

## Say Hi to Jen

Written by Jay Beskin, BT Contributor  
February 2020

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### Jen is running against Deb



his column has been accused a time or two by friends of Deb as being anti-Deb, but in point of fact, we've never endorsed a candidate against Deb or advocated her ouster per se.

What we have done in both 2016 and 2018 is given a voice to Professor Tim Canova, who ran against Deb in each of those years. Tim seems to have taken himself out of the running against Deb in 2020, which means that the only three-letter-word Deb is left cussing this year is "Jen." Jen is a-comin' for Deb, and she means business, so we thought we'd give her campaign a look-see and report the findings.

Deb, of course, is Debbie Wasserman Schultz, one of those perennial political types who start in local politics and move into state politics and finally land in federal politics. They generally follow the Peter Principle, enunciated by the late Canadian intellectual Laurence J. Peter, who claimed that in all hierarchies, a person will rise to the level of his incompetence. If you do well in the mail room, they move you up to filing, and if you do well in filing, they move you to sales, and if you do well in sales, they move you to management, until eventually you arrive at the level where you no longer can do well. At that point the promotions stop, and after many successful and competent stops on the ladder, you are now doomed to a permanent role as an unsuccessful incompetent.

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Jen thinks Deb has reached that inglorious pinnacle and is a perfect candidate for early retirement.

To remind our readers, Debbie Wasserman was a Jewish girl from Long Island who went to college at the University of Florida, was active in student government, and earned a B.A. and an M.A. in political science. She took up residence in South Florida and won a seat in the Florida House of Representatives in 1992. It was a new seat created by redistricting, so she never faced an incumbent. In 2000 she won a seat in the Florida Senate, and in 2004 she was essentially handed a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives by Peter Deutsch, who left to pursue a dismal primary campaign for U.S. Senate.

In 2011 she became the head of the Democratic National Committee. In 2016 she resigned when hacked e-mails published by Wikileaks showed she had conspired with Hillary Clinton to cheat Bernie Sanders out of the presidential nomination. (That's an overstatement, but basically true.)

Tim Canova, a Bernie supporter, ran against her in the primary that year and scored 43 percent of the vote. He suggested that there was cheating in the ballot counting, either by Deb or on her behalf, and he went to court. Broward County Supervisor of Elections Brenda Snipes testified that -- oops! -- she had accidentally destroyed all the evidence and -- oops! -- had failed to notice the court order to preserve the evidence because it got lost in the messy pile of papers on her desk.

I mention this not to re-litigate whether Tim really beat Deb and whether she scammed him like she scammed Bernie. The larger point is that as of 2016 there were at the very least 43 percent of Democratic primary voters who wanted to see Deb go. If a candidate can find those folks and win over a few more, we might have the Florida version of Alexandria Ocasio Cortez. If that happens, you and I might, in the words of Keats, feel "like some watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken or like stout (Ocasio?) Cortez when with eagle eyes he star'd at the Pacific." You know the rest of it, with the wild surmise and all that.

Jen is Jennifer Perelman, a Jewish lawyer from...New York like Deb? Chicago like me? No, from South Florida. Shame on you and me for thinking she was from anywhere else! Born and bred Floridian. And it turns out, in a refreshing kind of way, that's what her candidacy is really about. She wants to help people *here*.

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Sure, she has strong positions on big national issues, supporting single-payer health care and four taxpayer-funded years in university. “In 2020 we are at the point in our society where public school needs to be four years longer!” She sees climate change as a serious concern and wants to be active in fighting beach erosion and suchlike. But most important, she wants to serve the people and businesses in the congressional district. The big national votes come up once in a long while, but a congressperson should remember their first job is to see that the district receives its fair share from the federal coffers.

She isn't impressed with Deb on the big issues, noting that a trip to Deb's website is a stultifying meander through the pantheon of progressive platitudes. (The words are mine; the sentiments are hers.) When it comes to local matters, she believes that Deb is a total sellout, “bought and paid for” by all the worst kinds of plutocrats who put profit way ahead of the greater good.

One issue she brings up about Deb is quite insightful, and I was kicking myself for not having considered the point earlier. Donna Brazile, in her book *Hacks*, described what she found when she replaced Deb as chair of the Democratic National Committee. The situation was summed up by the Politico headline of November 2, 2017: “Inside Hillary Clinton's Secret Takeover of the DNC.” The DNC was so broke at the time that Hillary Clinton's campaign took over control of the day-to-day operations and decisions by...paying the bills!

That story is widely known and is a source of great consternation among Democrats. Yet nobody connected the dots until Jen. “If Deb found the DNC prosperous and left it broke, then who was it that ran the finances into the ground?”

So the Peter Principle did catch up to Deb. She got promoted to a job that, one might argue, was above her level of competency. Jen is here as an attorney, a mom of two, a Floridian, a progressive, and she is ready to serve the needs of this community.

As we said at the top, we do not do endorsements. But we do wish her well in all her endeavors. We could do a lot worse; some say we have already.

I hope this important concern is addressed. Perhaps there are plans already for this, which have

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not been publicized. I'd like to see this project bear fruit; not remain a virgin, so to speak.

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