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Mary L. Scheer

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## **Bound for Beaumont: Eleanor Roosevelt's 1939 Train Trip through East Texas and Beyond**

BY

MARY L. SCHEER

*Author's Note: It has long been the custom in our learned society—the East Texas Historical Association—for the departing president to address those assembled at the annual fall meeting in Nacogdoches. This talk, presented on October 9, 2015, represents a personal journey, from my research on Texas and Texas women to one more on the national stage. It is part of a larger project on Eleanor Roosevelt, who not only transformed the role of the first lady, but advocated for social justice, equality, and peace, making her a significant figure in her own right.*

Today, probably few people would associate the Roosevelt name, much less Eleanor Roosevelt, with East Texas or even Texas at large. She was born a Roosevelt; she was the niece of a Roosevelt, Teddy; and she was the wife of a Roosevelt—her fifth cousin, Franklin. All were patricians and from New York, a far distance from Texas. Born in 1884, Eleanor grew up to be a tall, shy, young woman who was intelligent, socially-conscious, and a champion of the less fortunate. These qualities attracted her to Franklin, but their marriage was not close; it was essentially a political partnership, one which allowed Eleanor to develop her own independence, her own friendships, and her own interests.<sup>1</sup>

When she entered the White House in 1932 Eleanor Roosevelt thought of herself mostly as a teacher, having taught for several years at the Tod Hunter School, a small private academy for girls in New York City.

But now as first lady she had to give up teaching and wondered what she could do that was not the result “of somebody else’s work and

*Mary L. Scheer is a Professor of History and the Director of the Center for History and Culture at Lamar University.*

position.” Eleanor therefore turned naturally to speaking and writing, a choice that helped her navigate the world that she inherited. As a public speaker she adhered to the advice extended her by FDR’s political advisor Louis Howe: “Have something to say, say it and sit down.”<sup>2</sup>

In choosing to speak and write, Eleanor wanted to accomplish something meaningful with her life and, of course, there was a depression going on with real human need. There was also a mood of experimentation in the country to try and solve the crisis. Since her husband was confined to a wheelchair due to polio, she literally was his “eyes, ears, and legs” during the 1930s and 1940s. As an astute observer and “publicist for the New Deal,” Eleanor traveled across the nation, making sure that federal agencies maintained their effectiveness and that the individual was never forgotten in the burgeoning bureaucracy.<sup>3</sup>

During her White House years, the first lady earned the nickname “Eleanor Everywhere.” In addition to her normal schedule of sponsored radio talks, press conferences, newspaper columns, election campaigns, and White House duties, she also contracted with the management firm of W. Colston Leigh to make two lecture tours a year. Such a hectic, unprecedented pace for a first lady caught the attention of the editors of *Life* magazine. In 1940 they reported that since moving into the White House Eleanor had traveled more than 280,000 miles, visited every state but South Dakota, shaken more than a half-million hands, given hundreds of lectures, and “probably not wasted as much time as the average person does in a week.” In fact, she was on the road so much that one Washington news headline announced a rare occurrence. It read: MRS. ROOSEVELT SPENDS NIGHT AT WHITE HOUSE!<sup>4</sup>

In March of 1939 Eleanor Roosevelt embarked on one of her lecture tours, this time through the South and into Texas, for which she was paid \$1,000 per speech. At the time working as a first lady was generally not standard behavior. But Eleanor Roosevelt was a non-traditional woman who just happened to be the president’s wife. Earning her own money provided her with a sense of personal fulfillment and enabled her “to do many things for which her own income was insufficient.” Further, she didn’t want “be a financial drain on her husband.” So beginning in 1935 she contracted every



spring and fall to deliver speeches across the country on selected topics, ranging from social responsibility and the problems of youth to world peace and a typical day at the White House.<sup>5</sup>

Never a great public speaker, Eleanor Roosevelt soon became more comfortable on the public stage as time went on. She took elocution lessons to correct her high-pitched, shrill voice, but was never satisfied with her performance. She suffered from nervousness and worried that people considered her as simply a “mouthpiece” for her husband. As an individual with opinions of her own, but also as the first lady, she had to walk a tightrope between her views and the official positions of her husband’s administration. Despite her claims that FDR did not try to discourage or muzzle her, Eleanor never felt completely free to voice her own thoughts and opinions until she was out of the White House and on her own after 1945.<sup>6</sup>

As she began her lecture tour in 1939, the nation and the state were in a state of transition. Texas had benefited at the federal money trough, but the depression, although waning, was not yet resolved. Many of the New Deal reforms of the past six years had peaked and lost their crusading force. Events on foreign soil were now distracting Texans from the large scale government spending programs to issues of isolationism, neutrality, and preparedness. Even President Roosevelt, in his annual State of the Union message to Congress in January of 1939, said as much when he referred to the recent military aggression by Nazi Germany, fascist Italy and imperial Japan.<sup>7</sup>

But before the world dissolved into open hostilities, most Texans in early 1939 were still more concerned with day-to-day events at home than events abroad. With over 300,000 Texans still out of work or on relief, they worried about the price of cotton, the continuation of public works jobs, and the stabilization of wages and taxes. Events such as the upcoming visit to the United States of King George VI and Queen Elizabeth of England, when the first lady dared to serve royalty hot dogs, and the announcement of Lou Gehrig’s retirement, the great New York Yankee first baseman, after contracting a neuro-muscular disorder, grabbed national headlines. News about the invasions by Germany of Austria and Czechoslovakia, while condemned, seemed distant and none of their concern in the months before the outbreak of World War II in Europe.<sup>8</sup>

By 1939 the First Lady was well versed with the issues facing Texans. Blessed with good health and energy, she was already a tireless traveler, crisscrossing the country and journeying thousands of miles. Eleanor had met and talked to those suffering from the depression across the nation. She had spoken out on controversial issues and openly supported new initiatives to solve some of the unjust situations she encountered. And she had filed detailed reports to her husband, particularly on the success or failure of many federal programs. As one *New York Times* reporter observed at the time, except for the president, she was “the best informed individual on the American scene.”<sup>9</sup>

Eleanor Roosevelt began her three week-long train trip on March 6, 1939, accompanied by her secretary Malvina (Tommy) Thompson, nine small suitcases and “the inevitable knitting bag.” Her route began in Washington D.C. and would take her through the segregated Deep South, into Texas, and then westward to California. Opposed to the prevailing Jim Crow laws at the time, she had earlier committed an act of civil disobedience at the Southern Conference for Human Welfare in Birmingham, Alabama, by sitting on the “black side” of the meeting room. Further, Eleanor had resigned from the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) when black singer Marian Anderson was banned from Washington’s Constitution Hall, which was controlled by the DAR. For these actions and others, she was both loved and hated in the South and had received death threats from the Ku Klux Klan. But the reality in 1939 was that segregation policies were socially entrenched and legally enforced. She therefore reluctantly traveled by train in segregated train cars and spoke at segregated facilities as she moved throughout the South.<sup>10</sup>

The purpose of this 1939 train trip was three-fold: First, to deliver paid lectures to many places throughout the country to which she otherwise might never have gone. Second, to report on New Deal programs to her husband “as a check against the many official reports he received.” And third, to keep the Roosevelt name and the administration’s policies before the public. It was not all business, however, as she also found time for sightseeing and visiting family along the way.

Fortunately, we know a lot about Eleanor’s itinerary and thoughts through her syndicated newspaper column entitled “My Day,” her own Bully Pulpit, which she wrote six days a week beginning in 1935 until her death in 1962. Many of her opinions, observations, and daily



movements found their way into these columns. Written in a simple, matter-of-fact way, and in language that the average person could understand, no activity or subject was too humble or too lofty to report. For example, she wrote on a wide range of topics from gardening and childcare to human rights and politics. She also wrote about her travels and impressions of the people and the country during the Great Depression. From a historian's standpoint, these columns provide a valuable day-to-day, firsthand account of where she traveled, whom she met, and what issues, large and small, she encountered.<sup>11</sup>

Eleanor Roosevelt began the first leg of her trip, heading south through Virginia, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Louisiana, visiting local communities and inspecting New Deal programs. She gave public lectures at Natchez and Vicksburg, Mississippi. Her last stop before crossing into East Texas was at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. There she visited Southern University in Scotlandville, just north of Baton Rouge, and toured a school for African-American children, headed by civil rights advocate Mary McLeod Bethune. This black education program was part of the National Youth Administration (NYA)--a New Deal program that Eleanor Roosevelt had directly championed and helped create. Aimed at youth, whom she called the "stranded generation," it provided job training for young people between the ages of 16 and 25, who had dropped out of school and into a stagnating economy. But at the time the president was reluctant to add another federal relief program to the New Deal and he took a lot of convincing. So Eleanor worked on him at the usual time for discussion of such questions—"right before he went to sleep." Preferring sleep to argument, the president eventually succumbed. On June 26, 1935, he signed executive order 7086 creating the NYA, which would also make a young 26-year-old Lyndon Johnson, the first NYA director in Texas. In 1939 it was this agency that was uppermost in her mind as she toured Texas and the South.<sup>12</sup>

As chief advocate and publicist for the NYA, Eleanor Roosevelt boarded the train in Baton Rouge on March 9, writing in her daily column that she was "bound for Beaumont." At every station along the way people came to greet her, bringing flowers. Although outspoken and often controversial, she was still popular. In fact, the Gallup poll that year showed that the first lady outranked the president, winning 67 percent approval compared to FDR's 58 percent.<sup>13</sup>

Prior to arriving in Beaumont, a young female reporter—Merita Mills—joined Eleanor Roosevelt on the train in DeQuincy, Louisiana, for the ride to Beaumont. This followed the first lady's practice of holding female-only press conferences in the White House and meetings with women journalists in the field. She believed that it gave women journalists a chance they would not otherwise have received in a male-dominated profession. Obviously star struck by the first lady, Mills repeatedly referred to Mrs. Roosevelt as "my president's wife," and wrote that meeting the first lady was like "brushing against the flag." Engaged in friendly conversation as the Texas landscape slid by the train window, Mills asked the first lady what young women could do to serve their country. Eleanor answered by suggesting the remarkable work done in hospitals and government offices by the NYA, as well as civic and charitable organizations. If government would provide training for volunteers over a period of time, Eleanor advised, then young people could render "some service which would be of use to the communities in which they live."<sup>14</sup>

Eleanor Roosevelt crossed the Sabine River into Texas at the Deweyville crossing. She traveled through Mauriceville, a town of about 60 residents, and arrived in Beaumont, the county seat of Jefferson County with a population of almost 60,000. A crowd of over 5,000 people greeted her. This was the first visit by a first lady to the city then or since. Disembarking at the Kansas City Southern Station in downtown Beaumont, she was welcomed by Mayor Ray Coale, along with members of the Altrusa Club, a local women's service organization. The Orange High School Bengal Guards then escorted her vehicle to the Hotel Beaumont, an eleven story hotel constructed in 1922. There she enjoyed a brief concert, followed by a short rest before beginning her day's event-filled agenda.<sup>15</sup>

Prior to her scheduled evening lecture, Eleanor Roosevelt met with NYA representatives from Jefferson County. She was "extremely interested" in their projects and learned about the county NYA training programs in woodworking, childcare, metal work, and nursing. Students were also taught "to cook and make flags," and given job assistance. Roosevelt stressed that it was impossible for the NYA alone to fully solve the youth problem; it would require "the assistance of the people in the communities."<sup>16</sup>



“The Relation of the Individual to his Community” therefore became the theme of her lecture at the civic center that evening. Dressed in a long velvet gown, the first lady urged the audience to think about their responsibilities to their community. She advised that they should begin by studying their own neighborhoods and local government, and with that knowledge they could improve their lives not only at the local and state levels, but also in the nation and in the world. It was up to the individual to make democracy work, she emphasized, and “you can’t say it is anybody else’s business, because it is not; it is yours!”<sup>17</sup>

Following her lecture, she customarily hosted a question and answer period—even taking questions meant to embarrass her. Here she could find out what was on the minds of her audience. While she generally tried to avoid politics, her audience did not. One question that evening from a Beaumonter was whether FDR would run for a third term. Due to the depression and possible war in Europe, many wondered if he would be a candidate again in 1940. She laughingly replied: “You’ll have to ask him yourself. There are just some things one doesn’t ask.” Yet privately, Eleanor feared another four years in the White House. She worried about her husband’s health, but also about the constraints placed on her as first lady. Additionally, there were many Americans who were constitutionally opposed to a third term, and some even suggested that Eleanor run instead and “Keep a Roosevelt in the White House!” Whenever the topic came up, however, she dismissed it, claiming that one president in the family was enough. Besides, Eleanor argued, she was too old and the country needed newer and younger leadership.<sup>18</sup>

Another pressing issue for many Texans at the time was the recent occupation of Austria and Czechoslovakia by Adolph Hitler. When questioned about the prospects for world peace, she stated that it divided into two distinct situations: the long-time view into the future and the immediate situation. “All you can do in the immediate situation is to look at it realistically and see what actually is going on and back whatever action seems to be most helpful at the time.” A strong believer in disarmament, she eventually came to the painful realization that the U.S. would have to abandon its isolationism and neutrality. In the current situation, she stated, “we as a nation are foolish if we do not keep our arms up to a point where we can



adequately defend ourselves." Since the president was still publically pledged to not getting involved in any foreign wars, Eleanor could say things as a trial balloon that the president could not. FDR, the consummate politician, could then weigh public reaction based on her probing comments and public reception.<sup>19</sup>

The next leg of her journey was from Beaumont to Fort Worth to spend the weekend with second son Elliott and his family. Unfamiliar with East Texas, she expected to see "a rather arid state." Instead, she saw green "fields which have evidently had more than their quota of rain." She made one brief stop at College Station where Elliott was one of the trustees at Texas A&M College. There she inspected resident NYA projects in agriculture and animal husbandry, catching a quick glimpse of the dairy and farm facilities.<sup>20</sup>

Arriving in Fort Worth on March 10 aboard the "Alamo," a special car attached to the Southern Pacific Railroad, she was met by her two-year-old grandson Elliott, Jr. and her daughter-in-law Ruth Roosevelt. Elliott, Sr., who was not always on good terms with his parents and eventually divorced four times, was in New York and unable to be present. He owned and operated several radio stations (Texas State Network) and often disagreed publicly with his parents over a third term for his father, American intervention in Europe, and his mother's friends in the American Youth Congress, a suspected communist organization. In fact, that was one reason why Eleanor Roosevelt had one of the largest FBI files at the time. Nevertheless, Eleanor looked forward to seeing her son, daughter-in-law, and two grandchildren on his Texas ranch. Her crowded schedule included an interview at a radio station, a discussion with "two gentlemen from the NYA," and then a train ride to Abilene for a speaking engagement on "A Day at the White House" at Hardin-Simmons University. This hectic pace left everyone but Eleanor breathless.<sup>21</sup>

On March 13 Eleanor left Fort Worth by car to travel to Sherman, Texas. Again, she was scheduled to give a public lecture, this time to the Texas League of American Pen Women, a woman's club to promote female creative activities. While in route, a dust storm erupted, but her driver assured her that "we never have any bad ones in this part of the State." But that was not the case and the storm proved to be "the worst they had seen." Visibility was limited and the car had "to stop once

or twice because we could not see the road ahead very clearly." This firsthand experience of the effects of the Dust Bowl convinced the first lady of the need for soil conservation programs in regions without rain for so long. In her column the next day she wrote: "There is no doubt that much of the country which has been put under cultivation should go back into grass and be used as range for cattle."<sup>22</sup>

Returning to the Roosevelt ranch, Eleanor had time to visit with Elliott and catch up with the family. Later that evening they attended the Southwestern Exposition and Stock Show in Fort Worth with Texas Governor and Mrs. O'Daniel. Her first experience at "a real rodeo," impressed Eleanor. Being a horsewoman herself, she appreciated the cowboy's ability to ride and their "strength and agility in dealing with cattle." Eleanor's overall impression of the region was stereotypical: She called it "cowboy country" where even in the larger cities, Texans are conscious of "the picturesqueness of this part of their population."<sup>23</sup>

After three very busy days, Eleanor Roosevelt said goodbye to her grandchildren and left Ft. Worth for Houston. This third leg of her trip was first by car and then by train. Driving with Elliott and wife Ruth, they first stopped at Hillsboro to see "a practice house for girls." This NYA facility was an innovative school for rural girls to attend for two weeks and then return home for two weeks to put into practice what they learned and then the cycle would repeat. Arriving in Waco to meet the train, Eleanor had time to inspect a building constructed at the municipal airport by the NYA boys and meet with the NYA State Advisory Committee. After a brief rest, she then boarded the train, arriving in Houston the next day.<sup>24</sup>

In 1939 Houston was a town of about 375,000 residents where, with the help of private banks and welfare agencies, the depression came later and left earlier than other parts of the nation. As was her custom, before she disembarked from the train she met the public and press on the train platform for a brief speech. Later, in her Rice Hotel suite, she held a press conference, followed by a tour of Jefferson Davis Hospital where NYA girls held jobs. Accompanied by J. C. Kellam, state NYA supervisor, and Houston director W. O. Alexander, she then traveled to a rural school in Cypress and talked with NYA boys who were building a house for the school superintendent, to Hempstead to inspect a new community center, and then to Prairie



View College, the only state supported black college, to inspect NYA dormitories. The day ended with a reception and an evening lecture at the Sam Houston Coliseum.<sup>25</sup>

Following her brief Houston stay, Eleanor Roosevelt left East Texas to continue her journey. On this fourth leg of her tour she drove to the Rio Grande Valley, a region known for its citrus fruits and vegetables. Arriving in Edinburg, her first visit to this part of the state, she wrote in her daily column that the area resembled "Southern California or in Florida." After a brief crossing into Mexico, she toured Engleman Gardens, a ranch of about 11,000 acres, and viewed citrus groves and a packing plant. She also drove through Weslaco where an experimental station was "developing various new usages for the products of the valley." The next morning, March 17, was the thirty-fourth anniversary of her marriage to FDR. With no mention of it in her "My Day" column, she drove to Harlingen, "paralleling the line of the Southern Pacific Railway." Along the way she viewed the Rio Grande River that supplied the essential water supply to the region. Reflecting her own philosophy to see things for herself, she observed: "In this big country of ours we have to see things with our own eyes to realize the things which may spell ruin to the entire section and yet which mean so little in other parts of the county."<sup>26</sup>

Leaving the valley on March 18, Eleanor Roosevelt arrived by train to San Antonio, the fifth leg of the trip. Accompanied by Mayor Maury Maverick, his wife, and Mrs. Harry Drought, she visited local industries and historical sites. Always a staunch supporter of labor, especially women in the workforce, Eleanor was keenly interested in the needlework industry and the conditions of its female workers. The real difficulties, she observed, were not in union shops, but in the home garment work done outside organized industry. Other concerns were the replacement of handmade goods by machines and the high tuberculosis rate in the city.<sup>27</sup>

Along with her visits to local industries, Eleanor also found time to visit the old Spanish Governor's Palace, "a beautiful piece of restoration," the Witte Museum, where a pioneer log cabin was being built by the NYA boys, and several WPA projects. Afterwards, she boarded the train for the last leg of her journey.<sup>28</sup>

Eleanor Roosevelt's last day in Texas was spent riding the rails through "miles and miles of desert" through West Texas. Looking out her window the next morning she saw "a few cattle, some goats and some sheep with their lambs," moving about. Crossing the Pecos River Bridge, she gazed down into the 381 foot canyon. She passed dry arroyo beds and small ranch houses. As she crossed into New Mexico heading for California, she now looked forward to visiting daughter Anna and son-in-law John, who were expecting their first child. But before leaving the state, she reflected on her impressions of crisscrossing Texas and talking to its citizens:

These people are all conscious of the riches of the state in which they live. They know that there are vast natural resources still undeveloped. They know that they grow certain things at a day [and] time when a ready market is to be found in other state. [sic] However, you hear one complaint from them: "Why can't we get action from the Interstate Commerce Commission and Congress in the matter of freight rate differentials."<sup>29</sup>

This 3-week train trip to East Texas and beyond was both ordinary and extraordinary. It was ordinary because it demonstrated Eleanor Roosevelt's genuine interest in the common man. By seeking out a cross section of people, she wanted to ensure that the New Deal relief agencies served the most needy and neglected groups, including blacks, women, and sharecroppers. She also spoke in a simple language to ordinary men and women about their day-to-day concerns during the waning years of the Great Depression. She learned about all manner of issues and problems that affected Texans, from the lack of rain and loss of jobs to needlework and even freight rate differentials. Her unassuming manner and sincerity convinced people that she cared about their problems and would use her influence and access to power to try and correct injustices. But her appeal was not based solely on her relationship with the president. Audiences were enchanted with her personality, her directness, her humanitarianism, her warmth, and her unselfish interest in people. This was acknowledged by both her adversaries, as well as her friends.



At the same time this trip was extraordinary in the sense that the First Lady, initially a shy and submissive young woman and wife, could carve out a public role for herself other than official hostess at the White House. Her experiences and travels certainly did not fit into the standard role for first ladies. No other first lady before or since could match her energy, public service, or concern for the downtrodden. Her lecture tours took her to places such as East Texas to see firsthand the needs of the people. Never elected to public office, Eleanor acted as an intermediary between the average citizen and the government. Her trip was also remarkable in that she traveled without the use of the secret service or police escorts. In fact, she refused to be trailed by secret service agents. Only after she demonstrated the ability to protect herself with a concealed gun that she carried did the secret service agency acquiesce in her going without their protection. As humorist Will Rogers observed about Eleanor, who often traveled alone, "No maid, no secretary—just the First Lady of the land on a paid passenger ticket" to somewhere.<sup>30</sup>

Ultimately, Eleanor's 1939 train trip to East Texas and beyond, expanded the image of the First Lady, promoted the New Deal agenda, and exerted political influence on the administration. It also was a platform to understand the needs of the forgotten man and woman during the depression and throw light on such programs as the NYA, which she championed. But historians and others disagree on her significance and effectiveness. Was she a busybody as some thought or a political insider and confidant of the President? Should a first lady work for pay or be expected to volunteer for certain causes? Did she neglect her family by her frequent trips or provide a needed service for her disabled husband? Was she a humanitarian reformer or a radical who threatened the foundations of American society? Never elected to public office, did she exercise political power or feminine influence to pursue her own social causes? While Eleanor Roosevelt always denied that she exerted any political influence on her husband or anyone else in government, saying that she was just passing along requests or suggestions that came to her, the historical record tells another story. What we can say is that Eleanor Roosevelt was one of the most controversial and influential women in Washington, and her 1939 train trip through East Texas and beyond allowed her to play a key role in connecting the public to their government during the worst years of the Great Depression.

## Notes

1 There is a large amount of Roosevelt historiography, both of Franklin and Eleanor. Several good sources on Eleanor include: Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin* (New York: New American Library, Inc., 1971, reprint 1973); Blanche Wiesen Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, 2 vols. (New York: Viking, 1992; 1999); Tamara Hareven, *Eleanor Roosevelt: An American Conscience* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1968); Hazel Rowley, *Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010); Joseph P. Lash, *Eleanor, The Years Alone* (New York: New American Library, 1972); Doris Kearns Goodwin, *No Ordinary Times: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II* (New York: Simon & Shuster), 1994; Joan Hoff-Wilson, *Without Precedent: The Life and Career of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984). Eleanor also wrote her own autobiography, *This I Remember* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1949).

2 Speeches and articles, 1934, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, Franklin Roosevelt Presidential Library, Hyde Park, New York, hereinafter cited as ER Papers. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, 553.

3 Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, 551-570; *Time*, XXV (June 24) 1935), 9; William E. Leuchtenburg, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal* (New York: Harper, 193; 2009), 192.

4 *Life*, 1940.

5 Generally, the president did not curb his wife's activities. His attitude was that she could say anything she wanted and he could then say: "That is my wife; I can't do anything about her." Eleanor frequently donated her radio and lecture fees to charity, especially to the American Friends Service Committee. Lash, *Eleanor and Franklin*, 555; Eleanor Roosevelt Biography, National First Ladies' Library, 12-13, [www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=33](http://www.firstladies.org/biographies/firstladies.aspx?biography=33) (accessed August, 10, 2015).

6 Roosevelt, *This I Remember*, 152, 164; ER to L. Hickok, April 19, 1945, ER Papers; Eleanor Roosevelt Biography, 12; Goodwin, *No Ordinary Time*, 164.

7 Franklin D. Roosevelt, State of the Union Address, January 2, 1939, Washington D.C.

8 Eleanor Roosevelt, *The Autobiography of Eleanor Roosevelt* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1937), 199-207; Robert A. Calvert, Arnoldo De León and Gregg Cantrell, *The History of Texas*, 3d ed. (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson, Inc., 2002), 320.



9 David Emblidge, ed., *My Day*, 1936-1962 (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2001) 34.

10 Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day", February 27, 1939, in Emblidge, ed., *My Day*, 1936-1962; Eleanor Roosevelt, "My Day," March 7, 1939, Eleanor Roosevelt Papers, George Washington University, Washington, D.C. hereinafter referred to as "My Day;" *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 10, 1939; James MacGregor Burns and Susan Dunn, *The Three Roosevelts: Patrician Leaders who Transformed America* (New York: Grove Press, 2001), 394; Allida M. Black, *Casting Her Own Shadow; Eleanor Roosevelt and the Shaping of Postwar Liberalism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 40-44; Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, 436.

11 Emblidge, ed., *My Day*, 1936-1962, xi.

12 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 7-9, 1939; Carol A. Weisenberger, *Dollars and Dreams: The National Youth Administration in Texas* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), 16-19; "National Youth Administration," *The Handbook of Texas Online*, [tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ncn04](http://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ncn04) (accessed September 5, 2015.)

13 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 9, 1939; Emblidge, ed., *My Day*, 33; Gallup Poll, 1939.

14 *Beaumont Enterprise*, March 9, 1939; Roosevelt, "My Day," March 10, 1939.

15 *Ibid.* U.S. Census, 1940.

16 Robert W. Touchet, "New Deal Work Programs in Jefferson County, Texas: The Civilian Conservation Corps at Tyrrell Park," M.A. thesis, 1972, Lamar University, Beaumont, Tx; *Beaumont Enterprise*, March 9, 1939; Roosevelt, "My Day," March 10, 1939.

17 *Beaumont Enterprise*, March 9, 1939.

18 *Ibid*; Joseph P. Lash, *Love Eleanor: Eleanor Roosevelt and Her Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1982), 280, 319-320.

19 *Beaumont Enterprise*, March 9, 1939.

20 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 10-11, 1939; Burns and Dunn, *The Three Roosevelts*, 311-312.

21 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 14, 1939.

- 23 Roosevelt "My Day," March 13, 1939; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, March 10, 1939.
- 24 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 15, 1939.
- 25 The U. S. census of 1940 listed 384,514 residents in Houston. *Houston Post-Dispatch*, March 12, 14-15, 1939; *Houston Chronicle*, March 15, 1939; Roosevelt, "My Day" March 15, 1939.
- 26 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 16-17, 1939.
- 27 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 18-19, 1939.
- 28 *Ibid.*
- 29 Roosevelt, "My Day," March 20, 1939.
- 30 Eleanor typically only carried a pistol when she was alone in a car. Cook, *Eleanor Roosevelt*, 436; Eleanor Roosevelt Biography, 15; Rogers quoted by Burns and Dunn, *The Three Roosevelts*, 268.