have tried to latch on to the Tea Party or manipulate the movement for their own benefit," Dr. Paul notes. "Any Tea Partier could tell you this, and they all are aware of it precisely because maintaining their independence is so important."

Tea Party Journey to Washington

"I had been Tea Party before Tea Party was cool," Dr. Paul quips, adding, "I suppose it's symbolic that I would have spoken at what some consider the first modern Tea Party in Boston in 2007, and even more appropriate that it was in support of the man whose presidential campaign many consider a precursor to today's Tea Party." Rand Paul had been involved in the presidential campaign of his father — Representative Ron Paul — which served as a rallying cry against out-of-control spending that led to the



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Tea Party. “Dad wouldn’t get the nomination but he would do something no other presidential candidate would — create a ‘Ron Paul Revolution’ that would help form and inspire the Tea Party, break fundraising records, influence a new generation of conservatives, take Dad’s popularity to new heights — and help fund my campaign. Sure, John McCain won the nomination in 2008 — but alas, there was no ‘John McCain Revolution.’”

Despite the Ron Paul genesis of the Tea Party movement, Rand is quick to note that “the movement has certainly grown beyond just Ron Paul adherents.” The gel of the Tea movement is the move to stop federal deficit spending, the younger Paul stresses. “The ‘tea’ in Tea Party is often said to stand for ‘taxed enough already’ and, while the Tea Partiers in each city tended to be social conservatives for a strong national defense, unquestionably their primary motivation was driven by a sincere concern over the size and scope of the national debt.”

All in the book is not cheers, rah, rah and hip, boom, bah, however. The book describes the type of smears that people who stand up for fiscal sanity can expect to face — which Paul has already faced.

Rand Paul’s journey to the U.S. Senate involved two nasty battles that involved his opponents lying about him, first by the Republican establishment, and after the primary by the leftist national media. But despite the massive mobilization of establishment leaders in both parties against him, Paul had the Tea Party and his father’s supporters backing him. After the primary came one of the nastiest smears on Paul, where he was accused of being a closet racist for having qualms about government regulating private businesses under the 1964 Civil Rights Act. In a discussion at a local newspaper, a reporter challenged his view of the law, stressing that “‘it’s different with race, because much of the discrimination based on race was codified into law.’ I agreed with him and ended the discussion by saying, ‘Exactly, it was institutionalized. And that’s why we had to end all institutional racism, and I’m completely in favor of that.’”

Paul’s point was that Jim Crow laws forced businesses in the South to discriminate against blacks and that private business owners shouldn’t be controlled by federal discrimination laws because people should have a right to associate with whom they please and handle their private property as they please. Furthermore, most private businesses would have stopped their discriminatory actions when the Jim Crow laws were overturned by the federal government, using the 14th Amendment, because unless businesses stopped turning people away, they would be at a competitive disadvantage.

But the leftist national media didn’t even care to understand what Dr. Paul saw as an “adult conversation.” Instead, the leftist media saw an opportunity to draw political blood, and Dr. Paul was booked on MSNBC’s *Rachel Maddow Show*. The book highlights his wife Kelley’s wisdom. Kelley sagely advised Dr. Paul: “Cancel Rachel Maddow, it’s a set-up.” But Rand wouldn’t hear it. The interview proceeded as Kelley predicted. As the overly tired Paul nevertheless reasoned like an adult, he was trashed on a politically irrelevant issue, and out-of-context sound bytes were then deployed to destroy him and the Tea Party across the nation. His lead in the polls began to diminish. Paul kept giving interviews, and appeared to be digging his own political grave, as his wife pleaded with him to stop giving national media interviews. Rand noted: “She said I was trying to be reasonable when my critics were more interested in a 24/7 news cycle. At one point, Kelley became so annoyed with my stubbornness that she got up from the couch and walked away.” Rand Paul finally listened to his wife, staying away from interviews until he was rested and ready, and his campaign recovered.



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Doctor's Prescription: More Tea, Less War

What sets Dr. Paul apart from many of the other would-be leaders of the Tea Party is the Senator's willingness to take on American foreign policy issues and oppose the expenditure of limitless blood by U.S. soldiers and money by taxpayers toward foreign wars that are only tangentially related to U.S. national security. This does not mean Rand Paul is a naive pacifist. "National security is — bar none — the most important constitutional function of our federal government," Dr. Paul stresses, adding that nevertheless "you have to make it smaller." Senator Paul would have backed the Afghan war in 2001: "After 9/11, America took the battle to our enemies and I would have voted to go to war in Afghanistan because we needed to fight back. There was a clear link between al Qaeda and the Taliban and this is exactly what our military is for — national defense. Whether we should still be in Afghanistan nation building is an entirely different matter." But he would have opposed the Iraq War because Iraq "did not pose a threat to the United States."

Paul doesn't just explain his opposition to the ongoing war in Iraq, he outlines the historical underpinnings of the war. "Though it was supported by most conservatives, the Iraq war was based on liberal premises. In both domestic and foreign policy, this is what the neoconservatives have come to represent — the progressive ideology of presidents Roosevelt or Wilson, repackaged and passed off as 'conservative.'"

Dr. Paul even considers the backlash against U.S. intervention abroad, noting that the CIA has termed the effect "blowback": "Consider this: Has Islam changed much since the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s when there was virtually no Islamic threat to the United States? Has America's involvement and policies toward the Middle East changed significantly since that time?" In the book's mature and persuasive section on foreign policy, Paul introduces readers to conservative heroes who opposed unlimited intervention and nation-building, such as Robert Taft and Barry Goldwater, perhaps introducing many young Tea Party activists to these men for the first time. *The Tea Party Goes to Washington* may be the book that helps the non-interventionist and budget-minded segment of the Tea Party prevail over neoconservative influences.

The Tea Party's fate is ultimately linked directly to the federal budget deficit, which will ring in at a record \$1.6 trillion this year. "The Tea Party's critics continue to portray the movement as too 'radical,'" Paul notes, stressing that the "mainstream" argument is that a \$1.6 trillion deficit is acceptable while only "radicals" challenge it. "If the Constitution and common sense still have any bearing, the Tea Party isn't the least bit radical — the federal government is."



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