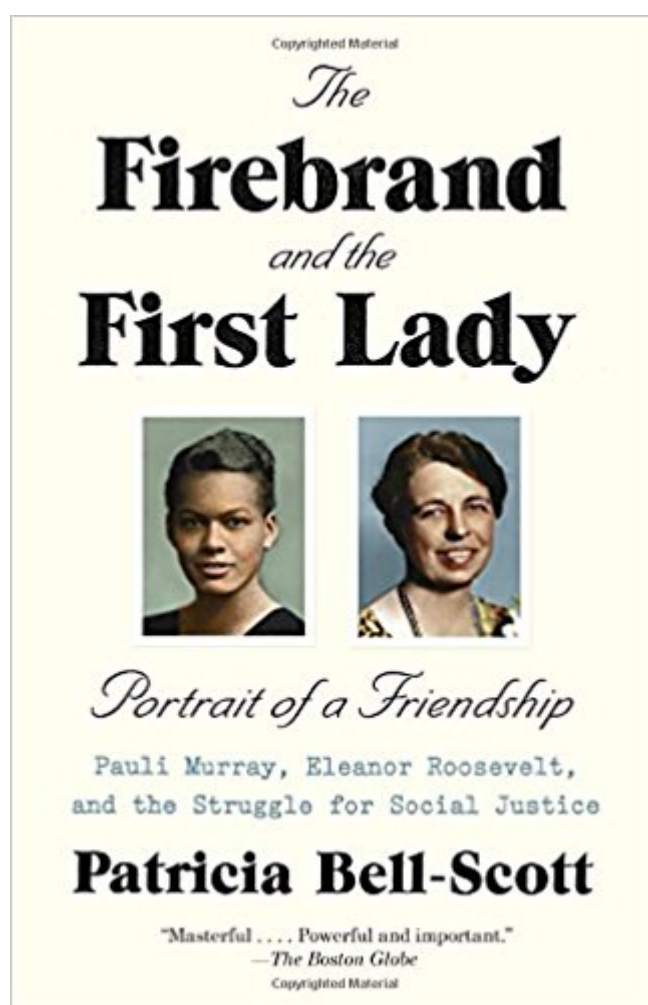


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# The Firebrand And The First Lady: Portrait Of A Friendship: Pauli Murray, Eleanor Roosevelt, And The Struggle For Social Justice



## Synopsis

A finalist for the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Nonfiction, and longlisted for the National Book Award, *The Firebrand and the First Lady* is the riveting history, two decades in the making, of how a brilliant writer-turned-activist and the first lady of the United States forged an enduring friendship that helped to alter the course of race and racism in America. In 1938, the twenty-eight-year-old Pauli Murray wrote a letter to the President and First Lady, Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt, protesting racial segregation in the South. Eleanor wrote back. So began a friendship that would last for a quarter of a century, as Pauli became a lawyer, principal strategist in the fight to protect Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and a co-founder of the National Organization of Women, and Eleanor became a diplomat and first chair of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights. Lillian Smith Book Award Finalist Georgia Author of the Year Nominated Zora Neale Hurston/Richard Wright Legacy Award

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A Finalist for the Andrew Carnegie Award for Excellence in Nonfiction Nominated for the National Book Award A Washington Post Notable Book A San Francisco Chronicle, Kirkus, and Booklist Best Book of the Year "Masterful. . . . Powerful and important." "Boston Globe" "Thorough and engaging . . . Our lives are richer for the accounting of their friendship in this important book." "The Washington Post" "Tremendous." "The New York Times Book Review" "[Written] with the grace, compassion and diligent attention to detail that characterized both of its principal subjects. . . . 'The Firebrand' is someone whose inspiration is sorely needed." "USA

Today's definitive biography of Murray, a trailblazing legal scholar and a tremendous influence on Mrs. Roosevelt. • "Essence" • Bold, fast-paced, and vividly written, Patricia Bell-Scott's dual portrait of Pauli Murray and Eleanor Roosevelt significantly enhances the story of two luminous activists who learned much from each other across the color line. • "Blanche Wiesen Cook, author of *Eleanor Roosevelt: I, II, and III*" • Extraordinary and inspiring. • "Shelf Awareness" • A fresh look at a fascinating friendship between two vivid individuals from very different worlds as well as a chronicle of the age-old conflict between the highest ideals and the art of the possible. • "Geoffrey C. Ward, author of *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*" • A groundbreaking portrait . . . essential and edifying. • "Booklist (starred review)" • Should inspire all readers. • Rarely has a friendship been dissected and analyzed with such verve and open-eyed compassion. • "Wil Haygood, author of *Showdown: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court Nomination that Changed America*" • Deftly reveals two women's crucial involvement in the struggle for civil rights . . . An absorbing historical page-turner. • "Publishers Weekly (starred review)" • The extraordinary life of Pauli Murray, activist, poet, teacher, priest and "firebrand" for all seasons, is beautifully detailed in Patricia Bell-Scott's book. . . . [Murray and Roosevelt's] history together reverberates today as the fight for equality continues, making this book important reading for all of us." • "Jane Alexander, award winning actress" • Bell-Scott shines a bright light on this significant relationship. A fresh look at Eleanor Roosevelt and a fascinating exploration of a cherished, mutually beneficial friendship. • "Kirkus Reviews, (starred review)" • What an exquisite book! Patricia Bell-Scott has done the painstaking research on two women who in many respects couldn't have been more different, but in at least one respect – their unique friendship – shared a passion for truth. . . . Patricia Bell-Scott has given us a book that will inspire and give hope to all who read it. • "The Rt. Rev. Mary D. Glasspool, Bishop Suffragan, Diocese of Los Angeles." • Biography at its best: intimate while revealing of society in its time. • Patricia Bell-Scott sees all, and her view is both engrossing and encouraging. • "Nell Irvin Painter, author of *Sojourner Truth, A Life, A Symbol*

PATRICIA BELL-SCOTT is professor emerita of women's studies and human development and family science at the University of Georgia. Her previous books include *Life Notes: Personal Writings by Contemporary Black Women*, *Flat-Footed Truths: Telling Black Women's Lives*, and *Double Stitch: Black Women Write About Mothers & Daughters*, which won the Letitia Woods Brown Memorial Book Prize. She lives in Athens, Georgia, with her husband, Charles V. Underwood Jr.

It is to my great regret that when I purchased "The Firebrand and the First Lady: Portrait of a Friendship" by Patricia Bell-Scott almost a year ago, circumstances did not permit me to immediately begin to enjoy it. Part of the difficulty was purely mechanical. This is a weighty book, and as a sufferer of carpal tunnel syndrome, frankly my hands were unable to handle it. Subsequent to surgery, I am now prepared to deal with the physical challenge. In any event, although I am only starting to read this wonderful dual biography and culturally highly-relevant narrative, I must say that I am profoundly glad I purchased it. The story is both fascinating and deeply moving, and the sociopolitical aspects handled with extreme sensitivity and brilliance. The photographs which head each chapter are extraordinary, and the notes and index detailed and extensive. This is a wonderfully scholarly work that reads like a novel and a priceless addition to my personal library.

This is truly a very important book. It traces an extraordinary friendship between Eleanor Roosevelt (a giant public figure renowned throughout the world for the cause of freedom and equality) and Pauli Murray. I did not know who Paul Murray was when I first came upon this book. Pauli Murray was a rare gift outright for all of the struggles of the American people. She was at the forefront linking and fighting for the equality of women, African-American, against Jim Crow, lynching and for civil rights, labor, the poor, and people of different sexual orientations. I could not put this book down. She was truly a woman ahead of her times. The author, Professor Patricia Bell-Scott, a renowned intellectual, spent 20 years researching this book. It is beautifully written and a joy to read. Don't miss it.

Captivating! Inspiring! Convicting! A precious, golden nugget from American history; a timely disclosure of a friendship between two women that continues-if we let it-to impact us all today; a look at how true sisterhood is created and lovingly maintained. Buy it for yourself, for relatives, for friends. Donate a copy to your local school libraries, your church!

I always love reading more about the remarkable life that Eleanor R led but to learn for the first time about Pauli Murray & her amazing life story...so empowering to see first hand how Pauli reached out to the First Lady AND Eleanor reached back - beginning a remarkable friendship, with progressive activism at the heart of their relationship. Great book! Excellent writing & great material.

Must read for all women especially and all men and women of color. Learning about the Collaboration of Pauli Murray and Eleanor Roosevelt and the magnitude of their accomplishments

blew me away. I have recommended this book to every thinking man, woman and child I know. I wish I could personally thank them for their bravery.

Enjoyed Patricia's extremely well researched and excellently written book about the times and her main characters. It shares so much of the reality of its time that no history class ever has for me.

This is an inspired idea--to trace the intertwined lives of Eleanor Roosevelt and one of her most gallant friends (of whom the First Lady had many). This is an excellent and gratifying book.

Great historical review with insight into the happenings of the times. An interesting read, good for book discussion groups

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