

# MIZZOU

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[Home](#) » [Spring 2011](#) » [Alumni Profiles](#) » Alumna publishes Eleanor Roosevelt book

## Alumni Profile

### Alumna publishes Eleanor Roosevelt book

In the mid-1950s, a woman's role in the newsroom was limited, so Maurine Beasley pursued bachelor's degrees in journalism as well as history, with an eye toward teaching — if she had to. But with the publication of her most recent book, *Eleanor Roosevelt: Transformative First Lady* (University Press of Kansas, 2010), Beasley is schooling a much wider audience than just a roomful of students.

“Girls were supposed to work on the society pages at the *Missourian*,” Beasley says. “I escaped that, however, because I was so sure I needed to get out with some credentials that would allow me to support myself.”

While taking classes to fulfill requirements for both her history degree and high school teaching certification, Beasley, BA, BJ '58, bypassed the society assignments under editor Queen Smith and instead went to the Boone County Courthouse to cover a murder trial.

“I was so nervous and scared my hands were shaking,” Beasley says. “It was a big story, and I botched it up, but the *Columbia Daily Tribune* reporter there was very nice. He gave me the defendant's name and made sure I spelled it right.”



New book *Eleanor Roosevelt: Transformative First Lady* by Maurine Beasley, BA, BJ '58, is a selection of the History Book Club.

Originally from Sedalia, Mo., Beasley didn't let that rocky start get in the way of an illustrious career. Currently professor emerita at the University of Maryland College of Journalism, Beasley has a master's degree from Columbia University and a doctorate from George Washington University.




Despite forward thinking and time spent reporting for the *Kansas City Star* and the *Washington Post*, Beasley has always kept an eye on the past. She has taught classes on women and the media as well as the history of journalism. Now, with the publication of her newest book, Beasley has added to her legacy as one of today's foremost Eleanor Roosevelt historians.

"The most interesting thing about Eleanor is that she had no script. What she did, she did on her own. No advisers, no handlers, she was her own person."

Although Beasley adamantly denies it, you could say the same thing about her. — *Robert W. Johnson*

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