

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT; FIRST LADY OF THE WORLD

Spring 2019

WHEN:

Monday mornings

Temple Beth El

10:00 am-12 pm

April 1- May 20

COORDINATORS:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

As first lady, Eleanor Roosevelt often acted as FDR's ambassador and surrogate but also found her own mission in fighting racism, white supremacy and Jim Crow in the United States. But it was after her husband's death in 1945, when President Truman appointed her to the United States delegation for the first United Nations assembly in London that she emerged as an independent leader, working on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and continuing her civil rights and humanitarian work. We will examine the life and accomplishments of this extraordinary woman.

RESOURCES:

Participants may choose to read any or all of the following books:

Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt: The War Years and After 1939-1962*; Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor: The Years Alone*; Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt*, Eleanor Roosevelt, *My Day*, *The Best of Eleanor Roosevelt's Acclaimed Newspaper Columns, 1936-1962*, Hazel Rowley, *Franklin and Eleanor*.

FORMAT:

Class participants should begin to read the texts prior to the beginning of the class and choose one of the following three options:

- (1) A presentation on a suggested or approved topic or individual. This will involve a 10-20 minute oral presentation followed by class discussion.
- (2) Participation in a debate or performance on a suggested topic or individual.
- (3) Leading a class discussion on one of the suggested topics (researching the topic, developing and distributing discussion questions and additional relevant material in advance of discussion date)

HOW WILL TOPICS/ASSIGNMENTS BE ALLOCATED

Topics will be allotted on a first come, first served basis. Please e-mail your first three choices in descending order to

COURSE CALENDAR:

Week 1 – April 1

Hour 1 : Introductions and Course Business

Hour 2: Eleanor's Childhood – Tragedy and Insecurity 1884-1902
Background Reading: Cook pp 3-15, *Autobiography* pp 3-114

Week 2 – April 8

Hour 1: Courtship and Marriage - 1903- 1921

Courtship

Early years of marriage – mother-in-law

Childbirth

Discovery and accommodation to FDR's infidelity

Political activities

Background reading: Rowley pp 3-63, *Autobiography* pp 129-147

Hour 2: 1921-1932 - Polio/ Recovery/ Re-entry into political world

Suggested Topics: FDR's Polio and Recovery

Eleanor's role in Facilitating Re-entry into Politics

Louis Howe

Lorena Hicks

Background Reading: Rowley pp 91-153, *Autobiography* 147-158

Week 3 April 15

Early Whitehouse Years/ Defining Years 1933-1937

Suggested Topics: Racial issues/Marian Anderson

Journalism/"My Day"

Role as "eyes and ears" of the President

Suggested Resources: Cook – chaps 1-4, pp 17-112

Rowley pp 179-211, *Autobiography* pp 173-199

Week 4 April 22

Facing Advance of Totalitarianism and War Abroad 1938-1941

Suggested Topics:

Anti-Semitism in U.S.

Refugee Crisis (the St. Louis)

Joseph Kennedy in London

Suggested Resources: Cook – pp 113-404, Rowley pp 211-241

Autobiography pp 208-234

Week 5 April 29

America at War 1941-1945

Suggested Topics: Pearl Harbor and Declaration of War

American mobilization

Internship of Japanese

Discrimination in the military

Suggested Resources: Cook pp 405-542, Rowley pp 242-275,

Autobiography pp 221-268

Week 6 - May 6

Hour 1: Active Widow - Funeral and Beyond 1945-1946

Suggested Topics: Journalist Career

Eleanor On Her Own

Defense of Civil Rights

Suggested Resources: *My Day*

Ladies Home Journal

Hour 2: United Nations

Suggested Topics: London meeting

Human Rights

Suggested Resources: Lash pp 19-54, Cook pp 543- 561,

Rowley pp275-302, *Autobiography* pp 283-381

Week 7 May 13

Hour 1: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Suggested Topics:

Suggested Resources: Lash pp 55-107

Hour 2: A Jewish Homeland

Suggested Resources: Lash 108-137

Week 8 May 20

Hour 1: Campaigning for Adlai Stevenson and JFK

Hour 2: President's Commission on Status of Women