

Theodore Roosevelt



Theodore Roosevelt at age 11

Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt was born on October 27, 1858, in a four-story brownstone at 28 East 20th Street, in the modern-day Gramercy section of New York City, the second of four children of Theodore Roosevelt, Sr. (1831–1878) and Martha "Mittie" Bulloch (1835–1884). He had an elder sister Anna, and two younger siblings—his brother Elliott (the father of future First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt), and his sister Corinne.

Sickly and asthmatic as a child, Roosevelt had to sleep propped up in bed or slouching in a chair during much of his early childhood, and had frequent ailments. Despite his illnesses, he was a hyperactive and often mischievous child. His lifelong interest in zoology was formed at age seven upon seeing a dead seal at a local market. After obtaining the seal's head, the young Roosevelt and two of his cousins formed what they called the "Roosevelt Museum of Natural History". Learning the rudiments of taxidermy, he filled his makeshift museum with many animals that he killed or caught, studied, and prepared for display. At age nine, he codified his observation of insects with a paper titled "The Natural History of Insects".

To combat his poor physical condition, his father encouraged the young Roosevelt to take up exercise. Roosevelt started boxing lessons. Two trips abroad had a permanent impact: family tours of Europe in 1869 and 1870, and Egypt 1872 to 1873.

Theodore, Sr. had a tremendous influence on his son, of whom Roosevelt wrote, "My father, Theodore Roosevelt, was the best man I ever knew. He combined strength and courage with gentleness, tenderness, and great unselfishness. He would not tolerate in us children selfishness or cruelty, idleness, cowardice, or untruthfulness."

Young "Teedie", as he was nicknamed as a child, was mostly home schooled by tutors and his parents. A leading biographer says: "The most obvious drawback to the home schooling Roosevelt received was uneven coverage of the various areas of human knowledge." He was solid in geography (thanks to his careful observations on all his travels) and very well read in history, strong in biology, French, and German, but deficient in mathematics, Latin and Greek. He matriculated at Harvard College in 1876. His father's death in 1878 was a tremendous blow, but Roosevelt redoubled his activities. He did well in science, philosophy and rhetoric

courses but fared poorly in Latin and Greek. He studied biology with great interest and indeed was already an accomplished naturalist and published ornithologist. He had a photographic memory and developed a life-long habit of devouring books, memorizing every detail. He was an eloquent conversationalist who, throughout his life, sought out the company of the smartest people.

While at Harvard, Roosevelt was active in rowing, boxing, the Alpha Delta Phi literary society, the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity, and was a member of the Porcellian Club. He also edited a student magazine. He was runner-up in the Harvard boxing championship.

While at Harvard, Roosevelt began a systematic study of the role played by the US Navy in the War of 1812. Published after Roosevelt's graduation from college, his first book *The Naval War of 1812* was praised for its scholarship and style. This book established Roosevelt's reputation as a serious historian.

Upon graduating, Roosevelt underwent a physical examination, and his doctor advised him that due to serious heart problems, he should find a desk job and avoid strenuous activity. He chose to embrace strenuous life instead.

He graduated Phi Beta Kappa (22nd of 177) from Harvard in 1880, and entered Columbia Law School. When offered a chance to run for New York Assemblyman in 1881, he dropped out of law school to pursue his new goal of entering public life. He was elected to the Assembly of New York State, holding office for three years and distinguishing himself as an ardent reformer.



Roosevelt as NY State Assemblyman, 1883 photo

First Marriage

Alice Hathaway Lee was the first wife of Theodore Roosevelt and mother of their child, Alice. Roosevelt's wife, Alice died of kidney failure two days after Alice Lee was born. Theodore Roosevelt's mother had died of typhoid fever in the same house, on the same day, at 3 am, some eleven hours earlier. After the near simultaneous deaths of his mother and wife, Roosevelt left his daughter in the care of his sister, Anna "Bamie/Bye" in New York City. In his diary he wrote a large X on the page and wrote "the light has gone out of my life."



Diary Entry Feb 14, 1884



Ranch Life in North Dakota

In 1884, because of the death of his wife, Roosevelt abandoned his political work for some time. He invested part of the fortune he had inherited from his father in a cattle ranch in the Badlands of Dakota Territory, expecting to remain in the West for many years. He became a passionate hunter, especially of big game, and an ardent believer in the wild outdoor life which brought him health and strength.

After the uniquely severe U.S. winter of 1886-1887 wiped out his herd of cattle (together with those of his competitors) and his \$60,000 investment, he returned to the East, where in 1885 he had built Sagamore Hill in Oyster Bay, New York. It would be his home and estate until his death. Roosevelt ran as the Republican candidate for mayor of New York City in 1886 as "The Cowboy of the Dakotas"; he came in third.

Second Marriage & Family

Following the defeat in the mayoral election, he went to London in 1886 and married his childhood sweetheart, Edith Kermit Carow. They had five children: Theodore Jr., Kermit, Ethel Carow, Archibald Bulloch "Archie", and Quentin.

Civil Service Commission

In the 1888 presidential election, Roosevelt campaigned in the Midwest for Benjamin Harrison. President Harrison appointed Roosevelt to the United States Civil Service Commission, where he served until 1895.

New York City Police Commissioner

Roosevelt became president of the board of New York City Police Commissioners in 1895. During his two years in this post, Roosevelt radically reformed the police department. The police force was reputed as one of the most corrupt in America. The NYPD's history division records that Roosevelt was "an iron-willed leader of unimpeachable honesty, who brought a reforming zeal to the New York City Police Commission." Roosevelt established new disciplinary rules, created a bicycle squad to police New York's traffic problems, and standardized the use of pistols by officers. Roosevelt made a habit of walking officers' beats late at night and early in the morning to make sure they were on duty.



Roosevelt as NYPD Commissioner 1895

Assistant Secretary of the Navy

Roosevelt had always been fascinated by naval history. Urged by Roosevelt's close friend, Congressman Henry Cabot Lodge, President William McKinley appointed a delighted Roosevelt to the post of Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1897. Roosevelt was instrumental in preparing the Navy for

the Spanish-American War and was an enthusiastic proponent of testing the U.S. military in battle, at one point stating "I should welcome almost any war, for I think this country needs one".



Colonel Theodore Roosevelt

War in Cuba

Upon the 1898 Declaration of War launching the Spanish-American War, Roosevelt resigned from the Navy Department. With the aid of U.S. Army Colonel Leonard Wood, Roosevelt found volunteers from cowboys from the Western territories to Ivy League friends from New York, forming the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry Regiment. The newspapers called them the "**Rough Riders.**" Roosevelt was promoted to Colonel and given command of the Regiment.



Colonel Roosevelt and the Rough Riders after capturing San Juan Hill

Under his leadership, the Rough Riders became famous for dual charges up Kettle Hill and San Juan Hill on July 1, 1898. For his actions, Roosevelt was nominated for the Medal of Honor which was subsequently disapproved. [However, Roosevelt was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor in 2001 for his actions. The medal is currently on display in the Roosevelt Room of the White House.]

Governor and Vice-President

On leaving the Army, Roosevelt was elected governor of New York in 1898 as a Republican. He made such an effort to root out corruption and "machine politics" that Republican boss Thomas Collier Platt forced him on McKinley as a vice-presidential running mate in the 1900 Presidential election. Roosevelt was a powerful campaign asset for the Republican ticket, which defeated William Jennings Bryan in a landslide. Roosevelt's six months as Vice President (March to September 1901) were uneventful. On September 2, 1901, at the Minnesota State Fair, Roosevelt first used in a public speech a saying that would later be universally associated with him: "*Speak softly and carry a big stick, and you will go far.*"

President of the United States 1901-1909

On September 6, President McKinley was shot while at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York. Initial reports in the succeeding days suggested his condition was improving, so Roosevelt embarked on a vacation at Mount

Marcy in north-eastern New York. He was returning from a climb to the summit on September 13 when a park ranger brought him a telegram informing him that McKinley's condition had deteriorated, and he was near death.

Roosevelt and his family immediately departed for Buffalo. When they reached the nearest train station at North Creek, at 5:22 a.m. on September 14, he received another telegram that McKinley had died a few hours earlier. Roosevelt arrived in Buffalo that afternoon, and was sworn in there as President at 3:30 p.m.

In the 1904 presidential election, Roosevelt won the presidency in his own right in a landslide victory.



Official White House portrait by John Singer Sargent

Events & Accomplishments of Theodore Roosevelt's Presidency

President Roosevelt served through most of the first decade of the 1900's. He was determined to build a **canal across Panama**. America aided Panama in gaining independence from Colombia. The U.S. then created a treaty with the newly independent Panama to gain the canal zone in exchange for \$10 million plus annual payments.

The Monroe Doctrine is one of the keystones of American foreign policy. It says that the western hemisphere is off limits to foreign encroachment. Roosevelt added the **Roosevelt Corollary** to the Doctrine. This stated that it was the responsibility of America to intervene with force if necessary in Latin America to enforce the Monroe Doctrine. This was part of what became known as 'Big Stick Diplomacy'.

From 1904-05, the **Russo-Japanese War** occurred. Roosevelt was the mediator of the peace between the two countries. Due to this, he won the **1906 Nobel Peace Prize**.

While in office, Roosevelt was known for his progressive policies. One of his nicknames was Trust Buster because his administration used existing antitrust laws to fight against corruption in the railroad, oil, and other industries. His policies concerning trusts and labor reform were part of what he called the "Square Deal."

Upton Sinclair wrote about the disgusting and unsanitary practices of the meat packing industry in his novel *The Jungle*. This resulted in the **Meat Inspection and the Pure Food and Drug Acts** in 1906. These laws required the government to

inspect meat and protect consumers from food and drugs that might be dangerous.

Roosevelt was well-known for his conservation efforts. He was known as the **Great Conservationist**. During his time in office, over 125 million acres in national forests were set aside under public protection. He also established the first national wildlife refuge.

Building on McKinley's effective use of the press, Roosevelt made the White House the center of news every day, providing interviews and photo opportunities. After noticing the White House reporters huddled outside in the rain one day, he gave them their own room inside, effectively **inventing the presidential press briefing**.

In August 1902, Roosevelt was the first president to be seen riding in an automobile in public.



He chose not to run for another term in 1908, and supported William Taft for the presidency.

Post-Presidential Period

Roosevelt declined to run for re-election in 1908 and retired to Oyster Bay, New York. He went on a safari to Africa where he collected specimens for the Smithsonian Institute. The safari was partially financed by Andrew Carnegie.



Roosevelt standing next to a dead elephant during a safari

On his return to the US, a bitter rift developed between Roosevelt and his anointed successor as President, William Howard Taft. Roosevelt attempted in 1912 to wrest the Republican nomination from Taft, and when he failed, he launched the Bull Moose Party.

Assassination attempt

While Roosevelt was campaigning in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on October 14, 1912, a saloonkeeper named John Schrank shot him, but the bullet lodged in his chest only after penetrating his steel eyeglass case and passing through a thick (50 pages)

single-folded copy of the speech he was carrying in his jacket. Roosevelt, as an experienced hunter and anatomist, correctly concluded that since he wasn't coughing blood, the bullet had not completely penetrated the chest wall to his lung, and so declined suggestions he go to the hospital immediately.

Instead, he delivered his scheduled speech with blood seeping into his shirt. He spoke for 90 minutes. His opening comments to the gathered crowd were, "Ladies and gentlemen, I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot; but it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose."¹ Afterwards, probes and x-ray showed that the bullet had traversed three inches of tissue and lodged in Roosevelt's chest muscle but did not penetrate the pleura, and it would be more dangerous to attempt to remove the bullet than to leave it in place. Roosevelt carried it with him for the rest of his life.

Due to the bullet wound, Roosevelt was taken off the campaign trail in the final weeks of the race (which ended election day, November 5). Though the other two campaigners stopped their own campaigns in the week Roosevelt was in the hospital, they resumed it once he was released.

Roosevelt for many reasons failed to move enough Republicans in his direction. His presence in the election caused the Republican vote to be split allowing Democrat Woodrow Wilson to win the election and become president.

Final Years

After the election, Roosevelt embarked on a major expedition to South America; the river on which he traveled now bears his name. He contracted malaria on the trip, which damaged his health.

A few years later, on January 6, 1919, Roosevelt died in his sleep at Oyster Bay of heart attack at the age of 60. Upon receiving word of his death, his son Archie telegraphed his siblings simply, "The old lion is dead." The U.S. Vice-President at that time, Thomas R. Marshall, said that "Death had to take Roosevelt sleeping, for if he had been awake, there would have been a fight."

Roosevelt has consistently been ranked by scholars as one of the greatest U.S. Presidents.

Theodore Roosevelt the Writer

Roosevelt was a prolific author, writing with passion on subjects ranging from foreign policy to the importance of the national park system. Roosevelt was also an avid reader of poetry. American poet, Robert Frost said of TR, "He was our kind. He quoted poetry to me. He knew poetry."

As an editor of *Outlook* magazine, he had weekly access to a large, educated national audience. In all, Roosevelt wrote about 18 books, including his *Autobiography*, *The Rough Riders*, *History of the Naval War of 1812* and others on subjects such as ranching, history, explorations, war, and wildlife. His most ambitious book was the four volume narrative *The Winning of the West*. He also wrote many

articles on a wide variety of topics and his literary contributions include many influential speeches.

In popular culture

Roosevelt's lasting pop culture legacy is the stuffed toy bears — teddy bears — named after him following an incident on a hunting trip in Mississippi in 1902. Roosevelt famously ordered the mercy killing of a wounded black bear. After a national cartoonist illustrated the President with a bear, a toy maker heard the story and asked Roosevelt if he could use his name on a toy bear. Roosevelt approved, and the teddy bear was born. Bears and later bear cubs became closely associated with Roosevelt in political cartoons thereafter.



Roosevelt Family in 1903 with Quentin on the left, TR, Ted, Jr., "Archie", Alice, Kermit, Edith, and Ethel



Sagamore Hill, Roosevelt's estate



1910 cartoon shows Roosevelt's multiple roles from 1899 to 1910



Character and Success

Theodore Roosevelt

PUBLISHED IN THE "OUTLOOK," MARCH 31, 1900

A YEAR or two ago I was speaking to a famous Yale professor, one of the most noted scholars in the country, and one who is even more than a scholar, because he is in every sense of the word a man. We had been discussing the Yale-Harvard foot-ball teams, and he remarked of a certain player: "I told them not to take him, for he was slack in his studies, and my experience is that, as a rule, the man who is slack in his studies will be slack in his foot-ball work; it is character that counts in both."

Bodily vigor is good, and vigor of intellect is even better, but far above both is character. It is true, of course, that a genius may, on certain lines, do more than a brave and manly fellow who is not a genius; and so, in sports, vast physical strength may overcome weakness, even though the puny body may have in it the heart of a lion. But, in the long run, in the great battle of life, no brilliancy of intellect, no perfection of bodily development, will count when weighed in the balance against that assemblage of virtues, active and passive, of moral qualities, which we group together under the name of character; and if between any two contestants, even in college sport or in college work, the difference in character on the right side is as great as the difference of intellect or strength the other way, it is the character side that will win.

Of course this does not mean that either intellect or bodily vigor can safely be neglected. On the contrary, it means that both should be developed, and that not the least of the benefits of developing both comes from the indirect effect which this development itself has upon the character. In very rude and ignorant communities all schooling is more or less looked down upon; but there are now very few places indeed in the United States where elementary schooling is not considered a necessity. There are any number of men, however, priding themselves upon being "hard-headed" and "practical," who sneer at book-learning and at every form of higher education, under the impression that the additional mental culture is at best useless, and is ordinarily harmful in practical life. Not long ago two of the wealthiest men in the United States publicly committed themselves to the proposition that to go to college was a positive disadvantage for a young man who strove for success. Now, of course, the very most successful men we have ever had, men like Lincoln, had no chance to go

to college, but did have such indomitable tenacity and such keen appreciation of the value of wisdom that they set to work and learned for themselves far more than they could have been taught in any academy. On the other hand, boys of weak fiber, who go to high school or college instead of going to work after getting through the primary schools, may be seriously damaged instead of benefited. But, as a rule, if the boy has in him the right stuff, it is a great advantage to him should his circumstances be so fortunate as to enable him to get the years of additional mental training. The trouble with the two rich men whose views are above quoted was that, owing largely perhaps to their own defects in early training, they did not know what success really was. Their speeches merely betrayed their own limitations, and did not furnish any argument against education. Success must always include, as its first element, earning a competence for the support of the man himself, and for the bringing up of those dependent upon him. In the vast majority of cases it ought to include financially rather more than this. But the acquisition of wealth is not in the least the only test of success. After a certain amount of wealth has been accumulated, the accumulation of more is of very little consequence indeed from the standpoint of success, as success should be understood both by the community and the individual. Wealthy men who use their wealth aright are a great power for good in the community, and help to uphold that material national prosperity which must underlie national greatness; but if this were the only kind of success, the nation would be indeed poorly off. Successful statesmen, soldiers, sailors, explorers, historians, poets, and scientific men are also essential to national greatness, and, in fact, very much more essential than any mere successful business man can possibly be. The average man, into whom the average boy develops, is, of course, not going to be a marvel in any line, but, if he only chooses to try, he can be very good in any line, and the chances of his doing good work are immensely increased if he has trained his mind. Of course, if, as a result of his high-school, academy, or college experience, he gets to thinking that the only kind of learning is that to be found in books, he will do very little; but if he keeps his mental balance,—that is, if he shows character,—he will understand both what learning can do and what it cannot, and he will be all the better the more he can get.

A good deal the same thing is true of bodily development. Exactly as one kind of man sneers at college work because he does not think it bears any immediate fruit in money-getting, so another type of man sneers at college sports because he does not see their immediate effect for good in practical life. Of course, if they are carried to an excessive degree, they are altogether bad. It is a good thing for a boy to have captained his school or college eleven, but it is a very bad thing if, twenty years afterward, all that can be said of him is that he has continued to take an interest in foot-ball, base-ball, or

boxing, and has with him the memory that he was once captain. A very acute observer has pointed out that, not impossibly, excessive devotion to sports and games has proved a serious detriment in the British army, by leading the officers and even the men to neglect the hard, practical work of their profession for the sake of racing, foot-ball, base-ball, polo, and tennis—until they received a very rude awakening at the hands of the Boers. Of course this means merely that any healthy pursuit can be abused. The student in a college who "crams" in order to stand at the head of his class, and neglects his health and stunts his development by working for high marks, may do himself much damage; but all that he proves is that the abuse of study is wrong. The fact remains that the study itself is essential. So it is with vigorous pastimes. If rowing or foot-ball or base-ball is treated as the end of life by any considerable section of a community, then that community shows itself to be in an unhealthy condition. If treated as it should be,—that is, as good, healthy play,—it is of great benefit, not only to the body, but in its effect upon character. To study hard implies character in the student, and to work hard at a sport which entails severe physical exertion and steady training also implies character.

All kinds of qualities go to make up character, for, emphatically, the term should include the positive no less than the negative virtues. If we say of a boy or a man, "He is of good character," we mean that he does not do a great many things that are wrong, and we also mean that he does do a great many things which imply much effort of will and readiness to face what is disagreeable. He must not steal, he must not be intemperate, he must not be vicious in any way; he must not be mean or brutal; he must not bully the weak. In fact, he must refrain from whatever is evil. But besides refraining from evil, he must do good. He must be brave and energetic; he must be resolute and persevering. The Bible always inculcates the need of the positive no less than the negative virtues, although certain people who profess to teach Christianity are apt to dwell wholly on the negative. We are bidden not merely to be harmless as doves, but also as wise as serpents. It is very much easier to carry out the former part of the order than the latter; while, on the other hand, it is of much more importance for the good of mankind that our goodness should be accompanied by wisdom than that we should merely be harmless. If with the serpent wisdom we unite the serpent guile, terrible will be the damage we do; and if, with the best of intentions, we can only manage to deserve the epithet of "harmless," it is hardly worthwhile to have lived in the world at all.

Perhaps there is no more important component of character than steadfast resolution. The boy who is going to make a great man, or is going to count in any way in after life, must make up his mind not merely to overcome a thousand obstacles, but to win in spite of a thousand repulses or defeats. He may be

able to wrest success along the lines on which he originally started. He may have to try something entirely new. On the one hand, he must not be volatile and irresolute, and, on the other hand, he must not fear to try a new line because he has failed in another. Grant did well as a boy and well as a young man; then came a period of trouble and failure, and then the Civil War and his opportunity; and he grasped it, and rose until his name is among the greatest in our history. Young Lincoln, struggling against incalculable odds, worked his way up, trying one thing and another until he, too, struck out boldly into the turbulent torrent of our national life, at a time when only the boldest and wisest could so carry themselves as to win success and honor; and from the struggle he won both death and honor, and stands forevermore among the greatest of mankind.

Character is shown in peace no less than in war. As the greatest fertility of invention, the greatest perfection of armament, will not make soldiers out of cowards, so no mental training and no bodily vigor will make a nation great if it lacks the fundamental principles of honesty and moral cleanliness. After the death of Alexander the Great nearly all of the then civilized world was divided among the Greek monarchies ruled by his companions and their successors. This Greek world was very brilliant and very wealthy. It contained haughty military empires, and huge trading cities, under republican government, which attained the highest pitch of commercial and industrial prosperity. Art flourished to an extraordinary degree; science advanced as never before. There were academies for men of letters; there were many orators, many philosophers. Merchants and business men thrived apace, and for a long period the Greek soldiers kept the superiority and renown they had won under the mighty conqueror of the East. But the heart of the people was incurably false, incurably treacherous and debased. Almost every statesman had his price, almost every soldier was a mercenary who, for a sufficient inducement, would betray any cause. Moral corruption ate into the whole social and domestic fabric, until, a little more than a century after the death of Alexander, the empire which he had left had become a mere glittering shell, which went down like a house of cards on impact with the Romans; for the Romans, with all their faults, were then a thoroughly manly race—a race of strong, virile character.

Alike for the nation and the individual, the one indispensable requisite is character—character that does and dares as well as endures, character that is active in the performance of virtue no less than firm in the refusal to do aught that is vicious or degraded.

Citizenship in a Republic (1910)

by Theodore Roosevelt

Portion of speech delivered at the Sorbonne, Paris
April 23, 1910

Today I shall speak to you on the subject of individual citizenship, the one subject of vital importance to you, my hearers, and to me and my countrymen, because you and we a great citizens of great democratic republics. A democratic republic such as ours - an effort to realize its full sense government by, of, and for the people - represents the most gigantic of all possible social experiments, the one fraught with great responsibilities alike for good and evil. The success of republics like yours and like ours means the glory, and our failure of despair, of mankind; and for you and for us the question of the quality of the individual citizen is supreme.....

...With you here, and with us in my own home, in the long run, success or failure will be conditioned upon the way in which the average man, the average woman, does his or her duty, first in the ordinary, every-day affairs of life, and next in those great occasional crises which call for heroic virtues. The average citizen must be a good citizen if our republics are to succeed. The stream will not permanently rise higher than the main source; and the main source of national power and national greatness is found in the average citizenship of the nation. Therefore it behooves us to do our best to see that the standard of the average citizen is kept high; and the average cannot be kept high unless the standard of the leaders is very much higher.

It is well if a large proportion of the leaders in any republic, in any democracy, are, as a matter of course, drawn from the classes represented in this audience to-day; but only provided that those classes possess the gifts of sympathy with plain people and of devotion to great ideals. You and those like you have received special advantages; you have all of you had the opportunity for mental training; many of you have had leisure; most of you have had a chance for enjoyment of life far greater than comes to the majority of your fellows. **To you and your kind much has been given, and from you much should be expected.**

Yet there are certain failings against which it is especially incumbent that both men of trained and cultivated intellect, and men of inherited wealth and position should especially guard themselves, because to these failings they are especially liable; and if yielded to, their- your- chances of useful service are at an end.

Let the man of learning, the man of lettered leisure, beware of that queer and cheap temptation to pose to himself and to others as a cynic, as the man who has outgrown emotions and beliefs, the man to whom good and evil are as one. The poorest way to face life is to face it with a sneer. There are many men who feel a kind of twister pride in cynicism; there are many who confine themselves to criticism of the way others do what they themselves dare not even attempt. There is no more unhealthy being, no man

less worthy of respect, than he who either really holds, or feigns to hold, an attitude of sneering disbelief toward all that is great and lofty, whether in achievement or in that noble effort which, even if it fails, comes to second achievement. A cynical habit of thought and speech, a readiness to criticize work which the critic himself never tries to perform, an intellectual aloofness which will not accept contact with life's realities - all these are marks, not as the possessor would fain to think, of superiority but of weakness. They mark the men unfit to bear their part painfully in the stern strife of living, who seek, in the affection of contempt for the achievements of others, to hide from others and from themselves in their own weakness. The role is easy; there is none easier, save only the role of the man who sneers alike at both criticism and performance.

It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.

The Leader and The Cause: It Takes More Than That to Kill a Bull Moose

*Theodore Roosevelt Address at Milwaukee, Wisconsin
October 14, 1912.*

Just before entering the auditorium at Milwaukee, an attempt was made on Colonel Roosevelt's life. The speech is from a stenographic report, differing considerably from the prepared manuscript.

TR was shot in an assassination attempt by John Schrank. Schrank spent the rest of his life in a mental institution. No one came to visit him. Schrank had stalked TR for thousands of miles before getting a clear shot at him in Milwaukee. Schrank was caught on the spot. Roosevelt credited the thickness of his prepared speech, which was shot through, as having prevented the bullet from entering his heart.

Friends, I shall ask you to be as quiet as possible. I don't know whether you fully understand that I have just been shot; but it takes more than that to kill a Bull Moose. But fortunately I had my manuscript, so you see I was going to make a long speech, and there is a bullet - there is where the bullet went through - and it probably saved me from it going into my heart. **The bullet is in me now, so that I cannot make a very long speech, but I will try my best.**

And now, friends, I want to take advantage of this incident to say a word of solemn warning to my fellow countrymen. First of all, I want to say this about myself: I have altogether too important things to think of to feel any concern over my own death; and now I cannot speak to you insincerely within five minutes of being shot. I am telling you the literal truth when I say that my concern is for many other things. It is not in the least for my own life. I want you to understand that I am ahead of the game, anyway. No man has had a happier life than I have led; a happier life in every way. I have been able to do certain things that I greatly wished to do, and I am interested in doing other things. I can tell you with absolute truthfulness that I am very much uninterested in whether I am shot or not. It was just as when I was colonel of my regiment. I always felt that a private was to be excused for feeling at times some pangs of anxiety about his personal safety, but I cannot understand a man fit to be a colonel who can pay any heed to his personal safety when he is occupied as he ought to be with the absorbing desire to do his duty.

Friends, I ask you now this evening to accept what I am saying as absolutely true, when I tell you I am not thinking of my own success. I am not thinking of my life or of anything connected with me personally. I am thinking of the movement. I say this by way of introduction, because I want to say something very serious to our people and especially to the newspapers. I don't know anything about who the man was who shot me to-night. He was seized at once by one of the stenographers in my party, Mr. Martin, and I suppose is now in the hands of the police. He shot to kill. He shot - the shot, the bullet went in here - I will show you.

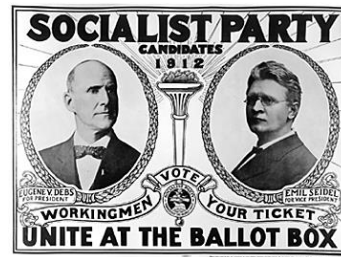
I am going to ask you to be as quiet as possible for I am not able to give the challenge of the bull moose quite as loudly. Now, I do not know who he was or what he represented. He was a coward. He stood in the darkness in the crowd around the automobile and when they cheered me, and I got up to bow, he stepped forward and shot me in the darkness.

Now, friends, of course, I do not know, as I say, anything about him; but it is a very natural thing that weak and vicious minds should be inflamed to acts of violence by the kind of awful mendacity and abuse that have been heaped upon me for the last three months by the papers in the interest of not only Mr. Debs but of Mr. Wilson and Mr. Taft.



Presidential Candidates in the 1912 Election – Above: Wilson (Democrat Party), Taft (Republican Party), and Roosevelt (Progressive/Bull Moose Party)

Below: Eugene Debs (Socialist Party)



now I wish to say seriously to all the daily newspapers, to the Republicans, the Democrat, and Socialist parties, that they cannot, month in month out and year in and year out, make the kind of untruthful, of bitter assault that they have made and not expect that brutal, violent natures, or brutal and violent characters, especially when the brutality is accompanied by a not very strong mind; they cannot expect that such natures will be unaffected by it.

Now, friends, I am not speaking for myself at all, I give you my word, I do not care a rap about being shot; not a rap.

I have had a good many experiences in my time and this is one of them. What I care for is my country. I wish I were able to impress upon my people -- our people, the duty to feel strongly but to speak the truth of their opponents. I say now, I have never said one word on the stump against any opponent that I cannot defend. I have said nothing that I could not substantiate and nothing that I ought not to have said -- nothing that I -- nothing that, looking back at, I would not say again.

Now, friends, it ought not to be too much to ask that our opponents - [*speaking to someone on the stage*] - I am not sick at all. I am all right. I cannot tell you of what infinitesimal importance I regard this incident as compared with the great issues at stake in this campaign, and I ask it not for my sake, not the least in the world, but for the sake of common country, that they make up their minds to speak only the truth, and not use that kind of slander and mendacity which if taken seriously must incite weak and violent natures to crimes of violence. Don't you make any mistake. Don't you pity me. I am all right. **I am all right and you cannot escape listening to the speech either.**

...Now, friends, what we Progressives are trying to do is to enroll rich or poor, whatever their social or industrial position, to stand together for the most elementary rights of good citizenship, those elementary rights which are the foundation of good citizenship in this great Republic of ours.

(At this point a renewed effort was made to persuade Mr. Roosevelt to conclude his speech.)

My friends are a little more nervous than I am. **Don't you waste any sympathy on me. I have had an A-1 time in life and I am having it now.**