

AAUW Eleanor Roosevelt Fund for Women and Girls

Inspired by Eleanor Roosevelt's vision that "we need every single mind" for America's future, in 1988 the Educational Foundation of AAUW established the Eleanor Roosevelt Fund for Women and Girls to help foster more equitable education for girls in grades K-12, especially in math, science, and technology. The fund supports fellowships for public school teachers and groundbreaking research that has changed the way scholars, policy-makers, and the general public think about the educational experiences and needs of girls in public schools.

Eleanor Roosevelt Teacher Fellowships are awarded to women public school teachers as individuals or as lead members of teams who develop new teaching strategies and curriculum materials that will improve the educational opportunities for all children.

Funded research focuses on the educational experience of girls in grades K-12. This research has brought public awareness to the differences in the quality and quantity of education among girls and boys. Past research initiatives include: *Shortchanging Girls, Shortchanging America* (1991), *Growing Smart: What's Working for Girls in School* (1995), *Voices of a Generation: Teenage Girls on Sex, School, and Self* (1999), *Tech-Savvy: Educating Girls in the New Computer Age* (2000), *Tenure Denied: Sex Discrimination in Academia* (2004), *Behind the Pay Gap* (2007), and *Where the Girls Are: The Facts About Gender Equity in Academia* (2008).

Lansdale AAUW



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Breaking through Barriers

Happy 125th Birthday, Eleanor Roosevelt



October 11, 2009

Eleanor Roosevelt was an extraordinary individual who refused to be confined to the traditional women's roles of her time. Among her many accomplishments, she was an advocate and champion for women's rights, civil rights, workers' rights, and universal human rights.

Eleanor Roosevelt's Early Life

Anna Eleanor Roosevelt was born on October 11, 1884, in New York City to Anna Hall and Elliot Roosevelt (brother of Theodore Roosevelt). Eleanor's father suffered from alcoholism and depression which led to the dissolution of the family and his death in 1894. Despite this, Eleanor adored her father. Eleanor's mother Anna was a renowned beauty who lamented over Eleanor's plainness and serious expression, nicknaming her "Granny". Anna Hall contracted diphtheria and died in 1892 when Eleanor was only eight. Eleanor attended the Allenswood Academy in 1899, a finishing school for girls in England. The headmistress was Marie Souvestre, a noted feminist educator who strove to instill an independent mindset in her students. Eleanor considered Marie one of the seven key persons who shaped her life.

Eleanor and Franklin

Eleanor became engaged to Franklin Delano Roosevelt (her fifth cousin) in 1903 and married him in 1905. Franklin's mother, Sara Delano Roosevelt, was a domineering woman who continued to exert control over Franklin and Eleanor's lives. She insisted the couple live in her house at Hyde Park or in the double home adjacent to hers in New York City and that Eleanor give up her volunteer activities in New York to stay at home. Between 1906 and 1916 Eleanor gave birth to six children, one of whom died in infancy.

Politics

Franklin was elected to the New York State Senate in 1910 and reelected in 1912. He resigned from the New York State Senate to accept an appointment in Woodrow Wilson's administration as Assistant Secretary of the Navy and was in this role when World War I began. The war freed Eleanor from the burden of her purely social obligations and allowed her to work for Navy Relief and the Red Cross. She joined the League of Women Voters, the Women's City Club, and the Women's Division of the New York State Democratic Committee.

When Franklin suffered paralysis from polio in 1921, Eleanor began to accept public speaking engagements. Franklin was elected Governor of New York in 1928, and Eleanor continued her political activities and began her role as Franklin's observer, making inspection tours of schools and state institutions on his behalf. When Franklin was elected President in 1932, Eleanor created a new type of First Lady: one who held her own press conferences for women reporters only, who lectured and wrote prolifically, who traveled extensively as her husband's representative, and who spoke out on a host of issues concerning the disadvantaged. Eleanor played a role in World War II assisting refugees, boosting troop morale, and rallying citizens on the home front.

Eleanor on Her Own

After Franklin's death on April 12, 1945, Eleanor continued public life. She was appointed by President Truman to the United States Delegation to the United Nations General Assembly, a position she held until 1953. She was chair of the Human Rights Commission during the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the General Assembly on December 10, 1948. From 1952-1959, Eleanor traveled extensively and remained a staunch civil rights advocate, joining the NAACP Board of Directors in 1945. President Kennedy appointed Eleanor a member of the National Advisory Committee of the Peace Corps and chair of the President's Commission on the Status of Women.

In her later years, Eleanor lived at Val-kill in Hyde Park, New York. She also maintained an apartment in New York City, where she died on November 7, 1962, at the age of 78. She is buried alongside her husband in the rose garden of their estate at Hyde Park.

References

<http://www.ervk.org/index.html>

<http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/erbio.html>