

"Senator No" ^[1]

Jesse Helms served as U.S. Senator from 1973 to 2003. He began as a junior senator on the minority fringe; by the time he retired he had become a powerful senior figure in the majority party. His willingness to use any means available to block legislation he opposed earned Helms the nickname "Senator No," and his dogged support for conservative policies won him love from fellow conservatives and loathing from liberals. These magazine and newspaper articles trace the stages of Helms' career and show how perceptions of him changed (and didn't change) over time. The first three are profiles from *Time* magazine at various points in Helms' career. The fourth is an obituary from the *New York Times*. The last two are opposing editorials from the *Wall Street Journal*, published after Helms' death, summing up his career.

To the Right, March! ^[2] (*Time*, September 14, 1981)

The name and the face are only vaguely familiar outside North Carolina, for in his eight years in the Senate, Helms has been a legislator only nominally. Instead of cutting deals and mastering the techniques of cloakroom conciliation, he has been a right-wing curiosity, proposing hopeless bills, attacking presidential appointments out of ideological pique, making blustery speeches that go largely unremarked. But now the conservative current is swift, and Helms' time has come.

Scourge of the Senate ^[3] (*Time*, May 30, 1988)

An entire wall of Jesse Helms' Capitol Hill office is covered with political cartoons, most of them lampooning him as a rogue and obstructionist. The senior Senator from North Carolina takes impish delight in each and every one of them. "The uglier they are the quicker he puts them up," says an aide. Among Helms' favorites is one depicting a fellow Senator praying, "And would you kindly ask Jesse Helms to please shut up?"

Senator No ^[4] (*Time*, May 29, 2000)

Where is the mecca of American foreign policy? It's not in Washington's Foggy Bottom neighborhood, where the gray monolith of the State Department gazes out onto the Potomac, or in the trendy salons of Georgetown or the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City. No, to get to mecca, you have to drive east on U.S. 74 to the village of Wingate, N.C. There you will find mecca on the right side of the road, just across from a Hardee's. It's the Jesse Helms Center, set up nine years ago as a shrine for the North Carolina Senator in an old white neoclassical home with a wide portico and fluted columns.

Jesse Helms Dies at 86; Conservative Force in the Senate ^[5] (*New York Times*, July 5, 2008)

Jesse Helms, the former North Carolina senator with the courtly manner and mossy drawl who turned his hard-edged conservatism against civil rights, gay rights, foreign aid and modern art, died early Friday. He was 86.

How Jesse Helms Made a Difference ^[6] (*Wall Street Journal*, July 5, 2008)

If Ronald Reagan was the sunny and optimistic face of modern conservatism, the uncompromisingly defiant exemplar of it was Jesse Helms, who died yesterday at age 86.

Jesse Helms Was No Hero ^[7] (*Wall Street Journal*, July 5, 2008)

In death, Sen. Jesse Helms is being honored as a conservative hero. But "Senator No" created an angry, scolding, close-minded face for the modern GOP.

User Tags:

[history](#) ^[8]

[Jesse Helms](#) ^[9]

[NC](#) ^[10]

[North Carolina](#) ^[11]

[North Carolina History](#) ^[12]

[Page](#) ^[13]

[politics](#) ^[14]

[State of North Carolina](#) ^[15]

[Students](#) ^[16]

[Teachers](#) ^[17]

[Creative Commons BY-NC-SA](#) ^[18]

From:

[ANCHOR: A North Carolina History Online Resource](#) ^[19]

Copyright Date:

2010

Related Topics:

Primary Sources:

Jesse Helms' Viewpoint on the Speaker Ban^[21]

3 January 2018

Source URL: <https://ncpedia.org/anchor/senator-no>

Links

[1] <https://ncpedia.org/anchor/senator-no> [2] <https://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,924848,00.html> [3] <https://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,967516,00.html> [4] <https://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,997038,00.html> [5] <https://www.nytimes.com/2008/07/05/us/politics/00helms.html> [6] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB121521073192129407> [7] <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB121581690915747421> [8] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/history> [9] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/jesse-helms> [10] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/nc> [11] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/north-carolina-5> [12] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/north-carolina-6> [13] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/page> [14] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/politics> [15] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/state-north> [16] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/students> [17] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/teachers> [18] <https://ncpedia.org/category/user-tags/creative-commons> [19] <https://ncpedia.org/category/entry-source/anchor-north> [20] <https://login.proxy171.nclive.org/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/45185434> [21] <https://www.ncpedia.org/anchor/primary-source-jesse-helms>