

Franklin over
economic as well as
social barriers.



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Franklin Delano Roosevelt This essay will focus on the life of Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Roosevelt devoted much of his later years in life to help the needy. As president, Roosevelt passed as many bills, lobbying for as much congressional support as he could get to aid him in his attempts to help the unemployed, starving and poor people that society had forgotten. President Roosevelt has often been called the most beneficial president that America has had in the twentieth century, some may argue that he was the best president since Lincoln. Roosevelt truly dedicated his life to humanitarian efforts worldwide, never stopping to take a break until his unfortunate early death. Never in the history of the United States had there ever been such a terrible, long-lasting, economic depression then the one that began just before President Roosevelt ran for his first presidential election. Thirteen million people were out of work, about one quarter of the working age population and cities - as well as states - were losing money fast, as there were no taxes to be collected. Schools were closed because the states did not have enough money to fund them and people were homeless and starving; living - and dying - on the very streets where just a few years ago America experienced its first economic boom.

This sets the stage for the most triumphant presidency this country has ever seen. Triumphant not only over the war that was to follow but also over economic as well as social barriers. It would be nothing short of the truth to say that President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and his staff saved this country from total economic collapse. President Roosevelt's heritage traces all the way back to our great nation's colonial times.

Being of Dutch and English ancestry, his ancestor, Klaes Martensen had been a Dutch immigrant, settling in New York in 1645. Almost two hundred years later, on January 30, 1882, Franklin Delano was born. Both of his parents had come from upper-class families. His father, James Roosevelt was the vice president of the Delaware and Hudson Railway Company. Franklin lived a life almost all would envy, growing up about 100 miles north of New York City on his parents Hyde Estate. The estate, totaling about 100 acres in size overlooked the Hudson River and had a breathtaking view of the Catskill mountains. He led a good life, going to well-renound private schools then graduating, to attend Harvard and later Colombia Law School.

It was at this time that Roosevelt met and fell in love with Anna Eleanor Roosevelt, and the were promptly married. Attending the ceremonies was President Theodore Roosevelt. The assumption can be drawn that during this time Franklin was overcome with a strong desire to become president.

His road to success was far from over, though, in a period of about ten to twenty years Roosevelt became a New York senator and Governor. He was forced to fade out of the public spotlight, though when he was stricken with polio after a boating trip. During this period of a few years Franklin became better acquainted with his wife and her ideals. Eleanor was his second influence, as she was a great humanitarian. Eleanor taught Franklin many of the important morals he would later use as president. When Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected for his first term, in 1933 he began to put these morals to good use. During the first one hundred days Roosevelt spent in office he passed many bills, setting up agencies like the WPA, or Works Progress Administration.

Roosevelt believed in giving aid to the sick, poor and helpless, by providing hospital care for those who needed it and by setting up food distribution centers and homeless shelters. He also believed in insurance for the elderly and unemployed, he set up Social Security to pay out money to those who could no longer work or who just could not find work. He set up mortgage relief actions for farmers and home owners, before he became president over one hundred homes were foreclosed every day, and one in three farms had been foreclosed or deserted. He set up public works programs to create jobs for the millions of unemployed able workers, building roads and other projects.

He regulated banks, after the closing of all banks in Michigan for a day people panicked and began to withdraw their money. Roosevelt closed all banks in the United States and set up a board to review the banks, those that were deemed able to be reopened were, but many banks had to file for bankruptcy. Finally, Roosevelt believed in the preservation not only of the human soul but also of the earth we live on, so he allotted land for national parks and set up nature reserves. Having been stricken with Polio, Roosevelt knew what it was like to be helpless, always in need of someone else's help, not due to any fault of their own; for this reason his compassion for those in need was enormous. The Catholic Church would back up any of these measures, as it teaches many of these same values. For instance, it is only natural to think that the church would treat the poor as Roosevelt did, because Jesus did the same, providing food and shelter for homeless and starving. Also, the church teaches that we should treat all people as equals, as we are all created in God's own image.

Franklin Delano Roosevelt's bills did not exclude the poor, sick or elderly. As a matter of fact, Roosevelt set up the Social Security Act to provide for these old and sick. Also, Roosevelt's public works projects included all races, providing jobs for whites as well as blacks and Asians. The actions of Roosevelt and his staff represent the epitome of the will to survive the Great Depression.

They never gave up, continuing to produce bills well into his second elected term. If a bill was deemed unlawful, as some were, he would review the bill, rephrasing it to make it legal while still retaining its quality. These great actions stemmed from great beliefs. Though it was unclear to the writer what religious beliefs the former President held, it was clear that he truly believed and was empowered by God to perform many of the tasks and actions that he did. His beliefs also came from his parents and wife. Both of his parents believed that one with more money should give to one with less money. In other words, Roosevelt probably had understood the importance of giving all of his life.

Roosevelt also learned a lot from his wife, Eleanor, who was a great humanitarian. During her days in the White House, Eleanor spent much time devising ways to help her husband propose new bills and give more, she was probably the biggest influence on Franklin Roosevelt's life. Morris, Jeffrey B. *FDR Way*, The 1996, Lou Reda Productions.