Tiana Taylor

Honors 3250

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This essay argues that the marital affair of Franklin D. Roosevelt with Lucy

Mercer led to the change in role of Eleanor Roosevelt during his presidency. Although

Eleanor and Franklin Roosevelt remained married after the discovery of his infidelity in

1918, the union evolved into a political partnership. Disenchanted, Eleanor pursued an

open public life and devoted her focus to her social work. To illustrate the evolutionary

role of Eleanor Roosevelt, this essay examines her contribution to the four presidential

campaigns of Franklin Roosevelt in 1932, 1936, 1940, and 1944 using Franklin D.

Roosevelt archives. Throughout the elections, Eleanor Roosevelt redefined the role of the

first lady and exemplified that the first lady is a significant factor of American history

and politics.