



# The Ayn-Rand Loving Billionaires and Vast Right-Wing Machine Behind David Brat

David Brat's "surprise" win over Eric Cantor was in the works for years.

By Thom Hartmann  
June 11, 2014 |

Dark money is flowing like water in Washington.

House Majority Leader Eric Cantor, who has always been considered one of the more Conservative members of the House, lost in a primary to upstart Tea Party challenger David Brat.

Brat, an economics college professor, was vastly outraised by Cantor, and most polls leading up to the primary showed Cantor with a very comfortable lead.

In the immediate aftermath of last night's shocker in Virginia, analysts have been saying Brat's victory was just a fluke.

They couldn't be more wrong.

Dave Brat's victory wasn't just a fluke, and he isn't just some Tea Partying economics college professor from Virginia.

Both he and his victory have dark money written all over them.

Back in 2008 during America's financial collapse, BB&T Bank was one of the many big banks that crashed. In order to stay afloat, that bank took a \$3.1 billion bailout from the Bush administration.

At the helm of the bank at that time was John Allison, an Ayn Rand-loving CEO.

According to The Street, during his time as CEO of BB&T, Allison regularly used the BB&T Charitable Foundation, "to provide grants to schools that agree to create courses on capitalism that feature the study of 'Atlas Shrugged.'"

Meanwhile, according to New York Magazine, Allison gave \$500,000 to Randolph-Macon College to hire Dave Brat, so that he too could teach the Ayn Rand libertarian philosophy as an economics professor.

Shortly after BB&T accepted \$3.1 billion government bailout from the Bush Administration, Allison resigned as CEO, and was picked up by Charles Koch, to become the new president of the Cato Institute, formerly known as the Charles Koch Foundation, and to keep spreading the work of Rand.

Much like the BB&T Charitable Foundation, Koch-allied groups like The Cato Institute have spent millions of dollars, putting college professors in economics departments across the country, so that they can spread the good word of Ayn Rand, and help create a libertarian paradise in America.

As ThinkProgress pointed out back in 2011, Florida State University's economics department accepted a \$1.5 million grant from the Charles G. Koch Charitable Foundation, now the Cato Institute, which would provide funding for new professors, who would likely teach about Ayn Rand and libertarian economics.

Similarly, Koch-backed groups have given money to a number of other universities, including West Virginia University, George Mason University, Clemson University, and even the Ivy-League Brown University.

Basically, the Kochtopus is spending millions and millions of dollars, placing college professors in economics departments across the country, so that they can promote Ayn Rand and the libertarian philosophy to future generations of Americans.

So, Dave Brat is far more than just a college professor who beat Eric Cantor in a fluke of a primary.

He is a complete shill for Ayn Rand-loving libertarians and the Koch Brothers.

And he is apparently a graduate of the Kochtopus' "Teach Ayn Rand in College, Do Well, and We'll Send You to Washington" program.

Besides saying that Brat's win was just a fluke and that he's just a college professor, pundits have also been saying that Cantor lost to Brat because of his stances on immigration, and because he ran a poor campaign.

Again, that couldn't be further from the truth.

Last night, after Cantor was declared the loser, talking heads on Fox So-Called News praised the power of talk radio, and gave credit to right-wing talk radio pundits, particularly Laura Ingraham and Mark Levin, for Brat's win. That credit is probably well deserved.

That's because for weeks leading up to last night's primary, Ingraham and Levin absolutely pounded Eric Cantor at every chance possible on their respective radio programs.

Meanwhile, they were preaching to the people of Virginia that Dave Brat was their guy, and he was the man that should be in Washington, not Eric Cantor.

So, why were Ingraham and Levin pounding Cantor so hard?

Well, as Politico brilliantly pointed out earlier this year, "A POLITICO review of filings with the Internal Revenue Service and Federal Election Commission, as well as interviews and reviews of radio shows, found that conservative groups spent nearly \$22 million to broker and pay for involved advertising relationships known as sponsorships with a handful of influential talkers including [Glenn] Beck, Sean Hannity, Laura Ingraham, Mark Levin and Rush Limbaugh between the first talk radio deals in 2008 and the end of 2012."

And you guessed it; Koch-affiliated groups are first among the conservative groups handing out money to the right-wing talking machine.

Politico notes that, "The Koch brothers-backed Americans for Prosperity paid at least \$757,000 primarily to sponsor his [Mark Levin's] radio show - a sponsorship that covered part of the 2012 cycle."

So, the Koch Brothers gave over \$700,000 to Mark Levin, the same man who promoted Dave Brat, the Koch Brothers-funded college professor, for months.

And while specific numbers aren't known about Ingraham, she's also subsidized the Koch Brothers, according to Politico, which could help explain her eagerness to slam Eric Cantor and promote Brat.

This isn't to allege any sort of corruption on the part of Levin or Ingraham - supporting somebody with money who already supports politicians you support is just good political investing. And doing it under the radar is particularly useful when Harry Reid is calling you out on the floor of the senate.

The bottom-line here is Dave Brat didn't beat Eric Cantor because Cantor's campaign was poor or because of his immigration stance. And Brat's victory over Cantor wasn't just a fluke.

What happened last night in Virginia was in the works for years, and it has dark money written all over it.