



Image from: [Alabama Governor George C. Wallace \(seated\)... in Encyclopedia of U.S. Campaigns, Elections, and Electoral Behavior](#)

Summary Article: **Wallace, George Corley**

From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

1919–98, governor of Alabama (1963–67, 1971–79, 1983–87), b. Clio, Ala. Admitted to the bar in 1942, he was active in the Alabama Democratic party, serving in the state assembly (1947–53) and as a district court judge (1953–59). In 1962 he won election as governor as an avowed segregationist, and promised to defy federal orders to integrate Alabama schools. In June, 1963, Wallace blocked two black students from entering the Univ. of Alabama, but capitulated when President Kennedy federalized the Alabama national guard. Prevented by state law from succeeding himself as governor in 1966, Wallace had his wife, **Lurleen Burns Wallace**, 1926–68, run successfully in his place.

As a leading opponent of the civil-rights movement, Wallace campaigned for president in 1968 on a third-party ticket, capitalizing on racist and anti-Washington attitudes in both North and South to energize many. In 1970, he was reelected governor of Alabama. In 1972, he entered the Democratic presidential primaries; his campaign ended abruptly on May 15, when an assassination attempt by Arthur H. Bremer left him paralyzed below the waist. In 1974 Wallace was overwhelmingly reelected governor, and in 1976 he made another unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination. He later moved to reconcile with African Americans and recanted white supremacist positions, and in 1982 he was again elected governor, this time with the support of many black Alabamans; he retired in 1987.

See biographies by W. G. Jones (1966), M. Frady (1968), and S. Lesher (1994); study by D. T. Carter (1995).

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