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Eleanor Roosevelt
Standard One: History of the United States and New York

Women Must Learn to
Play the Game
As Men Do

By

Mrs. Franklin D.
Roosevelt

MRS. FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT speaks with unique authority on politics, especially in reference to women. She can bear witness from personal experience to what they can achieve and what is refused them. Her life has been spent in a political atmosphere. Her father was Elliott Roosevelt, a brother of Theodore Roosevelt; and her mother, who was Miss Anna Hall before her marriage, came from one of the oldest New York families, and was a descendant of Chancellor Livingston, who administered the oath of office to George Washington.

As a girl Mrs. Roosevelt lived at the family estate at Tivoli-on-the-Hudson, an original grant to Chancellor Livingston; and her education was completed by three years of study abroad. She married, in 1905, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, who later was elected to the New York senate, where he served from 1910 until 1917.

Appointed Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Franklin Roosevelt served for eight years, during the entire period of America's participation in the war. In Washington during this period Mrs. Roosevelt enjoyed unusual contacts with Government officials, diplomats, members of war missions, and officers of the Army and Navy. After the Armistice she visited Europe with her husband, who took charge of the closing of the naval aviation camps. Mr. Roosevelt resigned as Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1920, to accept the Democratic nomination for Vice-President of the United States.

Mrs. Roosevelt herself has figured importantly in the Democratic Party since 1921; for six years she served as finance chairman of women's activities of the New York Democratic State Committee, and is also a member of the committee of Dutchess County.

She is vice-chairman of the Woman's City Club of New York, chairman of the Non-Partisan Legislative Committee, editor of the New York State Women's Democratic News, and is a member of the Board of Directors of the Foreign Policy Association and the City Housing Corporation. Her acquaintance with political affairs is country-wide, and is extended to both parties.

Mrs. Roosevelt is part owner of and teacher in a private school for girls, and in her county has launched a movement intended to solve the problems of agricultural people. In a furniture industry, started and financed by her, she aims to give employment to farm workers in the winter, and through other crafts to enable farm women to earn their own money.

Active as she is politically, Mrs. Roosevelt is devoted to her home, is the mother of five children, and is one of the most popular and charming hostesses in the best circles of New York society.—THE EDITORS.



Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

WOMEN have been voting for ten years. But have they achieved actual political equality with men? No. They go through the gesture of going to the polls; their votes are solicited by politicians; and they possess the external aspect of equal rights. But it is mostly a gesture without real power. With some outstanding exceptions, women who have gone into politics are refused serious consideration by the men leaders. Generally they are treated most courteously, to be sure, but what they want, what they have to say, is regarded as of little weight. In fact, they have no actual influence or say at all in the consequential councils of their parties.

In small things they are listened to; but when it comes to asking for important things they generally find they are up against a blank wall. This is true of local committees, State committees, and the national organizations of both major political parties.

From all over the United States, women of both camps have come to me, and their experiences are practically the same. When meetings are to be held at which momentous matters are to be decided, the women members often are not asked. When they are notified of formal meetings where important matters are to be ratified, they generally find all these things have been planned and prepared, without consultation with them, in secret confabs of the men beforehand. If they have objections to proposed policies or candidates, they are adroitly overruled. They are not allowed to run for office to any appreciable extent, and if they propose candidates of their own sex, reasons are usually found for their elimination which, while diplomatic and polite, are just pretexts nevertheless.

In those circles which decide the affairs of national politics, women have no voice or power whatever. On the national committee of each party there is a woman representative from every State, and a woman appears as vice-chairman. Before national elections they will be told to organize the United States, and asked to help in minor ways in raising funds. But when it comes to those grave councils at which possible candidates are discussed, as well as party policies, they are rarely invited in. At the national conventions no woman has ever been asked to serve on the platform committee.

Politically, as a sex, women are generally "frozen out" from any intrinsic share of influence in their parties.

The machinery of party politics has always been in the hands of men, and still is. Our statesmen and legislators are still keeping in form as the successors of the early warriors gathering around the camp-fire plotting the next day's attack. Yes, they have made feints indicating they are willing to take women into the high councils of the parties. But, in fact, the women who have gone

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Family home of the Franklin D. Roosevelts, Hyde Park, N. Y.

into the political game will tell you they are excluded from any actual kind of important participation. They are called upon to produce votes, but they are kept in ignorance of noteworthy plans and affairs. Their requests are seldom refused outright, but they are put off with a technique that is an art in itself. The fact is that generally women are not taken seriously. With certain exceptions, men still as a class dismiss their consequence and value in politics, cherishing the old-fashioned concept that their place is in the home. While women's votes are a factor to be counted upon, and figure largely in any impending campaign, the individual women who figure in party councils are regarded by their male confreres as having no real power back of them. And they haven't.

Men who work hard in party politics are always recognized, or taken care of in one way or another. Women, most of whom are

voluntary workers and not at all self-seeking, are generally expected to find in their labor its own reward. When it comes to giving the offices or dealing out favors, men are always given precedence.

They will ask women to run for office now and then, sometimes because they think it politic and wise to show women how generous they are, but more often because they realize in advance their ticket cannot win in the district selected. Therefore they will put up a woman, knowing it will injure the party less to have a woman defeated, and then they can always say it was her sex that defeated her. Where victory is certain, very rarely can you get a woman nominated on the party ticket.

Of course there are women all over the United States who have been elected to high and important offices. There are three women in Congress; there have been two woman governors; and women sit in various State legislatures and hold State offices. In New York City one could cite several who have not only been elected but who have conducted themselves in office with ability and distinction. But does that indicate any equal recognition or share in political power? Infinitely more examples come to mind of women who were either denied a nomination or who were offered it only when inevitable defeat stared the party leaders in the face.

When, some years ago, it came to putting women on the Democratic State Committee in New York, only two outstanding men openly approved of the move. A number were willing, but a great many more were indifferent. Governor Smith wanted women on the committee, believing they had something to contribute, and that they should have recognition for what they could do. Quite unlike Governor Smith, many other men come to mind who hold important positions of power in New York State. They deal with the women in a spirit of most deferential courtesy; but as many of us know, they heartily dislike the idea of women mixing in politics, are antagonistic to those who are active, and can be depended upon to do all in their power to render the women's influence negative.

Beneath the veneer of courtesy and outward show of consideration universally accorded women, there is a widespread male hostility—age-old, perhaps—against sharing with them any actual control.

How many excuses haven't I heard for not giving nominations to women! "Oh, she wouldn't like the kind of work she'd have to do!" Or, "You know she wouldn't like the people she'd have to associate with—that's not a job for a nice, refined woman." Or more usually: "You see, there is so little patronage nowadays. We must give every appointment the most careful consideration. We've got to consider the good of the party." "The good of the party" eliminates women!

When no women are present at the meetings, the leaders are more outspoken. (Continued on page 141)



Photo by Baehrach

Three of Mrs. Roosevelt's children.

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WOMEN MUST LEARN TO PLAY
THE GAME AS MEN DO

(Continued from page 79)

"No, we're not going to have any woman on the ticket," declared one leader according to a report once made to me. "Those fool women are always making trouble, anyway. We won't have any we don't have to have, and if we have one, let's get one we understand."

It is a strong and liberal man, indeed, who speaks on behalf of the women at those secret conclaves, and endeavors to have them fairly treated.

To many women who fought so long and so valiantly for suffrage, what has happened has been most discouraging. For one reason or another, most of the leaders who carried the early fight to success have dropped out of politics. This has been in many ways unfortunate. Among them were women with gifts of real leadership. They were exceptional and high types of women, idealists concerned in carrying a cause to victory, with no idea of personal advancement or gain. In fact, attaining the vote was only part of a program for equal rights—an external gesture toward economic independence, and social and spiritual equality with men.

When the franchise was finally achieved, their interest was not held by any ambition for political preferment or honors. To learn the intricate machinery of politics and play the men's game left them cold. The routine of political office held no appeal. One of the most prominent of those early crusaders today gives her energies to campaigning for world peace. By nature a propagandist, it would be impossible to interest her in either of the major parties. Another woman, who donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to the cause, frankly admits she has never even cast a vote. She considers the situation, with women coping with men in the leading parties, utterly hopeless. Like many others, she regards suffrage as an empty victory, equal rights a travesty, and the vote a gesture without power.

An extreme point of view, in my opinion. There is a method—and not the one advocated by certain militants who hold aloof from party politics—by which, I believe, the end of a fair representation and share in control may be attained.

Personally, I do not believe in a Woman's Party. A woman's ticket could never possibly succeed. And to crystallize the issues on the basis of sex-opposition would only further antagonize men, congeal their age-old prejudices, and widen the chasm of existing differences.

HOW, then, can we bring the men leaders to concede participation in party affairs, adequate representation and real political equality?

Our means is to elect, accept and back women political bosses.

To organize as women, but within the parties, in districts, counties and States just as men organize, and to pick efficient leaders—say two or three in each State—whom we will support and by whose decisions we will abide. With the power of unified women voters behind them, such women bosses would be in a position to talk in terms of "business" with the men leaders; their voices would be heard, because their authority and the elective power they could command would have to be recognized.

Women are today ignored largely because they have no banded unity under representative leaders and spokesmen capable of dealing with the bosses controlling groups of men whose votes they can "deliver." These men bosses have the power of coordinated voters behind them. Our helplessness is that of an incoherent anarchy.

PERHAPS the word "boss" may shock sensitive ears. To many it will conjure all that is unhealthy and corrupt in our political machinery. Yet when I speak of women bosses, I mean bosses actually in the sense that men are bosses. The term boss does not necessarily infer what it once did. Politics have been purged of many of the corruptions prevalent a quarter of a century ago. In neither of the political parties are there many, if any, such bosses, great or small, as were such common types in the heyday of Quay and Tweed. As things are today, the boss is a leader, often an enlightened, high-minded leader, who retains little of the qualities imputed by the old use of this obnoxious word, but who still exercises authority over his district. I therefore use the word, as it is the word men understand.

If women believe they have a right and duty in political life today, they must learn to talk the language of men. They must not only master the phraseology, but also understand the machinery which men have built up through years of practical experience. Against the men bosses there must be women bosses who can talk as equals, with the backing of a coherent organization of women voters behind them.

Voters who are only voters, whether men or women, are only the followers of leaders. The important thing is the choosing of leaders.

We must be fair, and admit the blame for our present ineffectuality in politics does not lie wholly with the men. If we are still a negligible factor, ignored and neglected, we must be prepared to admit in what we have ourselves failed.

The trouble with many women is that they won't work. They won't take up their jobs as men do and put in seven or eight real working hours a day. They lack knowledge, and at that many won't take the pains to study history, economics, political methods or get out among human beings. If they take a volunteer political job, it is a thing of constant interruptions, with no sense of application, concentration, business efficiency or order. One of the reasons why men leaders so often do not consider as important what a woman says is that they do not feel sure she has been active among the mass of women voters and has learned what they want. In fact, many women do make the mistake of "talking out of a blue sky" instead of going about, mixing with women, and getting their point of view from close personal contact and practical experience. When a man leader says his following want certain things, the men higher up realize that he knows what he is talking about, and that he has gone through his district.

There are two classes of men in politics—those for whom it is a game or relaxation, and those for whom it is bread and butter. These latter are usually small office-holding politicians, bosses of small groups of men. At their head are men who are deeply interested for the good of their country as they see it, and who often for patriotic reasons hold government offices for a time. But you will find as a rule that their first interest is in some other career in which they have made a name, worked their best and hardest, and gained the wherewithal to live and support their families. Politics—public service—is something apart.

Women are different. Many of them have no professional careers. If they go into politics it is usually because of some interest which they realize is dependent on government action. I know women who are interested in education, in health conditions, in the improvement of rural life, in social problems, in housing, and all active in politics



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PAGE 142

The Red Book Magazine



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because they have come to realize by that way they may further their particular cause. Politics is less of a game to them because they haven't had the same training for games as men, and their first contact with great groups of people is an exciting and disturbing experience, not to be taken lightly but almost prayerfully.

In this I am not speaking of the small army of women who are trained in some profession, some of whom hold minor political offices, and a few of whom hold positions of importance in the parties. Some of these have attained the attitude of men, and meet them on the same ground. Then there are women, as there are men, who frankly are in politics for what they can get out of it. I remember well one woman who had worked hard in an organization and was denied recognition in the tangible way she desired—namely, a paid job. Whereupon she announced she was going over to the opposing political party, where, when they wished to reward a worker, they created a job if one was not available at the time!

This attitude is comparatively rare, however, because most women working in all political organizations are volunteers. Their motives for being volunteers may be mixed. I am far from claiming that as a sex we have a monopoly of disinterested desire to serve our country. Human nature is much the same in men and women. But the fact remains that the great mass of women working in political organizations all over this country are unpaid, and they are so far allowed to do the detail work which bores the men.

IN the average home a woman's job is full of interruptions; and so, unless she sets out to methodize her life, she is apt to go through many waste motions. Now many volunteer political workers come out of such unorganized homes. When the children are small, if they have little help in their homes, the mothers cannot do outside work. But as the children grow up—or in rare cases before they are married—they may turn to politics as an outside interest. If they are women of means and have more help at home, they may still have led disorganized lives, for of necessity a home and children make unexpected demands.

I don't want the average woman, or the exceptional woman for that matter, who

for one reason or another could not do a public job well, to take one at present. For just now a woman must do better than a man, for whatever she does in the public eye reflects on the whole cause of women. There are women in the United States I would gladly see run for any office. But if we cannot have the best I should prefer to wait and prepare a little longer until women are more ready to make a fine contribution to public life in any office they might hold.

An old politician once objected: "Don't you think these women lose their allure, that the bloom is just a little gone? Men are no longer interested?"

Frankly, I don't know. I imagine the answer is individual. It was once said that men did not marry women who showed too much intelligence. In my youth I knew women who hid their college degrees as if they were one of the seven deadly sins. But all that is passing, and so will pass many other prejudices that have their origin in the ancient tradition that women are a by-product of creation.

Remember, women have voted just ten years. They have held responsible positions in big business enterprises only since the war, to any great extent. The men at the head of big business or controlling politics are for the most part middle-aged men. Their wives grew up in an era when no public question was discussed in a popular manner, when men talked politics over their wine or cigars, and pulled their waistcoats down, on joining the ladies, to talk music, or the play or the latest scandal. Can you blame them if the adjustment to modern conditions is somewhat difficult?

Certain women profess to be horrified at the thought of women bosses bartering and dickering in the hard game of politics with men. But many more women realize that we are living in a material world, and that politics cannot be played from the clouds. To sum up, women must learn to play the game as men do. If they go into politics, they must stick to their jobs, respect the time and work of others, master a knowledge of history and human nature, learn diplomacy, subordinate their likes and dislikes of the moment and choose leaders to act for them and to whom they will be loyal. They can keep their ideals; but they must face facts and deal with them practically.

MONEY OF HER OWN

(Continued from page 72)

well as it could. "I don't think Philip Helm would," she said; "he didn't seem like that to me. I thought he was terribly proud and all that."

"Well, he'll need to be," said Botsford sarcastically.

"Dick, I think you're awfully unfair." "Oh, am I?" Botsford was not to be moved from his satisfaction.

"Get me a paper, will you?" he asked the waiter.

They were dining at the Town Club, by themselves. Lily and Botsford had been making the best of each other lately, as if they saw inevitable marriage in the distance. But they were listless about it. . . .

Dick leaned forward, the paper folded to a long column on the front page.

"It's certainly got a headline. Eccentric will of late David Ranger. Believed men should earn own money. Niece gets large estate. Hospital gains hundred thousand." "He must have been rich!"

"Oh, he was. Why shouldn't he be? He never spent anything. I drove out tonight with Will Cummings, who says that his properties in the copper country simply weren't known. He was a great income-tax dodger, old Ranger."

"Go on," said Lily. "Read the part about Carol."

"I'm coming to it. Here it is: 'My niece, Caroline Ranger, the rest of my estate, on the condition that she shall retain control of her own property and not give it in whole or in any part to her spouse, whoever he may be. . . . This must have been written before Carol was married.'"

"I told you it wasn't because he had anything against Philip Helm!"

"Well, he must have guessed at him. Here's the heavy part. 'I do this in the belief that every man should earn his own living, regardless of the property of his wife, and that no man should depend on a woman for his livelihood. I believe that marital happiness and welfare is dependent on this— Say, he had quite a lot of beliefs, didn't he, the old bozo?'"

"What's the date of the will?" asked Lily, amazingly intelligent.

"About fourteen months ago."

"You see, it was before Carol was married! My mother said tonight that she remembered that Mr. Ranger had a sister who married a man and gave him what money she had—they had a lot of trouble about it."

"Something bit Ranger," said Dick. "Say, do you want grouse? They've got that, and some Chinese pheasant too—bootleg this month."

"All right. I don't see that the whole