



## What We Know About Dave Brat, the Tea Party Candidate Who Beat Eric Cantor

By: Pema Levy  
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No one expected Tea Party upstart Dave Brat to unseat Eric Cantor, the most powerful Republican in Virginia. But that's exactly what happened Tuesday night. Since Cantor's district, the Virginia's 7th, is very conservative, it's presumed that Brat will win in November.

So, here are a few facts you should know about the man who beat Eric Cantor and may soon be in Congress.

**1) He's a libertarian Economics professor:** Brat teaches at Randolph-Macon College where he chairs the department of economics and business. He also heads the BB&T Moral Foundations of Capitalism program, which is funded by the wealthy former banker and Ayn Rand superfan John Allison. Before becoming CEO of the libertarian Cato Institute, Allison used his former financial services firm, BB&T, to [donate many millions of dollars](#) to colleges who would promise to teach their students about Ayn Rand.

Brat even co-authored a paper with Allison called "An Analysis of the Moral Foundations in Ayn Rand" but [told National Review](#) in January that he's not a full-blown Randian, he just likes some of her ideas.

**2) He's "hot":** That's according to Brat's students, who have reviewed him at the website RateMyProfessors.com. One student [opined](#) that Brat "change (sic) assignments a lot and sometimes it's unclear what he wants you to do" but "he's total eye candy!!"

Brat's Democratic opponent in November will be his colleague, sociology professor Jack Trammell. Both have fairly positive Rate My Professors [pages](#).

**3) He's married:** Brat, 49, is married to a woman named Laura and they have two children named Jonathan and Sophia, [according](#) to the Washington Post. And he's originally from Michigan.

**4) On the issues, he's Tea Party turned up to 11:** If Dave Brat is one thing, it's conservative. The liberal magazine Mother Jones dug through his positions Wednesday and found that he supports drastic cutbacks to the social safety net.

“He appears to endorse slashing Medicare and Social Security payouts to seniors by two-thirds,” MoJo [reported](#). “He wants to dissolve the IRS. And he has called for drastic cuts to education funding, explaining, ‘My hero Socrates trained in Plato on a rock. How much did that cost? So the greatest minds in history became the greatest minds in history without spending a lot of money.’”

**5) Don't ask him about Syria:** In an interview Wednesday, MSNBC's Chuck Todd asked Brat for his take on American involvement in Syria's bloody civil war, but Brat didn't want to talk policy.

“Hey Chuck, I thought we were just going to chat about the celebratory aspect,” Brat [responded](#). “I'd love to go through all this, but my mind is just — I didn't get that much sleep last night.”

Todd pressed him, but Brat was not having it. “I just wanted to talk about the victory and thank everybody that worked so hard on my campaign.”

In fairness to Brat, the Syria situation is a grim, no-win foreign policy quagmire for the United States. On the other hand, he's a professor, so he's probably given a few pop quizzes himself.