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Subject: Cheney-Inspired Trivia

Posted by [elektratic](#) on Thu, 16 Feb 2006 12:04:04 GMT

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The Cheney hunting accident has generated many mentions of Aaron Burr as the last VP to have shot someone. What surprises me is that I have seen no references to presidents who have shot people. I therefore thought that I'd provide some useless, but hopefully interesting, trivia. In this regard, Andrew Jackson stands out. Jackson was probably the fiercest person ever to have served as president. Before his election, he engaged in at least three duels, including one with the then governor of Tennessee, and a wild gun battle in the middle of Nashville. Jackson's 1806 duel with Charles Dickinson stands out because Jackson shot and killed Dickinson while Dickinson was defenseless. Jackson challenged Dickinson, even though Dickinson was believed the best shot in Tennessee, because he had impugned Jackson's wife. Dickinson got off the first shot, wounding Jackson severely in the chest (the musket ball remained lodged near his heart for the rest of his life). According to convention, Dickinson then had to return to his position, 24 feet from Jackson, and await Jackson's shot. Rather than firing into the air, which would have satisfied honor, Jackson took careful aim at Dickinson and shot and killed him. Jackson later received a second wound, in the shoulder, during the melee in Nashville. One of his opponents in that running gun battle was Thomas Hart Benton. Benton and Jackson later reconciled, and Benton, as senator from Missouri (1821-51), became one of the legislative leaders of the Jacksonian Democratic party.

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Subject: Re: Cheney-Inspired Trivia

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 16 Feb 2006 17:59:04 GMT

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The last episode you cite occurred in 1859? We have done a good job reigning in those wild Presidents up until now.

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Subject: And Another . . .

Posted by [elektratic](#) on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 02:25:19 GMT

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Andrew Jackson fought his duels in 1795, 1803 and 1806, and the wild-west shootout in Nashville took place in 1813. Who's the last major-party presidential nominee who shot and killed someone (other than in war)? If you guessed Ted Kennedy, you're wrong on two counts. He was never the Democratic presidential nominee; and he didn't use a gun. The correct answer is . . . . . drumroll . . . . Adlai Stevenson, the Democratic Party candidate who ran unsuccessfully against Ike in 1952 and 1956: "When Stevenson was a child, there was a tragic incident that haunted him for the rest of his life. While showing off with his brother's hunting rifle, he accidentally shot and killed a

young playmate named Ruth Merwin. Stevenson rarely discussed the incident but many have theorized that his dedication to causes may have been due to the terrible burden of guilt he carried."

Adlai Stevenson Wikipedia Bio

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Subject: Re: And Another . . .

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 17:19:32 GMT

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Thats why we keep all guns locked up and chaperone all children while using any kind of weapon. That was a sad tragedy but he has the excuse that he was a child at the time. The history is certainly interesting regarding past politicians and guns. Cheney has no defense.

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Subject: Re: And Another . . .

Posted by [Damir](#) on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 17:58:18 GMT

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"The history is certainly interesting regarding past politicians and guns." Did you notice that historic incidents and persons which excited you as a kid have other meaning later? I mean, history like robbery and massacre, and leaders like... you know... "Cheney has no defense." Hey, the wounded fellow is a lawyer...

<http://www.plyrics.com/lyrics/sexpistols/godsavethequeen.html>

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Subject: Re: And Another . . .

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 20:13:27 GMT

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I see he is a lawyer; now it all makes sense. Thats a defense admissable in court; wounding a lawyer, nyuk nyuk! Thats a good point Damir; about how you percieve things as you get older; wiser; and a lot less gullible.

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Subject: Past Politicians and Guns

Posted by [elektraticg](#) on Fri, 17 Feb 2006 23:12:53 GMT

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Before the Civil War, dueling was generally illegal in theory but not all that uncommon in practice. Even Henry Clay, "the Great Pacificator" and a profoundly unmilitary man, engaged in a (nonlethal) duel, which only increased the respect in which he was held. I suppose it was preferable to this (see link).

The Caning of Charles Sumner

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