

No Ordinary Time Study Guide

No Ordinary Time by Doris Kearns Goodwin

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Plot Summary

This book is entitled *No Ordinary Time: Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt: The Home Front in World War II*. Goodwin's idea was to write a history of World War II, not from a military standpoint, but rather, about what happened here in the United States. It is also a psychohistory about Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt. Goodwin becomes a psychoanalyst, who delves into their childhood traumas, emotional lives, family relationships, and even their extra-marital affairs, to create an understanding of them as human beings.

The book opens in May 1940, with FDR receiving the terrible news that Hitler's armies had attacked Holland, Luxembourg, Belgium, and France. He was worried that the United States was not prepared for war at all. There were no munitions factories or military draft. Instead, Americans were producing automobiles and washing machines. The Great Depression was not quite over, but the worst had seemed to have passed.

Roosevelt immediately rose to the occasion. He told the American people that just because there were oceans separating them from World War II, it didn't mean they were safe. However, they will remain neutral for the time being. He made a dramatic call for the production of fifty thousand planes a year. He began to nurse along a closer connection between business and government.

Meanwhile in Europe, the British armies miraculously escaped the Germans at Dunkirk. Italy entered the war on the side of Germany. France fell to the Nazis.

As the focus moved from domestic issues to foreign, Eleanor Roosevelt felt lost and abandoned. She had traveled actively as First Lady since 1932 and now the President was ignoring her. She asked to be sent to Europe with the Red Cross. However, it was denied due to the trip being considered too risky.

In 1940, Roosevelt overthrew the two-term tradition and was elected to a third-term. He promised that the United States would become "the arsenal of democracy" and supply free nations with weapons, ships, and airplanes against Germany and Italy. He came up with the ingenious term "Lend-Lease." Speaking in a homey, countrified way, he said a good neighbor lends his friends a fire hose in an emergency and does not ask for money. He secretly met with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill at sea and drew up the Atlantic Charter.

On December 7, 1941, the United States declared war on Germany, Italy, and Japan after Japan's surprise attack on the American naval base at Pearl Harbor. Roosevelt had eleven million men in the armed services and began to call for the production of even more aircraft, tanks, and guns. Coffee, sugar, nylon, rubber, aluminum, and other commodities were rationed.

Churchill, Roosevelt, and Russian Premier Joseph Stalin became known as the "Big Three." They met throughout the war and made all the major decisions about what

needed to be done. The conferences at Teheran and Quebec were about setting up a major cross channel invasion, convincing Stalin to help defeat Japan, and setting up the United Nations.

In 1944, Roosevelt won a fourth-term as President of the United States.

Once it was clear Germany would be defeated, the Big Three met in 1945 at Yalta to decide what to do about Germany, Poland, and the United Nations. Stalin walked away from these conferences with most of Eastern Europe.

Eleanor found a niche for herself by working for civil rights, especially for equal treatment of black soldiers. She traveled not only in the United States, but overseas to visit wounded soldiers and battlefields. She worked with the European refugee problem and continued to write her daily newspaper column. She was the first First Lady to address a national political convention and the first to hold a job in government. She and her husband conducted many inspections of war defense plants.

The book covers a lot about their personal lives, which were unusual. Eleanor and Franklin were more like business partners working in politics than man and wife. Eleanor was extremely useful to Roosevelt because she was vocal and liberal, which pleased the left wing of the Democratic Party. She could say things he believed, but could not necessarily act upon politically. Their four sons were in the armed services and their daughter, Anna, served as her father's personal assistant. Many friends and aides lived on and off in the White House, including Harry Hopkins, Lorena Hickok, Princess Martha of the Netherlands, Roosevelt's mother, Missy LeHand, and many guests such as Winston Churchill, who would visit for months at a time.

Roosevelt grew very sick and doctors knew that he had about a year to live when he ran for his fourth-term. He did not live to see victory in Europe or the defeat of Japan.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

This chapter reads like "a day in the life of President Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt," except this particular day was a very important one.

On May 9, 1940, Hitler's armies attacked Britain, Holland, Luxembourg, Belgium, and France. Bombs fell on Brussels, Amsterdam, Chilham, and Rotterdam, then on the French cities of Dunkirk, Calais, and Metz.

Roosevelt was fifty-eight years old and had been President for seven years. He got the news from Europe at 11 p.m. and stayed up until 2 a.m. consulting with advisors and foreign leaders. The next morning, he met with General George Marshall, Navy Chief Admiral Harold Stark, Attorney General Robert Jackson, Secretary of Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Secretary of State Cordell Hull, and Undersecretary Sumner Welles. They discussed how ill-prepared the United States was for a war and that Germany had the most modern weapons in the world.

After the meeting, Roosevelt held a press conference where he announced he would address the nation that evening. In the afternoon, he held a Cabinet meeting. Word came from England that Neville Chamberlain had resigned as Prime Minister and would be replaced by Winston Churchill.

After dinner, Roosevelt spoke in Constitution Hall at the Pan American Scientific Congress. Professing to be a pacifist, he nonetheless, warned the audience of scientists that America might be called upon to defend itself from.

Meanwhile, Eleanor Roosevelt was in New York City where she kept an apartment located in Greenwich Village. She had recently picked up an award from *The Nation Magazine* for her work on behalf of promoting civil rights and abolishing poverty. Her own views on war were that it was a terrible waste of human life and resources. Money spent on war could be better used on helping those in need.

The author paints a picture of their unusual marriage. Eleanor was never home. Her sensitive accounts of her travels helped her husband understand the everyday needs of Americans. Franklin was paralyzed from the waist down. A valet had to help him with basic care such as dressing, going to the bathroom, and getting in and out of bed. The couple was estranged from each other and surrounded themselves by other people. Franklin was particularly close to Missy LeHand, his personal secretary and political advisor, Harry Hopkins. Eleanor's secretary, Marvina Thompson, traveled everywhere with her. These three all lived in the White House.



Chapter 1 Analysis

The author starts off very strongly with a lot of small details of the President's everyday life. Little things, such as Eleanor leaving a basket of correspondence on his nightstand and the President enjoying gossip about sex at cocktail hour with a movie actress, help reveal personality. The reader gets a clear picture of just how helpless and dependent Roosevelt was after his bout with polio. Eleanor's cold judgmental attitude and refusal to be sexually intimate becomes a justification for Roosevelt shutting her out and enjoying the company of other women. Great events may be happening in the world, but this is still one humanly, married couple living in a house, even if it was the White House.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

The careful detail continues as FDR addresses Congress on May 16, 1940. Within this week, Holland had surrendered and the armies of Belgium and France were losing to the Germans. Roosevelt was in a difficult position. He wanted to help the Allies and predicted sooner or later, America would join the fight. However, he knew this was not a popular cause.

Americans had problems of their own. The Depression, which had lasted more than ten years, seemed to be ebbing, but the country was tired of the New Deal and reforms. Republicans who hated Roosevelt's domestic programs were in favor of his foreign policy and aiding the British. The Democrats, on the other hand, had the opposite view.

When he spoke to Congress that day, Roosevelt spent the first part of his speech explaining that in an age of modern air war, oceans no longer protected America. He called for arms production, asking specifically for 50,000 airplanes a year. He was clear that our country was facing a crisis and that we had to meet the Nazi threat head-on.

A few days later, celebrity hero, Charles Lindbergh made a case for continued isolationism. Nevertheless, Congress approved three quarters of a billion dollars to train troops, build tanks, planes, and ships, train pilots, and build weapons as quickly as possible.

The Allies were way behind the Germans in weaponry. Not only did they not have enough airplanes and tanks, some traditionalists actually wanted to keep using horses instead of tanks, as German tanks were moving with amazing, unstoppable efficiency across all kinds of terrain. One of Roosevelt's biggest problems was to make the business community, one that was very hostile to him, unite with the government in this crisis. He appointed William Knudsen, Head of General Motors, as director of the production process and the Chairman of United States Steel, Edward Stettinius, to supervise delivery and production of raw materials. Keeping the left content, he gave New Dealers four of the seven other main appointments. Afraid of asking too much from Americans, Roosevelt would not constrict consumption of consumer goods.

On May 26, 1940, he gave a "fireside chat." Roosevelt gave these "chats" or informal, evening radio speeches about twice a year. During this chat, Roosevelt said that Americans do not have to become like fascist nations in order to prepare for war and that a working relationship between government and business in this crucial time was possible.

In general, Eleanor was on the side of the New Dealers. She was distrustful of big business and against all wars.



Chapter 2 Analysis

This chapter really highlights Roosevelt's political dilemma and his ability to please different interests at the same time. He needed business interests to provide machinery and raw materials for munitions, but he did not want to inconvenience the American consumer. He needed Americans to support the allies in World War II, but they were not ready to go to war themselves. He needed to appease Democrats like his own wife, who believed money spent on weapons, is money taken away from social concerns.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Roosevelt had to make a difficult decision: should he give military aid to the British and help them hold on against the Germans, or should he build up America's military? Military leaders at home were in favor of rearming the United States. Most believed that the situation was hopeless. France and England would both eventually fall to the Germans. The President was betting on the British. If he were wrong, all the American equipment sent to help them would be lost to the Germans.

On May 24, the Germans were only a few miles from Dunkirk. For some strange reason, Hitler declared a three-day vacation. This gave the allies enough time to produce "the miracle of Dunkirk." About 340,000 men escaped to England on every kind of boat imaginable, including yachts and lifeboats. This gave the allies new hope and bolstered Roosevelt's argument for America to help the British. Roosevelt pressured Marshall into secretly sending "surplus" equipment abroad.

On June 10, Roosevelt gave an important speech at the University of Virginia. He denounced Italy for joining up with Germany and pledged "The material forces of this nation." The speech cleared the air. From now on, America was on the side of the allies. On June 14, the Germans took Paris, making Hitler the Master of France, Poland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, and Norway.

On June 20, Roosevelt reorganized the war department, appointing well-known conservatives in favor of intervention in the war in Europe. Then he returned to his estate in Hyde Park for a family vacation.

At this point, the author writes about Franklin's childhood. As an only child, both his parents doted on him and made his childhood the center of their lives. He was taught to avoid talking about unpleasant topics, showing pain or anger, and to be optimistic and happy above all. He grew up in a wealthy and privileged home. He often made the daily rounds of the large Roosevelt estate with his elderly father. After his father became a semi-invalid, when Roosevelt was only eight years old, he felt more than ever that he had to maintain a happy façade all the time. His mother was so attached to him that she educated him at home until he was fourteen. He then went to boarding school. He was not popular with the other boys there because he played up to his teachers and other adults. After boarding school, Roosevelt studied at Harvard University. When his father died, his mother grew so very lonely. She took an apartment in Boston to be near her son. At age twenty-one, Roosevelt wanted to marry his cousin, Eleanor, niece of President Theodore Roosevelt. However, his mother objected. Though they eventually did marry, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt's marriage was shared with his mother, who held the purse strings and supervised every household and child-rearing decision.



Chapter 3 Analysis

The author indulges in "psychobabble," when she writes sentences like this: "One consequence of early adaptation to a parent's wishes is the fear that all the love captured with so much effort is simply admiration for the good manners and achievements and the good nature, not truly love for the child as he is. What would happen if I appeared on the outside as I really am on the inside - sad, angry, rude, jealous and scared? □ This fear of exposure would explain Franklin Roosevelt's lifelong tendency to guard his weaknesses as if they were scars □" Goodwin studied at Harvard University in the 1970s, when many leading historians were writing "psycho-biographies" of famous people.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Whereas Chapter 3 is about Franklin's childhood, Chapter 4 is about Eleanor's.

Eleanor Roosevelt was the daughter of a well-known, prominent family in New York. Both Eleanor and Franklin were Roosevelts, but from different branches of the same family. Her father was the brother of President Theodore Roosevelt. Her mother was a society belle renowned for her exquisite beauty. Together they made a dazzling couple, but they presented problems for their three children. Anna Roosevelt was so self-absorbed that she was cold and remote to others. She was particularly mean to her homely daughter, Eleanor. Anna died when Eleanor was only eight. Eleanor's father, Elliot, was an alcoholic who died at age thirty-four when he jumped out of a window, leaving Eleanor and her brothers orphans when she was only ten.

Despite all his problems and instability, Eleanor adored her father and felt that she was his favorite child, who received unconditional love. His death wounded her deeply. Her childhood was unhappy and lonely. As an adult, she was prone to depression and insecurities.

Her marriage to Franklin was happy in the beginning, but after he had an affair with her social secretary, things changed. When he did not want to divorce her, she withdrew emotionally and sexually. After polio left him as a helpless cripple, their marriage became a business partnership working to keep his political career alive. She traveled, gave speeches, and reported back to him. He was attentive to her observations and opinions.

However, when Franklin became preoccupied with the war in Europe in May 1940, Eleanor felt abandoned by him. She worried that her work in civil rights and among poverty-stricken people was over. She did not have anything to do as Franklin was more interested in foreign affairs and armaments.

Eleanor came up with the idea that she could travel to Europe with the Red Cross to help organize relief efforts for refugees. On May 12, 1940, she cornered the Chairman of the Red Cross, who was on a boat outing with her and the President. She pressed her case. The next day she was disappointed to learn that she would be too much of a security risk to travel to Europe.

She had other disappointments in this period, as her friends in liberal causes, such as those in the American Youth Congress, became more critical of war spending and American intervention in European affairs. Even her friend in the White House, Harry Hopkins, who had been her ally in domestic affairs, suddenly became only interested in foreign policy. "Franklin," she told a friend, "Doesn't need my advice any more. Franklin doesn't ask it. He has Harry."



However, by the end of June 1940, Eleanor found a niche for herself. She became Chairman of the U.S. Committee for the Care of European Children, a movement to bring European children to America in unarmed ships as "visitors," not immigrants. Actually, at this time, Jewish Europeans were the ones who needed help getting out of Europe. Roosevelt worked behind the scenes and managed to get over 100,000 Jewish refugees safely to the United States between 1933 and 1940. However, the cause was unpopular. Roosevelt's hands were tied politically. Eleanor's committee and other refugee groups worked hard to bring refugees to America. From this period on, Eleanor was no longer working with her husband in pursuit of common goals. Rather, she became an agitator for her causes, as he remained political.

Chapter 4 Analysis

The author proposes that Eleanor felt abandoned by her husband in the same way she felt abandoned by her father, which brought on a deep depression. Under this scenario, Eleanor no longer was a selfless woman, but rather a woman who was self-absorbed and disappointed that her pet projects were being ignored in favor of a world war. Yet at this same time, she wrote to her daughter, "Men think more of their importance. I hope I'll never think I am of any importance, it makes one so stuffy!" In *No Ordinary Time*, Eleanor's work becomes only about her own self-fulfillment, even though there is contrary evidence. This is a psychobiography, a history in which an author psychoanalyzes another person long after her death.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

This chapter is about Franklin Roosevelt's nomination for a third-term as President through insider dealings at the Democratic National Convention.

As Roosevelt's second-term was ending, no one knew if he would run for a third-term. Most people assumed that he would not. Ever since the first President, George Washington, had declined a third-term, a two-term precedent had been put in place. Most Americans supported term limits and most key people in the political system did too. For example, the Chairman of the Democratic Party, James Farley, did not want FDR to run again because he felt that it discouraged talent from the party by closing the door to new appointments for a new administration. Roosevelt had actually put out a few signals that he was not a candidate. By refusing to say publicly that he was not a candidate, he was paralyzing the process of nominating someone else.

On July 9, Farley met with Franklin and told him he would allow his name to be placed for nomination. If nominated, he would run, although he was not actively seeking a third-term.

At this point in the chapter, Goodwin digresses into a long examination of Franklin's relationship with his secretary, Missy LeHand. LeHand was from a working class background, but with her long association with FDR, she had developed upper class ways. She was eighteen years younger and good-looking. She had been with Roosevelt since he was the Governor of New York. When he was stricken with polio, she spent years helping him try to recover and learn to walk again in Warm Springs, Georgia. Eleanor had no interest in mothering Roosevelt, but LeHand did. She made sure he took his cough medicine and planned parties and outings so his life would be interesting. She was his hostess at dinner parties when Eleanor traveled. She lived across the hall from him in the White House. They were so intimate that many people believed they were lovers, although there was some question as to whether FDR's paralysis had rendered him impotent. In any event, Missy LeHand did not want him to run for President again. She wanted to return to Hyde Park with him because there, she could have more of his time than in the White House.

Eleanor herself had formed a close intimate friendship with Joseph Lash, a man who was twenty-five years her junior. Lash said in his own biography of Eleanor that "He loved her, needed her and idealized her as a mentor." Eleanor poured her heart out to Lash about her melancholy and loneliness.

Franklin was in the White House with LeHand, while Eleanor was at Hyde Park with Lash when the Democratic Convention opened in Chicago on July 15, 1940. Roosevelt was able to manipulate the reluctant delegates to nominate him without coming out

directly and asking for the nomination. He made only vague statements and refused to attend the convention himself.

Some Democrats were particularly angry when Roosevelt announced indirectly, that he wanted Henry Wallace as his vice-presidential candidate. In fact, he prepared a statement withdrawing himself from the race if Wallace were not on the ticket. At this point, since Franklin was still refusing to go to Chicago, his advisors suggested that he send Eleanor. It would be the first time a First Lady would speak before a political convention.

When Wallace was nominated, the boos were louder than the cheers for him. The plan was to have Eleanor speak after the nominations were over. Her speech was on a very idealistic level. "This is no ordinary time," she said. "No time for weighing anything except what we can do for the country as a whole." She spoke of the necessity for letting her husband pick his own team. When she finished, the mood in the auditorium changed. Wallace won the nomination. Many observers felt that Eleanor Roosevelt had saved the convention for her husband.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Perhaps, if Roosevelt had announced that he wanted a third-term in the Spring of 1940, there would have been more time to oppose him. By waiting and manipulating the situation behind the scenes, he got what he wanted. This chapter shows why Roosevelt was considered a masterful politician.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

The Summer of 1940 presented several challenges to President Roosevelt. The British were urgently asking for help in the form of destroyers. He needed to pass an unpopular law reinstating another military draft and he needed to win a third-term election in November.

His solution to the first problem was ingenious. He would give the British destroyers, if the British agreed to give the United States the right to use nine strategic bases. It would look as if the Americans had gotten the better end of the deal: nine bases in exchange for fifty destroyers. Prime Minister Winston Churchill had no choice, but to agree. Newspapers and public opinion was in support of the deal, even though it made America more vulnerable to war with Germany. Clearly, America was not neutral.

Reinstating a military draft was a hard sell to Americans. Americans did not want to send their boys overseas. Roosevelt was unsure where his opponent Wendell Wilkie stood on this issue because he was delaying his acceptance speech until August 17th. Roosevelt postponed talk about the draft until after Wilkie made his stand. Wilkie came out in favor of a military draft to the delight of Democrats. Roosevelt, however, stole Wilkie's thunder by making a major speech of his own in Canada at the exact same time of Wilkie's speech.

A final problem was to help business mobilize for war by changing tax laws in their favor. In mid-July, Roosevelt called for new tax laws permitting businesses that built new plants and equipment to amortize their capital expenses within five years or less. "This meant companies could deduct 20 percent of their capital costs before arriving at the net income on which taxes were paid" (page 156). Roosevelt also proposed repeal of the Vinson-Trammell Act, which limited profits on manufacturers of aircraft and ships. He was criticized for caving into business interests and there was some truth to that criticism.

About half this chapter is about Roosevelt's flirtation with Crown Princess Martha of Norway, who had escaped with her children from the Nazi conquest. Taken up by her beauty and charm, Roosevelt invited her to stay at the White House until she found a residence. While Eleanor did seem to mind, Missy LeHand grew jealous of the Princess. At age forty-two, LeHand had already had romances with Earl Miller, who was Eleanor's bodyguard, and William Bullitt, a newspaper correspondent. Yet, she never married because she was so much in love with her the President. When Martha rented an estate in Maryland, the President kept up the flirtation by visiting her.



Chapter 6 Analysis

On Page 153, Goodwin records the thoughts of Franklin Roosevelt's mother: "Sara was particularly taken with the composure of Martha's children, whose excellent manners reminded her of Franklin's when he was a boy. □ Turning her gaze from Martha's children to her own child, his head so like hers, Sara smiled broadly. This was her house, her family, her world and she was perfectly at ease." How does Goodwin know what Sara Roosevelt's thoughts were at that luncheon and how she smiled? In the notes at the back of the book, no one interviewed by Goodwin was at the luncheon.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Eleanor Roosevelt put herself in the middle of racial controversy in September of 1940, by speaking at the Convention of Sleeping Car Porters, a mostly Negro group. Eleanor had championed the economic needs of black Americans during the 1930s. She was instrumental in getting her husband to sign an Anti-Discrimination provision on WPA projects. She spoke up publicly for racial equality and invited black Americans by the hundreds to the White House.

The President gained by her efforts among black voters, who were migrating into large cities like New York and Chicago. By keeping a lower profile on the issues himself, he maintained viability in a Southern-dominated Congress.

A new and bigger issue arose in the form of eliminating racial segregation and discrimination in the Armed Forces. Negro leaders were particularly angry that well-qualified blacks were denied promotions and well-paying jobs in the army and navy. Instead, they served in menial positions. The same week as the Porters Convention, fifteen sailors wrote a letter in complaint to the Navy. The signers were put in prison and given dishonorable discharges. Hundreds of Negro sailors began to speak up in protest. Eleanor vowed to help Negro leaders obtain a meeting with her husband.

Roosevelt met with three civil rights leaders about their concerns. He was unable to get the Armed Forces, however, to change policy. Pounded by protests and letters from black Americans, Roosevelt was able to get Benjamin Davis promoted to brigadier general.

Eleanor also got involved in refugee controversies. She worked to get visas for Europeans, but with little result.

Roosevelt did not want to actively campaign against Wilkie, but instead, made a long series of visits to defense plants. He drew big crowds the same way he would have on the campaign trail. Union leader, John L. Lewis, wounded Roosevelt's campaign when he came out in favor of Wilkie. This incident and advice from Eleanor and Harry Hopkins made Roosevelt begin campaigning in earnest.

On October 29, a draft lottery began that would induct sixteen million men into the armed services. Roosevelt made a pledge that "Your boys will not be sent into any foreign wars." These words would haunt him later. The next week, Roosevelt defeated Wilkie by 55% to 45% of the vote.

A big section of this chapter is about Eleanor's relationships with her children. Among her five children, there were eighteen divorces. None of them seemed to measure up to the Roosevelt name in achievement. She became close to her daughter, Anna, but only



after Anna was well into her twenties. Sara Roosevelt did most of the mothering of Eleanor's children, a fact she later regretted.

Chapter 7 Analysis

In some ways, the Roosevelts played "good cop, bad cop." Eleanor was forthright about ending racial segregation and treating all people the same way. She wanted to aid Jewish refugees and open America's borders to them. Franklin made no efforts to control her activism because talking about issues was good politics for him. However, doing something would have alienated big constituencies.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

By November of 1940, the British were in more trouble than ever. Churchill wrote to Roosevelt that they could no longer pay for shipping and other supplies. The idea of loaning money to the British was extremely unpopular.

Roosevelt came up with an ingenious way of selling Americans on helping the British. He put it in folksy terms. If your neighbor's house is on fire, you lend him your fire hose and you don't charge him for its use. In the same way, we could lend help to the British in their hour of need. He called his proposal "lend-lease" and presented it during a fireside chat in a speech that became known as "The Arsenal of Democracy" speech. Americans were in favor of helping the British this way, particularly if this could be a substitute for America itself going to war.

On January 6, 1941, Roosevelt gave a State of the Union address. He called for "four essential freedoms": freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear. His inaugural address on January 20 was also memorable as a "Summons to the Spirit of Democracy."

His next task was to pass the lend-lease act. Critics said it would lead us into war and grant Roosevelt too many dictatorial powers. British Ambassador Joseph Kennedy, father of President John F. Kennedy, and former candidate, Wilkie, both helped get lend-lease passed. Aviator Charles Lindbergh was among its vocal dissenters. Churchill agreed to make a speech to the effect that lend-lease would help keep the United States out of the war. The bill passed in March and Roosevelt put Harry Hopkins in charge of the program.

The author discusses Eleanor's earlier work with women's rights and her friendships with women like Marion Dickerman and Nancy Cook. Eleanor's activism put her at odds with her mother-in-law. Roosevelt agreed to allow Eleanor to have a cottage for herself and her friends on the Hyde Park Estate, but separate from the "big house" where the Roosevelts traditionally lived. The little cottage was named Val-Kill and was built in 1925.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Roosevelt understood the creative process. His idea of "lend-lease" came to him while on vacation. It was an ingenious solution to a complex problem. Roosevelt was very creative in his thinking at many times in his life.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

This chapter has a lot of information about the friendship of Lorene Hickok and Eleanor Roosevelt. "Hick" was a two-hundred pound newspaper woman who smoked cigars and had affairs with women. She was extremely talented and had built up a notable career for herself by the time she met Eleanor in 1932. At this time in Eleanor's life, she was trying to adjust to public life. Hick gave her practical advice, as well as self-confidence. Their friendship was a crucial factor in Eleanor's success.

Hick moved into the White House in 1941. However, by that time, Eleanor was increasingly ignoring her. Their letters had been passionate and loving for years, but Eleanor had become less dependent upon her friend and this made Hick very miserable.

The year 1941 was a banner year for strikes. Eleanor called for sacrifice on the part of labor and of all Americans. However, the country was almost at war and no one was feeling the kind of patriotism Eleanor wanted. A situation arose at Ford Motor Company, which had kept down union organizers by threats and hard tactics. The War Department rejected their bid for contracts. After this, there was literally a war at Ford. There were strikers taking clubs to each other. Finally, Ford executives allowed the union to form at their company.

While Eleanor remained on the side of labor, Roosevelt was under pressure to stop strikers so the country could mobilize for war. He sent federal troops to break a strike in California. Meanwhile, Hitler took over Yugoslavia and Greece.

Eleanor was urging consumers to buy fewer cars and appliances so that materials could be used for weapons and planes. Her stance, however, backfired. People believed there would be a shortage of cars and bought more than ever. The Secretary of War complained to Roosevelt that he was not showing leadership and nothing good had happened since lend-lease. Many others criticized Roosevelt for bending too much to business interests.

On May 2, Roosevelt fell ill. He remained in bed for four weeks. He was attended by Missy LeHand and Hopkins. Eleanor felt shut out and ignored by her husband by not listening to her social concerns. Roosevelt recovered and on May 27, he gave a major speech about the war in Europe. Calling it a war for "World Domination," Roosevelt broadened the idea of an attack on the United States. He did not mean it as an attack only on the homeland, but on areas even several thousand miles away. "We cannot wait to see the whites of their eyes before we prepare to defend ourselves," he said.

To Roosevelt's surprise, the speech got favorable response from the American public.



Chapter 9 Analysis

The author speculates that Roosevelt got sick because he had been torn in so many directions over the war in Europe. If he pushed too hard to help the British, the Germans would declare war on the United States. Once he decided to make a strong stand, however, his health improved.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

On June 4, 1941, Missy LeHand collapsed in her bedroom. Her doctors seemed to think she had a nervous breakdown because she began to talk nonsense and write crazy letters to people. At this point, she could no longer be trusted with top-level government work. A few weeks later, she suffered a major stroke and lost movement in her right arm and leg and the ability to speak clearly. Eleanor was kind and visited Missy LeHand often. Roosevelt seemed outwardly callous toward her. However, he changed his will to leave half of his estate to her because he knew she did not have the savings necessary for her medical costs and retirement. LeHand was 42 years old.

A storm was brewing in civil rights again. Negro leaders were planning a massive march in Washington, D.C. partly, because war plants would not hire black workers. On June 18, Roosevelt met with the leaders of the march. A week later, he signed Executive Order 8802, which called for full participation in defense plants by all people, regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin. The civil rights groups called off their march.

On June 22, Germany invaded Russia by placing three million men on the Russian border. Churchill announced that he would help the Russians, even though he did not like the Communist system. This invasion confirmed the wisdom that America should stay out of the war, particularly among American Catholics. The Catholic Church was very much against Communism. On June 24, Roosevelt had a press conference and said that we would be helping Russia. He sent Hopkins to England and Russia to find out what help was needed.

Hopkins was impressed by Stalin's blunt talk. He said the Russians needed anti-aircraft guns, aluminum, and machine guns.

By the middle of summer, nothing had been done for the Russians and Roosevelt was angry. He took out his anger on Stimson. The Office of Professional Management (OPM) started an aluminum drive, in which average Americans collected scrap aluminum. Demand was high since ALOCA had a monopoly. Scrap could be melted for some purposes, but not to make airplanes. Finally by September, Roosevelt had committed the United States to a long list of equipment for Russia, even things like blankets and shoes, as well as trucks and tanks. Russia, like Britain, came under lend-lease.

Roosevelt prepared for a ten-day fishing vacation on August 3. However, he was secretly planning to meet with Winston Churchill. Hopkins fretted over whether the two men, with their massive egos would get along. They liked each other immediately and became close friends as they worked together. Meeting off the coast of Newfoundland, they discussed Japanese aggression. They agreed to a set of principles to follow during the course of the war that included: commitment to free trade, respecting the rights of



people to choose their government, keeping territories according to the wishes of the people who occupied them, and working toward disarmament.

As the Selective Service Act of 1940 was about to expire, Roosevelt faced a real battle to get Congress to renew it. He got his extension by a razor-thin margin of 203-202 in the House of Representatives.

Chapter 10 Analysis

Roosevelt and Churchill liked each other personally and agreed on many democratic ideals such as: allowing people to choose their government, free trade, not taking over territory, working toward disarmament, and providing security. It is noteworthy that they could agree on these points at their first meeting. When Stalin came into their meetings, such agreement disappears.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

The title of this chapter is "A Completely Changed World" because it deals with how the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, an event that put the United States into World War II.

In September 1941, the Roosevelts lost two important family members. Franklin's mother, Sara, had a stroke in June and required care until her death on September 6. Five minutes after her death, the largest oak tree on the Hyde Park estate simply toppled to the ground. Everyone who knew Sara felt they had the explanation for this strange occurrence. Franklin went into a deep grief after his mother's death, but Eleanor felt little. This made her sad because she and Sara had known each other for many decades.

Eleanor's only surviving brother, Hall, died a hard death from liver failure due to alcoholism. He suffered for several weeks. This took a toll on Eleanor. To get her mind off things, Eleanor threw herself into her work with the Office of Civilian Defense, a regular job offered to her by New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia. She became "ridiculously busy" from this job, her daily newspaper column, her weekly radio broadcast, and correspondence.

Meanwhile, Franklin was dealing with a variety of things including: German attacks on unarmed ships, an oil embargo placed against Japan after that country's invasion of Indochina, a miner's strike led by John L. Lewis, and Missy LeHand's illness. On November 28, FDR left to visit LeHand in Warm Springs, Georgia. However, he cut his scheduled ten-day trip short to return to Washington, DC, after the Japanese Premier Tojo made an aggressive speech.

The attack came on the morning of Sunday, December 7, 1941, but Roosevelt got the news about 1:30 p.m. He remained almost deadly calm, as others expressed anger and bitterness. Churchill later wrote that he felt the "greatest joy" that the United States was now in the war together, with England. Meeting with his Cabinet over what he called the worst crisis ever confronted by the United States, Roosevelt had trouble expressing the sad facts of the attack that devastated the navy that he loved.

Since Pearl Harbor, there has been a lot of speculation as to whether Roosevelt "allowed" the attack to happen. Goodwin believes that this is an impossibility, given Roosevelt's love of the navy and moral sense.

On Monday, Roosevelt made his famous "Day of Infamy" speech, pledging that "This form of treachery shall never endanger us again." Congress quickly approved a declaration of war against Japan. Three days later, Congress declared war on Germany and Italy.



There were immediate changes in the White House such as black-out curtains, no more fires in fireplaces, practice runs to shelters, and increased security. Eleanor said, "It seemed like a completely changed world now."

Chapter 11 Analysis

Looking back on the 1940s, historians can see that it would have been better if the United States had gotten into World War II earlier. France and the lowland countries may not have fallen to the Nazis. The Soviet Union would not have been able to occupy Eastern Europe. Many people believe Roosevelt wanted to help the British so much in their lonely struggle against the Nazi armies, that he allowed the United States to be attacked Goodwin, however, discounts this theory.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

On December 22, 1941, Churchill came to the White House, where he visited for almost a month. He got along famously with Roosevelt, although Eleanor was not fond of him. She thought he romanticized war.

The two men often stayed up talking, drinking brandy, and smoking cigars until 2 or 3 a.m. These talks became known as "The Arcadia Conference," in which they reaffirmed their former plan to deal with Germany first. This was harder for Roosevelt because most Americans wanted immediate revenge on Japan.

As the Japanese pounded Malaya and the Philippines, the Russians were losing more territory and people than all the others combined. However, the Russian winter was beginning to defeat the German .

The Roosevelts had Christmas with the Churchills. Missy LeHand tried to commit suicide in Warm Springs, a fact kept from the Roosevelts.

On December 26, Churchill gave a rousing speech in front of Congress and "Condemned the Nazi tyrannies, heaped scorn on Mussolini, and questioned the sanity of the Japanese." In that same week, twenty-six nations led by the United States and Britain signed "The United Nations Declaration" to fight against the Axis powers.

At his State of the Union message on January 6, Roosevelt called for production goals that seemed unreasonably optimistic for one year's time: 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, 6,000,000 tons of merchant shipping, and 20,000 anti-aircraft guns. Military production meant that millions of Americans migrated to states like California for work. There were massive layouts in automobile plants and other civilian production.

On February 23, Roosevelt gave a fireside chat heard by sixty-one million adults. He asked people to buy maps before the chat and many did. He explained the Allied situation in every part of the world, as he had people refer to their maps. This was very effective and unifying to the nation.

Roosevelt took the advice of his military and signed an executive order that required the forced removal of people of Japanese descent from military zones. This ultimately meant that over a hundred thousand citizens were evacuated and herded into hastily built shelters.

The rest of the chapter is about Eleanor's activities during this period. She got into a feud with LaGuardia at the OCD and Roosevelt diplomatically had him fired. Afterwards, however, Eleanor had to resign. People protested that she wanted to put social concerns over practical matters. She also involved herself in racial discrimination issues, including a riot in Detroit over public housing built for black people only and



discrimination in the armed forces. Eleanor believed that every American should be conscripted into military or civilian service during the war. Her husband, on the other hand, believed that the government should use incentives, not conscription, to get people to work in the war effort.

Chapter 12 Analysis

This is a complex chapter. The attack on Pearl Harbor brought massive changes to average Americans and to the First Family as well. Roosevelt made a host of decisions, such as demanding increased military production and the internment of people of Japanese descent. Eleanor came under increasing criticism for her outspoken support of Negro Civil Rights and concern for social problems, both of which were considered luxuries in time of war.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

The first American troops went to Britain in January 1942. In the first half of that year, there were many discussions on the best way to defeat Hitler. General Marshall and Eisenhower argued in favor of a big European front and not scattering allied forces in India, Russia, the Middle East, and other parts of the world. Roosevelt received a plan for a cross-channel attack in March, which he liked. Hopkins went to London to get Churchill's approval. Churchill preferred a series of smaller operations, but went along with Roosevelt.

Meanwhile, the Russians were taking the brunt of war with casualties and fighting. At the White House on May 29, the Russian Ambassador, Molotov got Roosevelt to agree to a second front in the East. On June 21, the British suffered a humiliating defeat at Tobruk where twenty-five thousand British soldiers surrendered and were taken prisoner. This defeat made Churchill more resistant to Roosevelt's plan. He and the President decided on Operation Gymnast, a plan to invade North Africa which would pull German troops from the Eastern front and shore up the British in the Middle East. Marshall and Eisenhower opposed Gymnast and the Russians would almost certainly, too. In this period, Roosevelt and Churchill also united to develop an atomic bomb before the Germans could get it.

In April, there was a daring raid on Tokyo led by Colonel James Doolittle. He launched his fighter planes from a ship that was some six hundred miles away from Japan. Although their government had promised the Japanese people that Japan would never be attacked, the Doolittle raid showed that Japan was vulnerable after all. It also gave the allies a psychological lift.

Eleanor Roosevelt got involved in the execution of a black sharecropper for the murder of his white landlord. She convinced her husband to appeal to the Governor of Virginia to commute his death sentence. Roosevelt complied by writing a secret letter, but the governor refused to intervene. On the day of the execution, Eleanor phoned her husband several times an hour to intervene, but Roosevelt did not take her calls until the time of the execution, when he told her nothing more could be done. Liberals who did not know about the letter criticized Roosevelt for not doing enough; conservatives criticized Eleanor for doing too much.

Meanwhile, Americans began a period of wartime rationing. They used a system of coupons and books for rationed things like meat, butter, canned goods, sugar, and shoes. People had the most difficulty with shortages of rubber and gasoline.

Henry Hopkins married a socialite in a White House wedding. Eleanor's dear friend, Joe Lash, went to war. Her other friend, Lorena Hickok, fell in love with someone new and showed less interest in Eleanor. Roosevelt continued to spend weekends and



afternoons with Princess Martha. Missy LeHand returned to the White House, but her disability made it impossible for her to do meaningful work. She soon moved in with her sister.

Chapter 13 Analysis

Eleanor does not come off well in this chapter. She is jealous of Hopkins' new love and meddlesome to Roosevelt, who has enough on his mind with the war. She wants him and others to stay focused on social concerns such as child welfare, housing, health, and so forth. Yet, her involvement in these concerns, as well as, Negro Civil Rights may have been politically injurious in the short run, but they were the right thing to do in the long-run.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

President Roosevelt asked his wife to accompany him on a two-week tour of factories and army camps in September 1942. Both of them had been lonelier than usual because of the losses in their lives. Franklin missed the companionship of his mother, Harry Hopkins, and Missy Le Hand. Eleanor no longer had Hickok and Joseph Lash. They journeyed with his two female cousins to plants in Detroit, Minnesota, and the West Coast.

The number of women employed in defense plants was noteworthy. Many people believed a factory was no place for a woman and that working women were neglecting their children and homes. Nevertheless, female labor was vital to the war effort with over five million men overseas. Eleanor said publicly, that she thought the experience was an excellent one; especially, for a young person, as a way to "expand their horizons and contribute to their country." When black women, who had formerly worked as domestic servants quit those jobs by the thousands to work in higher paying factory jobs, Eleanor Roosevelt was blamed.

The rest of the chapter is about intimate details of the Roosevelt marriage. Goodwin writes that on this trip, Roosevelt asked Eleanor to stay home more and return to being his wife. Eleanor said she would think it over.

Their marriage had been a long and troubled one. They were opposites in many ways. He was confident and outgoing and she was shy and inward. She was sincere and idealistic, whereas, he was flexible with people. As the years passed, instead of delighting in the differences, they were irritated by them. Roosevelt found her stiff and judgmental. She thought he was superficial and duplicitous. Their five children should have brought them together. Instead, Roosevelt's mother took over in that area.

In 1914, the Roosevelts were a couple in their early thirties with three children and one on the way. Eleanor hired the charming and beautiful, Lucy Mercer, as her social secretary. Lucy and Franklin fell in love and carried on their affair publicly when Eleanor summered with the children in Campobello. After this, they led more separate lives. Goodwin writes that Eleanor's inability to forgive the past made her decide not to take up Franklin's offer to reunite as man and wife in later life. Her answer to his proposal was to ask to be sent to visit American troops in England.

Chapter 14 Analysis

It is almost impossible to know what goes on inside other people's marriages, certainly someone who has never met the couple personally. Franklin Roosevelt had been dead for forty years when this book was written. Most of his contemporaries were dead, yet this chapter is a long analysis of his marriage and unrecorded intimate conversations he

had in 1942. In magazines like *People* and *Us*, news meets gossip. In books like this one, gossip meets history.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Republicans did well in the 1942 Congressional election. They picked up forty-four seats in the House and nine in the Senate. Roosevelt wanted the invasion of North Africa to take place before this election, but could not arrange it. The invasion occurred the following week on Sunday, November 8.

There were problems convincing the French that the allies were not conquering North Africa, but rather liberating it. There were also problems getting the right equipment to the soldiers. The allies enjoyed good luck in that the Atlantic Ocean was unusually calm and everyone was euphoric that at last they were on a major offensive. However, a bad political situation arose when allied leaders approached Admiral Jean-Francois Darlan to persuade local French forces to join the invasion. Darlan had collaborated with the Nazis. Charles de Gaulle and others denounced the choice of Darlan and this criticism angered Roosevelt.

Eleanor went to England at the end of October, where she stayed with the Churchills. She toured British defense plants and visited her son, Elliot, who was serving in the military. She was struck by the devastation of buildings and other war damage, but was impressed with the way the British showed little racism toward American black soldiers. She liked the British day care centers for children. The press coverage of this trip was very favorable to her. A Gallup poll in early December showed that about 60% of Americans were very positive toward Eleanor, while 40% actively disliked her.

She returned home for Thanksgiving and briefed the President on her tour. A few days after Thanksgiving, coffee was rationed. People over fifteen years of age were allowed one cup per day in order to free up international ships for wartime use. People grew angry with the Office of Price Administration (OPA) and its administrator, Leon Henderson. He was later forced to resign.

Reports from Europe were beginning to indicate that Jewish people sent to concentration camps were not being used for labor, but rather, were being killed. About three million Polish Jews had been murdered already. German refugee, Gerhart Reigner, was circulating this report among American Jewish leaders, who appealed to Roosevelt. He responded by requesting the power to allow more refugees into the United States, but the legislation did not pass.

Chapter 15 Analysis

By 1942, there were rumors that Hitler was exterminating Jewish people in Europe, particularly in Germany and Poland. By this time, perhaps, three million were dead. European Jews were frantic to leave the continent, but got little practical support from

the leaders of other nations, including the United States. Boats full of people were turned away. American Anti-Semitism was the main factor in this cruelty.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

Beginning January 9, 1943, Franklin Roosevelt spent about a month in Casablanca with Winston Churchill. Their talks and meeting were top secret.

During that winter, the battle of Stalingrad was raging in Russia. Over a million Russians lost their lives during this period, but the Russians managed not only to hang on, but to cut the German Army in two. They trapped nearly 300,000 German soldiers without food or supplies. Josef Stalin was reminding Roosevelt and Churchill that the Russians were enduring greater casualties than Britain and the United States. He wanted them to open a second front in Europe.

The British wanted to invade Sicily instead of France in 1943. Roosevelt was sympathetic to Stalin's request that the allies needed to divert the Germans from Russia, but he believed a cross-channel attack was still too risky. He agreed on Churchill's plan to invade Sicily. They also discussed the problems of French politics. Henri Giraud represented the French forces in North Africa and Charles De Gaulle was the symbol of French resistance. De Gaulle did not want to be seen with Giraud, but eventually agreed to come to Casablanca. He was even photographed shaking Giraud's hand.

Roosevelt made the mistake of telling the press that he and Churchill wanted an "unconditional surrender" of Germany and its allies. This mistake angered Churchill.

Roosevelt returned home to find Eleanor as busy as usual. She was touring defense factories, army camps, and the Women's Army Corps (WACS). By 1943, there were about 300,000 women in the WACS or WAVES (The Women's Division of the Navy). She promoted the idea of enrolling more women into factory and other defense jobs, but realized that women with children needed reliable day care to serve in this capacity. The Swan Island Day Care Center became a model for other centers. It was state-of-the-art and even provided dinner meals for mothers who wanted to buy them and take them home to serve to their families. About two thousand children of all races and backgrounds attended the school in its first year of operation.

Eleanor was also interested in equal treatment for Negro servicemen. Many of them complained directly to her that they were not allowed to attend theaters, use facilities on the base, or have the same access as white soldiers did. Negroes serving in the South could not get service at restaurants and other public places. Those who were trained as pilots never saw combat. One army base had a movie theater with one thousand seats, however, Negroes were allowed to sit in twenty seats in the back row. Eleanor wrote so many letters of complaint to General Marshall that he assigned two staff members to deal with them. On April 15, 1943, the first black fighter squadron was sent into combat. This was a significant change for the better.



There were also problems at the Japanese internment camps. Eleanor inspected one in Gila River, Arizona, where the summer heat was a big problem. Eleanor thought the detainees were enduring hardships, but told Franklin that the camp was breaking down family structures and causing hardships.

When Roosevelt's son-in-law, John Bottinger, decided to enlist in the armed services, Roosevelt's daughter, Anna, took over running a newspaper in Seattle. Anna was then able to spend more time with her parents. Franklin and Eleanor marked their tenth anniversary as President and First Lady.

Chapter 16 Analysis

Stalin used the tremendous loss of life that the Russian Army was enduring as a way to blackmail Churchill and Roosevelt to get what he wanted, especially at the end of the War. He himself was murdering millions of Russians who got in the way of his "communist" ideals.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

There is some evidence that Franklin got together with Lucy Mercer after he was President. She seems to have visited him a few times under an assumed name. His affair with Mercer in the 1920s almost broke up his marriage. On May 11, 1943, FDR agreed to pose for a portrait painted by an artist Lucy sent to the White House. She paid for and kept the painting.

On the same day, Churchill came to Washington just as the allied invasion of North Africa was successfully ending after a long struggle. The allied forces had won at Stalingrad, Guadalcanal, El Alamein, and Tunis. However, they still had the problem that most of Europe and South East Asia, which was under Axis control. President Roosevelt was against landing in Italy, as Churchill wanted a Sicily invasion. By May 25, the two leaders reached a compromise. Roosevelt would take action in Italy if he could get assurance from his commanders that such an action would not detract from the cross-channel attack planned for later in the year.

On June 2, John L. Lewis led another miners' strike that churned up much Anti-Labor sentiment. The miners were accused of being traitors during a war. However, Eleanor Roosevelt and a few others were sympathetic to their demands. An outraged Congress passed the Smith-Connally Act, which imposed penalties and restrictions against anyone encouraging strikes in government-owned plants. Roosevelt took over the mines under emergency war powers.

Roosevelt vetoed Smith-Connally on June 25, but his veto was overridden. The miners struck two more times, but Roosevelt took over the mines after each new strike. His administration was able to agree to some of the union's demands for money.

There were several important race riots that summer. In Alabama, white welders threw bricks and clubbed Negro welders hired to work by their sides. In Detroit on June 20, thirty-five people died and a thousand were injured in another riot. Many in the press blamed Eleanor Roosevelt's civil rights activism for creating a climate for such riots.

Roosevelt gave a rousing speech about the importance of national morale at home on June 27. Meanwhile, news from abroad was good. Mussolini had been arrested just days before the scheduled invasion of Sicily.

The Roosevelts, by this time, were aware of the terrible sufferings and killings of European Jews. However, Americans were generally unaware of this genocide. The average American believed the deaths were a byproduct of war and not a systematic murder of Jewish people. Neither leaders of Congress, the American intellectual community, nor American churches showed much interest in the subject.



Chapter 17 Analysis

During World War II, domestic problems were put on hold as Americans, both at home and abroad, united in the war effort. However, every now and then, such problems would resurface in the form of labor strikes and race riots. Roosevelt appealed to patriotic motives to make such events unpopular and unacceptable. These latent problems came to the forefront decades later.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

Eleanor Roosevelt embarked on a long and dangerous trip to cheer soldiers in the South Pacific. The author implies that the real reason of her trip was that she missed her young friend, Joseph Lash, so much that she was determined to visit him in Guadalcanal. When Eleanor finally arrived in New Caledonia, military leaders considered her to be a nuisance. Admiral Halsey told her bluntly, that he could not spare a fighter escort to take her to Guadalcanal, even though she had permission from the President. She went on to New Zealand and Australia and pressed her case upon her return. She was able to meet up with Joseph Lash. She wrote him the next morning, "When the war is over, I hope I never have to be long away from you."

Her trip to the South Pacific was a huge success. Everyone commented on her compassion and willingness to speak to each soldier individually and take up any request he may have. But when she returned to the White House, Eleanor went into a major depression. The author speculates the cause of her emotional upheaval was the terrible sight of wounded soldiers and battlefields. She had finally seen for herself the horrors of war. Typically, she tried to assuage her depression by throwing herself into her work.

While Eleanor was in the South Pacific, Roosevelt met with Churchill in Quebec August 17. They learned Sicily was under allied control after thirty-one days of fighting. They set the cross-channel attack for May 1, 1944, and discussed other issues, including the atomic bomb. Stalin wrote a letter saying he could no longer tolerate being "the third passive observer" when such talks took place without him.

Eleanor wanted very much to attend the Teheran Conference at the end of November 1943. Roosevelt was to meet Stalin for the first time. Churchill and Chiang Kai-shek would also attend. Roosevelt was adamant that Eleanor could not come to a "boys only" party. She grew angry when she saw pictures of Sarah Churchill and Madame Kai-shek who were invited to attend the conferences.

Roosevelt was determined to win over Stalin by using his famous charm. He began to tease Churchill, so that Roosevelt and Stalin became a duo, rather than having Stalin left out of the Churchill/Roosevelt friendship. This technique worked and Stalin warmed up to Roosevelt. Stalin was blunt with Churchill about his opposition to many of his schemes, such as capturing Rome. He praised Roosevelt for lend-lease. The Teheran Conference ended December 9 with deep discussions about what would happen after the war.

After Christmas, Roosevelt told the press that he did not want to speak in terms of the "New Deal" anymore. The country had moved on from "New Deal" to "Win the War."



Chapter 18 Analysis

Was Eleanor depressed over the wounds of war or over Joseph Lash? The author questions Eleanor's patriotism and humanitarian motives for going to South Pacific hospitals and battlefields. The author presents her as a lonely, lovesick woman. Both FDR and Eleanor are constantly cold to each other in this chapter and the foregoing ones. They don't meet each other's airplanes after long separations. Eleanor is demanding about what interests her, as Franklin is carrying on affairs with Mercer and Princess Martha. About half of each chapter is about personal information and the other half is about Stalin and World War II concerns.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

This chapter is entitled "I Want to Sleep and Sleep." It concerns Roosevelt's failing health.

Anna moved permanently into the White House on March 1, to serve as her father's hostess and secretary. This created tension between Anna and Eleanor, who had become very close as daughter and mother. Eleanor had always grown jealous of the other women, who served her husband in this capacity, including Missy LeHand, Betsey Cushing and Louise Hopkins, and now, she resented her own daughter.

It was Anna, however, who grew so concerned about her father's health that she arranged a check-up at Bethesda Naval Hospital. Dr. Howard Bruenn, a young cardiologist, was amazed to find that Roosevelt's heart was enlarged with a dangerous buildup of fluid. He diagnosed congestive heart failure and prescribed digitalis. Another doctor found an inoperable stomach cancer, but left no records. Anna supervised her father's new regime of a low-fat diet, reduced cigarette and alcohol intake, and increased rest. She tried to curtail the number of visitors who had access to him and the number of hours he worked. These measures improved Roosevelt's health, but he remained sick and weak.

He gave a State of the Union address on January 11, 1944. He recommended a tax increase, a cost-of-food law, and conscription of civilians into national service. He returned to some of the ideals of the New Deal and the belief that people have a right to a useful job with adequate earnings, decent housing, adequate medical care, a good education, and a dignified old age. The Republican Congress did not cooperate with his plans and watered every idea down. Roosevelt vetoed the resulting bill, which he called "relief not for the needy but for the greedy." These words enraged many senators including Majority Leader, Arlen Barkley, who threatened to resign. Congress overrode the President's veto.

Allied forces achieved some successes during this period. The Eighth Air Force dropped nearly ten thousand tons of bombs on Germany, ruining their war plants and causing a turning point in the air war against Germany. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of allied soldiers prepared for "D-Day."

Roosevelt picked up his relationship with Lucy Mercer after the death of her husband in March 1944.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Roosevelt's doctors knew he was deathly ill, but did not give him or his family details of his condition. If he had known the truth, perhaps he would not have run for a fourth-term in 1946.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

This chapter begins with a dramatic retelling of "D-Day," June 6, 1944. Eisenhower had postponed the invasion a few times because of bad weather. Hundreds of thousands of soldiers, loaded down with sixty-eight pounds of equipment, hit the beaches at Normandy. Meanwhile, Americans at home went to their places of worship to pray for the soldiers. Roosevelt's speech was a prayer in itself.

Over sixty-six hundred Americans died the first day of the invasion, but this was fewer than expected. In fact, the whole invasion went much better than the allied generals had hoped. The Germans responded more weakly than predicted. Three weeks later, one million men had been put ashore to fight in Europe, along with 171,500 vehicles and 566,000 tons of supplies.

On June 33, 1944, the President signed the GI Bill into law. This gave returning soldiers many benefits, including an allowance until they found employment, breaks on mortgages, hospitals for their care, and free college tuition. The idea behind the bill was that men and women who served their country should not be penalized financially.

The Roosevelt Administration was not as generous toward two other groups of people: Jewish refugees and Japanese-Americans. If America had been willing to allow Jewish Europeans to immigrate between 1939 and 1940, Hitler would have let them go. But the Roosevelt Administration did not wake up to the problem until the Spring of 1944, when the President began to talk about the "wholesale systematic murder of the Jews." By then, it was too late for the millions who had already been murdered. The efforts of the War Refugee Board, created in January, came too late to make much difference.

Japanese-Americans were not getting any breaks, as they were kept in internment during the war. Even though over 10,000 served in the military, Roosevelt talked in terms of "distributing" Japanese-Americans throughout the country, rather than concentrating them on the West Coast. He refused to take action until after the election.

Eleanor was continuing to work against Southern segregation, as many racial incidents were taking place. One incident involved nine Negro GIs, who could not get restaurant service in Louisiana. On July 17, a terrible explosion aboard the U.S.S. Bryan killed over two hundred black soldiers in California. This incident pointed out some of the problems of segregation in the armed services. Eleanor kept pushing the War Department for racial equality, making herself a target in the South.

Roosevelt allowed his name to go into nomination for a fourth-term as President, but showed little interest in his running mate. After a lot of backroom deals, Senator Harry Truman emerged as a compromise. FDR's health was so bad that it was hard for him to campaign. This fact was disguised by saying that he was too busy with the war. A



particularly terrible picture of him giving his acceptance speech from a railroad car alarmed a lot of people. On July 21, he went to San Diego and then on to Pearl Harbor. He consulted with General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz about the war strategy for the South Pacific.

Much of the chapter is devoted to FDR's personal life. He renewed his love affair with Lucy Mercer, with the help of his daughter, Anna.

Chapter 20 Analysis

Roosevelt ran for a fourth-term when he knew that his health was failing. Lucy Mercer and Missy LeHand knew just by looking at his pictures that he was dying. Even reporters were aware that he was ill. He collapsed several times and had a mild heart attack before the election. Yet, he showed little interest in his vice presidential choice and allowed party officials to pick Truman because he would help the ticket.



Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

The author devotes the first four pages to the July 30, 1944, the death of Missy LeHand. It includes details of her estate and funeral. Roosevelt suffered a mild heart attack August 4, as he was giving a speech.

A mass transit strike in Philadelphia on August 1, involved the walk-out of ten thousand employees protesting the hiring of eight Negroes to work as motormen. The system employed over five hundred Negroes, who worked as custodians, but never as conductors or operators. The strike paralyzed war production plants in Philadelphia, so Roosevelt called in the army to operate the streetcars. Within a few days, the strikers went back to work.

Eleanor and Franklin went to Quebec at the end of August to meet with the Churchills. Winston Churchill did not like Eleanor because she was out-spoken, but the two couples managed to get along.

Roosevelt and Churchill discussed taking away all of the German's armaments after the war and "converting Germany into a country primarily agricultural and pastoral." They also discussed the war with Japan. Churchill went on to Hyde Park, New York, with Roosevelt, where they discussed the atomic bomb. They decided to keep it a secret from the Russians.

By late September, Roosevelt's Republican challenger, Thomas Dewey, was running a strong race and Democrats were urging FDR to campaign more. Roosevelt gave a very funny speech from a sitting position before the Teamsters Union in Washington. He joked that while it was okay to pick on him and his family, the Republicans had no right to pick on his little dog, Fala and especially to accuse a Scotch dog of wasting money. It was so funny that he got a standing ovation. The old magic was back.

He began a tour of the New York boroughs in October and campaigned in the rain to dispel rumors about his health. There was a lucky break for him just before the election. American troops were regaining the Philippines in late October.

Roosevelt spent election night in Hyde Park. The election was closer than his other three runs, but he still won by over seven percent and by a landslide in the Electoral College.

Chapter 21 Analysis

The meeting with the Churchills in this chapter symbolizes one of the recurring themes of the book, as well as Eleanor's life: the role of a woman in society. Whereas Churchill did not seem to like Eleanor because she was so out-spoken, the American people had

come to expect this, and nothing less of her by now, as will become even more clear in the following chapter.

At this point in Roosevelt's life, he took comfort from Lucy Mercer. Eleanor is depicted as a person who can't have any fun. She is impatient when she is called upon to entertain the Churchills. She finds being a hostess gets in the way of her political activism. Roosevelt's doctors tell Anna and his secretaries to keep Eleanor away from him because she is so demanding and has little patience for illness.

FDR's health was not in the best state, but he remained staunch in his campaigning for the election. He knew what was best for the nation, and he needed to be re-elected in order to see to it that the country carried on as he saw fit. In order to coax the American people into believing that he was in good health, he took dangerous risks, but they paid off. It is often argued whether FDR could have ever won that last election if there had been nearly as much media coverage or technology as there was in the late 20th century. The debate arises over whether Americans would have voted the way they did had they been better informed, by their own observations, of the President's rapidly declining health.



Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

After the election, Eleanor began to question her position in society as a woman. She struggled with her position as a wife and mother as well as her position as a political and social leader. She began to question whether she was serving her husband as properly as she should be. At the same time, the war was drawing to a close, and women across the country found themselves in a predicament over the family or career lifestyle. During the war, millions of women had gone to work in factories and other like jobs where they had not been welcomed prior to the depletion of the male workforce. As men were returning home from war, they expected their wives to be home waiting for them, ready to serve the husband and raise a family. The soldiers also expected their jobs to be awaiting them. During this time, there was intense distribution of propaganda elevating the value of female domesticity. The nation that had needed women in the workforce during the war was now laying women off at a rate of 70% more than men. Recognizing the massive impact on the American economy that women in these roles would have, Eleanor advocated for women to be utilized in whichever ways they chose. She acknowledged publicly that "different women work for different reasons" (557), and she proclaimed, "women are fully as capable as men" (557).

By November 1944, men were being affected by layoffs as much as women were, and government officials began the debate over reconversion. That is, there was some debate over whether it was time to slow the layoffs by creating more jobs. On one side of the argument, officials wanted to allow the factories and small businesses to begin manufacturing materials that would be needed in peacetime, like the materials to build new schools, etc. Eleanor sided with individuals and small businesses, and she was sympathetic to all who lost their jobs due to "cutbacks in war production." Ultimately, though, her husband sided with the military and delayed reconversion.

At the end of November, FDR headed to Warm Springs, Georgia for a three-week vacation. While he was away, Eleanor kept him apprised of the important policies of which he needed to be aware and the status of the war. He spent his vacation relaxing, for the most part, though. Part of his relaxation involved a woman named Lucy, with whom he would go for drives in the countryside, and with whom he would have deep, meaningful conversations. While FDR was relaxing and enjoying the companionship of Lucy, Eleanor was back home running the country in his absence.

Upon his return in December, FDR learned of an overwhelming attack by the Germans which was proving to be quite a devastation, especially since many people had believed the war was drawing to a close quickly. This was the attack that later became known as the Battle of the Bulge. It was this battle that forced the American military to aggressively begin recruiting Negroes for combat. Although there were Negro platoons already set-up, most of these men were not used in combat, though it seemed they desperately wanted to partake in the fighting. For the most part, prior to this time, they



were used for driving trucks, laying roads, and digging ditches. However, for a temporary period, integrated platoons were set-up in which the white and black men fought along side each other and shared resources, such as food, etc. They developed mutual respect for each other, and the absurdity of racial segregation was reinforced. Unfortunately, after the Battle of the Bulge, the Negroes were re-stationed back in the segregated platoons.

Eleanor commented on FDR's appearance and state of health after he returned from his vacation, saying that the trip had done him well, that he appeared to be in good health and of good spirits. By Christmastime, FDR was longing to have the companionship of his wife, and he spoke to his son, Elliott, about this. FDR told Elliott that he longed for the day that Eleanor would not be too busy to spend time with him, and that he hoped she would soon be feeling the same way. Naturally, Elliott was inclined to sharing this insight with his mother, and Eleanor expressed a glimmer of hope in the same regards.

Chapter 22 Analysis

Eleanor continues to remain extremely busy, so much so that she and FDR barely have much of a relationship. While he is the President, and one of the most respected men in the world, he remains human. This chapter brings to light the most humane qualities of FDR, and it illustrates the universal truth that even the most powerful men still have basic needs of love and affection.

Eleanor has advocated for women's rights while battling her own guilt over whether to continue involvement in more worldly affairs or to live as a more domesticated woman, as a wife and mother traditionally would. She has come to symbolize too many things through her position as First Lady to back down now, though, and so she remains intimately involved in the business of running the nation.

Further illustrated in Chapter 22 are the constantly changing social policies of the nation. Besides the roles of women being called into question by the war, so too were the roles of African Americans. Just as the nation came to depend on women in ways they had never been depended upon previously, so too were Negroes. Of course, all social policies are desperately slow to take a lasting hold, but at least the foundations were solidly placed through the efforts of the war.



Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

Roosevelt managed to give his Inaugural Speech January 20, 1945. He attended the festivities, although he nearly collapsed from exhaustion by noon. Two days later, he was on his way to Yalta, a Soviet port in the Black Sea, where he would meet with Churchill and Stalin. He invited Anna, not Eleanor.

Each of the "big three" leaders had an agenda. Roosevelt wanted to set up the United Nations with equal votes for all, even the smaller nations. He also wanted Russia to help against Japan. Churchill wanted to maintain the British Empire, with France as an ally, so that Europe would not be dominated by the Soviet Union. Stalin was primarily interested in borders, particularly those of Poland, reparations from Germany, and getting land in the Far East.

There was a lot of disagreement over Poland. Stalin argued that Napoleon and Hitler had invaded his country through Poland. His troops had already taken over that country, even as Roosevelt and Churchill argued for free elections there. Another sticking point was the United Nations structure. Stalin wanted the Soviet Union to have more votes than other countries. Roosevelt agreed, only if the United States got extra votes, too. He also got a secret agreement with Stalin to enter the war against Japan within three months of Germany's surrender. Stalin also agreed to give France a zone of occupation after Germany's surrender.

After the Yalta Conference, the mood of the American delegation was jubilant. However, many historians looking back on this event believe that if Roosevelt had not been so deathly ill, he could have protected American interests better. Goodwin disagrees with this argument. She writes that in the main issues, Roosevelt did the best anyone could have done. In the details, such as more safeguards for Poland, more commitments to Russia in the Far East, and extra seats in the United Nations, he may have fought harder if he had been well. She argues, however, that Stalin was determined to have his way no matter what.

On March 1, 1945, Roosevelt addressed a joint session of Congress. For the first and only time, he sat in his wheelchair and referred to his disability. He kept the United Nations voting compromise a secret.

Roosevelt's illness was getting worse. He was repeating himself, blanking out for long periods, and was often unnaturally quiet. More and more his daughter, Anna ran interference for him and made sure he took long periods of rest.

The war in Europe was winding down, as the allies scored victories against the Germans. The Battle of Iwo Jima began February 19, killing more than six thousand Americans. The Japanese soldiers refused to surrender and often committed suicide



rather than be taken prisoner. Meanwhile, the United States continued to test the atomic bomb. Roosevelt kept pressing Congress and the American people not to let up on war production.

Anna arranged for Lucy Mercer to visit the President every time Eleanor traveled.

Chapter 23 Analysis

This is a complex and difficult chapter. The war was not over, but the assumption was that the allies would defeat the Axis. The conference at Yalta had long-range repercussions for the entire world. Things may have turned out differently if Roosevelt had lived to the end of World War II.



Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

On March 24, 1945, the President was in Hyde Park with Eleanor. They were planning a trip to London and even a visit to the Middle East and Asia. Nevertheless, FDR was getting physically weaker.

Stalin was holding Poland captive and not allowing free elections there. Roosevelt cabled him on March 29 about "the concern with which I view the developments of mutual interest since our fruitful meetings at Yalta." Stalin answered in an evasive way. That afternoon FDR left for a two-week visit to Warm Springs, Georgia.

A week later, news leaked that Russia was going to get three votes in the United Nations General Assembly. Roosevelt tried to minimize the reactions of outrage.

On April 9, Lucy Mercer and her artist friend arrived in Warm Springs. Roosevelt now was enjoying the company of two women, as well as two female cousins. While sitting for his portrait on April 12, he suddenly collapsed. Lucy and her friend left hurriedly. Doctors tried to revive the President, but he died.

Eleanor heard that the President had fainted while she was giving a speech in Washington. Anna, Harry Truman, Eleanor, and others were told at the White House that the President was dead. Truman was sworn in as President.

When Eleanor reached Warm Springs, her niece told her that Franklin had died in the company of Lucy Mercer. Eleanor later took out her anger on her daughter, who defended herself by saying FDR had put her in a terrible position between her two parents. Roosevelt's body was taken to Washington for funeral services and then transported by train to Hyde Park, where he was buried. The whole country went into mourning.

Goodwin spends many pages summarizing Roosevelt's accomplishments as President and as one of the greatest leaders of the century. She particularly praises his ability to lead the American people by staying in touch with public opinion and having "an uncanny sense of his followers." His magnificent sense of timing helped him lead. During the Depression, the New Deal was a disorganized series of actions without a master plan or division of responsibilities. However, that was part of Roosevelt's genius. He let people run things their own way, whether it was the New Deal or World War II. He never used the military for political purposes. Although, he may have wished the invasion of North Africa came before the 1942 elections, he never interfered with the decision. He was able to unite business and government and create a "mixed economy" that endures today, at a time when Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin were collectivizing resources under government dictatorships. One of his greatest achievements was lend-lease, in which he was able to mobilize millions of people in an effort to help Russia and



England, even before America entered the war on their side. He waited for the country to unite before he called for it to enter the war.

Chapter 24 Analysis

Roosevelt's death came as a shock to Americans. He had been able to hide his illness for years and present the illusion of health. After he died, there was a tremendous expression of sympathy and love for this man. He ranks as one of our greatest presidents, according to most historians.



Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

Most of this chapter is a summation of Eleanor Roosevelt's achievements, just as the last chapter was about those of Franklin Roosevelt.

First, however, the author writes about Eleanor's last days in the White House. She met with Bess and Margaret Truman for a tour of the building. The Trumans were appalled by the fact that everything was in bad shape. The draperies were rotting and the rugs were dirty. There were also rats. Eleanor had taken no interest in the White House itself and had not spent the governmental allowance for its upkeep. Only two weeks after FDR's death, the allies declared victory in Europe. Victory in Japan occurred soon after the United States dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. President Truman appointed Eleanor Roosevelt as this country's first Ambassador to the United Nations in December 1945.

Eleanor forgave her daughter, Anna, for her duplicity with Lucy Mercer. The author believes Eleanor forgave her husband for his infidelities after she realized that these other women provided opportunities for relaxation that she could not. Anna kept a long letter from Lucy Mercer in sympathy for the death of her father.

Eleanor Roosevelt is often mentioned among the greatest women who ever lived. Her main achievement was to become a voice for people who were disadvantaged. During the Depression, she would say "People are not hungry in the long-run, but now." She worked to improve the lives of Americans who were hungry, homeless, and out of work during the Depression. During the war, she worked tirelessly to visit factories, army camps, and hospitals to improve morale. She was a strong voice for Negro civil rights and actively entertained black people in the White House. She spoke up for the equal treatment of black men in the Armed Services. She was an example of a woman who had a family and a life outside the home and she actively encouraged women to work and develop themselves beyond homemaking and mothering. She changed the role of the First Lady by holding press conferences, writing a newspaper column, taking paid jobs, and working at the Office of Civil Defense. She had a heart for everyone and took an interest in everyone, regardless of their social status. She traveled to Appalachia and came home and talked to her husband about the plight of the coal miners. She would travel to army bases and convince her husband that black soldiers needed equal treatment. She tried to help Jewish refugees find a home in the United States. She also tried to prevent Japanese internment. She was an agitator for human rights, both as First Lady and later as United Nations Ambassador.



Chapter 25 Analysis

Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt became a working couple in the field of politics after he contracted polio. Eleanor began her public career by traveling and keeping the Roosevelt name alive politically until Franklin recovered enough to take up his career. She was a vital part of his success and became a force for good in her own right.



Afterword

Afterword Summary

A brief note on what happened to the main people in this book after Roosevelt died. Eleanor was a force behind the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Jewish State of Israel, and Americans for Democratic Action. She supported Adlai Stevenson in both his runs for the Presidency. She died in 1962.

All the Roosevelt sons, except John, ran for public office. However, they never achieved great success. FDR, Jr. lost twice for governor of New York and served as the Undersecretary of Commerce under John Kennedy. James lost for governor of California, but was elected to Congress seven times. Elliot wrote mystery books and was the mayor of Miami Beach. John was an investment banker and a Republican. Anna divorced Bottinger and married a doctor. She died in 1975. Between the five children, there were eighteen marriages.

Winston Churchill was booted out of office before the end of World War II. He went on to become a successful author and statesman.

Joe Lash wrote an authorized biography of his friend, Eleanor Roosevelt. Lorena Hickok lived in Hyde Park until her death in 1968. Harry Hopkins died nine months after FDR. Lucy Mercer Rutherford, who never remarried, died of leukemia in 1948.

Afterword Analysis

Franklin Roosevelt's children did not live up to the promise of their famous parents. Eleanor remained politically active after her husband's death. Democratic leaders like Truman and Kennedy sought her opinion and she played an active role in presidential politics. She was most known for her work with the United Nations.

Characters

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945)

Franklin Roosevelt was born in 1882 in Hyde Park, New York. He was an only child whose mother doted on him. After graduating from Columbia Law School, he became the Democratic vice-presidential nominee and later served as Secretary of the Navy.

In 1921, disaster struck him in the form of polio. He was paralyzed from the waist down after his illness. He went to Warm Springs, Georgia, where he became an inspiration to other polio victims, as he developed a special healing center for them. In 1938, he was elected governor of New York.

He was elected President in 1933 and oversaw one of the worst periods of the American economy. Almost one in three Americans were out of work and many families were hungry. He instituted the New Deal, a series of governmental programs to help Americans get back to work and to provide relief to those in danger of losing their homes and farms.

In 1941, Hitler was rapidly conquering Europe. After the fall of France, only Great Britain was left to fight the Nazis. Roosevelt came up with the idea of "lend-lease" to help the British and later, the Russians. He instituted a military draft and put everyone to work making weapons for the allies, but stopped short of getting into the war.

When Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Roosevelt led the country through the most terrible war in its history. Working closely with Winston Churchill, he secretly planned the "D-Day" invasion at Normandy, the development of the atomic bomb, and the invasion of North Africa. Because Russia suffered more casualties by the brunt of the Nazi force, Stalin was able to take over much of Eastern Europe without much opposition from Churchill and Roosevelt. However, the "Big Three" worked for the establishment of the United Nations to prevent other world wars and provide a forum for peaceful negotiations.

Roosevelt died while in office on April 12, 1945. Historians rank Roosevelt as the greatest President who ever lived. He shares the top four greatest Presidents with Lincoln, Washington, and Jefferson.

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884-1962)

Eleanor was born into the Oyster Bay branch of the prominent Roosevelt family. Her uncle was President Theodore Roosevelt. However, she had a miserable childhood because her father was an alcoholic and her mother was self-absorbed. She was an orphan by age ten and was reared by aunts and boarding schools.



She married Franklin in a White House ceremony when she was only nineteen and proceeded to have six pregnancies within ten years. Her mother-in-law controlled her children and their lives by controlling their finances and using the young people's desire to please her. When Franklin had an affair with Eleanor's social secretary, their marriage almost ended. A few months later, he contracted polio. Eleanor kept his name alive politically by speaking for him while he recovered.

After FDR was elected President at the height of the Great Depression, Eleanor broke ground as an activist First Lady. She traveled and wrote a daily newspaper column about the plight of the homeless, unemployed, and hungry people. She worked through organizations to champion various causes. When World War II broke out and the thrust of government moved from the domestic to foreign arena, she remained active. She worked toward Negro Civil Rights, especially in the Armed Forces. She set an example by entertaining people of all races in the White House and worked behind the scenes through her husband. She was the first President's wife to take a job in government at the Office of Civil Defense. She was also the first to address a national political convention. She traveled throughout the world during the war to visit factories, hospitals, and military camps to keep up morale.

After her husband's death, she went on to become United Nations Ambassador. She continued her work as a champion of liberal causes and a voice for the poor and disadvantaged.

Sara Delano Roosevelt (1854-1941)

Roosevelt's mother probably influenced him more than any other person. She was a beautiful woman from the Old New York society, who married a man much older than herself. She and her husband doted on their only child, Franklin, and spent their entire day with him. His father, who was retired, would drive him around their Hyde Park estate, as his mother cared for him and supervised his schooling. Sara remained at her son's side throughout both their lives. She controlled the young married couple by living with them and hiring all their nannies and servants. She did not approve of Eleanor's lifestyle or Franklin's interest in politics and would have preferred a quiet life at the country estate. She tried to persuade them to do that after Franklin contracted polio. When he was elected President, she lived between the White House and her Hyde Park estate and entertained people like the King of England. While Eleanor constantly traveled, Sara was always available to her son.

Anna Roosevelt (1906-1975)

The only daughter in Franklin Roosevelt's family of five children was Anna. She was a beautiful, headstrong woman. She married a stockbroker in 1926 and later divorced and married John Bottinger in 1936. They worked together on a newspaper in Seattle until he went to the military. She moved into the White House and served as her father's confidential assistant. As his health worsened, she did everything she could to make



sure he got enough rest and relaxation. She served as a liaison between Roosevelt and Mercer, a fact that estranged her from her mother. After her second divorce, she remarried for a third time. She remained active in her mother's causes.

Winston Churchill (1874-1955)

Churchill became Prime Minister of Britain when Neville Chamberlain resigned in 1940. More than any other person, Churchill led the British to defend Europe against Germany after the fall of France and the Low Countries to the Nazis. He met with Roosevelt many times before and during World War II, persuading him to give military aid to the British in the program that became "lend-lease." He and Roosevelt became not only working partners, but good personal friends. They worked together on military strategies like D-Day, as well as peaceful solutions, like the United Nations.

Joseph Stalin (1880-1953)

Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin are often known as the "Big Three" of Yalta and World War II, referring to their historic meeting at Yalta and their alliance to defeat the Axis Powers. Stalin is now considered one of the monsters of history. Yet during World War II, he led his country as Russians carried the burden of the Nazi invasion. Russia had more casualties than other countries.

Missy LeHand (1900-1942)

Missy LeHand was Franklin Roosevelt's personal assistant from 1923 until 1940. She lived in the White House with the Roosevelt family and served as his hostess at parties when Eleanor traveled. She was very much in love with him and jealous of his other female friends. When she became ill, Roosevelt changed his will to leave her half of his estate, but she died before she could inherit any of his money.

Harry Hopkins (1890-1944)

Hopkins had been with the Roosevelts since Franklin was Governor of New York. He served as a special emissary to Churchill and Stalin during the War and was in charge of Lend-Lease. He lived in the White House.

Lorena Hickok (1893-1968)

Hickok met Eleanor Roosevelt during the 1932 Presidential campaign. Hickok came up with the idea of having Eleanor hold press conferences and write her daily newspaper column. This kind of advice proved invaluable. She was in love with Eleanor and lived in the White House.



Joe Lash (1909-1987)

Lash was a pacifist and student leader in the socialist movement during the Great Depression. He met Eleanor in 1939 and they remained friends until her death. She visited him when he served in Guadalcanal, during World War II. He wrote a Pulitzer Prize winning biography of her.

Lucy Mercer Rutherford (1891-1944)

Lucy Mercer was a young, single woman from an upper-class background. Eleanor Roosevelt hired her in 1914 as her social secretary when Franklin was Secretary of the Navy. In 1918, Eleanor accidentally discovered that Lucy and Franklin were in love and having an affair. She offered him a divorce. Sara Roosevelt threatened to cut her son off financially and as an heir if he divorced Eleanor. They stayed married, but Lucy came back into FDR's life as a companion, especially in the last years he was President.



Objects/Places

Hyde Park

Franklin grew up at the family's 350 acre country estate in New York, called Hyde Park. As President, he often spent weekends and holidays there visiting his mother. It is now operated by the National Park Service.

Val-Kill

Eleanor and her friends built a cottage for themselves on the estate at Hyde Park called "Val Kill." She often said it was the only home that was truly hers.

The White House

Most of the book is set in the White House, which became a boarding house for the Roosevelt entourage. Besides Eleanor and Franklin, their friends and aides like Hopkins, LeHand, Hickok, and others lived there on and off. Their grown children often visited and their daughter lived there while her husband served in the military.

Warm Springs, Georgia

After Franklin contracted polio, he went for a cure in the warm waters of Warm Springs, Georgia. He built it up as a polio center for healing and continued to visit there even as President.

Washington Square Apartment

Eleanor maintained an apartment for herself and her friends in Manhattan. Roosevelt did not visit it until the last years of his life.

Quebec Conferences

One was in August 1943 and the other in September 1944. The first included Roosevelt, Churchill, and representatives of China and Canada. They discussed military options like D-Day. At the second conference, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt met to discuss Germany's future and war strategy.



Teheran Conference

This meeting began November 28, 1944, between Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt. The Brits and Americans committed to the invasion of France. Stalin committed to fighting against Japan. They discussed the formation of the United Nations.

Yalta Conference

This meeting took place February 4 - 11, 1945 between Churchill, Roosevelt, and Stalin. Germany would be divided into four zones. Some agreements were made on the borders and elections in Poland. Stalin secretly agreed to help defeat Japan. Years later, Roosevelt was accused of handing Eastern Europe over to Stalin at this conference.

Pearl Harbor

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese hit the American Navy at Pearl Harbor, which caused the United States to enter World War II.

Wheel Chair and Leg Braces

Roosevelt was paralyzed from the waist down. He had no use of his legs, but gave the illusion of walking by resting one arm on a cane and the other on his son or an aide. He needed help in and out of bed, in the bathroom, and to dress and undress. He was terrified of being trapped in a fire.

Labor Strikes

During World War II, business and government united to build weapons first in Lend-Lease and then after the United States entered the war. Labor strikes were considered unpatriotic. John L. Lewis struck with his mine workers union, but Roosevelt seized the mines under war emergency powers.

Negro Civil Rights

Eleanor Roosevelt plunged in the middle of this issue and worked for equal rights for those serving in the Armed Services. She would report all injustices to her husband after her frequent travels. There were many racial disturbances not only in the military, but also in many cities and towns.



Lend-Lease

The United States, while formally remaining neutral, developed a massive war production to lend and lease weapons to Britain and Russia. This program was called "lend-lease."

D-Day

June 6, 1944 is "D-Day," the day that 150,000 Americans landed on the beaches of Normandy. The invasion had been planned for years by Churchill and Roosevelt and their military commanders.

Fala

Roosevelt's devoted little Scottish terrier, Fala, became nationally famous in his master's humorous speeches.



Themes

Home Front During World War II

Although Goodwin writes many pages about the battles and their strategies, her focus is on the American home front during World War II. She writes about the changes in the average American's life during that time. Women went to work in defense factories, making them more financially independent. For the first time, their work outside the home was valued and needed. Americans experimented with the first daycare centers. People pulled together in a common effort to win the war. They rationed common things like meat, sugar, coffee, rubber and aluminum. They bought bonds instead of stocks. When Roosevelt asked people to buy a map before a certain fireside chat, millions of Americans did just that. They were glued to their radios with their maps of the world while the President explained to them how the war was being fought.

Eleanor serves as a national morale-booster, as she travels to hospitals and battlefields. She becomes the eyes and ears of her husband and reports to him on how the average family is coping with the changes that the war has brought.

Finally, the theme of "home front" is carried out as Goodwin describes the everyday lives of the Roosevelt in the White House and at Hyde Park.

An Unusual Marriage

The Roosevelt marriage is unusual in that there are more than two people in it. The White House is full of boarders, many of whom are friends, who are sacrificing their personal lives to serve the President and his wife. Roosevelt had affairs with Missy LeHand, Lucy Mercer and Princess Martha. He carries on with these women fairly openly. Likewise, Eleanor lives openly with lesbian friends like Lorena Hickok, who writes her letters about physical love. She seems to have fallen for Joe Lash and mourns for him when he serves in the military. Although everyone in Washington is gossiping, there are no reports in the press about what's going on.

Goodwin believes that the couple had "an open marriage." For example, Eleanor told her daughter that she was not interested in being a hostess and wife and that it was okay with her if Missy LeHand wanted to take over those roles in Franklin's life.

There may be two underlying reasons why their marriage was so full of people. First, the Roosevelts never lived alone as a couple. They got off to a bad start as a young couple, as Roosevelt's mother dominated their marriage and planned their days for them. Secondly, Franklin's physical helplessness meant that he needed constant service. He preferred a household full of life and people because he could not move freely from place to place.



Clashing Politics of Eleanor and Franklin

Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt had both broken ranks with their wealthy families and friends of their social class by becoming Democrats. Eleanor's uncle, Theodore Roosevelt, had been a liberal Republican.

Yet, Eleanor was more to the left than Franklin. She was active in causes that were very ahead of her times such as Negro Civil Rights. She joined groups that were considered socialist and she had many friends in far-left groups like the American Youth Congress. She constantly wanted her husband to do more for labor, Jewish refugees, and minorities. She was against the internment of the American-Japanese.

Her socialist and pacifist views touched Roosevelt. His Four Freedom Speech, in which he says people have the right to a good job, housing, and so forth, is closer to Eleanor's politics. Yet, because he had to survive in politics, he was more centrist. One of his greatest achievements was to form a "mixed economy" of business and government working together. He gave special tax breaks to the business community. He frequently went against the interests of men on strike, such as the times he seized the mines under his war emergency powers.

The couple was often at odds with each other. She could keep up her demands until she got her way. For example, if he didn't offer a certain friend a job, she would seat that friend next to her husband at a White House dinner. When Franklin grew ill, his doctors wanted to keep Eleanor away from him. Her constant badgering that he should do more for this group would make him ill. His blood pressure would measurably rise when she came into the room.

Style

Points of View

This book is written as a history, told from an all-knowing, narrative point of view. About half of it is told like any other history of great events, such as D-Day and the Yalta Conference. The other half is about the personal and emotional lives of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt. It is here that Goodwin writes almost like a psychoanalyst. She delves into their motives and longings, which she traces back to childhood influences. For example, after the death of his mother, she writes that Roosevelt is lonely and grief-stricken and reaches out to become closer to Eleanor, who rejects him. Eleanor's rejection has to do with her great love for her father, who rejected her through his alcoholism, making her distrustful and leery in relationships. These parts of the book become more like a novel written from the interior lives of its characters.

Setting

The setting is usually the White House or Hyde Park, where the Roosevelts had a lavish wealthy lifestyle. They were surrounded by servants and every luxury, as they were before they became President and First Lady. Meanwhile, World War II was raging on the battlefields of Europe, Russia, and the Far East. Although Eleanor and Franklin curb their spending so as not to appear extravagant during the war years, they can indulge every whim if they want to. If he wants a few weeks in Warm Springs or sailing on his yacht, that can be arranged. If she wants to visit a friend serving in the military on the other side of the world, it can be arranged. If he wants all thirteen grandchildren at his Inaugural, it is done.

Roosevelt is so helpless that he requires constant service by valets and maids. Both Eleanor and Franklin have turned loyal friends and family members into secretaries and aides, who freely sacrifice their personal lives to serve them. They live in the White House, too, so as to be constantly available to serve the President and First Lady.

Language and Meaning

Doris Kearns Goodwin studied at Harvard University in the 1970s, when the History Department there had turned to "psycho-history." She learned her profession from writers like, Erik Erickson and Fawn Brodie, who produced books that were part-history and part-psychology about Richard Nixon, Thomas Jefferson, Martin Luther, and other great historical figures.

Goodwin's book *No Ordinary Time* is told mostly in chronological order. It follows the lives of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt from the start of World War II in 1940 until FDR's death in 1945. Because they were in the "center of history" as Goodwin puts it,



the book is a history of World War II from their viewpoint. However, Goodwin's book focuses much more on their personal lives than on battles and generals.

Because Goodwin is interested in the personal psychology of the Roosevelts and other people in the book, she includes long passages that trace their depressions and moods to childhood traumas. She uses information from people who knew them to back up her speculation about personal aspects of their lives that goes far beyond what most historians write about. For example, she speculates about whether Roosevelt could be sexually active with his wife, Missy LeHand and Lucy Mercer, given his paralysis, and whether Eleanor had lesbian relationships with friends who lived with her. Some would argue that this speculation moves into the realm of gossip that can never be proven.

Structure

This book has twenty-five chapters and seems to have been carefully planned as a chronological history of the war years. Each chapter is about thirty pages long. Goodwin's concentration is not on the military strategies and battles of World War II, but rather the lives of the people who fought the war at home. She writes less about soldiers and more about the women working in defense factories and the effect that their working had on them and their families. She is interested in the struggles of the average American, with rationing and buying bonds, rather than battlefield plans.

In particular, she concentrates on what Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt did during those years as President and First Lady. About half of each chapter is devoted to their political lives, so Goodwin recounts Roosevelt's historic meetings with Stalin and Roosevelt, as well as his political dealings at home. She writes about Eleanor's travels and political activism. The other half of each chapter is about their personal and emotional lives.



Quotes

"In the spring of 1940, the United States possessed almost no munitions industry at all. So strong had been the recoil from war after 1918 that both the government and the private sector, had backed away from making weapons. The result was that while the United States led the world in the mass production of automobiles, washing machines, and other household appliances, the techniques of producing weapons of war had badly atrophied." Chapter 1, Page 23

So much did Eleanor travel that the *Washington Star* once printed a humorous headline: "Mrs. Roosevelt Spends Night at White House." Chapter 1, Page 29

Churchill 1940: "We shall not flag nor fail. We shall go on to the end, defend our island, whatever the cost may be, we shall fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds, we shall fight in the fields and in the streets, we shall fight in the hills; we shall never surrender.." Chapter 3, Page 63

Hitler ordered Speer to resume his architectural renovations of Berlin. However, as beautiful as Paris was, Berlin must be made far more beautiful. "In the past I often considered whether or not we would have to destroy Paris," he confided to Speer. "But when we are finished in Berlin, Paris will only be a shadow. So why destroy it?" Chapter 3, Page 73

"Whereas in the 1930s, Eleanor and Franklin worked side by side in common pursuit of the same goals, now, more and more, she would find herself in the role of the agitator while he remained the politician." Chapter 4, Page 104

"Roosevelt not only wants to be nominated himself," the Democratic delegates seemed to be saying, "He wants to pick his own man. He doesn't want to leave that to the convention. He doesn't want to let us have a runoff here between our political racehorses." But nobody could afford to show their resentment to the President. Chapter 5, Page 129

"Roosevelt had a little mischief in mind. By scheduling the summit for the same day as Wilkie's acceptance speech, he hoped, he later joked, that he would "steal half the show." He did." Chapter 6, Page 143

"Franklin tolerated Eleanor because she represented the more generous, idealistic side of his own nature, the humanitarian values he himself held but felt unable to act upon in the context of the Southern-dominated Congress. But it was also good politics. While he kept the part intact in the South, Eleanor was building new allies in the North among tens of thousands of migrating blacks to urban areas like Chicago, New York and Detroit." Chapter 7, Page 164

"The President's idea was really based upon very old, primitive and countrified ways of doing things □ Like lending hoses or ladders to a neighbor when his house was on fire,



and the neighbor would reciprocate when he could □ The moral of the story was clear: by sending supplies to the British now, the USA would be abundantly repaid by the increase to its own security." Chapter 8, Page 196

(Hickok's and Eleanor's) letters possess an emotional intensity and a sensual explicitness that is hard to disregard. Hick longed to kiss the soft spot at the corner of Eleanor's mouth; Eleanor yearned to hold Hick close; Hick despaired at being away from Eleanor; Eleanor wished she could lie down beside Hick and take her in her arms. Chapter 9, Page 222

Roosevelt had been anxious to lay down a set of broad principles which would guide Allied policy during and after the war. Churchill readily agreed to the idea □ The resulting declaration pledged the two countries to seek no territorial aggrandizement, pursue no territorial changes which did not accord with the wishes of the people concerned, respect the rights of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they would live, commit themselves to free trade, and work for both disarmament and a permanent system of security. Chapter 10, Page 266

It is inconceivable that Roosevelt, who loved the navy with a passion, would have intentionally sacrificed the heart of its fleet, much less the lives of thirty-five hundred American sailors and soldiers, without lifting a finger to reduce the risk. It is an inquiry that obscures the more important question Senator Connally posed: "How did it happen that our warships were caught like tame ducks in Pearl Harbor?" Chapter 11, Page 293

The difference between Eleanor's call for conscription and Franklin's reliance on democratic incentives was deep and signaled their incompatibility of outlook. .. Eleanor feared that in the absence of imposed order and discipline, confusion would result. The confusion Eleanor feared, Roosevelt saw as the necessary price for freedom. Chapter 12, Page 332

Although not everyone could have the privilege of "fighting our enemies in distant parts of the world or working in a munitions factory or shipyard, there is one front and one battle where everyone in the United States -every man, woman and child □ is in action. That front is right here at home in our daily tasks." Roosevelt, April 1942. Chapter 13, Page 339

Franklin approached Eleanor with the idea that they should try once more to live as man and wife □ Franklin turned to Eleanor late one night and asked her to stay home more; to commit herself, since civilian travel was restricted, to their life in the White House; to be his hostess at his cocktail hour, and to do things with him on the weekends □. (Page 371) Eleanor never mentioned the proposal directly. Instead, she gave an impassioned plea for a new assignment □ She wanted to visit American troops in England .. Chapter 14, Page 378

If the bill had passed, it would have opened the gates of immigration to Jewish refugees. The powerful conservative coalition crushed it. "The ugly truth," *Newsweek*



observed, "is that anti-Semitism was a definite factor in the bitter opposition to the President's request." Chapter 15, Page 397

More than three million women had entered the work force between 1940 and 1942, and three million more were expected to enter before the war was over, bringing the total of female workers to nineteen million. □ Seventy-five percent were married, 60 percent were over thirty-five, and more than 33 percent had children under fourteen. Chapter 16, Page 416

Red Oak, Iowa, was the "hometown we dreamed of overseas," one serviceman wrote after the war, "rich and contented, with chicken and blueberry pies on Sundays, for whose sake, some said, we were fighting the war." ..It would take weeks for the people of this small town to come to understand that their entire National Guard unit had been destroyed in a single battle. Chapter 17, Page 436

In substituting Dr. Win the War for Dr. New Deal, Roosevelt did not intend to diminish the past accomplishments of the New Deal. □ He was simply saying that when the times change and the problems change, the slogans should also change. Chapter 18, Page 482

Roosevelt in 1944: "We have come to the clear realization of the fact that true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. Necessitous men are not free men. People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made." Chapter 19, Page 485

Roosevelt on running the fourth time: "All that is within me cries out to go back to my home on the Hudson River, but the future existence of the nation and the future existence of our chosen form of government are at stake." Chapter 20, Page 524

"These Republican leaders have not been content with attacks on me, or my wife, or on my sons," Roosevelt said in a mock-serious tone. "No, not content with that, they now include my little dog Fala. Well, of course, I don't resent attacks, and my family doesn't resent attacks, but Fala does resent them." Chapter 21, Page 548

What women workers needed, Eleanor argued, was the courage to ask for their rights in a loud voice, demanding equal pay for equal work, an expansion of day care, and a proper share in postwar planning. "Men and women were meant to work together," she said. Chapter 23, Page 557

Did Roosevelt's physical condition impair his judgment (at Yalta)? There is no simple answer. .. (The other Americans at the conference) are unanimous in their belief that Roosevelt was in full possession of his faculties at all times. .. He might have insisted on stronger safeguards with regard to Poland, he might have been more ambiguous in his commitments to Russia in the Far East, he might have fought harder against the two extra Assembly seats, but in the end, there is no evidence that fine points of language would have made a great deal of difference in the course of events. Chapter 24, Page 585



Churchill once said that to encounter Franklin Roosevelt, with all his buoyant sparkle, his iridescent personality, and his inner élan was like opening your first bottle of champagne. Roosevelt genuinely liked people, he enjoyed taking responsibility, and he adored being President. Chapter 25, Page 606

They made an extraordinary team. (Eleanor) was more earnest, less devious, less patient, less fun, more uncompromisingly moral; he possessed the more trustworthy political talent, the more finely tuned sense of timing, the better feel for the citizenry, the smarter understanding of how to get things done. She could travel where he could not .. She was the agitator; he was the politician. Chapter 25, Page 629



Topics for Discussion

This book is part of a new genre that mixes intimate details of a subject's life with historical events. In some chapters, details of love affairs take up as much space as details about presidential actions that affected the lives of millions. What do you think about psycho-biography? Do you think such intimate details are necessary for understanding the subjects? Do you believe it is fair to the subject who can no longer defend himself?

Discuss how Eleanor's politics complemented the politics of her husband.

Roosevelt's doctors knew that he was dying before he chose to run for his fourth term as President. People close to FDR knew his health was failing. Why do you think Roosevelt wanted a fourth term? Why couldn't the presidency be turned over to someone else? Why didn't he groom a successor or take interest in his vice presidential choice?

In 1939, Hitler was willing to let Jewish people emigrate out of Europe. Why didn't the United States and other countries open their doors to these people? What were the opinions of Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt?

Many historians believe that if the United States had entered World War II earlier, Hitler would have been defeated earlier. Stalin would not have carved up Europe. There would have been no Cold War. Discuss these possibilities and what measures Roosevelt could have taken to convince the American people the war was necessary. Do you think he allowed the attack on Pearl Harbor to happen?

Today's press is very different than the one operating in 1940. Discuss whether it would be possible for Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt to carry on intimate affairs in the White House. How did the press cooperate with this deception as well as keeping the secrets of Roosevelt's disability?

Roosevelt is considered a master politician and one that could be cunning and wise. Give examples of some of his craftiness, as well as his wisdom in his years as President and head of the Democratic Party.

Discuss Eleanor Roosevelt's active role in ending Negro segregation and how it helped and hurt her husband's presidency.

Discuss the conference at Yalta. What concessions were made to Stalin and why? What concessions were gained for England and the United States?

Roosevelt ranks as one of the greatest Presidents the United States has had. What were his greatest accomplishments? What lasting changes did he make in government and society?