

Who Was Eleanor Roosevelt?

By Gare Thompson

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For a long time, the main role of First Ladies was to act as hostesses of the White House...until Eleanor Roosevelt. Born in 1884, Eleanor was not satisfied to just be a glorified hostess for her husband, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Eleanor had a voice, and she used it to speak up against poverty and racism. She had experience and knowledge of many issues, and fought for laws to help the less fortunate. She had passion, energy, and a way of speaking that made people listen, and she used these gifts to campaign for her husband and get him elected president-four times! A fascinating historical figure in her own right, Eleanor Roosevelt changed the role of First Lady forever.

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Editorial Review

About the Author
A former educator, Gare Thompson has written bestselling classroom programs as well as numerous children's books. His specialty is historical fiction. Thompson lives in Massachusetts.

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To my first ladies: Ena, Vaughan, and Chloe and to the Penguin first ladies, Debra and Jane

—G.T.

For Sophie and Tony—E.W.

Who Was Eleanor Roosevelt?

During the 1930s and early 1940s, Eleanor Roosevelt was our country’s first lady. Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who was president of the United States then, was her husband. There have been more than forty first ladies of the United States. What made Eleanor Roosevelt so special? Well, for one thing, Eleanor was first lady longer than anyone else was.

FDR, as he was called, was elected president four times. Eleanor was first lady for twelve years—from 1933 to 1945, when FDR died. Before Eleanor, first ladies gave dinner parties. They gave teas. But they did not speak out on important issues concerning our country. That’s what the president did.

Eleanor Roosevelt, however, worked while she was first lady. She wrote newspaper columns and books. She gave radio interviews and taught classes. She worked hard to help start the United Nations. Eleanor had opinions and shared them with the world. She let people know what she thought about important issues of the time, such as equality for all Americans.

Eleanor Roosevelt paved the way for the first ladies who followed her. Now, most first ladies have a cause. Some have focused on the danger of drugs, others have fought for better schools and libraries, and others for health care.

Eleanor Roosevelt was a smart and brave first lady. And even after she left the White House, Eleanor continued to work. By the time of her death in 1962, Eleanor Roosevelt was known as “the First Lady of the

World.”

Chapter 1
Early Years

Users Review

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